

WILTSHIRE POLICE



Results From Our Scrutiny Panels on Use of Force

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Results from scrutiny panels on stop and search

Introduction

This document is intended to introduce the ways that we are now reviewing use of force within Wiltshire Police and particularly around stop and search.

Stop and search and use of police powers can be contentious issues. We are committed to looking for disproportionality and scrutinising our uses of force and police powers with the aim of highlighting good practice and learning opportunities.

To achieve this aim we have established an external scrutiny panel and asked members of the public to review incidents and an internal panel from across the whole organisation to review the same incidents. This enables us to see if we view our use of force differently than the public due to our organisational culture.

The external scrutiny panel

The group is made up of local people from a diverse range of backgrounds. Members will attend meetings every 6 weeks to review a sample of files and body worn video (BWV) footage on Stop Search and Use of Powers.

The introduction of BWV allows for a further layer of examination to interactions with the public. BWV footage will be used to assist us in demonstrating our openness and transparency in the application of policing powers.

We have introduced a Police Improvement Group (an internal scrutiny panel) for both Stop Search and Use of Force. 67 Police staff and police officers in different roles all volunteered to review incidents and help us look for good practice and learning opportunities.

In our November meetings we reviewed TASER firings. In the last 12 months there were 31 TASER firings.

Results from scrutiny panels on stop and search

What is a TASER?

A TASER is a Conductive Energy Device (CED) designed to temporarily incapacitate targets allowing them to be approached and handled in an unresisting and safe manner.



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| What | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ CEDs are less lethal weapon system designed to temporarily incapacitate through electrical current▪ It is tactical option available when dealing with an incident with the potential for conflict. |
| Numbers | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Range for the barbs to make contact varies from up to 21 to 25 feet depending on model▪ When two probes make contact , the device delivers electrical discharge that lasts 5 seconds. |
| Impact | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Lose posture, legs go rigid, spasms, stiffen▪ Involuntary noises, cannot respond to commands, be confused |
| Caution | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ CEDs are classified as prohibited weapons by virtue of S5 Firearms Act▪ Officers must apply the National Decision-Making Model (NDM) |
| Legality | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Threshold for decision to deploy a PC with CED is significantly lower than that required to inform use.▪ Discharge must be proportionate, lawful, accountable and absolutely necessary (PLAN). |
| Usage | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Sparking, Aiming, Firing in any mode, or unintentional deployment all constitute usage |
| Verbals | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Usually on first contact officers should ID themselves and their CED• Officers should try to give a clear warning of intention to use it, with sufficient time to comply |
| Post Use | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aftercare on the subject – remove probes, consider hospital, medical assessment at custody• Use of form reporting |
| Training | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The minimum contact time for initial training is 18 hours.• There will follow a minimum 6 hours per annum of refresher training. |

Results from scrutiny panels on stop and search

How we reviewed the TASER use

The independent chair of our external scrutiny panel chose 10 incidents of TASER firings to be reviewed by the panel.

The external scrutiny panel met in November 2021 and reviewed 7 incidents of TASER use and reviewed the Body Worn Video footage. Unfortunately, we were unable to review all 10 in time given but it was important to capture the feedback from the incidents shown and not rush through them.

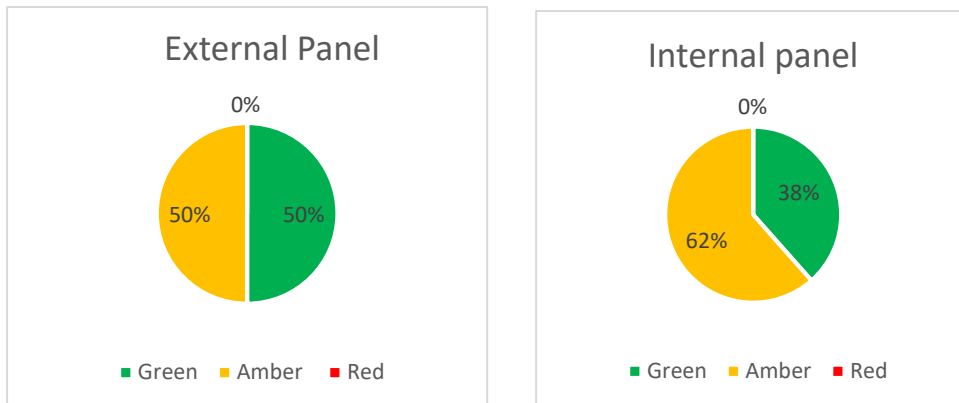
The internal scrutiny panel reviewed the same incidents. They were given the exact same information and viewed the same footage as the external scrutiny panel.

Each panel used a traffic light system to grade the incidents and commented on each video looking for learning and good practice.

Learning and scores from both panels were recorded and compared to look for any differences that may be attributed to police culture.

