

SPSO decision report

Case: 201204493, Scottish Prison Service
Sector: Scottish Government and devolved administration
Subject: personal property
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C, who is a prisoner, complained that the prison unreasonably removed and disposed of his football boot laces. This happened after staff searched his cell. Mr C said he was allowed to have his laces in use and there were no grounds for staff to dispose of them.

The prison advised us that staff removed Mr C's laces and disposed of them because it was suspected that he was using them as a 'line'. This is an article constructed from pieces of material, which prisoners can then use to pass items between cell windows on the outside of the building. The prison explained that using an authorised item of property in an unauthorised way could mean that such items are removed and disposed of. This is what happened in Mr C's case.

We were satisfied that the prison had taken a discretionary decision that they were entitled to take and that in the circumstances we could not question it. It was clear there were reasonable grounds for the prison to remove and dispose of Mr C's laces and because of that, we did not uphold his complaint.