

Police Powers Scrutiny Panel



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1 November 2021

Police Powers Scrutiny Panel meeting minutes. Meeting no. 4.

Monday 1 November 2021. In person meeting held at Wiltshire Police Headquarters, Devizes.

Attendees

- Sergeant Tom Ellerby – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) officer
- Emily Adams – EDI Officer
- Lisa Collins – Chair
- Anton James – Member
- Abdul Amin – Member
- Jonathan Poulton – Member
- Ken Oxley – Member
- Liz Priscott – Member
- Chris Callow – Member
- Steve Botham – Member
- Anthony Pickernell – Member
- Nazma Rumruttun – Member

Apologies

- No other attendees due to Covid restrictions

Welcome

Tom Ellerby introduced himself to the panel, cited the Terms of Reference and asked all panel members to review and sign a copy of the Confidentiality Agreement.

This was the first meeting where Taser use was shown on the Body Worn Video (BWV) footage. Considerations were explained to the panel due to the images, videos, and potential aggression and distress shown in the BWV.

The panel also had a full explanation of Taser, including what it is, the impact on a person when they are tasered, the legality of using a Taser and the training that officers have to complete before they are authorised to use Taser.

An overview of the law relating to use of force was also explained to the panel.

Data Update

Key headlines were reviewed and briefly discussed. Panel members were signposted to the location of the [Use of Force](#) data on the Wiltshire Police website.

Taser can be used in several ways:

- Aim – Aiming a Taser at a person may act as a deterrent or lead on to the Taser being discharge.
- Arc / arcing – When the Taser trigger is squeezed, the electric current can be seen between the two contacts and can also be heard crackling.
- Red dot – The taser has a laser to allow the officer to ensure accuracy when firing.
- Fire – The Taser fires two probes attached by copper wire to the Taser. The probes complete the electric circuit which temporarily incapacitates the suspect.
- Drive stun – If the Taser has not been fully effective, the end of the Taser can be placed onto the suspect.

In the last 12 months, there were 155 Taser firings.

- 50% of taser use over the last 12 months have been red dot only.
- 21.3% have been drawn, nothing further.
- 16% have been discharged
- Other usage comprises drive stun, arcing etc.

The highest proportion of usage was recorded in Swindon, 52%.

For the last 12-month period, Taser usage data shows that the likelihood of having Taser usage against you is the following (per 1,000 of the population):

- Black – 3.3
- Asian – 0.3
- White – 0.2
- Chinese – 0.0
- Ethnic Minority – 1.1

Updates from Previous Meeting

There were no updates provided in respect of red or amber results from Stop Searches as all were deemed to be green in the previous meeting, and therefore reasonable grounds for Stop and Search were provided.

We informed the panel on the work we have carried out to feed back lessons learnt and positive comments to the Officers who had their Stop Searches reviewed. This work will continue after every Scrutiny Panel meeting that is held.

- Minutes from the meeting were published internally
- Staff were contacted directly
- The Force was informed that the panel had taken place and Lessons Learnt were provided to the organisation
- An internal internet website was set up to be constantly updated and reviewed
- Training was updated

Independent Review of Use of Taser Led by Lisa Collins (Independent Chair)

10 incidents were chosen by the Chair to be reviewed. During the meeting, 7 of the incidents were reviewed including the BWV.

To undertake review and scrutiny of the records presented, panel members were asked to consider the circumstances under which the Taser was utilised. They were then asked to provide and make an assessment based on a Red, Amber, Green criteria (R.A.G) as shown on the right.

R.A.G Assessment Criteria

Green – In the lay view of the Panel, the circumstances were reasonable for the use of Taser to be carried out.

Amber – In the lay view of the Panel, the circumstances leave questions to be answered or some concerns were raised.

Red – In the lay view of the Panel, the circumstances did not warrant the use of Taser and further investigation is required.

Résumé of search results provided by panel members

Incident No.	Assessment Results	Comments
1	50% green 50% amber	No warning of Taser use given. The Officer was much smaller than the subject.
2	100% green	Everything possible was done before Taser deployed. Very impressed with the welfare and aftercare given to the subject.
3	100% green	Female Officer kept her cool and acted professionally. She clearly warned the suspect that Taser may be used.
4	100% green	Officer was in the property on their own in a confined space.
5	70% green 30% amber	Officers voice showed they had adrenalin going. Those that voted amber said there were other ways that the person could have been stopped.

Incident No.	Assessment Results	Comments
6	100% green	Taser was announced clearly, and the suspect was still resisting, and the space was confined.
7	n/a	BWV turned on too late, therefore neither panel could not make a fair assessment

The Officers involved in the cases that were reviewed will be contacted directly with lessons learnt and positive feedback from the panel.

The occurrences that had amber votes on will be reviewed by the local Inspectors and updates will be provided at the next panel meeting. Minutes from the meetings will be published internally and externally.

Internal communication will continue to be sent out to the whole organisation and the internal internet website will be updated.

Date of Next Meeting

13th December 2021

Contact Details

If there are any questions or queries, please contact the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Department at EDI@wiltshire.police.uk