



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

# ELECTRONIC DEFENSE WEAPON ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS, 2016

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A Study by the  
Institute for Municipal & Regional Policy (IMRP)

CENTRAL CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

The Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2014, in an effort to increase transparency and better understand taser<sup>1</sup> use, the Connecticut General Assembly passed Public Act 14-149, *“An Act Concerning the Use of Electronic Defense Weapons by Police Officers.”* The act directed the Police Officer Standards and Training Council (“POSTC”) to develop a model policy for regulating the use of tasers. It requires that every police department adopt and maintain a taser policy that meets or exceeds the standards set by the POSTC model. The law also requires (1) police officers to document each incident in which a taser was used and (2) those law enforcement agencies authorizing such use to report all incidents to the Office of Policy and Management (OPM), Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division, by January 15 of the following year.

The Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy (IMRP), at Central Connecticut State University, was tasked by the Office of Policy and Management’s Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division with compiling and analyzing the reported taser data for 2016.

The findings and recommendations in this report are based on analysis of the data submitted by 80 police departments in 2016. This was the second year in which data on taser use had been collected in Connecticut. Based on numerous factors, IMRP researchers believe the submitted data is not indicative of the total incident reports required by PA 14-149. Therefore, while the descriptive statistics presented in this report raise many questions as to how, when, why, and on whom reported taser usage occurs within law enforcement agencies, they cannot be construed to conclusively establish what is happening with respect to all law enforcement taser use in Connecticut. Thus, based on reported data for 2016 taser incidents, findings should be interpreted with caution.

## E.1A: FINDINGS FROM THE 2016 ANALYSIS

Police officers and citizens interact continuously every day throughout the United States. In 1999, the Bureau of Justice Statistics reported that police use of force against a person is statistically rare, occurring in approximately one-percent of all police-citizen encounters. The total number of nationwide taser deployments is not known. Connecticut is the first state to require comprehensive, statewide data collection with respect to taser use.

On average there are approximately 100,000 arrests in Connecticut each year<sup>2</sup>. In 2016, there were approximately 560,000 traffic stops, as well as an unknown number of other types of police-citizen encounters. The Connecticut State Police and 91 municipal police departments authorize officers to carry tasers. Sixty-four departments reported at least one taser deployment in 2016. IMRP received 575 electronic defense weapon (EDW) reports documenting taser incidents involving 542 people.

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<sup>1</sup> TASER International Inc., is a leading manufacturer of electronic control weapons. The weapon is colloquially referred to as a “taser,” but goes by many names including Electronic Defense Weapon (EDW), Conducted Electronic Weapon (CEW) or Electronic Control Weapon (ECW). Since virtually all law enforcement agencies in Connecticut use weapons produced by TASER International Inc., this report will refer to this weapon as a “taser,” regardless of make or model.

<sup>2</sup> 2016 is the most recent year that arrest data is available for the State of Connecticut.

**Less than one percent** (0.08%) of the approximately 660,000 arrest and traffic stop incidents in Connecticut in 2016 involved the use of tasers by police officers. This percentage may be even lower if the total number of statewide police-citizen encounters, including calls for service, were included.

However, ***the use of tasers by police appears to be under-reported***. Many police departments did not report all uses of a taser. Much of the underreporting appears to have involved incidents in which the taser was used in laser-sight or warning arc mode without delivering an electric shock. For example, the two largest police departments (Connecticut State Police [CSP] and Hartford) reported almost no taser incidents in which the taser was arced or laser-sighted, but no one was tased.<sup>3</sup> It seems improbable that only one officer from either department sighted or arced a taser in 2016. Several of the largest departments told IMRP researchers that they had been unaware of the requirement to report all activation of tasers, not just incidents in which a person was tased.

***Females were much less likely to be involved in a taser incident than males.*** The vast majority (93%) of persons involved in taser incident were male.

***Minority persons account for 56 percent of all taser incidents; white persons account for 44 percent.***

***Thirty-seven persons under the age of 18 were involved in a taser incident.*** Thirteen of them were tased, of whom, eight were black, two were white, and three were Hispanic. Six of the 13 youth tased were reported as emotionally disturbed or suicidal.

Of the 542 people involved in taser incidents, 300 (55%) received an electric shock. ***Of the males involved in taser incidents, white males received an electric shock 56 percent of the time, Hispanic males were shocked 53 percent of the time and black males were shocked 56 percent of the time.***

***The majority (80%) of persons involved in a reported taser incident were unarmed. Black persons were less likely than whites and Hispanics to be armed.*** Of the armed persons, officers only indicated that 33 percent threatened to use the weapon. More than 39 percent of armed people tased were identified as suicidal. About 20 percent of white males were armed, compared to 22 percent of Hispanic males, and 16 percent of black males.

***More than one-third (38%) of persons involved in reported taser incidents were described as “emotionally disturbed.”*** Persons described as “emotionally disturbed” were somewhat more likely to be tased than persons who were not so described.

Furthermore, ***11 percent of reported taser incidents involved persons described as “suicidal.”*** Persons described as “suicidal” were much more likely than non-suicidal persons to be armed. Armed persons were more likely to be tased if they were suicidal than if they were not.

***Nearly half of all persons involved in reported taser incidents (44%) were identified as “under the influence of alcohol/drugs” or “possibly intoxicated.”*** Unfortunately, the EDW report provides little contextual information by which to better assess this finding.

***Of 300 persons who were tased, more than 55 percent reportedly received only one electric shock and about 45 percent received multiple shocks.*** Hispanic males who were tased were more likely

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<sup>3</sup> Of 21 persons involved in taser incidents reported by Hartford, 100% were tased. Of 42 persons involved in taser incidents reported by CSP, 39 persons were tased.

to be shocked multiple times, whereas black males who were tased were less likely to be shocked more than once.

## **E.1B: RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **1. Improve data collection form**

A consistent finding throughout this report is that the available data on taser use does not or is inadequate in meeting the data requirements specified in Public Act 14-149 and by the POSTC model policy. Although these data raise many more questions than they answer, some of those questions could be answered with more consistent reporting practices and more comprehensive data collection. Improved reporting and data collection could yield meaningful evidence to inform public policy with respect to tasers and possibly other uses of force. With more comprehensive data collection and more complete, consistent and accurate reporting, stronger conclusions could be drawn about cross-departmental differences in taser practices and about the relationship between departmental policy and reported taser practice.

To allow for more accurate and consistent analysis of taser data, it is recommended that the existing taser data form be amended to include the following:

- whether the tased person was arrested and the charges filed,
- physical condition of the person upon the officer's arrival and after taser deployment,
- whether the tased person was transported to a hospital, and
- a supervisor's determination of justification on each deployment.

### **2. Clarify reporting practices**

It appears that departments differ in their understanding of the law's reporting requirements. For example, some departments completed EDW reports in real time, on the day of the incident or immediately afterward, while others completed all their EDW reports at the end of the year, close to the statutory deadline. Some departments reported incidents that were not required under the POSTC policy (i.e., incidents in which the taser was un-holstered but not activated), while other departments told researchers that they had not realized that the POSTC policy required reporting incidents of arcing or laser-sight activation when no one was tased. Furthermore, some departments completed EDW forms without recording the number and duration of each electric shock.

It is recommended that POSTC clarify the following with respect to departments' reporting obligations:

- EDW reports must be completed at the same time as use-of-force and case incident reports;
- reporting the number and duration of electric shocks is mandatory; and
- reporting arcing and laser-sight activations is mandatory, while reporting of un-holstering without activation is not required.

### **3. Collect use-of-force and case incident reports for all taser incidents**

Two other documents required by law include data that could yield more meaningful results with respect to every use of force: the use-of-force report and the case incident report. Departments should be required to submit, along with the taser form, all use-of-force forms and case incident

reports from every incident in which a taser was activated in laser sight, warning arc, drive-stun or cartridge (prong) mode. In some circumstances, state law and department policy do not require the use-of-force form when activating the taser in laser sight or warning arc mode. In such incidents, case incident reports should be submitted along with the EDW form.

Additional research is also recommended in four preliminary areas that consider:

- Where on the standard use-of-force continuum—in both policy and practice—are tasers and other less-lethal weapons positioned?
- The relationship between departmental policy and practice with respect to taser use and the use of other kinds of less-lethal force.
- The medical, behavioral and situational factors associated with serious injuries or fatalities in reported taser incidents.
- Whether the use of tasers reduces injuries to police and other persons during police-citizen encounters. If so, how and in what circumstances? How the results of taser incidents compare to the results of similar incidents involving the use of other less-lethal weapons, or of no force at all.

This research should review any variations across departments with respect to policy, use and reporting of taser use. Continued research may encourage and support improved routine data collection to inform public policy. Researchers and police departments should collaborate to examine the research findings. In particular, police departments may wish to use results to improve policies, training and protocols on taser use.

#### **4. Additional research on persons experiencing psychiatric crisis**

The manufacturer of the taser, TASER International, cautions that taser use may be ineffective against persons who are intoxicated or experiencing psychiatric crisis. Medical research also suggests that taser use against such persons may pose a heightened risk of injury. At the same time, circumstances may exist in which a taser (or other use of force) is the most appropriate option to control persons experiencing psychiatric crisis and getting them into treatment. Further research is required into the circumstances taser use might be appropriate in response to persons experiencing psychiatric crisis. Research on the following questions might aid the development of evidence-based policy with respect to the use of tasers and other physical force against persons experiencing psychiatric crisis:

- What are best practices with respect to an emergency medical response to persons experiencing apparent psychiatric crisis?
- In which circumstances might taser use on persons experiencing psychiatric crisis pose particular health risks? In which circumstances might taser use be a safe option for the officer, a person in crisis, and other persons involved?

#### **5. Collect data on other use-of-force incidents**

This data collection effort did not include information on other police-citizen encounters in which less-lethal force was used. As a result, the collection of data on taser incidents cannot be compared to other incidents involving less-lethal force, or to incidents resolved without use of force. We recommend that in all cases in which force is used, use-of-force and incident reports be submitted to the state to increase transparency and improve the analyses of all these circumstances.



## **6. Review intent and implementation of model policy as mandated by PA 14-149**

POSTC complied with Public Act 14-149 by adopting a model policy on the use of tasers. Although the law does not specify any required content for the POSTC model policy, the adopted policy does not incorporate several guidelines recommended by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), or TASER International, Inc. The policy also does not establish guidelines on criteria that would “meet or exceed” the model policy standards. An enforcement mechanism for the requirement that departments adopt a conforming policy is not specified.

Presumably, the intent of the law was to determine best practices for taser usage in Connecticut, and to have those standards uniformly promulgated throughout law enforcement agencies. As such, policymakers may want to revisit the law’s specifications for the model policy mandate and make this policy with respect to POSTC subject to review and approval under the Uniform Administrative Procedure Act (Chapter 54 of the Connecticut General Statutes).

## **7. Review additional department policies regarding use-of-force**

Police departments maintain policies on the use-of-force continuum and the use of less-lethal weapons. These policies may address dealing with emotionally disturbed, mentally ill or disabled persons; handling suicidal persons; and other issues that impact an officer’s decision to deploy a taser. The departments also maintain policies and curriculum for pre- and in-service officer training in the use of tasers and other less-lethal weapons; communication skills; de-escalation techniques; understanding and communicating with disturbed, disabled, suicidal or other persons in distress; and tactical training exercises. None of these policies were reviewed in the course of this study. To conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the adequacy and effectiveness of the POSTC model policy and departmental policies, all policies pertaining to and impacting the use of tasers should be reviewed to determine how they balance public safety, the safety of suspects, and the safety of police officers. Alternatively, police departments could prepare and submit an annotated version of their taser policy that explicitly cross-references rules and situations that may be covered under other departmental policies.

# INTRODUCTION

During the past four decades, new technologies have emerged that offer the promise of more effective police control over resistant and noncompliant persons with fewer or less serious injuries to the officers and the civilians involved. Electronic control devices have been available to the police since the 1970s, but in the past 10 years have come into widespread use.

TASER<sup>4</sup> International Inc., is a leading manufacturer of electronic control weapons. The weapon is colloquially referred to as a “taser,” but goes by many names including Electronic Defense Weapon (EDW), Conducted Electronic Weapon (CEW) or Electronic Control Weapon (ECW). Since virtually all law enforcement agencies in Connecticut use weapons produced by TASER International Inc., this report will refer to this weapon as a “taser,” regardless of make or model.

Tasers are considered a less-lethal option that can allow officers to de-escalate aggressive or noncompliant individuals and reduce the risk of injury to officers, individuals and bystanders. In a 2010 analysis of use of force, the CSP Office of Professional Standards, described the taser as a “low-level use of force option that allows a trooper to bring a subject under control with minimal effort and hence minimal risk to both the subject and the trooper.” CSP noted an “inverse trend” from 2007 through 2009 by which the introduction of the taser tended to displace “other force options including pepper spray.” It noted that, “[i]n all cases of taser deployment, some form of hands on techniques would have been reasonable and justified, but may have lead [*sic*] to injury to the subject, trooper or both.”

Tasers are intended to be less-lethal weapons and are not designed to kill. Nonetheless, deaths have been reported among people who have been tased. Persons who are injured, intoxicated, under the influence of drugs, have pre-existing heart conditions or are tased multiple times appear to be at heightened risk of death or serious injury. National estimates of the number of taser-associated deaths vary: the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) reported more than 200 Americans have died after being shocked by tasers, while the American Civil Liberties Union reports that, since the early 2000s, more than 500 persons have died after being tased. The rate of death or serious injury per taser use cannot be known because there are no national estimates of the number of taser deployments. In Connecticut, 14 persons have reportedly died after being tased as of January 1, 2016 since the introduction of tasers in 2005. Some of those who died were reported to be otherwise healthy adults, while others were under the influence of drugs or had physical or mental illnesses. These deaths have raised questions about whether, when and how tasers can be safely used.

In an effort to increase transparency and better understand taser use, the Connecticut General Assembly passed Public Act 14-149, “*An Act Concerning the Use of Electronic Defense Weapons by Police Officers.*” PA 14-149 directed the Police Officer Standards and Training Council (“POSTC”) to draft and distribute a model policy for regulating the use of tasers. This law also requires that every police department adopt and maintain a taser policy that meets or exceeds the standard set by the POSTC model policy. The new law also requires police officers to document each incident in which a

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<sup>4</sup> TASER is a trade name and an acronym. The letters stand for “Thomas A. Swift’s Electric Rifle”. Tom Swift was the science whiz hero of a series of novels written for young people in the 1940s and 1950s.

taser was used and report all incidents to the Office of Policy and Management (OPM), Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division, by January 15 of the following year.

The potential value of data collection was also emphasized in the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) 2011 Electronic Control Weapon (taser) Guidelines. PERF guidelines suggest that, given the recent increase of taser use and their relative newness as a tool for officers, data collection can allow for cross-departmental comparisons and to identify officers who may use tasers at an increased rate or in a discriminatory or improper fashion.

The Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy (IMRP), at Central Connecticut State University, was tasked with compiling and analyzing the reported taser data for 2016. This report presents the analysis and findings from the second year of reported data.

## SECTION I: DESCRIPTION OF A TASER

This section provides a description of the taser and information about how tasers work and when they can be used.

### I.A: WHAT IS A TASER?

Connecticut law (CGS § 53a-3(20)) defines an “electronic defense weapon” as “a weapon which by electronic impulse or current is capable of immobilizing a person temporarily, but is not capable of inflicting death or serious physical injury.” The weapon’s purpose is to subdue a person to obtain compliance with an officer’s directives by administering electric shock that disrupts superficial muscle functions or causes pain without significantly harming the person.

Electronic defense weapons take many forms and serve many functions. Stun guns, batons (or prods), and belts can administer electric shock by direct contact. Long-range electroshock projectiles, which can be fired from ordinary shotguns and do not need the wires, have been developed as well. The firearm-style electronic defense weapons commonly described as tasers are the weapons most commonly issued by Connecticut police departments to their officers. Tasers fire projectiles that can administer a shock by firing two sharp prongs (also called darts) attached to thin, flexible wires up to 25 feet long. The prongs are designed to pierce the subject’s skin or clothing and lodge in muscle tissue. If both prongs pierce the subject’s skin, the taser can deliver an electric shock, the duration of which is controlled by the officer operating the firearm.

**Figure 1.0: Common Taser Used in Connecticut**



TASER International, Inc., based in Scottsdale, Arizona, is an American developer, manufacturer, and distributor of electronic control weapons. Figure 1.0 shows the most common taser design used in Connecticut. Most tasers have bright yellow markings to differentiate them from firearms.

First generation stun devices were originally designed, much like a cattle prod, to inflict severely unpleasant sensations without imposing a loss of muscle control. This was a pain-compliance tool: it is designed to administer a shock so painful that the person would comply with the police officer. The stun devices proved to be

ineffective against persons who, because they were under the influence of alcohol or drugs or for

other reasons, had unpredictably high pain thresholds that allowed them to continue physical resistance in spite of the painful shock.

