



Derbyshire Constabulary Independent Advisory Group

Use of Force Taser Scrutiny Meeting

Date: 21st August 2024

Attendance Police

Pete Moss – Chief Taser Instructor (PM)

Police Constable Louisa Briscoe – Deputy Chief Taser Instructor (LB)

Heather Cunningham – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Compliance Officer (HC)

Independent members

PW - Independent member

TC - Independent member

SP - Independent member

SPe - Independent member

JM - Independent member

GR - Independent member



CB - Independent member

DD - Independent member

AA - Independent member

1) Welcome and Introductions

This meeting was held virtually via Microsoft Teams, but the facility was also there for Independent Advisory Group (IAG) members to attend Derbyshire Force Headquarters (FHQ) to attend in person if they so wished.

The chair SP welcomed all members to the meeting and introduced PM. All attendees were invited to introduce themselves. SP reminded independent members of the confidentiality agreement they had signed.

PM presented the cases and the Body Worn Video (BWV). PM and Police Constable LB answered questions and provided an explanation around the procedure and training for tasers. The cases presented were not thematic but randomly selected for the panel to scrutinise.

These minutes contain numerous abbreviations. A description of them is explained below.

BWV – Body Worn Video

DP - Detained person

FHQ – Force Headquarters

IAG – Independent Advisory Group

NTE- Night Time Economy

OCG – Organised Crime Gang

PPST – Public and Personal Safety Training

STO – Specially Trained Officer



2) Feedback from previous meeting

There was no feedback from the previous meeting.

3) Use of Police Powers Scrutiny

Case 1:

Date	22/05/2024
Time	00:07
Location	Long Eaton
Subject	Female 18 – 30 years White – North European
Type of force used	Taser Drawn
Impact Factors (from Use of Force form)	Psychological
Incident summary	<p>Report of windows being smashed in and a female making threats on the phone saying she has pepper spray in the house and would not give up without a fight. Female states if police don't come in she will sort it out herself.</p> <p>Upon arrival at the incident the female was in the street holding a kitchen knife. Officers have drawn taser where the female dropped the knife and is then arrested.</p>
Outcome (i.e. arrested)	Detained in custody
Body Worn Video	Yes
Panel Observations	<p>An independent member (IM) felt that the Body Worn Video (BWV) had shown that the Detained Person (DP) was fully compliant when the taser was pointed at her.</p> <p>An IM commented on the clear, concise instructions from the officer with a taser to the DP and felt that they had an assertive voice.</p>



	An IM asked whether the DP has been under the influence of drugs or alcohol. PW confirmed that this information was not recorded on the form as an impact factor, but the DP appeared to be having challenges with their mental health.
Panel Decision	Unanimous decision from the panel that the use of force was proportionate.
Actions taken by Police/ feedback	Feedback to be shared with officers and their supervisor.

Case 2:

Date	26/05/2024
Time	01:10
Location	Chesterfield
Subject	Male 18 – 30 years Unknown
Type of force used	Taser Firing
Impact Factors (from Use of Force form)	Drugs
Incident summary	<p>Officer A and officer B were on Night Time Economy (NTE) foot patrol and attended the car park in the town center. A male was riding a dirt bike in a dangerous manner and committing public order offences by swearing.</p> <p>Officer B has used reasonable force to drag him off the bike and both have gone to the floor. The male has then got on top of officer B and raised his fist to him. Officer A considered gassing the male or pulling him off however the risk was high and there was not enough time to do either. The male was tasered to prevent further harm to officer B.</p>
Outcome (i.e. arrested)	Arrested



Body Worn Video	Yes
Panel Observations	<p>An IM felt that the BWV showed officer A to be a little over enthusiastic at the start of the incident. The IM felt that the officer seemed to escalate the situation telling a bystander to 'piss off'. An IM felt that officer A was revving up the situation by telling officer B the woman was vile and she was not speaking to her in earshot of the woman.</p> <p>An IM commented that the 'piss off' comment from officer A was unprofessional.</p> <p>An IM noted that officer A continued to tell the DP that they had been tasered. PM explained that this is part of the aftercare because people who have been tasered can be confused, officers are taught this as part of their taser training.</p> <p>An IM noted that officer B verbally confirmed that he had the situation under control to officer A.</p> <p>An IM asked for clarification as to why the taser was deployed. PM explained there was a moment in which officer B was in a scrap with the DP. Officer A from the BWV appears to have made a decision to use the taser, but the taser was triggered as the DP went to flee.</p> <p>An IM asked if the officer A had provided a warning before triggering the taser. PM explained that it is not a legal requirement to provide a warning before triggering a taser.</p> <p>Police Constable LB explained that officers are told in training to be considerate as to how the use of the taser could be perceived by the public. Police Constable LB confirmed that officer A will be provided feedback around their tactical communications. Police Constable LB explained that the taser trainers teach officers to deescalate situations and noted that the officer was</p>



