

#### **12.22 Agency Use of "Tasers".**

- (1) The use of a specific "Electro-Muscular Disruption Device" (Taser) is authorized for use by Sheriff's Office members certified through the Training Unit.
- (2) Only specific models proposed by the Training Unit, approved by the Sheriff, and issued by the Sheriff's Office shall be authorized for use.
- (3) Use of the Taser shall be consistent with "ominous/active" resistance as prescribed in "Levels IV and V" of the Sheriff's Office Use of Force Continuum.
- (4) The sole purpose for deploying a Taser shall be to temporarily immobilize a threat to facilitate immediate control of the individual by use of restraints, and/or placement in a cell, vehicle, or other secure location.
- (5) Members deploying the Taser shall be responsible for assessing the effectiveness of the tool on the threat. If it appears the device is not reasonably effective or sufficiently immobilizing the individual, use of the Taser shall be discontinued and alternative tactics and/or tools shall be employed.
- (6) Except in the event of a spontaneous assault on a member, the following objectives shall be adhered to:
  - (a) When reasonable, members shall warn the threat of the potential use of the Taser prior to deployment.

- (b) Immediately prior to the actual deployment of the Taser, the activating member shall communicate his or her intent by clearly announcing, "Taser, Taser, Taser."
  - (c) Whenever possible, a reasonable number of staff shall be present to safely apply restraints and/or secure the threat after deployment.
- (7) Use of Chemical Agents and Tasers in a Correctional Facility.
- (a) Secure locations for the availability of Chemical Agents and Tasers in a facility shall be established by the Facility Commanders. Locations shall be in areas for immediate use and where inmates are not allowed access.
  - (b) Only members currently qualified in its use will deploy the Chemical Agent or Taser.
  - (c) Deployment of a Chemical Agent or Taser may be authorized for the following:
    - i. When lesser use of force is not effective, or the authorizing member reasonably believes a lesser level of force is unlikely to be effective;
    - ii. When other options for gaining compliance have been considered or exhausted;
    - iii. For the prevention of violence;
    - iv. For suppression of a disturbance with a minimum hazard to inmates and staff;
    - v. Incapacitation and restraint of violent inmates who are endangering life, property and/or security of a facility;
    - vi. When dealing with a combative inmate during the booking process or cell extraction;
    - vii. When moving an inmate who may become combative.
- (8) Reporting.
- (a) Any activation of a Taser, regardless of the effect, by a "contact or drive" discharge or by the firing of probes at a person or an animal, shall be considered an application of force and documented in accordance with existing Use of Force reporting requirements.
  - (b) In conjunction with the normal reporting requirements, members shall include in the report:
    - i. Any verbal warnings issued to the threat prior to deployment;

- ii. The approximate distance between the deploying member and the threat;
    - iii. The number and duration(s) of discharge(s);
    - iv. The serial number of the cartridge(s) used; and,
    - v. Disposition of the probes, if deployed.
  - (c) When Tasers are used inside a correctional facility.
    - i. Except as provided in Section 12.22 (8) (c) (ii) below, any introduction and potential use of a Taser into a secured facility shall be documented on an Information Report by the member.
    - ii. Members introducing a Taser into a secured facility who witness or are involved in a use of force related to the Taser introduction shall document the incident consistent with the provisions of CD01.014.074
- (1-8) HAZARD REPORTS.
- (9) Disposition of Fired Probes.
    - (a) In all cases, regardless of whether criminal charges are contemplated, the probes and the discharged cartridge(s) shall be collected and maintained as evidence.
    - (b) Whenever possible, photographs of the affected area of the individual's body should be obtained and placed into evidence. Consent should be obtained before photographing personally sensitive areas.
    - (c) In all cases, fired probes shall be handled in a manner consistent with existing body fluid precaution procedures.
  - (10) Taser Data.
    - (a) Data stored on a specific Taser may be downloaded as part of an investigation.
  - (11) Taser Security and Storage.
    - (a) Whether on duty or off duty, members are responsible to maintain secure control of the Taser.
    - (b) When not carried on the person, members shall secure the Taser in a locked container capable of preventing unauthorized access to the device.

## OP MANUAL

### 11.7 TASER, LESS LETHAL WEAPON SYSTEM

#### 11.7.1 POLICY

Only those members currently certified with the TASER, as described below, are authorized to use it.