In 2001, TASER International, Inc. developed its “Advanced Taser Electro-Muscular Disruption” systems, which introduced the modern version of tasers with a stronger charge that reached and synchronized with the activity of motor nerves lodged deep in muscle tissue. With 50 to 60 pulses per second, the newer tasers induced sustained muscle contractions, rigidity and spasms. Persons who are tased are rendered physically immobile for the duration of the electric shock.

## **I.B: HOW DOES A TASER WORK?**

The most common deployment mode, cartridge deployment mode as described above, fires two electrodes (darts) tethered to long, insulated wires into a person’s skin or clothing in order to create an electrical circuit. Tasers can shoot a person from approximately 15 to 20 feet away. When the officer presses the trigger to fire the taser, the darts are projected at a speed of 180 feet per second. An electrical signal transmits through the region where the probes make contact with the skin or clothing.

Once the electrodes hit a person, the taser sends a pulse with about 50,000 volts and a few milliamps. By the time it comes in contact with the person’s body, the charge is usually diminished to about 1,800 volts. In comparison, the electrical shock delivered by a household electrical outlet delivers about 150 volts and a defibrillator delivers 450 to 750 volts.

On its standard setting, the pulse cycles for five seconds before shutting off, but the pulse continues for as long as the trigger is depressed. The five-second shock sends signals through the person’s nervous system causing considerable pain and triggers muscle contractions resulting in temporary paralysis. The weapon is intended to ensure that the nervous system does not recover instantly allowing the subject to remove the probes.

A taser can also be used in what is called drive-stun mode. This causes more localized pain and less widespread muscle contraction. Different models have different lengths of cycles. Newer models allow for longer cycles than the older models.

The basic idea of a taser is to disrupt the body’s communication system. The charge is designed not to be intense enough to damage the person’s body unless it is applied for an extended period of time. The charge (about three milliamps) interrupts the normal electrical signal from the person’s brain to his or her muscles, mixing it with “noise” caused by the taser. Because the brain signals cannot reach the muscles, the person temporarily becomes partially paralyzed. A person may also become confused and unbalanced and fall down, which is why it is used to subdue persons in police altercations.

Since there are muscles and nerves all over the body, the taser’s effectiveness does not vary according to where on the body a person is hit. The taser’s effectiveness varies depending on the weapon model and a person’s body size pain threshold. In general, a shock of a half second duration issues a painful jolt that will startle a person. A current lasting for one or two seconds causes muscle spasms and the person will become dazed. A current of three seconds or more will render the person unbalanced and disoriented and the person may lose muscle control and fall down. There are persons with certain physiological or medical conditions who may not be incapacitated despite any length of shock.

TASER International Inc. warns that the weapon may cause breathing problems, skin irritation, small puncture wounds or minor burns. It also reports that the violent muscle contractions can result in “athletic-type injuries.”

### **I.C: HOW CAN A TASER BE USED?**

Police officers can use a taser in a variety of ways allowing for a graduated use of the weapon based on the person’s noncompliance or the situational threat posed. An officer can warn a person of potential use of the weapon by simply removing it from the holster.

The taser can be arced or the laser pointed. Arcing refers to display of an electrical arc without discharging the probes or delivering any electric shock (spark test). Laser pointing refers to activation of the taser’s laser sights to warn a person that the taser is trained on him or her. A threat to use the taser may suffice to get a person to comply with the officer’s directions.

### **I.D: WHEN CAN A TASER BE USED?**

The use of a taser, like any other less-lethal or lethal weapon, is regulated by departmental policies and by federal and state law.

#### **Departmental Policies: The Use-of-Force Continuum**

Police officers are instructed through training about when the use of a taser is appropriate. In many departments, this training involves tasing the trainees so that officers may experience the pain and paralysis.

Tasers are used to subdue a subject who is noncompliant or may pose a threat to the officer or others. Types of resistance can be categorized as follows:

- **Verbal Resistance:** a person is disregarding police commands and being verbally combative, but has not physically challenged the officer.
- **Passive Resistance:** a person is resisting an officer’s control by going limp (“dead weight”) or refusing to move from their position or location.
- **Defensive Resistance:** a person is resisting the officer’s physical control efforts by pulling away from officers, moving or spreading their arms apart as officers attempt to apply handcuffs, or any other action aimed to defeat the officer’s physical control such as spitting or fleeing. This type of resistance does not involve physical aggression against the officer.
- **Offensive Resistance:** a person is actively assaulting an officer by punching, slapping, kicking, biting, attempting takedowns, or employing a weapon generally understood to lack lethal force capability.
- **Lethal Resistance:** a person is offering resistance that constitutes an imminent deadly threat to the officer, others or himself. This obviously includes showing a weapon like a gun or a knife, but can also include physical attack or ambush.

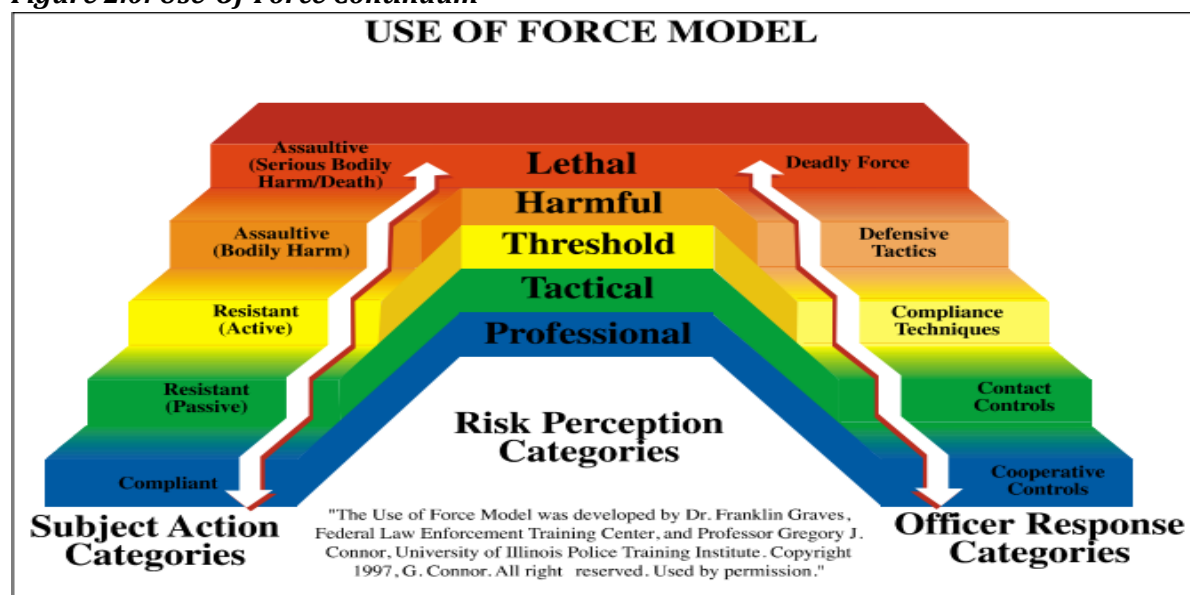
Police officers are trained in the use-of-force continuum, which is a standard that provides police officers with guidelines as to how much force may be used against a resisting or noncompliant person in a given situation. The purpose of this continuum is to clarify, both for the officers and community, the complex subject of use of force. There is no universal or standard model of the use-of-force

continuum and, in theory, each state, law enforcement agency, and community determines how it will be policed.

There are, however, central components of the use-of-force continuum. First developed in the 1980s and early 1990s, the use-of-force continuum model is often depicted in a "stair step" fashion. Each level of resistance is matched by a corresponding level of force by the officer. It is generally noted that an officer need not progress through each level before reaching the highest level of force. The progression rests on the premise that an officer should escalate and de-escalate his or her level of force in response to the subject's actions, which can be erratic, spontaneous, and influenced by the crowd, location, and situation.

Figure 2.0 is a depiction of the continuum developed by Dr. Franklin Graves and Professor Gregory J. Connor in 1997. The following are the most common "steps" in the use-of-force continuum:

**Figure 2.0: Use-Of-Force Continuum**



- **Officer presence:** set by the professionalism, uniform, and utility belt of the police officer and the marked patrol vehicle the officer arrives in. The visual presence of authority is normally enough for a person to comply with an officer's lawful demands. Depending on the totality of the circumstances, a situation may require additional officers or on scene officers may request assistance to gain better control of the situation and ensure a safer environment for all involved. In some models, the officer's taser or firearm un-holstered and pointed at a person may be categorized as officer presence.
- **Verbal commands/cooperative controls:** officers are trained to give clear, direct, and understandable verbal commands. In some cases, it is necessary for the officer to include a consequence to the verbal direction so that the person understands what will happen if he or she refuses to comply with the command. The verbal command and the consequence must be lawful and not considered excessive according to the continuum.
- **Empty-hand submission techniques:** commonly referred to as Pressure Point Control Tactics (PPCT). These tactical techniques are a level of force that has a low probability of causing soft connective tissue damage or bone fractures. This would include joint

manipulation techniques, applying pressure to pressure points and normal application of hand-cuffs.

- **Hard control techniques/Aggressive response techniques:** these tactical techniques use an amount of force that has a probability of causing soft connective tissue damage or bone fractures or irritation of the skin, eyes, and mucus membranes. This includes kicks, punches, taser drive-stuns, and use of aerosol sprays such as oleoresin capsicum (pepper spray).
- **Intermediate weapons:** use of an amount of force that would have a high probability of causing soft connective tissue damage or bone fractures. (e.g., expandable baton, wood baton, pepper spray, taser deployment, beanbag rounds, rubber fin stabilized ammunition, Mace (spray), police dogs, etc.). Intermediate weapon techniques are designed to impact muscles, arms and legs, and intentionally using an intermediate weapon on the head, neck, groin, knee caps, or spine would be classified as deadly or lethal force.
- **Lethal force/Deadly force:** force with a high probability of causing death or serious bodily injury. Serious bodily injury includes unconsciousness, protracted or obvious physical disfigurement, or protracted loss of or impairment to the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty. A firearm is the most widely recognized lethal or deadly force weapon; however, an automobile or weapon of opportunity could also be defined as a deadly force utility. Use of lethal force is guided by state and federal laws and case law.

Recognizing that every person and situation is different and has the potential to quickly become dangerous and that each officer's skills are different, it is impossible to determine in advance all the circumstances in which a taser may or may not be used. Police may respond with a level of force necessary to achieve compliance or to prevail over an attacker. It is not intended to be a fair fight; the police are supposed to win. Thus, police are generally allowed to use one level of force higher than the noncompliant person (referred to as the One Plus Rule).

Generally, police officers may deploy tasers in situations where they would otherwise resort to physical tactics and restraints (such as take downs) or empty hand/pain and submission compliance techniques. Tasers may also have replaced other forms of less-lethal weapons such as chemical agents (pepper spray) and baton. Some departments situate taser use at the same level as other impact weapons like a baton.

In a 2010 survey of 346 police departments in the United States and Canada, the Police Executive Research Forum found:

The placement of ECWs on the use-of-force continuum varied somewhat among agencies. Most placed ECWs in the intermediate range on the continuum, either equal to or just below chemical incapacitants, chemical/kinetic hybrids, and strikes/batons. Only a few agencies had ECWs directly beneath deadly force. At the low end of the force spectrum, only a few agencies had ECWs equal to control holds. A significant majority allowed the ECW to be used when officers encountered active resistance (80%) or aggressive resistance (91%). A much lower number of agencies (7%) allowed the use of an ECW when an officer encountered passive resistance—a use that the 2005 guidelines recommended against, as do the new 2011 guidelines contained in this report.



## Use of Force: Legal and Constitutional Rules

Taser use, like all other kinds of force, is governed by constitutional principles regulating the use of force more generally. The use of force by an officer is constitutional if it is objectively “reasonable” under the standard set by, among other cases, the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in *Graham v. Connor*.<sup>5</sup> To determine whether a use of force was objectively reasonable, a court must balance the intrusion on the individual’s Fourth Amendment interests, that is, the severity of the force used, against the government interests at stake in the circumstances. This balance requires:

careful attention to the facts and circumstances of each case, including the severity of the crime at issue, whether the suspect poses an immediate threat to the safety of the officers or others, and whether he is actively resisting or attempting to evade arrest by flight.” The court must judge the reasonableness of a particular use of force “from the perspective of a reasonable officer on the scene, rather than with the 20/20 vision of hindsight. ... [allowing] for the fact that police officers are often forced to make split-second judgments—in circumstances that are tense, uncertain, and rapidly evolving—about the amount of force necessary in a particular situation.

Even if an officer’s use of force is unreasonable and violates the Fourth Amendment, the officer may enjoy “qualified immunity”— exemption from liability for violating the constitutional right—if the right was not “clearly established” at the time of the incident,<sup>6</sup> or if “officers of reasonable competence could disagree” as to whether the use of force was legal at the time.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> 490 U.S. 386 (1989).

<sup>6</sup> *Saucier v. Katz*, 533 U.S. 194 (2001).

<sup>7</sup> *Walczyk v. Rio*, 496 F.3d 139, 154 (2d Cir. 2007).

## SECTION II: STATE LAW REGULATING TASERS

This section provides an overview of Connecticut laws that regulate the use of tasers.

Connecticut General Statute § 53a-22 provides that an officer's use of physical force is justified where the officer reasonably believes it is necessary to:

- make an arrest of a person the officer reasonably believes to have committed an offense;
- prevent the escape from custody of a person the officer reasonably believes to have committed an offense; or
- defend him- or herself, or a third person, from the use or imminent use of physical force while attempting to make an arrest or prevent an escape.

State law (Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-206) authorizes police officers to carry dangerous weapons, including electronic control weapons.

The Connecticut legislature has paid special attention to tasers in a number of statutes. Tasers are included in the list of dangerous weapons that citizens are prohibited from carrying on their person and in their vehicles (Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-206 and § 29-38). The threatened use or use of a taser in the commission of a felony is a class D felony crime (Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-216) and the state's criminal possession of a firearm law includes tasers (Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-217).

As described above, Public Act No. 14-149, *An Act Concerning the Use of Electronic Defense Weapons by Police Officers*, introduced new requirements regarding police departments' use of tasers. It directs the POSTC to draft and distribute a model policy for regulating the use of tasers (Conn. Gen. Stat. § 7-294cc). The law (Conn. Gen. Stat. § 54-1t) also requires that every police department adopt and maintain a taser policy that "meets or exceeds the model policy developed by the [POSTC]," unless the department does not authorize its officers to use tasers. All such policies were to be adopted by January 31, 2015. And it requires police officers to document each incident in which a taser was used. Police departments must report annually on all incidents in which a taser was deployed, and submit these taser reports to OPM, by January 15 of the following year.

To standardize the reporting, POSTC was required to develop a taser incident reporting form to be used by all police departments that authorize their officers to use tasers. Appendix A contains a copy of the form (the "EDW Report"). The statute requires that the EDW Report include:

- data downloads from the taser;
- data from use-of-force reports;
- the model of the taser used;
- the number of times the taser was activated and used on a person;
- the race and gender of the subject based on the perception of the police officer; and
- a description of any injury to the subject.

Lastly, police departments that do not issue tasers to their officers must file a yearly report with OPM saying so.

## **SECTION III: CONNECTICUT MODEL POLICY ON TASER USE**

Law enforcement administrators, policy and research organizations, and proponents and opponents of the use of tasers appear to be in strong agreement that every agency should promulgate a comprehensive policy governing the use of tasers by officers. In 2011, the Department of Justice Community Oriented Policing Services Division (COPS) and the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) worked together to develop guidelines for the use of electronic control weapons. They recommended that each department's taser policy be consistent with the department's use-of-force policy, which provides police officers with a clearly defined set of rules and guidance to follow when encountering a person. Use-of-force policies address the actions of the people involved, the officer's perception of the situation, and the available types of officer responses. As previously stated, use of force policies frequently refer to the use-of-force continuum, which serves as a visual tool to help explain the application of the use-of-force policy.

PERF and COPS further recommend that the departmental taser policy should provide specific information as to the placement of the weapon on the use-of-force continuum. The policy should require that a report be submitted each time a taser is used and describe the nature of its deployment. Finally, PERF and COPS agree that departmental taser training must be address the operation of the taser, its capabilities and potential deployment effects, and the circumstances in which its use may or not be necessary, advisable, appropriate, or permissible.

The 2011 PERF and COPS guidelines recommend that departmental policies should address at least the following six areas: (1) the weapon as a deadly force alternative; (2) placement of the weapon on a use of force continuum; (3) deployment and reactivation of the taser; (4) control of a tased person; (5) taser positioning (it is recommended officers carry the weapon in reverse holster position); and (6) training for medical personnel.

### **III.A: MANUFACTURER RECOMMENDATIONS**

TASER International Inc. does not establish binding rules with respect to the use of the taser. It acknowledges that each department is responsible for creating its own use-of-force policy and for determining how TASER devices fit into that policy based on legal and community standards. Nonetheless, its guidelines may illuminate the capabilities of the taser, its intended uses, and risks associated with its deployment. TASER International recommends that officers:

- receive training before using a taser;
- follow manufacturer instructions on use of tasers to reduce the risk of death or serious injury to the user, subject or others; and
- follow all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations.

