



Derbyshire Constabulary Independent Advisory Group

Use of Force Taser Scrutiny Meeting

Date: 22nd May 2024

Attendance Police

Pete Moss – Chief Taser Instructor (CTI) (PM)

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

Independent members

FK - Independent member

TC - Independent member

SP - Independent member

LN - 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. Independent member LN was at FHQ with HC who facilitated their involvement in the panel.

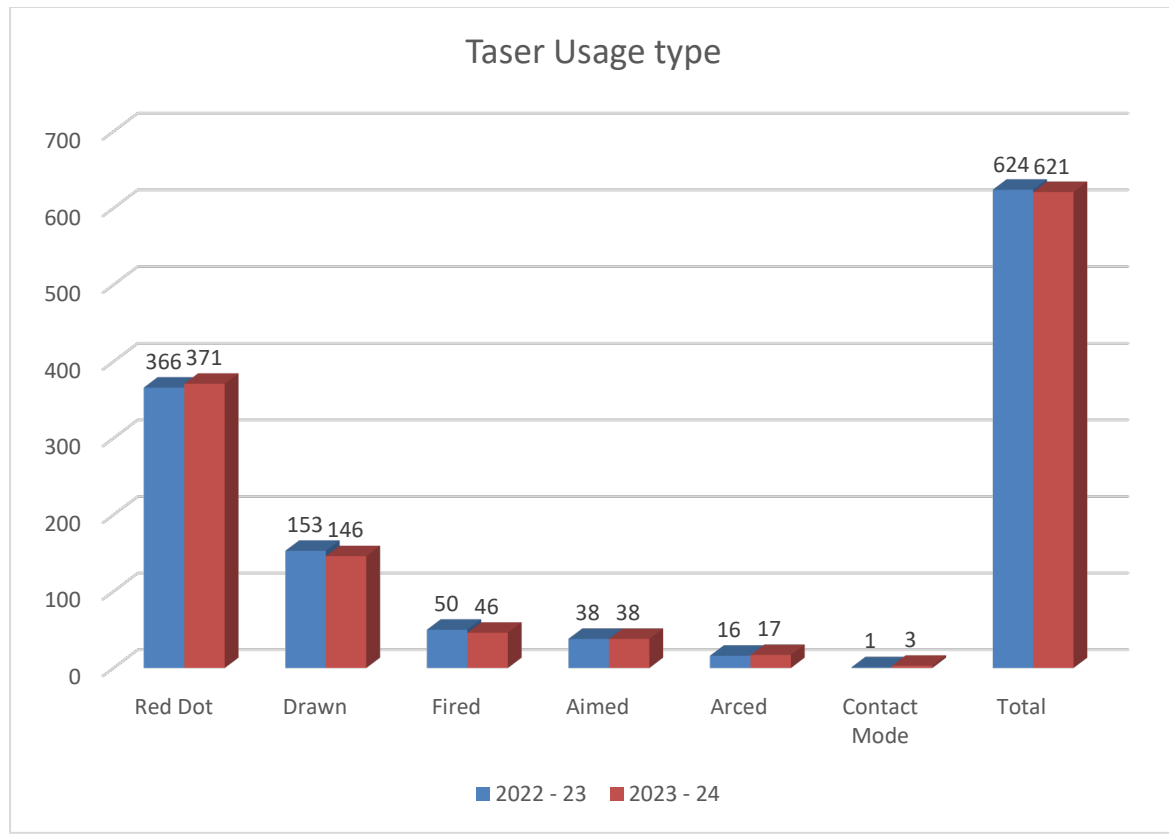
HC welcomed all members to the meeting and introduced PM. All attendees were invited to introduce themselves. HC reminded IAG members of the confidentiality agreement they had signed.

