

SPSO decision report

Case: 201503474, Scottish Prison Service
Sector: Scottish Government and devolved administration
Subject: complaints handling
Outcome: not upheld, action taken by body to remedy, no recommendations

Summary

During a search of his cell, Mr C said an officer transferred ink from an ink pad onto some items of his clothing. He complained about the matter and he was unhappy with the prison's response. Mr C complained to us that the prison failed to handle his complaint reasonably.

The prison told Mr C that he should not have had the ink pad in his cell in the first place. They were also unable to establish where the ink pad had come from. The prison told Mr C that they did not uphold his complaint. However, they agreed to remind staff of the standards that should be followed when conducting cell searches and dealing with prisoners' property. The prison also confirmed to us that Mr C had accepted an offer of £30 for the damage caused to his clothing.

In making his complaint to the prison, Mr C raised concerns about the manner in which an officer conducted the search. He said he wanted officers to take more care when doing cell searches. Whilst the prison did not uphold Mr C's complaint, they did take steps to remind staff of the professional standards required when conducting cell searches. It is not entirely clear why the prison sought to establish where the ink pad came from; doing so appears to have over-complicated the matter. However, overall, we were satisfied the prison's handling of the matter was reasonable and we did not uphold Mr C's complaint.