The TASER International Warnings, Instructions and Information pamphlet (March 1, 2013) for police officers states that tasers can cause physiological and/or metabolic effects that may increase the risk of death or serious injury, and that some persons may be particularly susceptible to the effects of a taser. These persons include the elderly, those with heart conditions, asthma or other pulmonary conditions, persons suffering from excited delirium, profound agitation, severe

exhaustion, drug intoxication or chronic drug abuse, over-exertion from physical struggle, or other physiological or metabolic changes. Using a taser on a person suffering from any of these conditions may cause or contribute to sudden death. Other high risk populations, it states, include pregnant women, persons with low body-mass index and small children.

Taser use, anticipation of use or response to use of a taser can cause startle, panic, fear, anger, rage, temporary discomfort, pain or stress which may be injurious or fatal to some persons. To reduce the risk from a taser, TASER International recommends officers:

- minimize the number and duration of taser exposures;
- avoid simultaneous taser exposures by different officers;
- control and restrain a tased person immediately;
- avoid touching probes and wires during taser deployment;
- avoid tasing a person who is:
  - on an elevated or unstable surface;
  - handcuffed, restrained, incapacitated or immobilized;
  - under the influence of alcohol, drugs or certain medications;
  - running, in motion, or moving under momentum;
  - operating or riding any mode of transportation (e.g., car, bus, bicycle, motorcycle, train);
  - located in water, mud, marsh; or
  - could fall and suffer impact injury to the head or other area or fall on a sharp object.

TASER International guidelines state that the drive-stun mode is for pain compliance only. The drive-stun mode does not cause incapacitation and may not be effective on emotionally disturbed persons or others who may not respond to pain due to mind-body disconnect. It recommends that officers avoid using repeated drive-stuns if compliance is not achieved.

TASER International identifies the preferred target areas as below the neck area from behind or the lower center mass (below the chest) for front shots. The preferred target areas increase dart-to-heart distance and reduce cardiac risks compared to tasing in the chest. Back shots are preferable to front shots when practicable. It also recommends that officers avoid intentionally targeting the sensitive areas of the body such as the face, eyes, head, throat, chest area (around the heart), breasts, groin and genitals, or known areas of pre-existing injury.

TASER offers a series of training courses including: Smart Use Considerations and Tactical Considerations as well as an Instructor and Master Instructor Courses.

### **III.B: POLICE OFFICERS STANDARDS AND TRAINING COUNCIL MODEL POLICY**

As required, the Connecticut Police Officers Standards and Training Council adopted a model policy on the use of tasers by police officers. POSTC practices and processes to develop law enforcement policies are not evaluated in this report. The POSTC model policy does address many areas recommended by best practices and existing research.

The POSTC policy addresses how and when a taser can and cannot be used (deployment), how to treat a person who has been tased (medical treatment), reporting taser incidents and other aspects such as how a police officer should wear a taser on a duty belt (taser positioning). The POSTC policy

requires all officers to have access to their department's written policy and to be trained to comply with the policy before being authorized to carry a taser. A copy of the POSTC model policy on taser use is in Appendix A.

### **III.B (1): Deployment**

The POSTC policy specifically requires that police officers should:

- give loud and clear warnings prior to using a taser;
- deploy a taser the least number of times and for no longer than necessary to accomplish a legitimate operational objective;
- secure a tased person as quickly as possible to reduce the need for repeated use of the taser; and
- in considering the need for subsequent deployments, consider that a person may not be able to respond to commands during or immediately after being tased.

The POSTC policy prohibits an officer from deploying a taser:

- in a punitive or coercive manner;
- on a subject demonstrating only passive resistance (which can be a reference to a use-of-force continuum);
- in any environment where potentially flammable, volatile, or explosive material is present (including but not limited to pepper spray with volatile propellant, gasoline, natural gas, or propane); or
- where it is likely that the subject may drown or fall from an elevated area.

While the policy prohibits officers from using a taser in a punitive or coercive manner, the policy does allow officers to use a taser in the drive-stun mode. POSTC acknowledges that drive stun-mode is a pain compliance tool, is minimally effective compared to a conventional cartridge deployment, and is more likely than a cartridge deployment to leave a mark on a person's skin.

The policy also establishes guidelines, but many of them stop short of setting standards that allow for or prohibit the use of a taser. For example, the POSTC policy notes that certain persons, such as those of small stature or those who the officer has reason to believe are pregnant, equipped with a pacemaker, are infirm, or are in obvious ill health, may be more susceptible to injury if tased, but does not set offer instructions about taser use in such circumstances.

### **III.B (2): Medical Attention**

The POSTC policy requires that an officer must offer medical attention and assistance to any person who is tased, though that person may decline. It also mandates that every person who is tased "shall be evaluated by qualified medical personnel." Such personnel include health care providers, emergency medical personnel, and police officers with Emergency Medical Responder certification. An officer must request medical dispatch for any "obvious" injury or where it is "otherwise prudent" to do so. Finally, the POSTC policy requires that a person who has been tased be taken to hospital if he or she has been shocked more than once, received a continuous energy cycle of 15 seconds or more, or exhibits any of the following symptoms or behaviors:

- loss of consciousness;
- irregular breathing;

- is known to be under the influence of drugs or medications;
- is naked in public or exhibits signs of overheating;
- evidences slurring or slowness of speech;
- does not appear to recover properly after being tased;
- shows signs of extreme uncontrolled agitation or hyper activity prior to being tased;
- exhibits bizarre or violent behavior including self-mutilation;
- claims to be injured or in medical distress;
- was hit by a probe in a sensitive area of the body including face, head, female breasts, male groin, etc.; or
- is in a potentially susceptible population category, including persons of small stature irrespective of age, the infirm, or those whom the officer has reason to believe are pregnant, equipped with a pacemaker, or in obvious ill health.

Only a medical professional may remove probes from a person's body. However, a police officer who has been POSTC-certified or has been authorized by a medical professional may remove the probes.

### **III.B (3): Reporting**

POSTC policy provides that the officer deploying a taser "should ... request" a supervisor respond to the scene "as soon as reasonably possible." The supervisor must assess whether the taser was deployed appropriately.

The POSTC policy requires that departments mandate completion of a use-of-force report on each incident in which a taser is "deployed," that is, activated in arc, laser-sight, cartridge or drive-stun mode. In accordance with Public Act 14-149, EDW reports must be submitted to OPM by January 15 of the following year.

### **III.C: COMPLIANCE WITH POSTC POLICY**

Only six departments (Groton Long Point, Old Saybrook, State Capitol Police, Supreme Court Police, University of New Haven, and Western Connecticut State University) reported that they did not authorize their officers to use tasers in 2016. Every other police department that authorizes its officers to use tasers has complied with the statutory mandate to adopt and maintain a written policy. It is less clear, however, whether all departmental policies "meet or exceed" the requirements set by the POSTC policy, as the law requires.

In 2016, the IMRP was able to examine most departmental policies, but since the POSTC policy sets few distinct mandates or prohibitions on when taser use may or may not be permissible, it is not always clear whether a departmental policy meets or exceeds the model policy. It is also possible that aspects of the POSTC policy may be incorporated in departmental policies other than the policy regarding taser use. Researchers only had access to departmental taser policies and therefore could not determine if the missing components were part of another policy. For example, a department's taser policy is most likely distinct from its use-of-force policy. However, the use-of-force policy would still apply to taser use.

Several police departments have adopted the POSTC policy with relatively few substantive changes (e.g., Bridgeport, Danbury, Farmington, Glastonbury, Milford, Naugatuck, and Simsbury). Other departments have developed their own policies, not all of which appear to be entirely congruent with

the POSTC model policy. It is possible, of course, that some departments' practices governed by additional departmental policies might be more or less consistent with the POSTC model policy than their taser policies as written might suggest.

There are a few examples of ways in which a number of departmental taser policies appear to differ from the POSTC policy that may not "meet or exceed" the POSTC minimum:

- Although the POSTC policy mandates that all officers "receive training as to [departmental taser policy] content prior to obtaining authorization to carry a CEW," at least nine departmental policies did not explicitly mandate that tasers be deployed only by officers who have satisfactorily completed training in the department's taser policy.
- Although the POSTC policy mandates that "the officer shall energize the subject the least number of times and no longer than necessary to accomplish the legitimate operational objective" and that "Each application of the CEW should be independently justifiable," at least ten departmental policies fail to adopt these rules.
- Although the POSTC policy prohibits taser deployment in a punitive or coercive manner or on a person demonstrating only passive resistance, at least nine departmental policies fail to prohibit deployment in such circumstances.
- Although the POSTC policy mandates transportation to a hospital for every person who loses consciousness after being tased, is hit in a sensitive area (e.g., head, groin, breasts), is tased three or more times, is naked in a public place, exhibits bizarre or violent behavior, shows signs of extreme uncontrolled agitation, or appears to be of small stature, infirm, pregnant, equipped with a pacemaker, or otherwise appears to be in obvious ill health, at least eight departments fail to mandate transportation to the hospital in such circumstances.

Other departmental policies have adopted restrictions on taser use that appear to be more exacting than the minimum set by the POSTC model policy. Some departmental policies prohibit or discourage the use of a taser against:

- children and aged persons (e.g., Ansonia, Cheshire, East Haven, Fairfield, Greenwich, UConn, Groton Town, New Haven, New London, Ridgefield, Stratford, Waterbury, Vernon, Wethersfield);
- persons operating motor vehicles (e.g., Ansonia, CCSU, Connecticut State Police, Cheshire, Fairfield, Groton Town, Norwalk, Stratford, UConn, Waterbury, Wethersfield);
- persons who are fleeing (e.g., East Haven, Stratford);
- persons who are handcuffed or restrained (e.g., Ansonia, CCSU, Cheshire, Groton Town, Newington, New London, UConn, Vernon, Wallingford, Wethersfield);
- persons in medical or mental crisis e.g., East Haven, Wallingford); or
- hitting a person in the chest with darts (probes) (e.g., Norwalk, UConn, Waterbury).

## **SECTION IV: TASER DATA ANALYSIS**

For this report, the IMRP received 575 EDW reports from 80 police departments reporting taser incidents involving 542 people in 2016. IMRP researchers examined all the taser reports and compiled a database containing all the information included in the reports. This database was the basis for IMRP's analysis.

### **IV.A: RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Public Act 14-149 required (1) POSTC to develop and promulgate a model policy on the use of tasers and a standardized form for reporting their use, (2) each state law enforcement agency to adopt and maintain a policy that meets or exceeds the model, and (3) law enforcement agencies to document and report EDW use collecting data specified in the act. The law requires the collection of information on the following aspects of each taser deployment:

- number of times the taser was deployed against the person;
- taser mode used (e.g., laser sight, warning arc, drive-stun, or cartridge deployment);
- race and gender of persons involved in reportable taser incidents; and
- any injury suffered by a tased person.

Each law enforcement agency must submit its report on the use of tasers to OPM's Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division by January 15 annually. Though not required by law, an analysis of the reported data provides an assessment of the effectiveness of and compliance with the POSTC model policy.

Have departments adopted policies that comply with the statute and the POSTC policy? How do the EDW reports reflect the effectiveness of the statute and the POSTC model policy in practice? How can law enforcement agencies implement best practices regarding the use of tasers.

As IMRP researchers examined the data presented in the EDW reports as required by Public Act 14-149 and the POSTC model policy, additional questions emerged. IMRP researchers attempted to identify these issues and—where possible, given the limitations of the available data—to answer them.

### **IV.B: LIMITATIONS OF THE DATA**

The IMRP review of the reported taser dataset reveals significant limitations that should be identified at the outset. In particular, the EDW form does not require any independent evaluation of compliance with departmental or POSTC policies. Unlike a use-of-force report, the EDW form does not include information on whether a supervisor found the use of a taser in that specific incident to be justifiable.

While the statute requires reporting of any injury suffered by a tased person, nowhere on the EDW form is the condition of the person prior to the police use of a taser specified. The form does not indicate whether reported injuries resulted from taser deployment, existed at the time of officers' arrival at the scene, were inflicted by third parties, or resulted from officers' application of force other than tasers. Furthermore, while the policy mandates transportation to the hospital for certain



persons who are most susceptible to injury when tased, officers completing the form are not required to indicate whether persons involved in taser incidents were transported to a hospital.

Evaluation of compliance with state statute and the POSTC policy is also limited by the absence of data on the crimes a person was suspected of or charged with. In accordance with state law and the Fourth Amendment, the POSTC policy notes that the justification of any use of force depends in part on the severity of the crime suspected and the threat posed by the suspect. Since the EDW form does not record what, if any, crime was cited, compliance with these aspects of the POSTC policy (and with state and federal law) cannot be evaluated using this dataset.

The reported EDW forms do not appear to provide a complete tally of all reportable incidents in which tasers were used in 2016. Although over 40 percent of all reported taser incidents involved no deployment, it appears from a review of the use-of-force and case incident reports that some departments may not have reported all incidents in which a taser was activated (laser sighted, warning arc), without administering any electric shock. Of the 80 departments that reported taser incidents, 16 reported incidents involving a taser display only. Of the departments that reported only incidents that resulted in an electric shock to the subject, it is likely that there were additional incidents that involved only the display of the taser. It seems likely that the number of reportable taser incidents in which a taser is shown but no one is tased may be greater than what is represented in the existing dataset.

A review of EDW reports also reveals inconsistency in departmental reporting practices that hinders meaningful cross-departmental comparisons. A comparison of EDW report data with a sample of use-of-force and case incident reports revealed areas in which data reporting appeared to be especially unreliable. For example, the number of deployments was often left blank on the EDW forms; taser injuries appear to be incompletely reported; and some departments appear to have routinely checked that a verbal warning had been given by the officer when nothing in the use-of-force or case incident report indicated that any verbal warning had been given.

Furthermore, while some departments appear to have completed EDW forms on the date of the incident or shortly thereafter, many departments completed the taser forms all at once and close to the January 15, 2017 deadline. This practice increases the likelihood that some taser incidents may have been missed and not reported to OPM. It also appears that in many departments the officers and/or supervisors directly involved in the incident may not have been involved in completing the EDW reports.

Despite these limitations, the available data raises some potential questions that the statutory framework and the POSTC model policy imply. Within the limitations of this data collection, this report begins to address issues related to the efficacy of the POSTC policy and departmental compliance with it.

#### **IV.C: DATA ANALYSIS**

The Connecticut Uniform Crime Report reported there were more than 100,000 arrests in Connecticut in 2016. According to the *Connecticut Traffic Stop Data Analysis and Findings 2014-2015* report, there are approximately 580,000 traffic stops each year, the majority of which did not result in a custodial arrest. The total number of incidents in which police respond is even higher, as not all incidents involve an active crime or are initiated as a traffic stop. Police officers may be called upon

by citizens to report a crime, for community service, or to respond to quality of life issues. Officers also routinely provide the public with information and referrals, or other services and tasks. The total number of police-citizen contacts in Connecticut each year is not known.

In 2016, there were 575 taser reports involving 542 people.<sup>8</sup> The number of reported taser incidents is less than one percent (0.53%) of arrests in Connecticut in 2016. The rate drops to .08 percent when the number of arrest and traffic stop incidents are added; 542 reported taser incidents out of approximately 680,000 police-citizen encounters annually. Thus the proportion of police-citizen encounters in which a taser incident is reported appears to be small.

#### **IV.C (1): Number of Taser Reports**

A total of 80 police departments submitted EDW reports<sup>9</sup> in 2016. Of these, 76 were municipal police departments, three were special police departments, and one was the Connecticut State Police. Eighteen departments reported that they had no incidents involving an electronic defense weapon in 2016. The average number of submitted reports per department was seven. Of the 80 departments that submitted reports, 51 reported fewer than five, 14 reported between five and 10, and 15 reported more than 10. Departments that submitted more than 10 reports each accounted for 64.5 percent of all taser incidents. The 10 departments that submitted the most reports made up almost half (48%) of the statewide taser reports. Those departments are identified in Table 1.0.

**Table 1.0: Total Number of Taser Reports Submitted (Top 10 Departments)**

Department Name	Number of Taser Incidents	% of Statewide Taser Incidents
Connecticut State Police	42	7.73%
New Haven	33	6.08%
Waterbury	30	5.52%
Norwalk	26	4.79%
Manchester	26	4.79%
Bridgeport	26	4.79%
Bristol	25	4.60%
Hartford	22	4.05%
New Britain	17	3.13%
Stamford	14	2.58%

The EDW reports submitted indicate wide variability in the number of incidents reported in towns of similar size. In light of the inconsistent reporting practices described above, though, cross-departmental comparisons must be viewed with great caution. Some departments reported taser

<sup>8</sup> There was one incidents in which a dog was tased, but this was omitted from the analysis. In addition, some individuals were tased by more than one officer which prompted more than one report to be submitted.

