

Case: 201100805, Scottish Prison Service
Sector: scottish government and devolved administration
Subject: personal property
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C purchased a hi-fi through prison 1's local purchasing process but was no longer allowed to use it after he was transferred to prison 2, as it contained a iPod docking station. Mr C complained that it was unreasonable of prison 2 to withhold the hi-fi and he had not been given adequate reasons as to why it was not allowed. Mr C said that he had purchased the hi-fi through the proper procedure at prison 1 and that a security seal had been placed over the docking station to disable its use.

Prison 2 told Mr C that, in line with national policy, electrical or electronic equipment that may operate a device that can access the internet is not allowed in a prisoner's cell. Prison 2 sought advice from their IT specialist who advised that the iPod docking station could not be effectively sealed off.

We concluded that prison 2 acted in accordance with the national policy in withholding Mr C's hi-fi. There was evidence that Mr C was given a detailed written explanation of the reasons why he was not allowed this equipment. We also identified that the purpose of the security seal is to prevent unauthorised items from being concealed in devices that are allowed in a prisoner's cell, and not for the purposes of disabling the likes of an iPod docking station.

Although we did not uphold the complaint, it was clear that prison 1 had not acted in accordance with the national policy in allowing Mr C to purchase the hi-fi. As a result, prison 1 decided to reimburse the cost of it to Mr C.