Scrutiny Panel Results

Incident 1

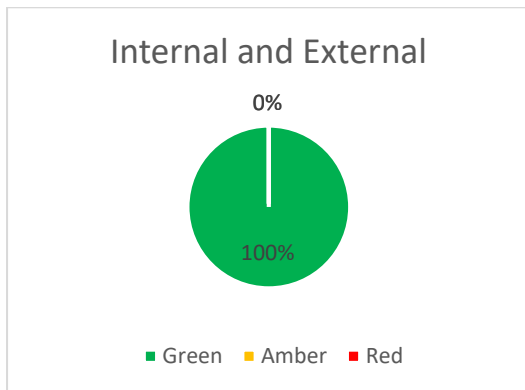


The external scrutiny panel votes were evenly split on Green Amber both being 50%. They commented that no warning of TASER was given. They also picked up on size difference in that the officer was much smaller than the subject.

The internal scrutiny panel also could not hear a warning nor hear the officers tell the suspect they had TASER. The panel asked if other options may [or could?] have been considered.

Results from scrutiny panels on stop and search

Incident 2

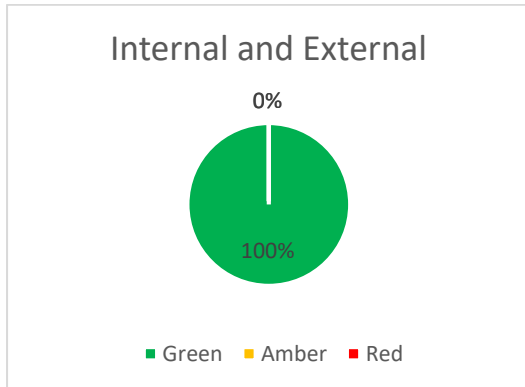


Both panels were unanimous and voted Green for this incident.

The external scrutiny panel commented that everything possible was done before the TASER was used. The Panel were really impressed with the welfare and aftercare given to the subject.

The internal panel also noted that the aftercare given to the subject was excellent.

Incident 3

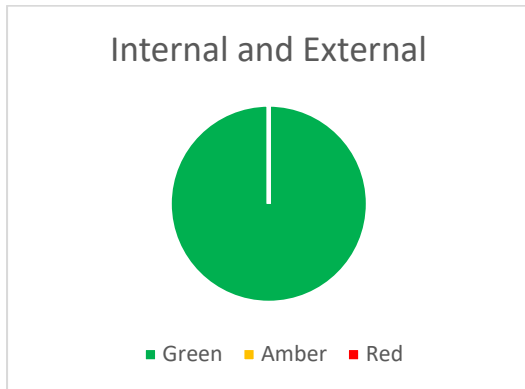


Both panels were unanimous and voted Green for this incident.

The external panel highlighted this good practise "All credit to female officer. She's kept her cool and acted professionally." They also commented on her clear warning that TASER may be used.

The internal scrutiny panel members commented that this was a textbook example of taser use.

Incident 4

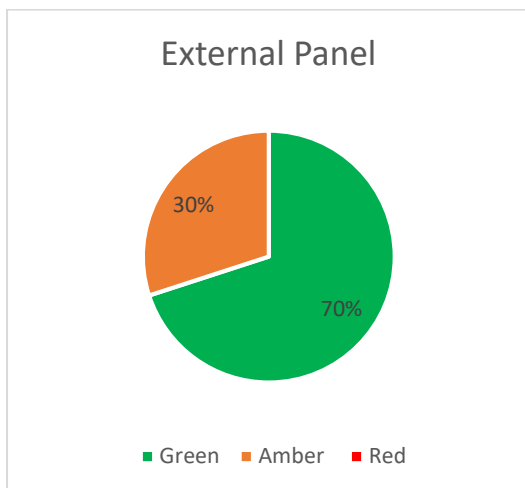


Both panels were unanimous and voted Green for this incident.

The external scrutiny panel noted that that officer was in the property on their own and in a confined space.

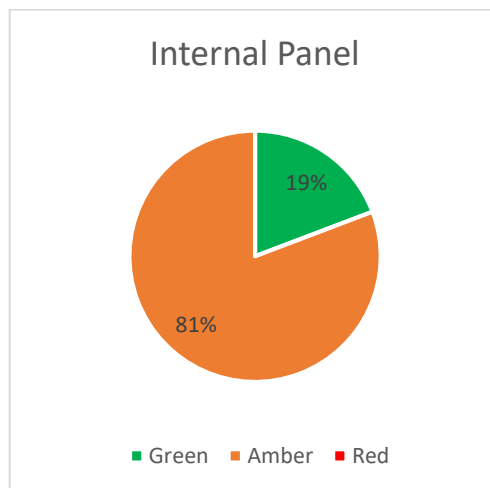
The internal scrutiny panel also noted the incident was in a confined space, baton and pava were not able to be used and TASER was the best option.

Incident 5



The external scrutiny panel voted 70% Green and 30% Amber

The external panel commented that the police officers voice showed that they had had adrenalin going. Those that voted Amber felt there were possibly other ways that the person could have been stopped.