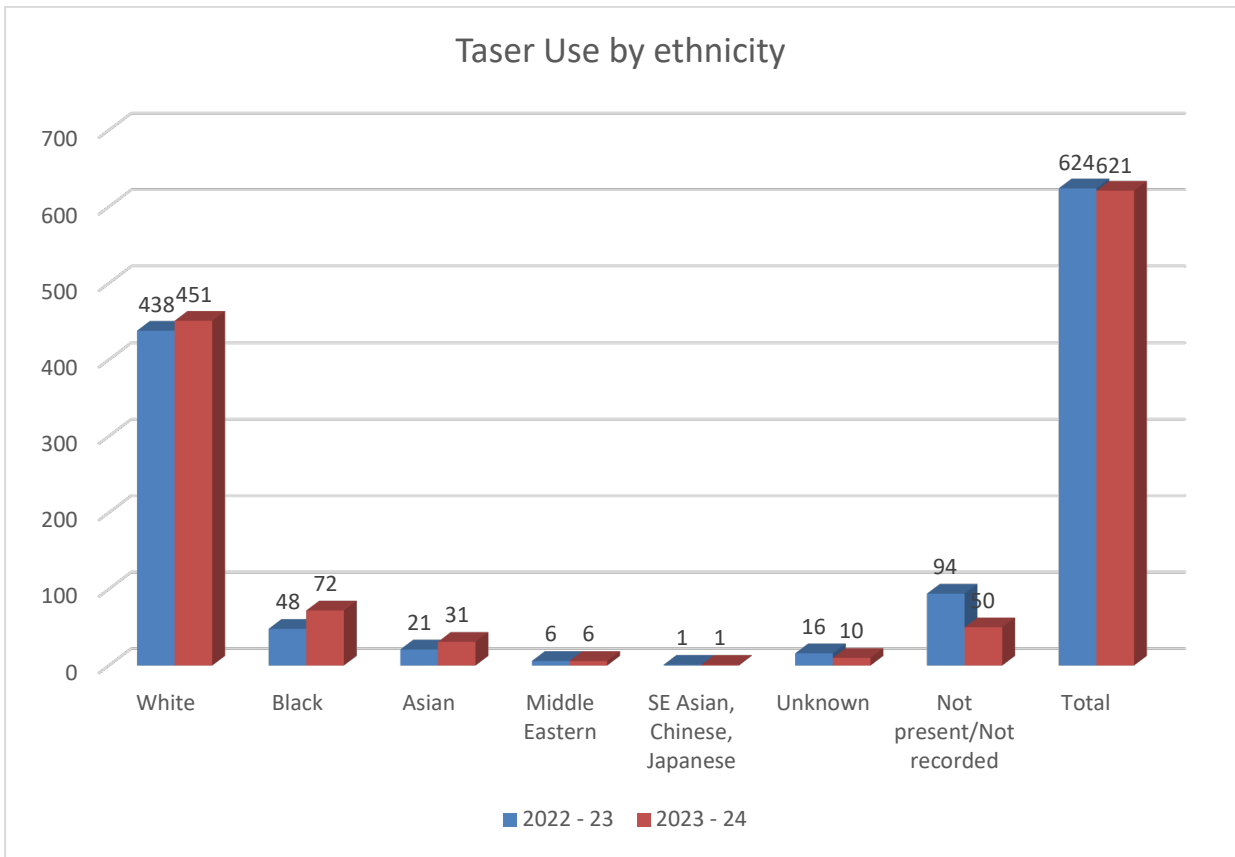
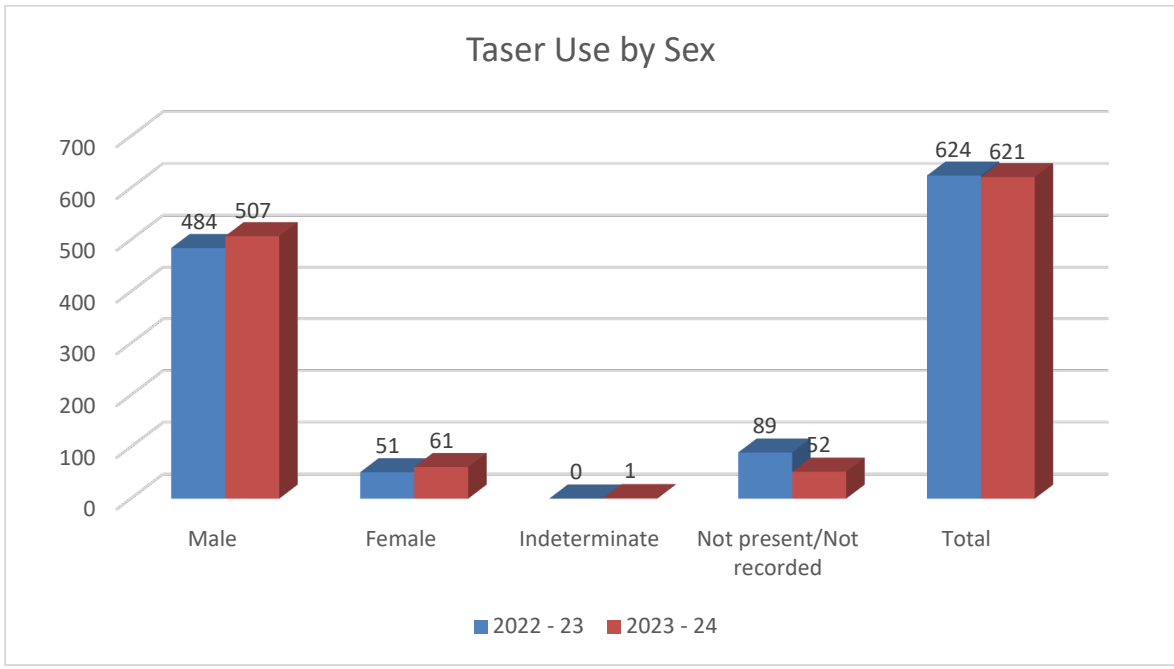
PM presented the cases and the Body Worn Video (BWV). PM answered questions and

provided an explanation around the procedure and training for tasers. The cases presented were not thematic but randomly selected for the panel to scrutinise.

PM provided an overview and explanation around the different stages for use of a taser and statistics of taser use nationally and regionally.