	<p>speaking to members of the public about bad language and then using poor language when speaking to the public.</p> <p>An IM raised that the panel did not know what officer A had encountered prior to the BWV starting or what incidents the officer may have attended earlier on in the shift and acknowledged that she is only human.</p> <p>PM explained that dealing with drunk individuals who may not be pleasant is part of the job and that officers should be professional. PM stated that officer B was a model of de-escalation and that he did well in encouraging the drunk bystander's friend to try and take her home.</p> <p>An IM felt that officer may have been feeling nervous and under pressure as the BWV showed just two officers at the scene surrounded by a crowd.</p> <p>An IM commented that it was unprofessional for the officers to threaten to lock the woman up. Police Constable LB explained that this is a way to deescalate situations. It gives the person a chance to correct their behaviour before the individual is arrested.</p>
Panel Decision	Agreement that the use of force in this instance was proportionate.
Actions taken by Police/ feedback	Feedback to be shared with officers and their supervisor. Feedback to specifically include discussion around tactical communication with members of the public.

Case 3:

Date	28/06/2024
Time	00:15
Location	Derby City



Subject	Male
Type of force used	Taser Red Dot
Impact Factors (from Use of Force form)	Drugs
Incident summary	<p>Firearms deployment, reports of a male with a machete inside a shed on a caravan site.</p> <p>Suspect called out of shed and red dotted with a taser. Subject compliant and arrested.</p>
Outcome (i.e. arrested)	Arrested.
Body Worn Video	Yes
Panel Observations	<p>PM explained that the DP's parent alerted the police to the DP with a machete.</p> <p>An IM commented that the two firearms officers present at the scene appeared to engage with getting the DP out of the property before all the officers present where prepared.</p> <p>PM explained that the DP had seen the firearms officers and preempted the interaction and the officers reacted. The plan was altered and adapted to the DP voluntarily exiting the building.</p> <p>An IM asked if the officers were present, were only firearms officers. PM explained that it was just firearms officers present at the incident.</p> <p>An IM felt that from viewing the BWV it was clear that the officer was a firearms officer because of the way the officer held the taser.</p> <p>An IM felt that the officer leading the arrest was in charge and used really good communication with the team he was leading. The IM felt that he was very slick, and the operation was very controlled.</p>



	<p>PM explained the firearms officer are highly skilled and trained to deescalate and deal with high pressure situations.</p> <p>An IM felt that the situation was well handled and had a good outcome.</p>
Panel Decision	Unanimous decision from the panel that the use of force was proportionate.
Actions taken by Police/ feedback	Feedback to be shared with officers and their supervisor.

Case 4:

Date	03/08/2024
Time	08:40
Location	Derby City
Subject	Male 18 -30 years Black
Type of force used	Taser Red Dot
Impact Factors (from Use of Force form)	Drugs
Incident summary	<p>On arrival four males were seen to run upstairs with cannabis plants blocking the stairs. One of the males had a meat cleaver above his head. There was a medium, size cannabis grow.</p> <p>All males were arrested for cultivation with a further arrest for one for an assault.</p>
Outcome (i.e. arrested)	Arrested
Body Worn Video	Yes
Panel Observations	An IM asked what red dot stands for in relation to use of taser. Police Constable LB explained that red dots are the lasers that are part of the taser capability. They give an approximate location of where the barbs will hit the subject. The red dots are often verbalised to the subject and are enough to



deescalate the situation so that it does not lead to an actual firing. 9 times out of 10, red dots alone are enough to remove the threat. Police Constable LB explained that once a taser is withdrawn from the holster it is a use of force. Police Constable LB explained that this is why usage looks high and that only around 8% of uses for Derbyshire result in a firing. The national use which results in a firing is 10%.

An IM asked where the other officers were if the job was planned. PM explained that that the job was not planned job but was spontaneous.

An IM commented that they felt the officer was in a very vulnerable position but handled the situation well.

An IM felt that the officer handled the incident well.

An IM felt that the officer should have retreated when he saw the number of offenders and waited for reinforcements. There was a concern around the officer's safety. Police Constable LB that the officer could have retreated but sometimes showing fear (e.g., retreating) can be just as dangerous.

An IM commented that one of the men seen in the BWV appeared to be having a genuine panic attack and felt it was risky of the officer to handcuff this individual to the front.

An IM commented that the officer went to handcuff the individual having a panic attack to the rear but then changed this to the front.

PM explained that the officer was alone and needed to get control of the individual.

An IM highlighted that vulnerable people can get drawn into crime and the man who was



having a panic attack could have been vulnerable so it'd be wrong for people to make assumptions as to whether he was having a panic attack or not. The IM felt that the officer handled the situation really well.

An IM commented on the calm approach the officer had.

An IM noted that on the BWV there was a female officer at the bottom of the stairs with long blonde hair in a ponytail. The IM asked whether this adhered to force standards because in a previous panel meeting members had been told officers with long hair had to have this tied back in a particular way to minimize the risk of the officers hair being grabbed.

Police Constable LB stated that the force has a Uniform Policy which is clear on the standard. Police Constable LB explained that individuals involved with the cultivation of drugs can be trafficked and controlled by Organised Crime Gangs (OCG) which is another element of vulnerability officers should be aware of.