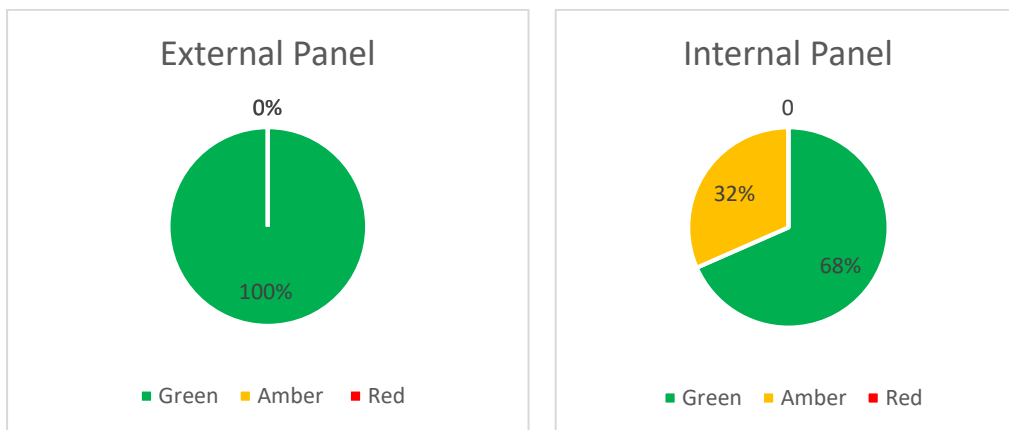


The Internal panel voted 81% Amber and 19% Green

Internal panel members comments included that did the officers bring the situation on themselves with the initial approach? A panel member went green for the TASER use but believed it shouldn't have reached the point where TASER was needed.

In isolation taser was justified, but the initial approach was dealt with badly. There were learning issues in respect of aftercare. Also noted that officers should all download their footage at incidents.

Incident 6



The external scrutiny panel unanimously voted green for this incident as the panel felt the officer announced everything clearly and the suspect was still resisting. The panel noted that it was a confined space again.

The internal scrutiny panel members voted 68% Green 32% Amber.

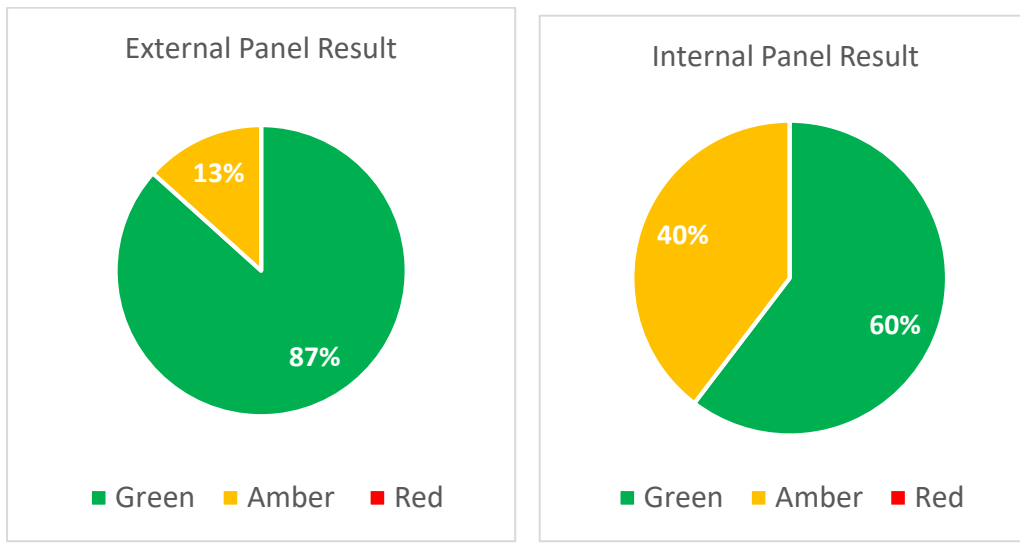
The panel wanted to see the footage of the officer who fired the TASER. They also said there were too many TASERS drawn. Learning from this clip was all officers need to use their Body Worn Videos (BWV) and download the footage from incidents.

Incident 7

The Body Worn Video was turned on far too late. Neither panel could make fair assessment due to footage starting too late.

Learning from this incident was that officers should wherever possible turn on their Body Worn Video as soon as possible.

Comparison of results between scrutiny panels



In total, across the 7 incidents our external scrutiny panel voted 87% Green and 13% Amber our internal scrutiny panel voted 60% Green and 40% Amber.

Key Learning identified

1. All officers need to download and save their Body Worn Video footage
2. Body Worn Video should be turned on as soon as possible
3. This learning will be re-emphasised in training and throughout corporate messaging.

Good Practice

1. Aftercare is really important and we will review of the incidents showing good aftercare to see if we can make changes to improve this across the organisation.
2. Announcing TASER in the majority of incidents the TASER officer announced they were carrying TASER clearly.

Next steps

Our scrutiny panels will next sit in December 2021 and will review stop and search.