
CHAMPAIGN POLICE DEPARTMENT

POLICY and PROCEDURE

POLICY NUMBER: 1.10

SUBJECT: TASERS

EFFECTIVE DATE: 12/02/15

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ADM.05.03

Neuromuscular incapacitation (NMI): The stimulation of motor cells by a conducted energy weapon that has the effect of causing muscles to contract. A result of this contraction is the limited ability of the person experiencing NMI to move or control the affected muscles.

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Passive Resistance: Any resistance that does not involve an attempt to defeat an officer's touch or control, or where a subject, with little or no physical activity, refuses to respond to an officer appropriately. Examples include subjects who refuse verbal commands to stand or walk where directed or subjects involved in protests or public demonstrations who refuse to move.

Probes: Small, barb-like projectiles fired from the CEW that are connected to the CEW by wires and attach to the subject to send the electrical signal.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to establish training standards for Conducted Energy Weapons (CEW) to establish guidelines for their use, procedures for post-deployment medical aid, and requirements for the proper reporting of incidents during which a CEW was activated or deployed.

Support-Hand: The officer's non-holster hand; the hand not used to draw, carry, or deploy the officer's primary firearm, regardless of the officer's dominant hand.

Taser: An approved, Department-issued CEW.

DEFINITIONS:

Active Aggression: The actual advancing, challenging, or physical assault made by a subject or behavior causing an officer to reasonably believe the subject intends to cause injury to others or the officer.

Warning Alert: A loud noise and bright flashing strobe light used to assist in gaining compliance prior to the deployment of probes.

Active Resistance: Resistance with physically evasive movements to avoid physical control, such as fleeing, flailing, bracing, tensing, pushing, or verbally signaling an intention to actively avoid being restrained.

POLICY:

1.10.1 TRAINING

Conducted Energy Weapon (CEW): A device that utilizes propelled wires or direct contact to conduct energy to temporarily affect the sensory and motor functions of the nervous system.

- A. Authorization for an officer to carry a Taser can be granted solely by the Police Chief.
- B. An officer authorized by the Police Chief to carry a Taser shall only be permitted to do so after achieving certification.
- C. The responsibility for the certification of authorized officers shall rest with the certified Taser Instructors. The certified Taser Instructors shall:

Deployment: Pointing an armed or unarmed CEW at a person, laser painting a subject, contact with a subject or animal, and/or discharging an air cartridge – regardless of whether the probes strike their intended target. By itself, the display of a CEW is not considered a deployment.

- 1. Complete all certification and re-certification requirements issued by Axon International Inc.
- 2. Certify each officer whom the Police Chief authorizes to carry a Taser. Certification shall be in conformance with Taser guidelines and the requirements of this policy.
- 3. Re-certify each authorized officer on an annual basis. Re-certification shall also be in conformance with Taser guidelines and the requirements of this policy. Provide ongoing training to authorized users who are on

Function Test: A test of the CEW as prescribed by the manufacturer's instructions.

Laser Painting: Pointing the lasers of an armed Taser at a subject to gain compliance.

extended absences of six months or more, and to those who request additional training.

4. Reassessment of an officer's knowledge and/or practical skill may also be required at the direction of a command officer or certified Taser Instructor.
- D. The certified Taser Instructors and the Training Sergeant shall be jointly responsible for ensuring that all training, certification, and re-certification includes the following:
1. A review of this policy.
 2. A review of the Use of Force Policy.
 3. De-escalation techniques.
 4. A review of the Hyperactive Delirium protocol.
 5. A review of documentation requirements, including incident reports and forms.
 6. The performance of support-hand draws to reduce the possibility of unintentionally drawing and firing a firearm.
 7. Target area considerations, to include techniques or options designed to reduce the unintentional application of probes near the head, neck, chest, groin, or anterior (front) pelvis.
 8. Scenario-based training and judgment-based training that highlights the limitations of Tasers and the possible need to transition to other force options.
 9. The handcuffing of a subject during the application of the Taser.
 10. Weapon retention techniques.
 11. Restraint techniques that do not impair respiration following the application of the Taser device.
 12. Recognition that multiple applications or cycling for more than 15 seconds, either cumulatively or continuously, may increase the risk of death or serious injury and should be avoided unless necessary for the safety of the subject, others, or the officer.
- E. Any and all training, certification, and recertification shall be documented in the officer's training file.
- F. The Training Sergeant is responsible for ensuring that each officer who carries a Taser has received initial certification and required re-certification

training. Verification shall take place through periodic audits.

- G. Those officers who do not carry Taser devices shall receive annual training that is sufficient to familiarize them with the device and enable them to work with officers who use the device.

