



Staffordshire Police Equality Impact Assessment



The purpose of this EIA is to ensure you consider any equality issues as part of your decision making when developing / reviewing your policy / procedure.

Please complete the sections below and send to the Equality and Diversity unit to be quality assured. New / revised policies cannot be published on the policy database until the EIA has passed the quality assurance process.

Title of policy/procedure:	Taser – Management, Command & Deployment
Department:	Operational Services
Date:	9 th March 2012

1. Identify the aims and purpose of the policy

The intention of the policy is to set down parameters governing the management, command and the operational deployment of Taser devices by specially trained units and authorised firearm officers collectively known as Authorised Taser Officers.

Taser is for use by those trained officers in situations involving violence or threats of violence of such severity that the use of force to protect the public, themselves or the subjects is justified.

The Human Rights' Act emphasised the need for the police service to be able to access and use a range of 'less lethal' options, and personal safety tactical options in decisions made by the police, has become an imperative for the service.

The Police Service is required to justify any use of force, showing that it was proportionate and legal, and that there was, at the time, an absolute necessity, particularly where potentially lethal force is used. Available less lethal technologies work in different ways and each may offer unique advantages in specific circumstances. The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) believe that having a range of options available is likely to provide the most appropriate response to any given situation. This will include Conducted Energy Devices, of which the Home Office Scientific Development Branch currently only authorise the Taser.

It has been demonstrated that where Taser has been used, it has contributed to the effective resolution of an incident. It is not a replacement for existing personal safety tactical options, but gives another option to officers to consider alongside other personal safety tactical options, such as negotiation, batons, incapacitant sprays, dogs and conventional firearms. These do not constitute a hierarchy of lawful force and should be viewed as a range of approved options from which the most proportionate and appropriate should be selected, according to circumstances, in order to meet the obligations set out in this document.

The National Decision Making Model (NDMM), contained within the ACPO Personal Safety Manual of Guidance sets out the process by which a measured and appropriate response can be made to any situation involving conflict.

Nothing in the policy overrides the fundamental duty of police officers to protect life in accordance with the law and the European Convention on Human Rights.

2. Identify the individuals and organisations who are likely to have an interest in, or be affected by the policy.

Staffordshire Police, The public at large and The Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC).

3. Data

Summarise the findings of any monitoring data / information which you have considered regarding the impact of this policy on people from all or any of the protected groups. This could include national or local data.

3.1 Age

The decision to use Taser is not in any way affected by any one of the 'Protected Criteria'. Its use is triggered by the conduct of any individual whereby the use of force is deemed appropriate and justified.

3.2 Disability

As above.

3.3 Race

As above.

3.4 Religion or Belief

As above.

3.5 Sex

As above.

3.6 Sexual Orientation

As above.

3.7 Transgender

As above.

4. Research

Summarise the findings of any research you have considered regarding this policy for all or any of the protected groups. This could include information you have obtained from other sources e.g. ACPO, Home Office.

4.1 Age

The decision to use Taser is not in any way affected by any one of the 'Protected Criteria'. Its use is triggered by the conduct of any individual whereby the use of force is deemed appropriate and justified. No research concerning its use on particular individuals defined as a member of a 'Protected Criteria' is deemed necessary regarding this policy. Extensive research in the development and use of Taser was carried out by the Home Office prior to it being approved for use by the police service.

4.2 Disability

As above.

4.3 Race

As above.

4.4 Religion or Belief

As above.

4.5 Sex

As above.

4.6 Sexual Orientation

As above.

4.7 Transgender

As above.

5. Consultation

Summarise the opinions of any consultation for all or any of the protected groups.

Who was consulted and how e.g. survey, discussion, forum.

If there was no consultation please justify why.

5.1 Age

The decision to use Taser is not in any way affected by any one of the 'Protected Criteria'. Its use is triggered by the conduct of any individual whereby the use of force is deemed appropriate and justified. No consultation concerning its use on particular individuals defined as a member of a 'Protected Criteria' is deemed necessary regarding this policy.

5.2 Disability

As above.

5.3 Race

As above.

5.4 Religion or Belief

As above.

5.5 Sex

As above.

5.6 Sexual Orientation

As above.

5.7 Transgender

As above.

6. Conclusions

Taking into account the results of the monitoring, research and consultation, set out how the policy impacts or could impact on people from the following protected groups? (Include positive and/or negative impacts)

6.1 Age

There are no perceived impacts in relation to a person's age.

6.2 Disability

There may be an impact on people with a disability who have mental health issues speech or hearing difficulties in understanding the warning that is given before a Taser is used.. The impact is reduced by the training officers receive in the use of Taser.

The training is a nationally approved package by the National Police Improvement Agency and has been checked and validated by their Legal and Diversity Department. The package includes an input entitled 'Dealing with Vulnerable People'. This input covers all aspects of dealing with subjects who have mental health issues, speech or hearing difficulties and any other issues which may make them vulnerable when coming into contact with the police. The input also covers tactical considerations when dealing with vulnerable persons, including blocks to communication. The training is scenario based with an increased emphasis on communicate with subjects prior to and in an effort to obviate the need for actual discharge of Taser.

All officers have to complete the Taser training before they can use a Taser.

6.3 Race

There may be an impact on people who have communication difficulties due to language in understanding the warning that is given before a Taser is used. The impact is reduced by the training officers receive in the use of Taser.

The training is a nationally approved package by the National Police Improvement Agency and has been checked and validated by their Legal and Diversity Department. The package includes an input entitled 'Dealing with Vulnerable People' and this input includes people who do not speak English. The training is scenario based with an increased emphasis on communicate with subjects prior to and in an effort to obviate the need for actual discharge of Taser.

All officers have to complete the Taser training before they can use a Taser.

6.4 Religion or Belief

There are no perceived impacts in relation to a person's religion or belief.

6.5 Sex

There are no perceived impacts in relation to a person's sex.

6.6 Sexual Orientation

There are no perceived impacts in relation to a person's sexual orientation.

6.7 Transgender

There are no perceived impacts in relation to a person who is transgender.

7. Decisions

If the policy will have a negative impact on members of one or more of the protected groups, explain how the policy will change or why it is to continue in the same way.

If no changes are proposed, the policy needs to be objectively justified.

The policy may have an adverse impact on people who have difficulty understanding the warning that is given before a Taser is used. The training provided to all officers with an increased emphasis on communication reduces the impact. Therefore the policy will be adopted.

8. Monitoring arrangements

If the policy is new what consideration has been given to piloting the policy?
If monitoring is not already in place what arrangements have been made to monitor the effects of the policy on equality and diversity?

The policy is not new and no piloting is necessary. However, monitoring of the actual use of Taser is continuous and all discharges are automatically reported to the IPCC for their information regardless of whether any complaints in its use are made.

This equality impact assessment will be published on the force website.

EIA Form Dated
09/03/2012