<sup>9</sup> A report must be submitted for all incidents involving a taser, including if the taser was threatened to be used, but not actually deployed. Therefore, not all reports result in an electric shock to the subject.

incidents involving no electric shock while others did not; and some departments completed EDW reports in real time while others completed them all at the end of the year, close to the deadline. It cannot be assumed, then, that submission of a larger number of EDW reports necessarily indicates a larger number of reportable taser incidents or a larger number of persons tased. Cross-departmental comparisons are further complicated by the absence of information about the number and proportion of officers in each department who have been issued tasers.

#### IV.C (2): Demographic Information for Taser Incidents

Table 2.0 presents some basic demographic data on persons tased or threatened to be tased by police in 2016. Not surprisingly, females were much less likely to be involved in a reported taser incident than were males. The vast majority (93%) of persons involved in taser incidents were males. Nearly half of the males involved in reported taser incidents were white (44%), a little more than one-third of males were black (35%) and over one-fifth of males were Hispanic (21%). White persons make up 44 percent of reported taser incidents and minorities account for 56 percent of the incidents.

**Table 2.0: Taser Subject Demographics**

Race/Ethnicity		Gender		Age	
White	43.7%	Male	93.4%	15 or younger	1.5%
				16 – 20	12.5%
Black	33.8%			21 – 30	35.1%
				31 – 40	25.6%
All Other Races	1.5%	Female	6.6%	41 – 50	15.9%
				51 – 60	7.4%
Hispanic	21.0%			Older than 61	0.7%
				Unknown	1.3%

The statewide model policy is silent with respect to the use of tasers on persons younger than 18 or older than 65. Nonetheless, the PERF guidelines, TASER International and several Connecticut police departments caution against using tasers on children or elderly persons. The EDW form reports the age of the individual involved in the taser incident.

Police departments reported 37 persons under 18 years were involved in taser incidents (7.0% of the total). Thirteen of them were tased. Of the 13 tased, eight were black, two were white, and three were Hispanic. All of the youths under the age of 16 were black, though only one of them was tased. The youngest person reported to have involved in a taser incident was 7 years old. Most of the taser incidents involved only the laser being pointed at the subject, but no activation of the device. However, in several incidents the taser was activated more than one time (the youngest person this happened to was 13 and he was tased four times). Six of the 13 youth who were tased were reported as “emotionally disturbed” or “suicidal.”

Two persons 65 years old or older were involved in a taser incident in 2016. One of the individuals was tased and the other received a warning. Both were white males described as armed with edged weapons.

### IV.C (3): Type of Taser Deployment

The taser can be used in essentially two different ways: as a warning or to deliver an electric shock. To warn a person, an officer may activate the laser sights or warning arc, or may simply un-holster the weapon without activating it. Incidents where a taser is un-holstered without being activated are not required to be reported under the POSTC policy, but incidents where the officer activates the laser sight or warning arc must be reported. Nonetheless, three EDW forms reported incidents in which a taser had been un-holstered but not activated.

Two modes of taser operation administer an electric shock to the subject (i.e., “tase” them): drive-stun and cartridge deployment. About 55 percent of people involved in reported taser incidents were tased: subjected to cartridge deployment (42%), drive-stun application<sup>10</sup> (6%), or both a cartridge and drive-stun application (7%). The remaining 45 percent of reported incidents involved a subject who was warned, but not tased.

**Table 3.0: Type of Taser Deployment**

Type of Deployment	Number	Percent
Warning*	241	44.5%
Cartridge Deployment	226	41.7%
Drive-Stun Deployment	34	6.3%
Cartridge and Drive-Stun	40	7.4%
Not Reported	1	0.1%

\*Warning includes laser sight only, warning arc, or removing the taser from the holster. Electric shock was not administered in any of these circumstances.

Of 542 persons involved in reported taser incidents, 300 received an electric shock (55%). Of these, 45 percent were white, 34 percent were black, and 19 percent were Hispanic. The data shows that in taser incidents where the taser was un-holstered, laser-sighted or arced without application of electric shock, 43 percent of persons were white, 33 percent were black, and 23 percent were Hispanic.

Of the males involved in reported taser incidents, 56 percent were tased (the other 44 percent were warned). White males were tased in 56 percent of incidents, Hispanic males were tased in 53 percent of incidents, and black males were tased in 56 percent of incidents. A similar pattern exists among females involved in taser incidents. Of the females involved in taser incidents, 47 percent were tased.

<sup>10</sup> The POSTC policy appears to discourage use of the taser in drive-stun mode. Paragraph 6G of the policy provides:

Deployment of the CEW in drive stun mode, from a policy perspective, is no different than a cartridge deployment. It is important to note that when the device is deployed in this manner, it is primarily a pain compliance tool: *is minimally effective compared to a conventional cartridge deployment*; and is more likely to leave marks on the subject’s skin.

White females were the most likely to be tased, followed by Black females and then Hispanic females. Table 4.0 is a breakdown by gender and race of persons involved in taser incidents and the types of deployments used by police.

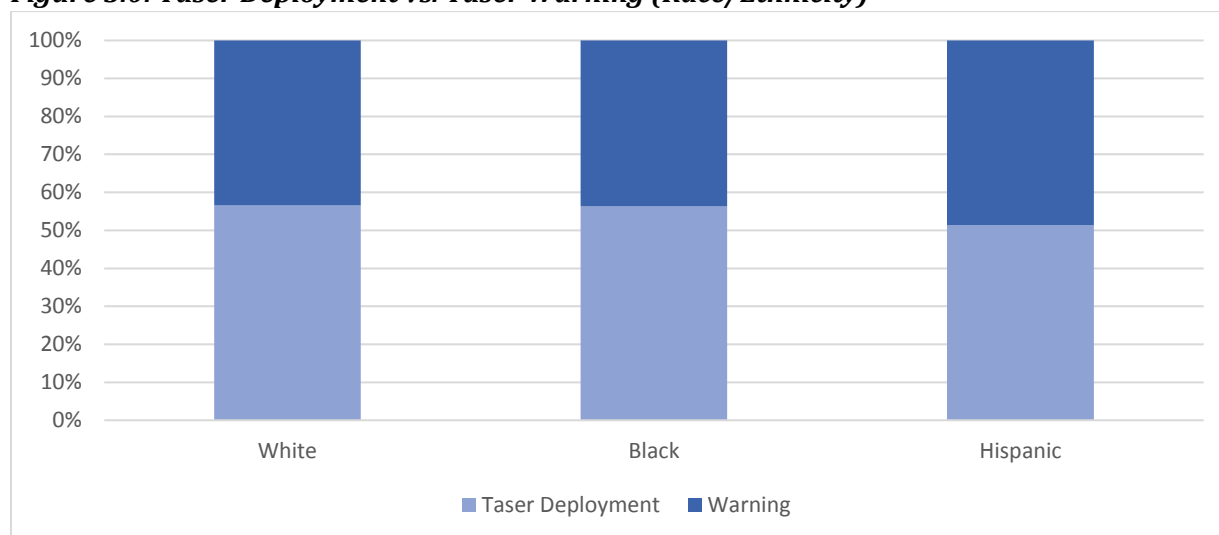
**Table 4.0: Type of Deployment by Race and Gender**

	Warning*		Cartridge		Drive-Stun		Cartridge and Drive-Stun	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Race/Ethnicity								
White	103	43.4%	98	41.4%	16	6.8%	20	8.4%
Black	80	43.7%	80	43.7%	12	6.6%	11	6.0%
Hispanic	55	48.7%	44	38.9%	5	4.4%	9	8.0%
All Other Races	3	37.5%	4	50.0%	1	12.5%	0	0.0%
Gender								
Male	222	44.0%	213	42.2%	31	6.1%	39	7.7%
Female	19	52.8%	13	36.1%	3	8.3%	1	2.8%

\* Warning includes laser sight only, warning arc, or removing the taser from the holster. Electric shock was not administered in any of these circumstances.

\*\*Percentages are derived based on the total incidents for each racial, ethnic, or gender group (not the total number of incidents.) For example, 43.4% of white subjects involved in a taser incident received a warning.

**Figure 3.0: Taser Deployment vs. Taser Warning (Race/Ethnicity)**



Although 80 departments reported taser incidents, 16 departments reported only taser warning incidents in which no one was tased. There are differences in the rate at which a department threatens to use the taser and actually deploys the taser. Of the 64 departments that reported tasing persons, 48 reported that fewer than five persons were tased, nine reported between five and 10

persons tased, and seven reported more than 10 persons tased. The departments that reported more than 10 persons tased accounted for 47 percent of all incidents in which a person was tased. The eleven departments<sup>11</sup> that reported the most persons tased accounted for 60 percent of persons tased statewide. Those departments are identified in Table 5.0.

**Table 5.0: Total Number of Persons Tased (Top 11 Departments)**

Department Name	Number of Taser Deployments	% of Statewide Persons Tased
Connecticut State Police	39	13.0%
Hartford	21	7.0%
Waterbury	21	7.0%
Bridgeport	18	6.0%
New Haven	16	5.3%
Norwalk	16	5.3%
Meriden	11	3.7%
Manchester	10	3.3%
Norwich	10	3.3%
Middletown	9	3.0%
West Haven	9	3.0%

#### **IV.C (4): Nature of the Threat**

As discussed above, the Fourth Amendment, state law, and the POSTC model policy establish that use of a taser may be justified when an officer reasonably believes that such use of force is necessary to:

- arrest or prevent the escape from custody of a person reasonably believed to have committed a crime or
- defend the officer or another person from the suspect’s use or imminent use of physical force during an arrest or to prevent an escape.

Moreover, as the POSTC policy notes, “the severity of the crime that the officer believed the suspect to have committed or be committing” is a factor in determining whether a use of force is reasonable (see *Graham v. Connor*, 490 U.S. 386 (1989), discussed in Part I, above).

This is not to say that the use of force is never justified against a person suspected of committing a low-level or nonviolent crime, if the person uses physical force or their use of physical force is

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<sup>11</sup> Typically, the top ten departments would be identified, but due to the fact that Middletown and West Haven tased the same number of people we decided to include the top eleven.

imminent while an officer is trying to arrest the person or prevent his or her escape<sup>12</sup>. Moreover, officers' apprehension of "imminent use of physical force" does not necessarily require an overt threat by the person involved.<sup>13</sup>

To assess whether a taser deployment complied with constitutional constraints, state law, or the POSTC policy, researchers would need to know the offense(s) the officer believed the person to have committed, whether an arrest was actually made, and the person's behavior while interacting with them. Unfortunately, because the EDW reports do not provide any information about offenses suspected or charged, and include scant information about the behavior of persons involved in reported taser incidents, this dataset cannot answer this question.

The POSTC policy specifies four circumstances in which tasers should not be deployed:

1. in a punitive or coercive manner;
2. on any subject demonstrating only passive resistance.
3. in any environment where an officer knows that a potentially flammable, volatile, or explosive material is present (including but not limited to OC spray with volatile propellant, gasoline, natural gas, or propane); or
4. where it is likely that the subject may drown or fall from an elevated area.

The EDW form does not provide information that would allow assessment of whether these rules are being followed. No field on the form asks for information about the presence of flammable, volatile or explosive materials, nor whether the encounter took place where a subject might drown or fall from a height. Even if the EDW form had a field for checking off whether the taser had been deployed "in a punitive or coercive manner," it seems unlikely that such a field would generate useful information. Two documents that might allow for external evaluation of whether a taser deployment complies with the model policy might be the use-of-force form and the case incident report provided by the officers. The use-of-force form, completed by a supervisor, provides information to determine whether the officer's use of force complied with departmental policy or was otherwise justified. A case incident report provides a narrative—the officer's account of events—that might provide information to answer this question.

### **Taser Incidents involving Armed vs. Unarmed Persons**

An overwhelming majority of persons (80%) involved in taser incidents were reportedly unarmed. The EDW form contains separate fields to indicate whether the person was armed and whether the person threatened to use a weapon. Of armed people involved in taser incidents, only 33 percent (36 people) reportedly threatened to use the weapon. Thus less than 7 percent of all persons involved in taser incidents were armed and threatened to use the weapon. Over 39 percent of these people (14) were reportedly suicidal. Out of 542 persons involved in taser incidents, only 22 reportedly

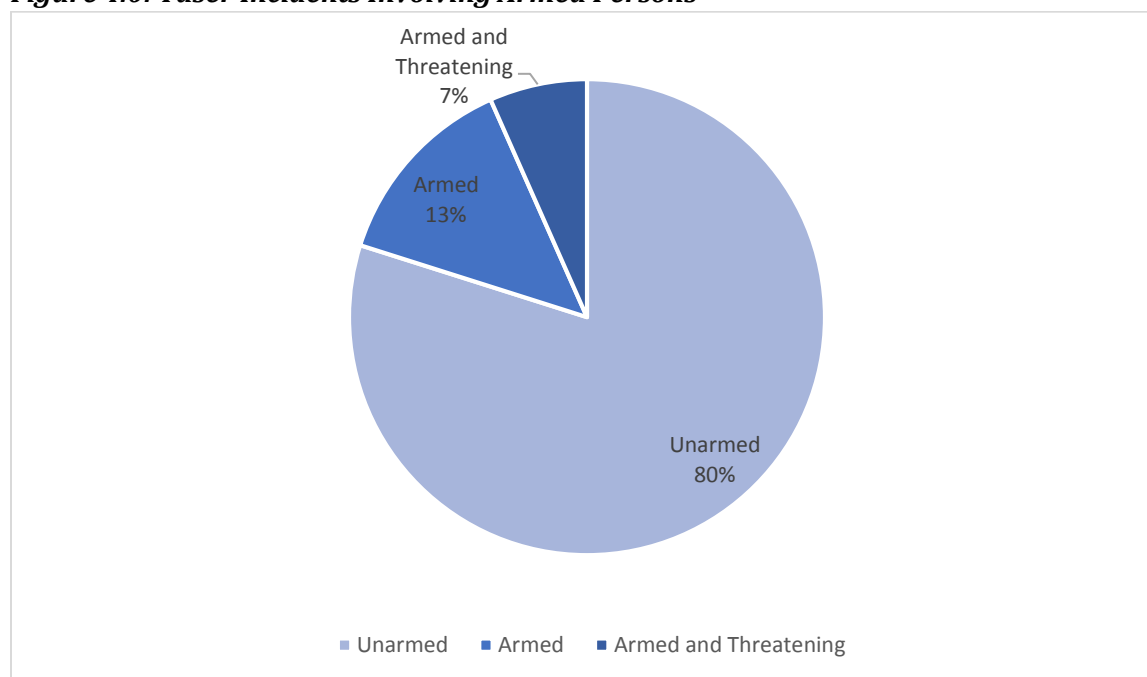
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<sup>12</sup> In 2010, for example, the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit held that it was objectively reasonable for police officers to tase two nonviolent protesters who were "not threatening the safety of any person with their behavior" and were suspected only of the "relatively minor crimes of trespass and resisting arrest." The protesters had chained themselves to a "several hundred-pound barrel drum" and police had "attempted to use other means to effect the arrest, none of which proved feasible, and used the taser only as a last resort, after warning Plaintiffs and giving them a last opportunity to unchain themselves." *Crowell v. Kirkpatrick*, 400 Fed. Appx. 592 (2d Cir. 2010)

<sup>13</sup> For example, the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit recently found that the use of force was "reasonable" when an officer tased a man who stood up after he had been told to kneel. The man was suspected of criminal activity and had just led police on a car chase. *MacLeod v. Town of Brattleboro*, 548 Fed.App'x. 6 (2d Cir.2013).

threatened to use a weapon who were not suicidal. Figure 3.0 illustrates taser incidents involving armed people and people threatening to use a weapon.

**Figure 4.0: Taser Incidents Involving Armed Persons**



Armed persons who threatened to use their weapons were tased at a higher rate than armed persons who did not threaten to use their weapon. More than 30 percent of armed persons tased were identified as suicidal.

Although the number is small, females were more likely to be armed (33%) than males (19%) involved in taser incidents. Females were slightly more likely to be suicidal (17%) than were males (11%) involved in taser incidents. White males were armed in 20 percent of incidents, Hispanic males in 22 percent of incidents, and black males in 16 percent of incidents. Table 6.0 indicates the number of persons who were armed and unarmed and the rate at which they were tased.

Overall, people involved in reported taser incidents were as likely to be tased if they were unarmed as if they were armed. While white and black persons were tased at roughly the same rate regardless of whether they were armed, Hispanic persons were less likely to be tased if they were armed than if they were unarmed.



**Table 6.0: Armed and Unarmed Persons Tased by Race/Ethnicity**

Race/Ethnicity	Armed		Unarmed	
	N	% Tased	N	% Tased
White	51	58.8%	186	55.9%
Black	32	56.3%	151	56.3%
Hispanic	26	46.2%	88	52.3%
All Other Races	0	0.0%	8	62.5%
Total	109	55.1%	433	55.4%

The taser reports indicate a general category for the type of weapon an armed person had. Most persons described as armed had an “edged weapon” (53%). The majority of “edged weapons” were described as knives. Thirty-one persons were described as armed with “other weapon.” These included a power drill, OC spray, nail gun, piece of cement, chair, and a computer wire. Two other persons were identified as armed, but the descriptions were “unknown.” Table 7.0 summarizes the type of weapon reportedly used by race and ethnicity.