1.10.2 ISSUANCE AND CARRYING OF TASERS

- A. Officers shall only use Tasers and cartridges issued by the Department.
- B. The Police Chief may, at his discretion, mandate the carrying of a Taser.
- C. An officer who has been issued a Taser shall wear the device in an approved and issued holster on their person.
1. Officers carrying a Taser shall carry the Taser in a support-hand draw holster. The holster may be worn on the duty belt, a thigh rig, or attached to an external vest. In all cases, the Taser shall be positioned to require a draw with the support hand (the hand opposite the officer's firearm holster designation). Cross-body draw of the Taser is permitted, provided the draw is executed with the support hand.
 2. All Tasers will be yellow in color to clearly distinguish them from a duty weapon or other device.
- D. An officer carrying a Taser shall perform a function test on the unit prior to the beginning of each shift or work assignment to ensure the unit is functioning properly and has adequate remaining battery life. Supervisors on the Taser Instructor Cadre should periodically review user logs to ensure function tests are completed as required.
- E. Each officer to whom a Taser has been issued shall be responsible for ensuring the issued device is properly maintained and kept in good working condition. When not in use, Tasers should be secured in the same manner as a firearm and should not be left in places where they could be exposed to extreme heat or cold.
- F. Unless circumstances do not permit an officer to holster a Taser prior to transitioning to a firearm, an officer shall not hold a firearm and a Taser at the same time.
- G. Each officer to whom a Taser has been issued shall be responsible for placing their battery on the Taser battery dock at least once every 30 days or when the battery reaches 20%, whichever comes first. Taser batteries will only be removed from the device for docking once the device has fully powered up and completed its internal check. This will prevent errors and flashing lights on the dock.

1.10.3 VERBAL AND VISUAL WARNINGS

- A. Officers shall issue a verbal and/or visual warning (i.e., warning alert or laser painting) consistent with training prior to deploying a CEW, when feasible, and allow a reasonable amount of time to comply with those warnings unless doing so would increase the risk of injury to officers, the subject or others. When practical, officers should notify assisting officers of their intention to deploy a CEW.
 - 1. The fact that a verbal or other warning was given, or the reasons it was not given, shall be thoroughly documented by the officer deploying the Taser in the related incident report.

1.10.4 USE OF THE TASER

- A. Use of the Taser will be governed by the Use of Force Principles outlined in Policy 1.3.1 and this policy.
- B. A CEW is authorized to be used:
 - 1. To protect an officer or others from a reasonably perceived, immediate threat of physical harm from the person to be exposed to the CEW;
 - 2. To restrain and/or subdue a person who is actively resisting arrest;
 - 3. To de-escalate a violent, potentially violent, or otherwise dangerous situation and bring the person safely under control.
- C. The CEW shall not be used:
 - 1. On a person who is passively resisting and who is not reasonably perceived to be an immediate threat to themselves or others.
 - 2. On a person who is in restraints, except as objectively reasonable to prevent imminent harm to the person, an officer or others.
 - 3. When the officer deploying the CEW should reasonably know that use of a CEW may cause death or great bodily harm from situational hazards such as falling, drowning, or igniting a potentially explosive or flammable material, except for situations where the use of deadly force would be justified.
- D. Immediately prior to deployment, the officer shall visually confirm that the device is a CEW and not a firearm.

- E. The CEW shall be aimed at preferred targeting areas, consistent with training and current manufacturer recommendations.
- F. The CEW shall not be intentionally aimed at sensitive areas, which include the face, eyes, head, throat, chest, female breasts, groin, genitals, or anterior pelvis, except when the use of deadly force is authorized.
- G. The CEW should be deployed for an initial five-second cycle.
- H. During and immediately after the initial deployment cycle, the officer shall give resistance control commands to the person being exposed to the CEW.
 - 1. The officer shall be aware that a person being exposed to a CEW may not be able to respond to commands during or immediately following exposure.
 - 2. The officer shall allow a reasonable amount of time to assess the effectiveness of the cycle and give the subject the opportunity to comply with verbal commands.
 - 3. The officer shall evaluate, under the totality of the circumstances, whether additional cycles are reasonably necessary and whether additional cycles appear likely to be effective in accomplishing the officer's lawful objectives. The evaluation shall involve consideration of the fact that deployments in excess of 15 seconds, whether due to multiple applications or continuous cycling may increase the risk of death or serious injury to the person being exposed.
 - 4. To reduce the potential need for more than one cycle, the person being exposed to the CEW should be secured as soon as practical, either during or immediately after the initial exposure.
- I. Mere flight from a pursuing officer, without other known circumstances or factors, is not sufficient to justify the use of the Taser.

1.10.5 SPECIAL DEPLOYMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- A. The use of a Taser against a member of a high-risk population should generally be avoided unless the totality of the circumstances reasonably indicate that other available options are likely to be ineffective or would present a greater danger to the subject or others, including officers, and the officer reasonably believes that the need to control the individual outweighs the risk of using the device.

B. High-risk populations include:

1. An individual who is either known to be or is obviously pregnant.
2. An individual in a wheelchair or who is using another visible mobility assistance device such as a chair, crutches, or a cane.
3. Small children, elderly people, and those who are visibly frail.
4. An individual in an elevated position from which a fall could result in death or serious physical injury.
5. An individual in physical control of a motor vehicle, moving motorcycle, ATV, bicycle, or motorized scooter unless exigent circumstances exist.

