

Operation of a Roll Cage

EFFECTIVE DATE

10 DEC 2025



Standard Operating Procedure NATS COL 085 05

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The aim of this SOP is to ensure that roll cages are used safely for:

- Transportation of session equipment and daily consumables to and from Session Venues and session supplies
- Storage on vehicles
- Storage in Blood donating centres

1.2 Good practice in manual handling **must** apply at all times when dealing with cages.

Key Changes from Previous Revision

CR26768: Please remove reference to Manual 012 Infection Control and add NATS GEN 077 on next revision

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This SOP includes references to the following documents:

Reference in text	
NSS Accident Incident Report (AIR) form	
Relevant other references	
Regulations:	Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
Standards:	
Guidelines:	NATS GEN 077 National Infection Prevention and Control Manual (NIPCM) NSS Accident Incident Report Form (AIR)
Other:	

2. HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 2.1 All operators **must** be trained on the safe use of cages.
- 2.2 Cages **must not** be overloaded.
- 2.3 **PPE must be worn at all times when manoeuvring cages.**
- 2.4 Cages **must not** be used where the ground is unsuitable i.e. rough surface or steep incline/decline.
- 2.5 Two person operation will be used where appropriate based on manual handling training, carry out a risk assessment and ask for assistance if required.
- 2.6 Care will be taken when pushing a cage through narrow confines.

Important Note: If the hands are on the side uprights at the front there is a danger that fingers could get trapped or knocked against doorframes etc.

The maximum weight capacity for each cage is 500kg.

- 2.7 The cage should always be manoeuvred from the front of the cage with the handles.
- 2.8 Operators **must not** step into the cage to load/unload it.
- 2.9 This procedure involves handling human blood or blood components, treat these as potentially hazardous, even if they have been tested, and found negative, for viruses known to be transmitted by transfusion.

Any accident, health issue, potential incident or near miss **must** be reported to a supervisor and NSS Accident Incident Report (AIR) form completed.

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3. MATERIALS

3.1 Cage(s)

Personal Protective Equipment (Approved and supplied by SNBTS)

- Gloves
- High visibility jackets
- Protective footwear

4. STAFF

4.1 Only staff trained can carry out this procedure.

5. PROCEDURE

5.1 Staff **must** follow instructions below:

- Only move one cage at a time.
- Move the cage no faster than walking speed.
- Whenever possible push the cage as this is ergonomically better than pulling it.
- Seek help on uneven surfaces or ramps.
- Stack heavier items at the bottom of the cage to lower the centre of gravity.
- Do not load above the load line or above the level the operator can see.
- When a roll cage has to be loaded with items above eye level that 2 people are required to move it.

5.2 Brakes

5.2.1 Operating from the front of the cage hold the cage with the handles as it faces you.

5.2.2 Push the cage away from you and the front swivel wheels will turn making visible the brake pedals.

5.2.3 To apply the brakes, press the brake pedal down with your foot.

5.2.4 To release the brake, place your foot on the exposed brake lever and gently push the pedal forward and up with your foot.

5.2.5 Cages **must not** be opened/closed or loaded/unloaded unless the brakes have been engaged.

5.3 Gate

5.3.1 To open the gate, hold the handles and gently lift the gate up approximately 10cms and pull the gate towards you.

5.3.2 To close the gate, push the front so that the left hand side of the gate meets the left side of the cage at a right angle, hold the handles and gently lift the gate up approximately 10cms, then lower the gate until the pins meet the pin holder and gently lower the cage so that the pins are placed in their holders at the top and

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bottom of the cage. This will lock the gate in place.

5.4 Manoeuvring a cage

5.4.1 There may be occasions when cages cannot be manoeuvred into session venues.

In the event of the session venue being inaccessible cages should be manoeuvred off the vehicle onto the pavement or other area close to the venue and emptied/loaded whilst the cage is at ground level. A dynamic risk assessment **must** be carried out before unloading the cages.

5.4.2 Operating from the front of the cage; hold the cage with each hand on the handles as it faces you.

5.4.3 Release the brake and push the cage forward.

5.4.4 Apply pressure to the right and the cage will turn left; apply pressure to the left and the cage will turn to the right.

5.5 Loading goods into cages

5.5.1 Wherever possible heavier items should be placed at the bottom of the cage with lighter items on top.

5.5.2 As in all lifts help should be requested from colleagues where awkward shapes or heavier items are being loaded.

5.6 Loading/unloading beds into cage

5.6.1 Cages used for the mobile donation beds **must** have a base plate.

Place 1 bed flat against the rear of the cage. Secure using a tied strap if available. (Photo 1 Appendix 1).

Stack 8 beds side on, in front of the first bed. (Photo 2 Appendix 1).

Place 1 bed flat against the 8 side on beds.

Attach a strap, if available, and secure across the middle in front of the beds to keep them in place and prevent movement during handling. This will stop movement if using ramps to access venues. (Photo 3 Appendix 1)

This ensures that colleagues have easy access to the handles to push the cages.

In summary the format is:

10 beds total packed per cage.

1 bed upright flat against rear wall of cage.

8 beds upright perpendicular to cage door mattress to mattress.

1 bed flat against the 8 side on beds.

Strapping, if available, used to secure beds and prevent excessive movement.

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If less than 10 beds are required then the spare beds can be stored securely in the cages.

This procedure **must** be adopted and all staff with supervisory responsibility have a duty to ensure compliance with this format.

5.7 Unloading goods from cages.

5.7.1 Care **must** be taken when opening the gate that items within the cage are not pressing on the gate or are unstable in the cage prior to opening.

5.7.2 The sides of the cage may be detached to allow staff to reach deeper into the cage. Ensure that an extra member of staff holds the side open to allow safe access into the cage.

Important note: Do not stand inside the cage to load or unload equipment.

5.8 Loading/Unloading cages from/to a tail lift.

5.8.1 **Unless individuals have been specifically identified and trained the only staff authorised to work inside the van are drivers.**

Individuals who have been trained should only do loading of the cages to the tail Lift platform.

The stop plates which are fitted to the platforms (to stop cages rolling off the platform) **must** be engaged at all times whilst the cages are on the platform.

5.9 Storage and folding of cages within a Venue.

Cages can be folded up and stored within each other.

5.9.1 To fold a cage.

- Face the cage.
- Ensure the brakes have been applied.
- Open the gate.
- Pull out the roof clips on the left and right of the roof.
- Fold the roof back and push the roof clips back into the closed position.
- Lift the left and right side of the cage upwards by 10cms to unhook the sides from the floor plate.
- Fold the roof down inside the cage to the back wall.
- Fold the floor up inside the cage to the back wall.
- Push the left side of the cage into the back wall and lift it upwards to hook the bottom of the left side of the gate onto the bottom of the back of the cage.
- Concertina the gate across the front of the right side and attach the gate to the right side using the clip found on the grill of the gate to hold the doors firmly in place.

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Appendix 1

Photo 1



Photo 2 (example of mattress to mattress)



Photo 3