**Table 7.0: Type of Weapon Used by Race/Ethnicity**

Race/Ethnicity	Firearm		Edged Weapon		Blunt Instrument		Other	
	N	% Tased	N	% Tased	N	% Tased	N	% Tased
White	5	60.0%	28	67.9%	5	40.0%	14	50.0%
Black	5	100.0%	17	47.1%	3	66.7%	7	42.9%
Hispanic	1	0.0%	13	53.8%	2	50.0%	10	40.0%
Other Races	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	11	72.7%	58	58.6%	10	50.0%	31	70.0%

### **Taser Incidents Involving “Emotionally Disturbed” Or “Suicidal” Persons**

Police officers receive extensive training in identifying, responding to and interacting with persons with emotional or intellectual disabilities or illnesses and suicidal persons. Nonetheless, it is not entirely clear what officers or administrators may have meant when they chose to check or not to check boxes on the EDW form indicating that a person was “emotionally disturbed.” As with other data gleaned from the taser reports, it seems that departments and officers may have followed inconsistent reporting procedures with respect to identifying persons who might have been experiencing psychiatric distress. For example, four of 61 persons described as “suicidal” in the taser reports were not described as being “emotionally disturbed.” A review of a sample of incident reports in 2015 revealed that several persons described in those incident reports as exhibiting obvious signs of psychiatric or mental disturbance may not have been noted as “emotionally disturbed” on the EDW forms. It is also possible that a police officer might describe a person as “emotionally disturbed” to

mean agitated or distressed without suspecting any underlying psychiatric illness. The taser reports, therefore, cannot be taken as a complete or accurate tally of the number of persons involved in taser incidents who may have been exhibiting signs of mental illness or psychiatric crisis.

However, according to information submitted on the EDW forms, persons involved in taser incidents were somewhat more likely to be tased if they were described as “emotionally disturbed” than if they were not: 57 percent of “emotionally disturbed” persons were tased, compared to 54 percent of persons who were not described as “emotionally disturbed.” This finding was consistent across racial and gender demographic groups, except for Hispanic males and females, who were less likely to be tased if they were reportedly “emotionally disturbed” than if they were not.

About 38 percent of persons involved in reported taser incidents was described as “emotionally disturbed” (207 of 542 persons). Table 8.0 indicates the gender and race/ethnicity of the persons identified as emotionally disturbed involved in taser incidents and the percent that were actually tased.

**Table 8.0: “Emotionally Disturbed” People Tased**

	Total Identified: “Emotionally Disturbed”	% Tased
Race/Ethnicity		
White	112	60.7%
Black	59	59.3%
Hispanic	31	41.9%
All Other Races	5	60.0%
Gender		
Male	188	57.5%
Female	19	57.9%

Females who were “emotionally disturbed” appear to have been at high risk of involvement in taser incidents. Of all “emotionally disturbed” persons involved in taser incidents, 9 percent were female. Females comprised only 5 percent of non-“emotionally disturbed” persons involved in taser incidents. In addition, females were more likely than males to be described as “emotionally disturbed”: 53 percent of females involved in taser incidents were described as “emotionally disturbed,” compared to 37 percent of men. While 60 percent of white women involved in taser incidents were described as “emotionally disturbed,” only 50 percent of black and 29 percent of Hispanic females involved in taser incidents were described as “emotionally disturbed.”

Because the number of taser deployments was not consistently reported, IMRP researchers could not determine whether persons who were described as “emotionally disturbed” were or were not more often subjected to multiple deployments. Of “emotionally disturbed” persons who were tased, 25 percent were reportedly tased more than once, compared to 22 percent of persons who were not described as “emotionally disturbed.”

The EDW form also contained a field to note that a person was suicidal. Eleven percent of reported taser incidents involved persons described as “suicidal.” Suicidal persons were reportedly much more likely to be armed than other people involved in reported taser incidents. The reports showed that 54 percent of suicidal persons were armed, compared to 15 percent of non-suicidal persons. Table 9.0 indicates the percentage of reportedly suicidal persons who were tased and armed or unarmed.

**Table 9.0: Suicidal Persons Tased (Armed vs. Unarmed)**

Race/Ethnicity	Armed		Unarmed	
	N	% Tased	N	% Tased
White	18	61.1%	22	50.0%
Black	8	62.5%	5	80.0%
Hispanic	7	57.1%	1	100.0%
Total	33	60.6%	28	57.0%

Suicidal armed persons were reportedly tased at higher rates than armed persons who were not described as suicidal. As shown, 61 percent of armed suicidal persons involved in taser incidents were tased, compared to 53 percent of armed persons who were not reported to be suicidal.

Among suicidal males, 60 percent were tased. Fifty-two percent of these males were tased more than once, including one male tased four times, and three males tased six times. Among suicidal females, 50 percent were tased at least once.

### **Taser Incidents Involving Intoxicated Persons**

Research on taser-related deaths indicates that many people who died after being tased had been in an extremely agitated state because of mental illness or the effect of stimulant drugs such as cocaine, PCP, or other methamphetamines. The POSTC policy appears to acknowledge the heightened risk of injury to a person who exhibits (1) irregular breathing or is known to be under the influence of drugs or medications; (2) signs of extreme uncontrolled agitation or hyperactivity; (3) bizarre or violent behavior including self-mutilation; or (4) is naked in a public place or exhibits signs of overheating. If a person is tased while exhibiting any of these behaviors, the POSTC policy requires he or she must be transported to a hospital even if that person declines medical treatment.

Nearly half of persons involved in reported taser incidents (44%) were identified as “under influence of alcohol/drugs” or “possibly intoxicated.” These persons were more likely than average to be tased (60%), and 48 percent were tased more than once.

Unfortunately, the EDW report provides little contextual information to better assess this finding. The EDW form cannot identify compliance or noncompliance with the state model policy because the form provides no information as to whether an intoxicated person was transported to a hospital. Moreover, unlike an incident report, the EDW form offers no details as to the person’s behavior or the suspected intoxicant. While tasing a person who is exhibiting the effects of alcohol or marijuana—two common intoxicants that have not often been associated with deaths after taser use—might not

raise special concerns about taser use, tasing a person who is overheating, agitated and naked in public, or whom the officer suspects may be high on cocaine or methamphetamines, could raise concerns about health risks from taser deployment.

#### **IV.C (5): Type of Resistance that Resulted in Taser Use**

The taser form asks the officer to report the type of resistance that resulted in the use of a taser. Most people involved in reported taser incidents exhibited more than one form of resistance. Of the 433 unarmed persons involved in taser incidents, subjects were described as follows:

- Unarmed, but threatened use of weapon (11)
- Threat/Hostile (202)
- Unarmed assault (55)
- Fighting stance/combative (199)
- Fleeing (181)
- Dead weight/noncompliant (52)
- Failed to follow officers directions (213)

The POSTC model policy states that tasers should not be deployed on any subject demonstrating only passive resistance. For 125 unarmed people, the only form of reported resistance was listed as “fleeing,” “suicidal,” “dead weight/noncompliant,” or “failed to follow directions.” For purposes of this report and based on the limited information available to IMRP researchers, incidents where the subject’s only resistance was reported as “dead weight/noncompliant” or “failed to follow directions” are categorized as “passive resistance.” In 27 reported taser incidents, the only form of resistance was reported as “dead weight/noncompliant” or “failed to follow directions.” In those incidents, 26 percent of persons were tased. Table 10.0 summarizes the unarmed persons reported as passively resisting and the percent tased.

**Table 10.0: Unarmed Persons “Passively Resisting” by Race/Ethnicity**

Race/Ethnicity	N	% Tased
White	10	30.0%
Black	10	40.0%
Hispanic	7	0.0%
Total	27	26.0%

Taser policies with respect to fleeing suspects vary across departments: while a handful discourage or prohibit tasing fleeing suspects unless they pose a safety risk, others recommend taser deployment as an appropriate means to prevent the escape of a fleeing suspect. As noted above, Taser International cautions against taser deployment against people who are running.

About one-third of persons involved in reported taser incidents (37%) fled police.<sup>14</sup> Persons who reportedly fled were more likely be tased than those who did not. The EDW form does not specify

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<sup>14</sup> Courts in the Second Circuit have gone both ways on the constitutionality of tasing a fleeing suspect who is not threatening officers or other persons. *See, e.g. Fudge v. Jones*, No. 5:11-CV-00525, 2014 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 131487 (N.D.N.Y. Sept. 19, 2014)

whether a person who fled was tased while fleeing, or at some other point during the encounter. Virtually all persons who fled were male (96%) and the majority were black or Hispanic (66%). Table 11.0 summarizes taser incidents involving persons who fled police by race and ethnicity.

**Table 11.0: Taser Incidents Involving Fleeing Persons by Race/Ethnicity**

Race/Ethnicity	N	% Tased
White	67	73.1%
Black	89	62.9%
Hispanic	44	61.4%
All Other Races	3	66.6%
Total	203	66.0%

#### IV.C (6): Multiple Taser Deployments

The POSTC model policy mandates that an officer shall energize a person the least number of times and for no longer than necessary to subdue the person. The policy states an officer should deploy a taser for one standard cycle and then evaluate the situation to determine if subsequent cycles are necessary. Each taser use or deployment should be independently justifiable and an officer should only deploy a taser to the extent necessary to gain control of a person. This minimum standard is consistent with national best practices and manufacturer recommendations, and federal courts adjudicating use-of-force claims have required separate justifications for each time an individual is tased.<sup>15</sup>

Reports of the number of times each person was tased should be viewed with caution. IMRP researchers' review of the sample of case incident reports found several instances in which the EDW report understated the number of deployments indicated in the officer's narrative and by the taser download data. Moreover, in two percent of incidents in which a person was reportedly tased, researchers could not ascertain the number of deployments because the fields on the EDW form were left blank and the taser download data was missing or undecipherable<sup>16</sup>.

Of 300 persons who were tased, more than 55 percent reportedly received only one shock and about 45 percent reportedly received multiple shocks. Hispanic males who were tased were more likely

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(upholding officers who tased a suspect who fled a traffic stop); *Arnold v. Buck*, No. 3:11-CV-1343 VLB, 2013 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 108629 (D.Conn. Aug. 2, 2013) (finding it objectively reasonable to tase a fleeing suspect because he was argumentative, fled, and disobeyed orders to stop); *Bombard v. Volp*, No. 2:13-cv-58, 2014 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 124940 (D.Vt. Sept. 8, 2014) (denying summary judgment to officers who tased a fleeing suspect in the back of the head, in circumstances where, the court held, a reasonable jury could find that the man had been fleeing to avoid a fight, and posed no threat of harm to the officer. The court also cited Taser International's guidance that tasing a running suspect may exacerbate the risk of injury).

<sup>15</sup> See, e.g. *Soto v. Gaudette*, No. 3:10-cv-106 (WWE), 205 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 144129 (D.Conn. Oct. 23, 2015); *Chamberlain v. City of White Plains*, 986 F.Supp.2d 363 (S.D.N.Y. 2013); *Towsley v. Frank*, No. 5:09-cv-23, 2010 LEXIS 137005 (D. Vt. Dec. 28, 2010).

<sup>16</sup> The taser form contains two fields indicating the number of deployments for persons who were tased: "#, Length of Drive-Stun Applications" and "#, Length of Activations after Probe Contact." Most departments completed these fields for every reported deployment of the taser in cartridge or drive-stun mode.

than average to receive multiple shocks. Black males who were tased were less likely than average to be subjected to multiple shocks. Table 12.0 indicates the number of deployments by race and gender.

**Table 12.0: Number of Deployments by Race and Gender**

Race/Ethnicity	One Deployment		Two Deployments		More than 3 Deployments		Unknown Deployments	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Race/Ethnicity								
White	70	52.6%	24	18.0%	30	22.6%	9	6.8%
Black	62	60.2%	22	21.4%	18	17.5%	1	0.9%
Hispanic	33	55.9%	18	30.5%	7	11.9%	1	1.7%
All Other Races	0	0.0%	2	40.0%	2	40.0%	1	20.0%
Gender								
Male	152	53.5%	65	23.2%	54	19.0%	12	4.3%
Female	13	77.8%	1	5.5%	3	16.7%	0	0.0%

\*Percentages are derived based on the total incidents for each racial, ethnic, or gender group (not the total number of incidents.) For example, 52.6% of white subjects involved in a taser incident were tased one time.

As with taser reporting in general, reporting of multiple deployments varied so widely across departments that cross-departmental comparisons cannot be made with confidence. Several departments left blank all the fields indicating the number of taser deployments in some reported incidents (Bridgeport, Manchester, Middletown, New London, New Haven, North Haven, Norwalk, State Police, West Haven, and Willimantic). For these departments, it was impossible to ascertain whether anyone who was tased received one or more electric shock. It is worth noting that Waterbury reported 67 percent of people were tased more than once which is significantly above the statewide average. Interestingly, every department that reported tasing five or more people in 2016, reported at least one multiple deployment.

In many small and mid-size departments, more than half of persons tased received multiple shocks. It should be noted that the total number of tasing incidents in most of these towns is small (fewer than five incidents). These towns included Berlin, Bethel, Branford, Bridgeport, Cheshire, Danbury, Darien, Derby, Fairfield, Glastonbury, Greenwich, Groton, Hamden, Manchester, Naugatuck, New Milford, North Branford, North Haven, Norwich, Plainfield, Plainville, Rocky Hill, Seymour, South Windsor, Stratford, Vernon, Waterbury, West Hartford, and Windsor.

Finally, a few departments reported no multiple deployments. These departments were Ansonia, Central Connecticut State University, East Hampton, East Hartford, East Windsor, Enfield, Farmington, Guilford, Mohegan Tribal Police, Newtown, Orange, Putnam, Torrington, Trumbull, Wallingford, Watertown, Willimantic, Winchester, and Woodbridge. Most of these departments reported only a single tasing incident in 2016, and the rest (except for Willimantic) reported fewer than five incidents.

#### **IV.C (7): Injuries Resulting from Tasers**

IMRP researchers' review of the EDW reports suggests that reports of injuries to persons may be unreliable. For example, 266 persons were reportedly subjected to a cartridge deployment. Presumably, all these persons would have experienced at least superficial injuries from the probe puncture (unless the taser prongs missed or were embedded in their clothing). It was reported that 120 of these persons (45%) experienced a probe puncture injury. Thus, presumably, nearly 55 percent of probe puncture injuries went unreported.

Moreover, as noted above, the "subject condition" section of the taser form, which provides for notation of injuries to persons involved in taser incidents, does not ask for any information about how or when any of the injuries was sustained. It is unclear whether injuries reported on the form had occurred before the time officers arrived on scene, or whether they were inflicted by persons other than officers, resulted from taser use by officers, or resulted from non-taser use of force by officers.

Of 542 persons involved in reported taser incidents, 300 were reportedly tased at least once. The EDW reports indicate that 235 people were injured in taser incidents, but only 214 of these persons were tased. Presumably, the 21 persons who were injured but not tased either were already injured when officers arrived, or were injured by some use of force other than the taser.

Some persons who were tased were reported to have suffered multiple injuries. Based on the descriptions provided, an overwhelming majority of the injuries appeared to be minor (i.e., probe puncture, bruise, and abrasions). Reported injuries to the 300 persons who were tased were as follows:

- 162 probe puncture injuries
- 78 abrasions
- 38 "other" (unspecified)
- 26 bruises
- 5 experienced breathing difficulty
- 1 lost consciousness.

The taser reports do not provide the number of officers involved in each reported taser incidents. As a result, it is impossible to calculate the percentage of officers who are injured in reported taser incidents. Similarly, without information about the percentage of officers who are injured in incidents involving other uses of less lethal force, it is impossible to evaluate whether the use or availability of tasers makes officers more or less safe.

Officers were reportedly injured in 52 of 542 reported taser incidents (10%). The types of injuries reported, most of which also appeared to be minor, were as follows:

- 20 bruises
- 29 abrasions
- 1 probe puncture only
- 6 breathing difficulty
- 29 other (unspecified)

## Persons Susceptible to Injury

The POSTC policy states: “Officers should be aware of the greater potential for injury when deploying a CEW against persons of small stature irrespective of age, or those who the officer has reason to believe are pregnant, equipped with a pacemaker, the infirm, or those in obvious ill health.” The EDW form collects data on a person’s height and weight, but not on any physical infirmity or condition. It may be difficult for officers to know whether a person is in ill health, has a pacemaker, or is pregnant.

Researchers defined small stature as 5 feet 4 inches or shorter. A total of 38 people involved in taser incidents were identified as being of small stature. These persons were tased at about the same rate (50%) as other persons involved in taser incidents. The height and weight of 28 people involved in taser incidents was unstated.

The POSTC policy cautions that “Officers should be aware of the greater potential for injury when deploying a (taser) against ... those who the officer has reason to believe are ... in obvious ill health.”