C. A Taser may be used on a person in the driver's seat of a vehicle as long as the engine is not running.

D. A Taser may be used on a person in the driver's seat of a running vehicle or motorcycle if:

1. There is probable cause that the person has committed or is wanted for a forcible felony that involved violence; and
2. There are no pedestrians in the immediate area, and the driver, therefore, presents no immediate threat to the safety of any other individual in the immediate area.

E. A Taser is not intended for use against a person armed with a firearm or other weapon that places others or the officer in imminent or immediate threat of death or great bodily harm.

F. A Taser should not be used against any individual who is handcuffed or otherwise restrained, absent overtly assaultive, self-destructive, or violently resistive behavior that cannot be reasonably addressed by other readily available means.

G. Officers shall not intentionally deploy more than one Taser at a time against a single subject.

H. A Taser shall not be used to psychologically torment, elicit a statement, or punish or retaliate against an individual.

1.10.6 DANGEROUS ANIMALS

A. A Taser may be deployed against an animal as part of a plan to deal with a potentially dangerous animal, such as a dog, if the animal reasonably appears to pose an imminent threat to human safety and alternative methods are not readily available or would likely be ineffective.

1.10.7 MEDICAL CONSIDERATIONS

A. Absent extenuating circumstances, only an officer trained in the removal of darts or appropriate medical personnel shall remove Taser probes from a subject's skin.

B. A discharged Taser probe shall be considered a biohazard and handled appropriately.

C. Any individual who has been subjected to the electric discharge of a Taser shall be medically assessed on scene by a paramedic unit. If not safe or practical to do so on-scene, the individual will be assessed by medical personnel unit as soon as possible.

D. Additionally, an individual who has been subjected to the electric discharge of a Taser and meets any of the following conditions shall, as soon as practical, be transported to a medical facility for an assessment:

1. The person is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol and/or a controlled substance.
2. The person is or may be pregnant.
3. The Taser probes are, or were, lodged in a sensitive area (e.g., groin, female breast, head, face, neck).
4. A dart is broken under the skin or embedded in a manner so as to preclude easy removal.
5. If the individual at any time requests to be treated at a medical facility.
6. The person reasonably appears to be in need of medical attention.
7. Paramedics suggest that the subject be transported to a medical facility.
8. An officer recognizes signs of distress, or the subject verbalizes a new complaint at any time following the initial medical assessment.
9. An individual was exposed to multiple or prolonged applications in excess of 15 seconds.

E. If an individual refuses medical attention, such refusal shall be documented by medical personnel and in related incident reports. If the contact is being recorded, the refusal should be captured if possible.

F. The transporting officer shall clearly inform any person providing medical care to the subject or

receiving custody of the subject that the individual has been subjected to the application of a Taser.

1.10.8 POST-DEPLOYMENT AND SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. An officer who discharges a Taser shall promptly notify an on-duty supervisor of the discharge.
- B. A supervisor shall respond to the scene of each incident in which a Taser was discharged.
- C. The expended cartridges, along with expended probes and wires, shall be collected and submitted into evidence. The evidence packaging shall be marked "Biohazard" if the probes penetrated the subject's skin.
- D. If an officer deploys probes, whether or not the probes make contact with a person, they shall return their battery to the Taser battery dock as soon as practicable. The officer will notify a Taser Training Cadre supervisor, who will move the logs from that battery into Evidence.com, as prescribed by the manufacturer.
- E. Photographs of the probe sites and any injuries to any subject will be taken. In the event the injuries are in sensitive or private areas of the body, the shift supervisor shall request that appropriate medical personnel assist with the photo documentation. Those present shall also be interviewed as witnesses.
- F. The Axon Trend Form is used to document all Taser deployments. Any officer who deploys a Taser, as defined in this policy (e.g., pointing, laser painting, or discharging probes), shall complete the form. The officer shall locate and complete the form in its entirety within Evidence.com and submit it to their immediate supervisor for review.
- G. As required by Policy 1.3, each incident involving a Taser discharge will be the subject of supervisory review.

1.10.9 REPORTING

- A. Officers shall report each instance in which the Taser was pointed at a person, probes were discharged, or the device made physical contact with a person. Unintentional discharges should be immediately reported to a supervisor.
- B. An officer who deploys a Taser shall include the same required information in the use of force report as outlined in Policy 1.3.9.

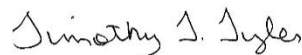
1.10.10 REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF TASER INCIDENTS

- A. Each Taser discharge will be reviewed in the same manner as all other use of force incidents in

accordance with Policy 1.3.10, to include a review of the incident reports and any/all relevant video captured by a squad video system or Taser camera.

- B. In addition, each deployment of a Taser by an officer of the Champaign Police Department will be reviewed and analyzed on a regular basis (but at least annually) by the Taser Instructor Cadre to determine any trends, training needs, or needs for policy modification. Any recommendations from the Cadre will be made to the Lieutenant overseeing the Taser cadre.
- C. Information regarding Taser deployments will be included in the annual use of force report, which is made available to the public.

ISSUING AUTHORITY



Timothy T. Tyler
Police Chief
Champaign Police Department