#### 11.7.2 PROCEDURE

1. The **TASER** is a less lethal weapon system that delivers electrical energy and is designed for the purpose of subduing persons without causing serious injury or death.
2. The **Air cartridge** is a device that contains two probes which are connected to the cartridge by a light gauge wire. When the Air Cartridge is fired, the probes attach to the subject which allows for the conduction of energy.
3. A **drive stun** is the technique of using the TASER with either a spent Air cartridge or no Air cartridge to make physical contact with a subject and deliver energy.

#### 11.7.3 TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

1. The Training Unit is responsible for the training and re-certification of members in the proper use and deployment of the TASER. Course dates for TASER training will be announced by the Training Unit. Members will apply for TASER training via a training application. To obtain certification members must complete the TASER initial certification course as conducted by the Training Unit. To maintain certification members must attend periodic refresher training as mandated by the Training Unit.

#### 11.7.4 USE OF TASER

1. Only members currently certified in its use will deploy the TASER. The TASER may be used in circumstances where a person displays the intent to engage in violent, aggressive actions; displays the intent to engage in suicidal behavior; or displays the intent to engage in physical resistance to a lawful police action.

2. Members deploying the TASER, if feasible, should be supported by at least one officer capable of providing immediate cover.

#### **11.7.5 VERBAL WARNINGS**

1. Members will, if feasible, provide a warning to the subject before deploying the TASER. The warning should be an explicit statement such as, "Stop, get on the ground, or you will be tasered."
2. Members should announce to cover officers that the TASER is being deployed. A verbal notification such as, "TASER, TASER, TASER," should be used.

#### **11.7.6 MEDICAL TREATMENT**

1. When the TASER is used on a person, EMS personnel will be summoned to the scene. EMS personnel will evaluate the person's need for medical treatment.
2. Deputies certified to use/carry the TASER may remove probes that have penetrated the skin as taught in the TASER certification classes, except in circumstances described below:
  - a. The probe enters an eye, the face, reproductive organ, or other sensitive area, which may cause disfigurement or loss of function. In these cases EMS should be consulted as to the person's need to be taken to an emergency room where the probes can be removed and the person evaluated.

#### **11.7.7 ACTIONS FOLLOWING THE USE OF THE TASER**

1. Following the operational discharge of TASER probes, the TASER probes, cartridge and wires will be collected and placed into evidence. Members will use biohazard/sharps precautions when handling TASER probes that were removed from a person. The expended TASER probes will be re-inserted, point down, into the discharged air cartridge and covered with biohazard tape before being placed into evidence bags.
2. Members will photograph the areas of the body where the TASER was applied (probe application and/or drive stun application), if possible, before and after probe removal. Consent should be obtained before photographing personally sensitive areas. All photographs of probe strikes will be placed into evidence.

#### **11.7.8 NOTIFICATION AND REPORTING OF USE**

1. Members deploying a TASER as a part of a use of force incident will, as soon as practical, notify an on-duty supervisor.
2. Members deploying a TASER on a person and/or deploying the TASER as a means to control the action(s) of an individual by the pointing of the TASER will, in accordance with Use of Force policy, complete a Hazard Report and any other reports necessary documenting the circumstances of the TASER deployment prior to the end of shift. The report shall document:
  - a. The specific circumstances leading to the use of the TASER.
  - b. All verbal warnings given to officers and the subject. If no warnings were given, members will document the circumstances that precluded any warnings.
  - c. The distance from which the TASER was used.
  - d. The serial numbers of all expended air cartridges.
  - e. The name and DPSST number of the officer designated as immediate cover.
  - f. The name and DPSST number of the notified and/or reporting supervisor.
  - g. That EMS responded and the results of any evaluation.

#### **11.7.9 RESPONSIBILITY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND CONTROL**

1. Members carrying the TASER shall ensure that the TASER is operating normally at the beginning of each shift by conducting a spark check as instructed in their initial certification course. Any malfunction or performance issues regarding any issued TASER shall be reported to the Training Unit.
2. Supervisors shall ensure that all pertinent information is documented in the appropriate reports and that all appropriate evidence is collected following the use of the TASER.
3. The Training Unit manager is responsible for the procurement, maintenance and issuance of the TASER and associated equipment. The Training Unit manager is responsible for the

training and re-certification of members in the use of the TASER. The Training Unit manager is responsible for evaluating the TASER program, review of the TASER database reports and the TASER data collection.