The EDW reports provide no field in which to report the health of the person before he or she is tased. Since the taser forms do not request information about the health of persons involved in taser incidents, there has been no systematic collection of information as to the apparent health of persons involved in taser incidents. As a result, the taser reports cannot indicate much about how often people might have been tased while in “obvious ill-health.”<sup>17</sup>

## IV.D: DETAIL AND CONTEXT: USE OF FORCE AND INCIDENT REPORTS

The EDW reports provide a sketch of the reported incidents in which tasers were deployed in 2016. As described above, this sketch is missing many crucial details, and it raises more questions than it answers. What do officers perceive to be happening in reported taser incidents? Why might an officer choose to use a taser over other use-of-force options or less-lethal weapons? How does the display or use of a taser affect the police-citizen encounter? Does it tend to escalate or de-escalate tense situations? What happens to people after they are tased or threatened with a taser?

The information available from this data collection cannot answer these questions. In 2015, IMRP researchers had the opportunity to review use-of-force reports and case incident reports for a selection of taser incidents. These reports provided more detail about how reported taser incidents unfold and raised additional questions that warrant further research.

As described above, it appears that EDW reports are typically completed by administrative staff who were not involved in the taser incident, often many months after the incident occurred. By contrast, use-of-force reports and case incident reports are required by state law to be prepared every time force is used, within 24 hours of the incident. An incident report is prepared by each officer involved

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<sup>17</sup> Federal courts in the Second Circuit have questioned the constitutionality of tasing a person when officers can see that s/he is seriously injured: *see, e.g. Soto v. Gaudette*, No. 3:10-cv-106 (WWE), 205 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 144129 (D.Conn. Oct. 23, 2015) (denying summary judgment to officers alleged to have tased a man while he was “lying face down on the ground,” bleeding from the head or face, “after having been hit by a car and tasered in the back”); *See also Taylor v. Schaffer*, No. 1:14-cv-123-jgm, 2015 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 16119 (D. Vt. Feb. 10, 2015) (denying summary judgment to officers alleged to have tased a man after being told by group home owner that the man had just had a seizure and should be left alone); *Doonan v. Village of Spring Valley*, No. 10 CV 7139(VB), 2013 LEXIS 94221 (S.D.N.Y. June 25, 2013) (denying summary judgment to officers alleged to have tased a man after he had had a seizure, fell, and “was covered in blood”); *Towsley v. Frank*, *supra* (denying summary judgment to officers alleged to have tased a man after he fell out a window breaking his pelvis).



in the incident and includes each officer's detailed narrative of what happened and why. It also records the charges, if any, against the person who was subjected to the force, and notes whether the person received medical treatment or was transported to a hospital afterward. The use-of-force report is prepared by a supervisor (typically a sergeant), who must determine whether the use of force fell within departmental policy and whether it was justified. It may also indicate where on the body the force was used (e.g., where the prongs landed, where the drive-stun was applied, or where a person was injured). Some departmental use-of-force reports also contain a field for supervisors to assess whether lethal force would have been justified.

Use-of-force and case incident reports, therefore, add context and detail to the skeletal information contained in the EDW reports. This context and detail may begin to address additional questions raised by the statute, the POSTC policy and the EDW reports. Public Act 14-149 does not require the submission of use-of-force or case incident reports, but 13 departments (Coventry, Greenwich, Ledyard, Milford, New Haven, Seymour, Stratford, Suffield, Waterford, Watertown, West Hartford, Westport, and Willimantic) submitted these reports along with their EDW reports. Coventry, Greenwich, Ledyard, and Watertown also enclosed case incident reports with its EDW reports. The submitted use-of-force and case incident reports constitute a very small sample of reported taser incidents. The case incident and use-of-force reports examined by IMRP researchers cannot be assumed to accurately represent reported taser incidents for which researchers have not received such reports.

## SECTION V: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The section presents findings and recommendations based on analysis of the data submitted by 80 police departments in 2016. This was only the second year in which data on taser use has been collected in Connecticut. It is therefore not yet possible to identify temporal trends. While the descriptive statistics presented in this report raise many questions, they cannot be taken to conclusively establish what is happening with respect to taser use in Connecticut. This limited second year of taser findings should be interpreted with caution.

### V. A: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Police officers and citizens interact continuously every day throughout the United States. In 1999, the Bureau of Justice Statistics reported that police use of force against a person is statistically rare, occurring in approximately one-percent of all police-citizen encounters. The total number of nationwide taser deployments is not known. Connecticut is the first state to require comprehensive, statewide data collection with respect to taser use.

On average there are approximately 100,000 arrests in Connecticut each year<sup>18</sup>. In 2016 there were approximately 560,000 traffic stops, as well as an unknown number of other types of police-citizen encounters. The Connecticut State Police and 91 municipal police departments authorize officers to carry tasers. Sixty-four departments reported at least one taser deployment in 2016. IMRP received 575 EDW reports documenting taser incidents involving 542 people.

**Less than one percent** (0.08%) of the approximately 660,000 arrest and traffic stop incidents in Connecticut in 2016 involved the use of tasers by police officers. This percentage may be even lower if the total number of statewide police-citizen encounters, including calls for service, were included.

However, *the use of tasers by police appears to be under-reported*. Many police departments did not report all uses of a taser. Much of the underreporting appears to have involved incidents in which the taser was used in laser-sight or warning arc mode without delivering an electric shock. For example, the two largest police departments (CSP and Hartford) reported almost no taser incidents in which the taser was arced or laser-sighted, but no one was tased.<sup>19</sup> It seems improbable that only one officer from either department sighted or arced a taser in 2016. Several of the largest departments told IMRP researchers that they had been unaware of the requirement to report all activation of tasers, not just incidents in which a person was tased.

*Females were much less likely to be involved in a taser incident than males.* The vast majority (93%) of persons involved in taser incident were male.

*Minority persons account for 56 percent of all taser incidents; white persons account for 44 percent.*

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<sup>18</sup> 2016 is the most recent year that arrest data is available for the State of Connecticut.

<sup>19</sup> Of 51 persons involved in taser incidents reported by Hartford, 100% were tased. Of 33 persons involved in taser incidents reported by CSP, 32 persons were tased.

**Thirty-seven persons under the age of 18 were involved in a taser incident.** Thirteen of them were tased, of whom, eight were black, two were white, and three were Hispanic. Six of the 13 youth tased were reported as emotionally disturbed or suicidal.

Of the 542 people involved in taser incidents, 300 (55%) received an electric shock. **Of the males involved in taser incidents, white males received an electric shock 56 percent of the time, Hispanic males were shocked 53 percent of the time and black males were shocked 56 percent of the time.**

**The majority (80%) of persons involved in a reported taser incident were unarmed. Black persons were less likely than whites and Hispanics to be armed.** Of the armed persons, officers only indicated that 33 percent threatened to use the weapon. More than 39 percent of armed people tased were identified as suicidal. About 20 percent of white males were armed, compared to 22 percent of Hispanic males, and 16 percent of black males.

**More than one-third (38%) of persons involved in reported taser incidents were described as “emotionally disturbed.”** Persons described as “emotionally disturbed” were somewhat more likely to be tased than persons who were not so described.

Furthermore, **11 percent of reported taser incidents involved persons described as “suicidal.”** Persons described as “suicidal” were much more likely than non-suicidal persons to be armed. Armed persons were more likely to be tased if they were suicidal than if they were not.

**Nearly half of all persons involved in reported taser incidents (44%) were identified as “under the influence of alcohol/drugs” or “possibly intoxicated.”** Unfortunately, the EDW report provides little contextual information by which to better assess this finding.

**Of 300 persons who were tased, more than 55 percent reportedly received only one electric shock and about 45 percent received multiple shocks.** Hispanic males who were tased were more likely to be shocked multiple times, whereas black males who were tased were less likely to be shocked more than once.

## **V. A: RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **1. Improve data collection form**

A consistent finding throughout this report is that the available data on taser use does not or is inadequate in meeting the data requirements specified in Public Act 14-149 and by the POSTC model policy. Although these data raise many more questions than they answer, some of those questions could be answered with more consistent reporting practices and more comprehensive data collection. Improved reporting and data collection could yield meaningful evidence to inform public policy with respect to tasers and possibly other uses of force. With more comprehensive data collection and more complete, consistent and accurate reporting, stronger conclusions could be drawn about cross-departmental differences in taser practices and about the relationship between departmental policy and reported taser practice.

To allow for more accurate and consistent analysis of taser data, it is recommended that the existing taser data form be amended to include the following:

- whether the tased person was arrested and the charges filed,

- physical condition of the person upon the officer's arrival and after taser deployment,
- whether the tased person was transported to a hospital, and
- a supervisor's determination of justification on each deployment.

## **2. Clarify reporting practices**

It appears that departments differ in their understanding of the law's reporting requirements. For example, some departments completed EDW reports in real time, on the day of the incident or immediately afterward, while others completed all their EDW reports at the end of the year, close to the statutory deadline. Some departments reported incidents that were not required under the POSTC policy (i.e., incidents in which the taser was un-holstered but not activated), while other departments told researchers that they had not realized that the POSTC policy required reporting incidents of arcing or laser-sight activation when no one was tased. Furthermore, some departments completed EDW forms without recording the number and duration of each electric shock.

It is recommended that POSTC clarify the following with respect to departments' reporting obligations:

- EDW reports must be completed at the same time as use-of-force and case incident reports;
- reporting the number and duration of electric shocks is mandatory; and
- reporting arcing and laser-sight activations is mandatory, while reporting of un-holstering without activation is not required.

## **3. Collect use-of-force and case incident reports for all taser incidents**

Two other documents required by law include data that could yield more meaningful results with respect to every use of force: the use-of-force report and the case incident report. Departments should be required to submit, along with the taser form, all use-of-force forms and case incident reports from every incident in which a taser was activated in laser sight, warning arc, drive-stun or cartridge (prong) mode. In some circumstances, state law and department policy do not require the use-of-force form when activating the taser in laser sight or warning arc mode. In such incidents, case incident reports should be submitted along with the EDW form.

Additional research is also recommended in four preliminary areas that consider:

- Where on the standard use-of-force continuum—in both policy and practice—are tasers and other less-lethal weapons positioned?
- The relationship between departmental policy and practice with respect to taser use and the use of other kinds of less-lethal force.
- The medical, behavioral and situational factors associated with serious injuries or fatalities in reported taser incidents.
- Whether the use of tasers reduces injuries to police and other persons during police-citizen encounters. If so, how and in what circumstances? How the results of taser incidents compare to the results of similar incidents involving the use of other less-lethal weapons, or of no force at all.

This research should review any variations across departments with respect to policy, use and reporting of taser use. Continued research may encourage and support improved routine data collection to inform public policy. Researchers and police departments should collaborate to examine

the research findings. In particular, police departments may wish to use results to improve policies, training and protocols on taser use.

#### **4. Additional research on persons experiencing psychiatric crisis**

The manufacturer of the taser, TASER International, cautions that taser use may be ineffective against persons who are intoxicated or experiencing psychiatric crisis. Medical research also suggests that taser use against such persons may pose a heightened risk of injury. At the same time, circumstances may exist in which a taser (or other use of force) is the most appropriate option to control persons experiencing psychiatric crisis and getting them into treatment. Further research is required into the circumstances taser use might be appropriate in response to persons experiencing psychiatric crisis. Research on the following questions might aid the development of evidence-based policy with respect to the use of tasers and other physical force against persons experiencing psychiatric crisis:

- What are best practices with respect to an emergency medical response to persons experiencing apparent psychiatric crisis?
- In which circumstances might taser use on persons experiencing psychiatric crisis pose particular health risks? In which circumstances might taser use be a safe option for the officer, a person in crisis, and other persons involved?

#### **5. Collect data on other use-of-force incidents**

This data collection effort did not include information on other police-citizen encounters in which less-lethal force was used. As a result, the collection of data on taser incidents cannot be compared to other incidents involving less-lethal force, or to incidents resolved without use of force. We recommend that in all cases in which force is used, use-of-force and incident reports be submitted to the state to increase transparency and improve the analyses of all these circumstances.

#### **6. Review intent and implementation of model policy as mandated by PA 14-149**

POSTC complied with Public Act 14-149 by adopting a model policy on the use of tasers. Although the law does not specify any required content for the POSTC model policy, the adopted policy does not incorporate several guidelines recommended by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), or TASER International, Inc. The policy also does not establish guidelines on criteria that would “meet or exceed” the model policy standards. An enforcement mechanism for the requirement that departments adopt a conforming policy is not specified.

Presumably, the intent of the law was to determine best practices for taser usage in Connecticut, and to have those standards uniformly promulgated throughout law enforcement agencies. As such, policymakers may want to revisit the law’s specifications for the model policy mandate and make this policy with respect to POSTC subject to review and approval under the Uniform Administrative Procedure Act (Chapter 54 of the Connecticut General Statutes).

#### **7. Review additional department policies regarding use-of-force**

Police departments maintain policies on the use-of-force continuum and the use of less-lethal weapons. These policies may address dealing with emotionally disturbed, mentally ill or disabled persons; handling suicidal persons; and other issues that impact an officer’s decision to deploy a taser. The departments also maintain policies and curriculum for pre- and in-service officer training in the use of tasers and other less-lethal weapons; communication skills; de-escalation techniques;

understanding and communicating with disturbed, disabled, suicidal or other persons in distress; and tactical training exercises. None of these policies were reviewed in the course of this study. To conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the adequacy and effectiveness of the POSTC model policy and departmental policies, all policies pertaining to and impacting the use of tasers should be reviewed to determine how they balance public safety, the safety of suspects, and the safety of police officers. Alternatively, police departments could prepare and submit an annotated version of their taser policy that explicitly cross-references rules and situations that may be covered under other departmental policies.

# APPENDIX

## Appendix A:

Public Act 14-149: *An Act Concerning the Use of Electronic Defense Weapons by Police Officers*

POSTC General Notice 14-02 (Council Action- Adoption of the Model Policy Concerning the Use of Conducted Electronic Weapons by Police Officers Pursuant to Public Act 14-149.)

Electronic Defense Weapon Data Collection Form

**Appendix B:** Full tables are available for certain information presented in Section IV of this report. The table number listed below corresponds with the table number in Section IV.

Table 1.0: Total Number of Taser Reports Submitted

Table 2.0a: Taser Subject Demographics by Race/Ethnicity

Table 2.0b: Taser Subject Demographics by Gender

Table 3.0: Type of Taser Deployment by Department

Table 5.0: Total Number of Persons Tased by Department

Table 12.0: Number of Taser Deployments by Department

# APPENDIX A





***Substitute House Bill No. 5389***

***Public Act No. 14-149***

***AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF ELECTRONIC DEFENSE WEAPONS BY POLICE OFFICERS.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2015*) (a) For purposes of this section, "law enforcement agency" means the Division of State Police within the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection or any municipal police department, "police officer" means a state police officer or a sworn member of a municipal police department and "electronic defense weapon" has the same meaning as provided in section 53a-3 of the general statutes.

(b) (1) Each law enforcement agency that authorizes a police officer employed by such agency to use an electronic defense weapon shall: (A) Not later than January 31, 2015, adopt and maintain a written policy that meets or exceeds the model policy developed by the Police Officer Standards and Training Council regarding the use of an electronic defense weapon; (B) require police officers to document any use of an electronic defense weapon in use-of-force reports; (C) not later than January fifteenth following each calendar year in which an electronic defense weapon is used, prepare an annual report using the form developed and promulgated by the Police Officer Standards and Training Council pursuant to section 2 of this act that details the use of

**Substitute House Bill No. 5389**

electronic defense weapons by police officers employed by such agency and includes (i) data downloaded from the electronic defense weapons after their use, (ii) data compiled from the use-of-force reports, and (iii) statistics on each such use of an electronic defense weapon, including, but not limited to, (I) the race and gender of each person on whom the electronic defense weapon was used, provided the identification of such characteristics shall be based on the observation and perception of the police officer that used the electronic defense weapon, (II) the number of times the electronic defense weapon was activated and used on such person, (III) the injury, if any, suffered by such person against whom the electronic defense weapon was used, and (IV) if the electronic defense weapon that was used had different usage modes, the mode used; and (D) not later than January 15, 2016, and annually thereafter, submit the report to the Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division within the Office of Policy and Management.

(2) Not later than January 15, 2016, and annually thereafter, a law enforcement agency that does not authorize police officers employed by such agency to use an electronic defense weapon shall submit a report to the Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division within the Office of Policy and Management stating that such agency does not authorize its officers to use electronic defense weapons.

(c) The Office of Policy and Management shall post the annual reports submitted pursuant to subsection (b) of this section on its Internet web site.

Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2014*) Not later than January 1, 2015, the Police Officer Standards and Training Council established under section 7-294b of the general statutes shall develop and promulgate (1) a model policy that provides guidelines on the use of an electronic defense weapon by a police officer, and (2) a standardized form for reporting the use of electronic defense weapons

***Substitute House Bill No. 5389***

pursuant to subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of section 1 of this act.