An IM stated that it is best to tell an individual having a panic attack to take long deep breaths. PM explained that in that the officer needed to focus on the threat present and at that point the officer has to maximise his safety and the safety of his colleagues. Officers have to think on their feet and adapt to the environment they are in.

Police Constable LB explained that officers receive Public and Personal Safety Training (PPST) which teaches self, seen, casualty. Officers have to preserve their own safety first. The officer has lots of factors to look at and would have administered first aid if the individual having the panic attack had become unresponsive or unconscious.

An IM asked what the job was the officers



	<p>were initially called to. PM explained that this was not captured on the use of force form, so he was not able to provide that information.</p> <p>An IM felt that the officer handled the situation very well facing three individuals with knives in the room with one being very excitable or having a panic attack.</p> <p>An IM commented that the incident was well handled in the circumstances by the officer.</p> <p>An IM asked if there was something specifically about Derby that attracted crimes related to cannabis cultivation. PM explained that OCG are able to make a lot of money out of it as a business.</p>
Panel Decision	IMs felt that the use of force was proportionate and that the officer handled the situation very well.
Actions taken by Police/ feedback	Feedback to be shared with officers and their supervisor.

Case 5:

Date	07/08/2024
Time	23:00
Location	Derby City
Subject	Male 31 – 64 years White – North European
Type of force used	Taser drawn
Impact Factors (from Use of Force form)	Alcohol, Psychological



Incident summary	<p>No Specially Trained Officer (STO) officers have attended the address where a crowd of four persons are present in the front window with more than one person shouting "he has a knife."</p> <p>The closest available STO attended the incident and have clarified with officer the male alleged to have a knife in his possession is the same as the male opening the front door. The officer draws his taser given the immediate proximity and the need for immediate incapacitation and shouted verbal commands for the man to show his hands and walk towards the officer with the taser. The officer then takes control of the subjects arm and passed him to a colleague to be moved into a sterile area to be arrested and searched.</p>
Outcome (i.e. arrested)	Arrested.
Body Worn Video	Yes
Panel Observations	<p>An IM asked if the taser officer was the second on scene. PM explained that the taser officer was called to attend the scene based on the information received that there was a weapon on scene. The taser officer supported the officers already present at the incident.</p> <p>An IM felt that the BWV was a little confusing and that the response seemed to be all over the place. PM explained that the taser officer appeared to take control of the situation and directed the officers present.</p> <p>An IM noted that the taser officer tried to get a rapport with the DP. PM agreed and highlighted that the officer was assertive without being aggressive and had good tactical communication with officer's present but also individuals present at the incident.</p> <p>An IM noted that the officers seemed to take the word of the individual at the incident that they didn't have a knife. PM highlighted that the person who was supposed to have</p>



	<p>the knife was the person seen in the BWV to be handcuffed.</p> <p>An IM commented that an officer present at the scene could be seen on the BWV to point out to the taser officer the individual who had been said to have a knife in their possession.</p> <p>PM explained that this incident was a good example of de-escalation and that the officer was assertive but friendly. PM stated that he believed the taser officer influenced the outcome of the incident.</p> <p>An IM asked whether there was a female present at the incident. PM explained that there was a female in the property and she was very volatile initially to the officers present but the taser officer calmed her down through tactical communication.</p> <p>An IM noted that the taser officer provided clear instructions to the other officers present about what he was doing. PM agreed with the IM comment but explained he was unsure why the officer did not engage the red dots because if he had needed to discharge the taser the officer had a step in between him doing so.</p> <p>An IM noted the good calm approach the taser officer had at the incident.</p> <p>An IM felt in their opinion that the taser officer took a formal and decisive lead.</p> <p>An IM asked whether a taser could work through heavy/winter clothing. PM explained that a taser does not work through heavy clothing or layers of clothing such as a puffer jacket. Officers with a taser would look at another use of force to another point to aim the taser for example an individual's legs.</p> <p>An IM asked if any serious injuries can be caused if a person with a heart condition or health condition is tasered. PM explained</p>
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	<p>that officers are trained to aim below the chest to minimize any risk of injury. There is always a possibility that an officer cannot accurately aim based on the threat present. PM explained that the taser causes a neuromuscular incapacitation and the biggest risk to injury is an unsupported fall where the person being tasered could hit their head.</p> <p>An IM asked if there will be a point in which all officers are trained to use a taser.</p> <p>PM explained that currently it is a voluntary training programme and highlighted that not all officers want to be taser trained. Police Constable LB highlighted that this would also cost the force. PM explained that if it did become mandatory there would potentially be issues around what would happen to serving officers who did not pass their taser training course.</p> <p>An IM asked whether there is any incentive for officers to complete a taser training course.</p> <p>PM explained that there are no incentive and that officers who are taser trained to not get paid more than officers who are not taser trained.</p>
Panel Decision	IMs felt that the use of force was proportionate and that the officer handled the situation well.
Actions taken by Police/ feedback	Feedback to be shared with officers and their supervisor.

Further Actions

HC to organise with Police Constable LB dates for the Independent Advisory Group members to observe taser training.

Date of next meeting

Wednesday 4th December 2024.