Approved June 6, 2014



# State of Connecticut

## Police Officer Standards and Training Council Connecticut Police Academy



### GENERAL NOTICE 14-02

**To:** Chief Law Enforcement Officers  
Training Officers  
Protective Services  
Resident Troopers

**From:** Thomas E. Flaherty  
Police Academy Administrator

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas E. Flaherty".

**Date:** December 24, 2014

**Subject:** Council Action – Adoption of the Model Policy Concerning the Use of Conducted Electronic Weapons by Police Officers Pursuant to Public Act No. 14-149 which SUPERSEDES General Notice No. 13-01

At a Special Meeting of the Police Officer Standards and Training Council on December 22, 2014, the Council adopted the attached documents entitled "Model Policy – Use of Conducted Electrical Weapons" and "Electronic Defense Weapon Annual Report" pursuant to Public Act No. 14-149. This Council action supersedes the recommended model policy included in General Notice No. 13-01.

Also included with this notice is a Model Use of Force Report endorsed by the Council and this is recommended for implementation by those Law Enforcement agencies whose existing Use of Forces reports do not capture all of the data required in the Annual Report that is to be submitted to the Office of Policy and Management.

The Council has additionally included with this notice, a copy of Public Act No. 14-149.

Please note that Public Act No. 14-149 requires "each law enforcement agency that authorizes a police officer employed by such agency to use an electronic defense weapon shall: (A) Not later than **JANUARY 31, 2015** adopt and maintain a written policy that meets or exceeds the



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model policy developed by the Police Officer Standards and Training Council regarding the use of an electronic defense weapon”; (B) “require police officers to document any use of an electronic defense weapon in use-of-force reports”; (C) “not later than January fifteenth following each calendar year in which an electronic defense weapon is used, prepare an annual report using the form developed and promulgated by the Police Officer Standards and Training Council” which includes:

- (i.) “data downloaded from the electronic defense weapons after their use”
- (ii.) “data compiled from the use of force reports”
- (iii.) “statistics on each use of an electronic defense weapon, including, but not limited to,”
  - a. “the race and gender of each person on whom the electronic defense weapon was used, provided the identification of such characteristics shall be based on the observation and perception of the police officer that used the electronic defense weapons”
  - b. “the number of times the electronic defense weapon was activated and used on such person”
  - c. “the injury, if any, suffered by such person against whom the electronic defense was used”
  - d. “if the electronic defense that was used had different modes, the mode used”.

The Public Act also requires that not later than January 15, 2016 and annually thereafter, the law enforcement agency shall submit a report to the Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division within the Office of Policy and Management.

Not later than January 15, 2016, and annually thereafter, a law enforcement agency that does not authorize police officers employed by such agency to use an electronic defense weapon shall submit a report to the Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division with the Office of Policy and Management stating that such agency does not authorize its officers to use electronic defense weapons.

It should be noted, because of the number of data points that must be captured on the Electronic Defense Weapon Annual Report, the forms should be submitted to OPM per the instructions on the form “as soon as practicable after approval by the submitting agency”.

Finally, the Use of Force Report is distributed to be employed at the option of a law enforcement agency to meet the requirements of reporting such uses.

This policy can be found at the POST website [www.ct.gov/post](http://www.ct.gov/post).

Questions or comments may be directed to my attention in writing either by e-mail or letter.

**State of Connecticut  
Police Officer Standards and Training Council  
Model Policy  
Use of Conducted Electrical Weapons**

**1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE:**

A. Purpose: To establish Department policy governing the use of Conducted Electrical Weapons (CEW) by sworn members of the (INSERT NAME OF INDIVIDUAL POLICE DEPARTMENT HERE) Police Department and to ensure compliance with applicable State statute(s) and regulations adopted by the Police Officer Standards and Training Council.

B. This Model Policy is intended to provide guidance for proper deployment and use of a CEW by a police officer in the field. This Model Policy is implemented via a Model Lesson Plan and related Instructor's Addendum compiled in conjunction with this policy as part of a Connecticut CEW Model Policy and Training Module.

**2. DISCUSSION:**

A. This policy deals with the use of the CEW. Per CGS 53a-22, police officers are justified in using physical force when and to the extent that he or she reasonably believes such to be necessary to: (1) Effect an arrest or prevent the escape from custody of a person whom he or she reasonably believes to have committed an offense, unless he or she knows that the arrest or custody is unauthorized; or (2) defend himself or herself or a third person from the use or imminent use of physical force while effecting or attempting to effect an arrest or while preventing or attempting to prevent an escape.

B. Officers are specifically granted the legal authority to carry weapons under C.G.S. 53-206 "while engaged in the pursuit of such officer's official duties."

C. The reasonableness of a use of force under this policy will be measured by standards established by the Supreme Court in *Graham v. Connor*, 490 U.S. 386 (1989). The reasonableness of a particular use of force must be judged from the perspective of a reasonable officer on the scene, in light of the facts and circumstances confronting them, without regard to their underlying intent or motivation, and not by the "20/20 vision of hindsight." The calculus must embody an allowance for the fact that police officers are often forced to make split-second decisions about the amount of force necessary in a particular situation. Factors relevant to the determination of reasonableness include the severity of the crime that the officer believed the suspect to have committed or be committing, whether the suspect presented an immediate threat to the safety of officers or the public, and whether the suspect actively resisted arrest or attempted to escape, along with any other fact or circumstance which reasonably bears upon the decision to use force.

**3. DEFINITIONS:**

**A. CONDUCTED ELECTRICAL WEAPON:** (Also referred to as an 'Electronic Defense Weapon', or 'EDW.' The CEW is a less than lethal weapon designed to disrupt a subject's central nervous system by deploying battery-powered electrical energy sufficient to cause uncontrolled muscle contractions and override voluntary motor responses.

**B. PHYSICAL FORCE:** Per CGS 53a-22, police officers are justified in using physical force when and to the extent that he or she reasonably believes such to be necessary to: (1) Effect an arrest or prevent the escape from custody of a person whom he or she reasonably believes to have committed an offense, unless he or she knows that the arrest or custody is unauthorized; or (2) defend himself or herself or a third person from the use or imminent use of physical force while effecting or attempting to effect an arrest or while preventing or attempting to prevent an escape.

**C. LESS-THAN-LETHAL FORCE:** A use of force which is not likely to cause death or serious physical injury.

**D. ACTIVE RESISTANCE:** Any physical act, or failure to act, undertaken by a subject, against an officer, that could reasonably interfere with or defeat a lawful attempt by the officer to gain physical control of the subject.

**E. PASSIVE RESISTANCE:** The mere failure or refusal to cooperate with the lawful directions of a police officer by one or more unarmed, non-violent persons, such as in the case of an act of civil disobedience or a non-violent handcuffed prisoner.

**F. DEPLOYMENT:** Does not include the mere removal of the CEW from the holster, but does include any use of a CEW against any person, including the illumination of the laser sight onto an individual.

**4. POLICY:**

**A.** It shall be the policy of the (INSERT NAME OF INDIVIDUAL POLICE DEPARTMENT HERE) Police Department that all officers will only use the level of force necessary to accomplish lawful objectives.

**B.** It shall be the policy of the (INSERT NAME OF INDIVIDUAL POLICE DEPARTMENT HERE) Police Department that when a subject is injured through any deployment of a CEW, the officer shall offer the injured party medical assistance. In the case of obvious physical injury or when otherwise prudent, the officer shall request medical dispatch.

**C.** Beginning January 1, 2015, it shall be the policy of the (INSERT THE NAME OF INDIVIDUAL POLICE DEPARTMENT HERE) Police Department that following any deployment of a CEW, a written Use of Force report will be generated and filed to accommodate CEW deployment tracking. Reports must be completed in their entirety and specifically describe the justification for the use



of force, including events and communications leading up to the physical confrontation, the subject's behavior, the environment in which the incident took place, and any injuries sustained by anyone during the event.

D. It shall be the policy of the (INSERT NAME OF INDIVIDUAL POLICE DEPARTMENT HERE) Police Department that all written reports generated regarding the deployment of a CEW be promptly reviewed by a supervisor to determine that the deployment of the CEW was appropriate. Should a determination be made by the supervisor that the deployment of the CEW was questionable or inappropriate, the matter shall be immediately referred for further review per Department policy. The supervisor's findings regarding the deployment of the CEW shall be documented in the Use of Force Report.

E. It shall be the policy of the (INSERT NAME OF INDIVIDUAL POLICE DEPARTMENT HERE) Police Department that all sworn persons have access to the Departmental CEW policy and receive training as to its content prior to obtaining authorization to carry a CEW. CEW's may only be deployed by sworn personnel who have satisfactorily completed this agency's approved training.

F. Beginning January 1, 2016, it shall be the policy of the (INSERT NAME OF INDIVIDUAL POLICE DEPARTMENT HERE) Police Department to complete the POSTC EDW/CEW Annual Report Form as required by statute. Said Report Form is to be submitted to the State of Connecticut Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division within the Office of Policy and Management no later than January 15<sup>th</sup> covering the preceding calendar year. The report is required for any department having deployed a CEW against any individual within the calendar year; any department authorizing the deployment of a CEW but not having any deployments within that calendar year; and, finally, by any department not authorizing the deployment of the CEW. Fields are provided on the Annual Report for those departments falling into the latter two (2) categories.

G. It shall be the policy of the (INSERT NAME OF INDIVIDUAL POLICE DEPARTMENT HERE) Police Department to conduct an annual review of all CEW deployments in the field in order to evaluate policy compliance.

**5. WEARING OF THE CEW:**

A. The device shall be carried in an approved holster on the side of the body opposite the service handgun if it is to be worn in a waist holster or a thigh holster. Officers not assigned to uniformed patrol may be authorized to utilize other Department-approved holsters and carry the device consistent with Department training and the requirement as set out in this paragraph.

B. The device shall be carried in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations and Department training. The CEW shall be pointed in a safe direction during loading, unloading, or when handled in other than an operational deployment.

C. Officers authorized to deploy the device shall be issued a minimum of one spare cartridge as a backup in case of cartridge failure, the need for redeployment, or in case the first cartridge's leads break during engagement.

The spare cartridges shall be stored and carried in a manner consistent with training and the cartridges replaced consistent with the manufacturer's expiration requirements.

**6. DEPLOYMENT OF THE CEW:**

A. As soon as reasonably possible, a supervisor should be requested to respond to the scene of a potential or completed CEW deployment.

B. As in all uses of force, certain individuals may be more susceptible to injury. Officers should be aware of the greater potential for injury when deploying a CEW against persons of small stature irrespective of age, or those who the officer has reason to believe are pregnant, equipped with a pacemaker, the infirm, or those in obvious ill health.

C. Upon discharging the device, the officer shall energize the subject the least number of times and no longer than necessary to accomplish the legitimate operational objective.

D. The subject should be secured as soon as practical while disabled by the CEW to minimize the number of deployment cycles. In determining the need for additional energy cycles, officers should be aware that an energized subject may not be able to respond to commands during or immediately following exposure. Personnel should deploy the CEW for one standard cycle and then evaluate the situation to determine if subsequent cycles are necessary. Each application of the CEW should be independently justifiable. Officers should only deploy the CEW to the extent necessary to gain control of the subject.

E. Whenever possible, prior to a CEW deployment, a loud, clear warning of a CEW deployment should be made. When aiming the CEW at a subject, officers should adhere to the manufacturer's preferred target zones whenever reasonably possible. Officers should take into consideration the capabilities and limitations of the CEW whenever employing it at close quarters.

F. A CEW should be aimed by use of the aiming laser(s) when possible. Fixed sights shall be used when the laser sight(s) are ineffective or as a secondary aiming tool.

G. The device may also be deployed in certain circumstances in a "drive stun" mode. Deployment of the CEW in drive stun mode, from a policy perspective, is no different than a cartridge deployment. It is important to note that when the device is deployed in this manner, it is primarily a pain compliance tool; is minimally effective compared to a conventional cartridge deployment; and is more likely to leave marks on the subject's skin.

H. Officers should not intentionally activate more than one CEW at a time against a subject.

I. The CEW should not be deployed:

1. In a punitive or coercive manner;

2. On any subject demonstrating only passive resistance.
3. In any environment where an officer knows that a potentially flammable, volatile, or explosive material is present (including but not limited to OC spray with volatile propellant, gasoline, natural gas, or propane);
4. Where it is likely that the subject may drown or fall from an elevated area.

**7. MEDICAL ATTENTION:**

A. Any subject against whom a CEW is deployed shall be evaluated by qualified medical personnel. Qualified medical personnel include medical professionals including medical doctors, licensed nurses, EMS first responders, or police officers certified in the deployment of a CEW and currently certified at no less than the Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) level (formerly known as Medical Response Technician (MRT)). The Department must also be cognizant of any medical regulations or guidelines regarding CEW's asserted by any medical authority having jurisdiction over the agency in whose jurisdiction the CEW is deployed.

B. Police officers shall not remove probes which have implanted anywhere on a subject's body unless authorized to do so by competent medical authority or the officer has been certified to do so by a POSTC certified instructor.

C. The following persons shall be transported to a hospital for examination following exposure to a CEW. Any person who:

1. Loses consciousness, exhibits irregular breathing or is known to be under the influence of drugs or medications;
2. Is hit in a sensitive area (e.g., face, head, female breasts, male groin);
3. Does not appear to recover properly after being energized;
4. Has been energized more than three times or has been subjected to a continuous energy cycle of 15 seconds or more;
5. Has had more than one CEW effectively used against him or her in any given incident;
6. Has exhibited signs of extreme uncontrolled agitation or hyperactivity prior to CEW deployment;
7. Is in a potentially susceptible population category, including persons of small stature irrespective of age, the infirm, or those who the officer has reason to believe are pregnant, equipped with a pacemaker, or in obvious

ill health;

8. Exhibits bizarre or violent behavior, including self-mutilation;
9. Is naked in a public place or exhibits signs of overheating;
10. Evidences slurring or slowness of speech;
11. Subject claims to have been injured or in medical distress.

# **APPENDIX B**

**Table 1.0: Total Number of Taser Reports Submitted  
(Sorted Alphabetically)**

<b>Department Name</b>	<b>Number of Taser Incidents</b>	<b>% of Statewide Taser Incidents</b>
Ansonia	2	0.37%
Berlin	2	0.37%
Bethel	3	0.55%
Bloomfield	9	1.66%
Branford	4	0.74%
Bridgeport	26	4.80%
Bristol	25	4.61%
Canton	1	0.18%
CCSU	1	0.18%
Cheshire	2	0.37%
Clinton	2	0.37%
Coventry	4	0.74%
Cromwell	3	0.55%
Danbury	10	1.85%
Darien	4	0.74%
Derby	4	0.74%
East Hampton	1	0.18%
East Hartford	10	1.85%
East Haven	5	0.92%
East Windsor	2	0.37%
Enfield	1	0.18%
Fairfield	2	0.37%
Farmington	4	0.74%
Glastonbury	3	0.55%
Greenwich	1	0.18%
Groton	1	0.18%
Guilford	5	0.92%
Hamden	1	0.18%
Hartford	21	3.87%
Ledyard	4	0.74%
Manchester	26	4.80%
Meriden	11	2.03%
Middletown	12	2.21%
Milford	5	0.92%
Mohegan Tribal	3	0.55%
Naugatuck	4	0.74%
New Britain	17	3.14%
New Canaan	2	0.37%
New Haven	33	6.09%
New London	11	2.03%
New Milford	4	0.74%
Newington	1	0.18%
Newtown	2	0.37%
North Branford	2	0.37%
North Haven	2	0.37%

**Table 1.0: Total Number of Taser Reports Submitted  
(Sorted Alphabetically)**

<b>Department Name</b>	<b>Number of Taser Incidents</b>	<b>% of Statewide Taser Incidents</b>
Norwalk	26	4.80%
Norwich	13	2.40%
Orange	3	0.55%
Plainfield	1	0.18%
Plainville	2	0.37%
Plymouth	7	1.29%
Putnam	4	0.74%
Ridgefield	1	0.18%
Rocky Hill	2	0.37%
Seymour	1	0.18%
Shelton	2	0.37%
Simsbury	1	0.18%
South Windsor	4	0.74%
Southington	2	0.37%
Stamford	14	2.58%
State Police	42	7.75%
Stratford	10	1.85%
Suffield	2	0.37%
Torrington	2	0.37%
Trumbull	7	1.29%
UCONN Health	1	0.18%
Vernon	12	2.21%
Wallingford	4	0.74%
Waterbury	30	5.54%
Waterford	8	1.48%
Watertown	1	0.18%
West Hartford	9	1.66%
West Haven	9	1.66%
Westport	1	0.18%
Wethersfield	1	0.18%
Willimantic	8	1.48%
Winchester	3	0.55%
Windsor	9	1.66%
Windsor Locks	1	0.18%
Woodbridge	1	0.18%

**Table 2.0a: Taser Subject Demographics by Race/Ethnicity  
(Sorted Alphabetically)**

Department Name	White		Black		Hispanic		All Other	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Ansonia	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%
Berlin	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	50.0%
Bethel	3	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Bloomfield	1	11.1%	7	77.8%	1	11.1%	0	0.0%
Branford	2	50.0%	2	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Bridgeport	3	11.5%	13	50.0%	10	38.5%	0	0.0%
Bristol	12	48.0%	3	12.0%	9	36.0%	1	4.0%
Canton	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
CCSU	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Cheshire	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Clinton	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Coventry	3	75.0%	0	0.0%	1	25.0%	0	0.0%
Cromwell	1	33.3%	2	66.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Danbury	3	30.0%	4	40.0%	2	20.0%	1	10.0%
Darien	1	25.0%	1	25.0%	2	50.0%	0	0.0%
Derby	2	50.0%	1	25.0%	1	25.0%	0	0.0%
East Hampton	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
East Hartford	2	20.0%	8	80.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
East Haven	3	60.0%	2	40.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
East Windsor	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Enfield	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Fairfield	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%
Farmington	3	75.0%	1	25.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Glastonbury	1	33.3%	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	1	33.3%
Greenwich	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Groton	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Guilford	5	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Hamden	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Hartford	3	14.3%	11	52.4%	6	28.6%	1	4.8%
Ledyard	3	75.0%	0	0.0%	1	25.0%	0	0.0%
Manchester	11	42.3%	9	34.6%	6	23.1%	0	0.0%
Meriden	7	63.6%	3	27.3%	1	9.1%	0	0.0%
Middletown	7	58.3%	4	33.3%	1	8.3%	0	0.0%
Milford	3	60.0%	1	20.0%	1	20.0%	0	0.0%
Mohegan Tribal	1	33.3%	2	66.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Naugatuck	3	75.0%	1	25.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
New Britain	2	11.8%	3	17.6%	12	70.6%	0	0.0%
New Canaan	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
New Haven	6	18.2%	20	60.6%	7	21.2%	0	0.0%
New London	3	27.3%	5	45.5%	3	27.3%	0	0.0%
New Milford	4	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Newington	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Newtown	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
North Branford	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
North Haven	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%



**Table 2.0a: Taser Subject Demographics by Race/Ethnicity  
(Sorted Alphabetically)**

Department Name	White		Black		Hispanic		All Other	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Norwalk	4	15.4%	14	53.8%	7	26.9%	1	3.8%
Norwich	8	61.5%	2	15.4%	3	23.1%	0	0.0%
Orange	3	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Plainfield	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Plainville	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Plymouth	6	85.7%	0	0.0%	1	14.3%	0	0.0%
Putnam	3	75.0%	1	25.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Ridgefield	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Rocky Hill	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Seymour	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Shelton	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Simsbury	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
South Windsor	4	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Southington	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Stamford	2	14.3%	8	57.1%	4	28.6%	0	0.0%
State Police	27	64.3%	12	28.6%	2	4.8%	1	2.4%
Stratford	3	30.0%	3	30.0%	3	30.0%	1	10.0%
Suffield	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%
Torrington	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%
Trumbull	1	14.3%	3	42.9%	3	42.9%	0	0.0%
UCONN Health	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Vernon	8	66.7%	3	25.0%	1	8.3%	0	0.0%
Wallingford	4	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Waterbury	9	30.0%	12	40.0%	9	30.0%	0	0.0%
Waterford	5	62.5%	2	25.0%	1	12.5%	0	0.0%
Watertown	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
West Hartford	4	44.4%	3	33.3%	2	22.2%	0	0.0%
West Haven	5	55.6%	3	33.3%	1	11.1%	0	0.0%
Westport	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Wethersfield	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Willimantic	3	37.5%	0	0.0%	5	62.5%	0	0.0%
Winchester	2	66.7%	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Windsor	3	33.3%	5	55.6%	1	11.1%	0	0.0%
Windsor Locks	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Woodbridge	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

**Table 2.0b: Taser Subject Demographics by Gender  
(Sorted Alphabetically)**

Department Name	Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%
Ansonia	2	100.0%	0	0.0%
Berlin	2	100.0%	0	0.0%
Bethel	3	100.0%	0	0.0%
Bloomfield	9	100.0%	0	0.0%
Branford	4	100.0%	0	0.0%
Bridgeport	24	92.3%	2	7.7%
Bristol	23	92.0%	2	8.0%
Canton	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
CCSU	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Cheshire	2	100.0%	0	0.0%
Clinton	2	100.0%	0	0.0%
Coventry	4	100.0%	0	0.0%
Cromwell	3	100.0%	0	0.0%
Danbury	9	90.0%	1	10.0%
Darien	3	75.0%	1	25.0%
Derby	4	100.0%	0	0.0%
East Hampton	0	0.0%	1	100.0%
East Hartford	10	100.0%	0	0.0%
East Haven	5	100.0%	0	0.0%
East Windsor	1	50.0%	1	50.0%
Enfield	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Fairfield	2	100.0%	0	0.0%
Farmington	4	100.0%	0	0.0%
Glastonbury	3	100.0%	0	0.0%
Greenwich	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Groton	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Guilford	4	80.0%	1	20.0%
Hamden	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Hartford	21	100.0%	0	0.0%
Ledyard	4	100.0%	0	0.0%
Manchester	24	92.3%	2	7.7%
Meriden	9	81.8%	2	18.2%
Middletown	11	91.7%	1	8.3%
Milford	5	100.0%	0	0.0%
Mohegan Tribal	3	100.0%	0	0.0%
Naugatuck	4	100.0%	0	0.0%
New Britain	15	88.2%	2	11.8%
New Canaan	2	100.0%	0	0.0%
New Haven	31	93.9%	2	6.1%
New London	11	100.0%	0	0.0%
New Milford	2	50.0%	2	50.0%
Newington	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Newtown	2	100.0%	0	0.0%
North Branford	2	100.0%	0	0.0%
North Haven	2	100.0%	0	0.0%

**Table 2.0b: Taser Subject Demographics by Gender  
(Sorted Alphabetically)**

Department Name	Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%
Norwalk	25	96.2%	1	3.8%
Norwich	11	84.6%	2	15.4%
Orange	3	100.0%	0	0.0%
Plainfield	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Plainville	2	100.0%	0	0.0%
Plymouth	7	100.0%	0	0.0%
Putnam	4	100.0%	0	0.0%
Ridgefield	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Rocky Hill	2	100.0%	0	0.0%
Seymour	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Shelton	2	100.0%	0	0.0%
Simsbury	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
South Windsor	4	100.0%	0	0.0%
Southington	2	100.0%	0	0.0%
Stamford	13	92.9%	1	7.1%
State Police	40	95.2%	2	4.8%
Stratford	9	90.0%	1	10.0%
Suffield	2	100.0%	0	0.0%
Torrington	2	100.0%	0	0.0%
Trumbull	7	100.0%	0	0.0%
UConn Health	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Vernon	11	91.7%	1	8.3%
Wallingford	4	100.0%	0	0.0%
Waterbury	29	96.7%	1	3.3%
Waterford	3	37.5%	5	62.5%
Watertown	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
West Hartford	9	100.0%	0	0.0%
West Haven	9	100.0%	0	0.0%
Westport	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Wethersfield	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Willimantic	8	100.0%	0	0.0%
Winchester	3	100.0%	0	0.0%
Windsor	7	77.8%	2	22.2%
Windsor Locks	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Woodbridge	1	100.0%	0	0.0%

**Table 3.0: Type of Taser Deployment by Department  
(Sorted Alphabetically)**

Department Name	Warning		Cartridge		Drive-Stun		Cartridge and Drive Stun		Not Reported	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Ansonia	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Berlin	0	0.0%	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Bethel	2	66.7%	0	0.0%	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Bloomfield	6	66.7%	1	11.1%	2	22.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Branford	1	25.0%	3	75.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Bridgeport	8	30.8%	12	46.2%	0	0.0%	6	23.1%	0	0.0%
Bristol	17	68.0%	7	28.0%	0	0.0%	1	4.0%	0	0.0%
Canton	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
CCSU	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Cheshire	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%
Clinton	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Coventry	4	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Cromwell	3	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Danbury	7	70.0%	2	20.0%	0	0.0%	1	10.0%	0	0.0%
Darien	2	50.0%	2	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Derby	0	0.0%	4	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
East Hampton	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
East Hartford	6	60.0%	3	30.0%	1	10.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
East Haven	2	40.0%	2	40.0%	0	0.0%	1	20.0%	0	0.0%
East Windsor	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Enfield	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Fairfield	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Farmington	3	75.0%	1	25.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Glastonbury	2	66.7%	0	0.0%	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Greenwich	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Groton	3	75.0%	1	25.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Guilford	0	0.0%	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Hamden	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Hartford	0	0.0%	19	90.5%	1	4.8%	1	4.8%	0	0.0%
Ledyard	4	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Manchester	16	61.5%	8	30.8%	2	7.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Meriden	0	0.0%	8	72.7%	0	0.0%	3	27.3%	0	0.0%
Middletown	3	25.0%	6	50.0%	1	8.3%	2	16.7%	0	0.0%
Milford	1	20.0%	4	80.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Mohegan Tribal	0	0.0%	2	66.7%	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Naugatuck	2	50.0%	0	0.0%	1	25.0%	1	25.0%	0	0.0%
New Britain	9	52.9%	6	35.3%	1	5.9%	1	5.9%	0	0.0%
New Canaan	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
New Haven	17	51.5%	14	42.4%	1	3.0%	1	3.0%	0	0.0%
New London	8	72.7%	1	9.1%	1	9.1%	0	0.0%	1	9.1%
New Milford	2	50.0%	0	0.0%	1	25.0%	1	25.0%	0	0.0%
Newington	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Newtown	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
North Branford	0	0.0%	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
North Haven	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%
Norwalk	10	38.5%	13	50.0%	2	7.7%	1	3.8%	0	0.0%
Norwich	3	23.1%	5	38.5%	2	15.4%	3	23.1%	0	0.0%
Orange	2	66.7%	0	0.0%	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Plainfield	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Plainville	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Plymouth	2	28.6%	4	57.1%	1	14.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Putnam	3	75.0%	1	25.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Ridgefield	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Rocky Hill	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%
Seymour	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Shelton	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Simsbury	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
South Windsor	3	75.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	25.0%	0	0.0%
Southington	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Stamford	7	50.0%	5	35.7%	0	0.0%	2	14.3%	0	0.0%

**Table 3.0: Type of Taser Deployment by Department  
(Sorted Alphabetically)**

Department Name	Warning		Cartridge		Drive-Stun		Cartridge and Drive Stun		Not Reported	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
State Police	3	7.1%	30	71.4%	3	7.1%	6	14.3%	0	0.0%
Stratford	8	80.0%	2	20.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Suffield	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Torrington	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Trumbull	6	85.7%	0	0.0%	1	14.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
UConn Health	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Vernon	11	91.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	8.3%	0	0.0%
Wallingford	3	75.0%	1	25.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Waterbury	9	30.0%	19	63.3%	2	6.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Waterford	5	62.5%	2	25.0%	0	0.0%	1	12.5%	0	0.0%
Watertown	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
West Hartford	5	55.6%	4	44.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
West Haven	0	0.0%	5	55.6%	2	22.2%	2	22.2%	0	0.0%
Westport	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Wethersfield	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Willimantic	2	25.0%	6	75.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Winchester	2	66.7%	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Windsor	6	66.7%	2	22.2%	0	0.0%	1	11.1%	0	0.0%
Windsor Locks	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Woodbridge	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

**Table 5.0: Total Number of Persons Tased by Department  
(Sorted Alphabetically)**

<b>Department Name</b>	<b>Number of Taser Deployments</b>	<b>% of Statewide Taser Deployments</b>
Ansonia	1	0.33%
Berlin	2	0.67%
Bethel	1	0.33%
Bloomfield	3	1.00%
Branford	3	1.00%
Bridgeport	18	6.00%
Bristol	8	2.67%
Canton	0	0.00%
CCSU	1	0.33%
Cheshire	1	0.33%
Clinton	0	0.00%
Coventry	0	0.00%
Cromwell	0	0.00%
Danbury	3	1.00%
Darien	2	0.67%
Derby	4	1.33%
East Hampton	1	0.33%
East Hartford	4	1.33%
East Haven	3	1.00%
East Windsor	2	0.67%
Enfield	1	0.33%
Fairfield	2	0.67%
Farmington	1	0.33%
Glastonbury	1	0.33%
Greenwich	1	0.33%
Groton	1	0.33%
Guilford	2	0.67%
Hamden	1	0.33%
Hartford	21	7.00%
Ledyard	0	0.00%
Manchester	10	3.33%
Meriden	11	3.67%
Middletown	9	3.00%
Milford	4	1.33%
Mohegan Tribal	3	1.00%
Naugatuck	2	0.67%
New Britain	8	2.67%
New Canaan	0	0.00%
New Haven	16	5.33%
New London	2	0.67%
New Milford	2	0.67%
Newington	0	0.00%
Newtown	1	0.33%
North Branford	2	0.67%
North Haven	2	0.67%

**Table 5.0: Total Number of Persons Tased by Department  
(Sorted Alphabetically)**

<b>Department Name</b>	<b>Number of Taser Deployments</b>	<b>% of Statewide Taser Deployments</b>
Norwalk	16	5.33%
Norwich	10	3.33%
Orange	1	0.33%
Plainfield	1	0.33%
Plainville	1	0.33%
Plymouth	5	1.67%
Putnam	1	0.33%
Ridgefield	0	0.00%
Rocky Hill	2	0.67%
Seymour	1	0.33%
Shelton	0	0.00%
Simsbury	0	0.00%
South Windsor	1	0.33%
Southington	0	0.00%
Stamford	7	2.33%
State Police	39	13.00%
Stratford	2	0.67%
Suffield	0	0.00%
Torrington	1	0.33%
Trumbull	1	0.33%
UConn Health	0	0.00%
Vernon	1	0.33%
Wallingford	1	0.33%
Waterbury	21	7.00%
Waterford	3	1.00%
Watertown	1	0.33%
West Hartford	4	1.33%
West Haven	9	3.00%
Westport	0	0.00%
Wethersfield	0	0.00%
Willimantic	6	2.00%
Winchester	1	0.33%
Windsor	3	1.00%
Windsor Locks	0	0.00%
Woodbridge	1	0.33%

**Table 12.0: Number of Taser Deployments by Department  
(Sorted Alphabetically)**

Department Name	One Deployment		Two Deployments		More than 3 Deployments		Unknown Deployments	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Ansonia	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Berlin	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%
Bethel	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Bloomfield	2	66.7%	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Branford	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%
Bridgeport	9	50.0%	5	27.8%	4	22.2%	0	0.0%
Bristol	7	70.0%	2	20.0%	1	10.0%	0	0.0%
CCSU	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Cheshire	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Danbury	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	2	66.7%	0	0.0%
Darien	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Derby	2	50.0%	1	25.0%	1	25.0%	0	0.0%
East Hampton	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
East Hartford	4	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
East Haven	2	66.7%	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
East Windsor	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Enfield	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Fairfield	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%
Farmington	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Glastonbury	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Greenwich	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Groton	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Guilford	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Hamden	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Hartford	11	52.4%	9	42.9%	1	4.8%	0	0.0%
Manchester	5	50.0%	3	30.0%	2	20.0%	0	0.0%
Meriden	6	54.5%	4	36.4%	1	9.1%	0	0.0%
Middletown	7	77.8%	1	11.1%	1	11.1%	0	0.0%
Milford	3	75.0%	1	25.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Mohegan Tribal	3	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Naugatuck	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
New Britain	5	62.5%	2	25.0%	1	12.5%	0	0.0%
New Haven	13	81.3%	2	12.5%	1	6.3%	0	0.0%
New London	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	100.0%
New Milford	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%
Newtown	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
North Branford	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
North Haven	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	1	50.0%
Norwalk	10	62.5%	3	18.8%	1	6.3%	2	12.5%
Norwich	5	50.0%	1	10.0%	4	40.0%	0	0.0%
Orange	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Plainfield	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Plainville	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Plymouth	3	60.0%	0	0.0%	2	40.0%	0	0.0%
Putnam	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Rocky Hill	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%
Seymour	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%



**Table 12.0: Number of Taser Deployments by Department  
(Sorted Alphabetically)**

Department Name	One Deployment		Two Deployments		More than 3 Deployments		Unknown Deployments	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
South Windsor	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Stamford	4	57.1%	1	14.3%	2	28.6%	0	0.0%
State Police	19	48.7%	5	12.8%	11	28.2%	4	10.3%
Stratford	0	0.0%	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Torrington	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Trumbull	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Vernon	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Wallingford	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Waterbury	7	33.3%	6	28.6%	8	38.1%	0	0.0%
Waterford	2	66.7%	0	0.0%	1	33.3%	0	0.0%
Watertown	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
West Hartford	2	50.0%	1	25.0%	1	25.0%	0	0.0%
West Haven	4	44.4%	3	33.3%	1	11.1%	1	11.1%
Willimantic	5	83.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	16.7%
Winchester	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Windsor	1	33.3%	2	66.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Woodbridge	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%