Below is the Use of Force taser data for Derbyshire Constabulary for the financial years 2022 – 2023 and 2023 – 2024. This is presented in three graphs by taser usage, sex (currently captured as gender on force systems) and ethnicity.





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

2) Feedback from previous meeting

There was no feedback from the previous meeting.

3) Use of Police Powers Scrutiny

Case 1:

Date	05/05/2024
Time	21:51
Location	Chesterfield, Derbyshire
Subject	Male 18 – 30 years White – Northern European
Type of force used	Taser red dot.
Impact Factors (from Use of Force form)	Psychological.
Incident summary	<p>Two on duty officers were called to attend a location in Chesterfield because a member of the public had reported to the police that there was a man with a baseball bat wandering around the streets and had been heading towards a group of people. The identity of the male was unknown to officers and his intentions of carrying a baseball bat whilst walking toward a group of people was unknown to officers, the male had the capability of using the baseball bat as a weapon.</p> <p>On arrival at the scene the officer exited the vehicle asked the male to stop, upon seeing the baseball bat the officer withdrew the taser and activated the red dot and identified themselves as a taser officer.</p> <p>The male chose to comply with the officer and drop the bat and followed the officer's instructions to get on the ground. The second officer at the scene, kicked the bat away from the male and handcuffed the DP to the rear, back-to-back position.</p>

Outcome (i.e. arrested)	Arrested, detained in custody.
Body Worn Video	Yes
Panel Observations	<p>An IM asked whether the Detained Person (DP) had any warning markers? PM explained that the officers were aware that the DP was carrying a baseball bat in the evening.</p> <p>An IM asked whether it is usual practice for an officer to have a taser drawn on exiting a vehicle. PM explained that this would depend on the officers perceived threat. In this instance, because the officer could see the DP had a baseball bat, the officer had perceived the threat to require the taser to be drawn.</p> <p>An IM commented on the good level of detail provided on the Use of Force form.</p> <p>An IM felt that a reasonable Use of Force had been used in this instance, because the DP had the potential for a nasty intent.</p> <p>An IM commented on the positive response from the officer who handcuffed the DP. The IM felt that the officer was assertive and provided clear instructions to the DP.</p> <p>An IM asked when the taser is drawn whether the red dot is automatically activated. PM explained that for the red dot to be activated the officer would need to disengage the safety switch, which allows for full usage of the taser.</p> <p>An IM felt that the Use of Force was totally appropriate and correct.</p> <p>An IM asked why the DP was instructed to go to the ground. PM explained that this was to ensure the safety of the DP and the officers to minimize the threat if the DP were to change their mind and use physical force against the officers. The IM asked whether the DP or officers could have been injured when getting the DP off the floor whilst handcuffed. PM explained that all officers receive training on how to safely get a DP from the ground, to sitting to standing. This is to prevent injury to the DP but also the officer.</p>

	An IM noted that the officer who handcuffed the DP kicked the bat away from the DP, whilst maintaining a visual on the DP keeping the situation calm and controlled.
Panel Decision	Justified and proportionate Use of Force.
Actions taken by Police/ feedback	PM to share feedback with officer involved with the incident.

Case 2:

Date	30/04/2024
Time	11:00
Location	Long Eaton, Derbyshire
Subject	Male 31 – 64 years White – North European
Type of force used	Taser Firing.
Impact Factors (from Use of Force form)	Psychological.
Incident summary	Officers attended an address in Long Eaton with a 135 warrant to detain an individual under the Mental Health Act. The officer tried to engage with the male using tactical communication. However, this was unsuccessful. The male punched the officer. The second officer present withdrew their taser and discharged their taser. The taser was not effective. The male ran into the garden at the property where an officer handcuffed the male to the front and escorted him to the street to await transportation.
Outcome (i.e. arrested)	Detained. Ambulance/Medic Treatment at Scene.
Body Worn Video	Yes
Panel Observations	An IM commented on the patience the officer who was speaking to the DP in attempts to negotiate their cooperation. An IM felt that the officer did not freeze upon being punched in the face by the DP but was very brave to have faced the DP who clearly had a poor state of mental health.

	<p>An IM asked if the officer was new in force, because they were being given guidance by another officer present. PM commented that the officer was new in force. PM noted that the taser in this instance was not effective because it has been deployed in a range too close to the DP.</p> <p>An IM felt that the environment made it very challenging for the officer present and that it would have been good to have used verbal tactics to negotiate DP out of the small alleyway in order for the officer to have had more space and control. The IM acknowledged that from the response from the DP in the BWV that cooperation would have been unlikely.</p> <p>An IM asked whether officers contact the family of the DP for help in this situation when they were informed about the DP's mental health. PM explained that the request had come from the mental health professionals who were present at the incident and that contact with the DP's family would be done through them rather than the police.</p>
Panel Decision	Justified and proportionate Use of Force.
Actions taken by Police/ feedback	PM to share feedback with officer involved with the incident.

Case 3:

Date	16/04/2024
Time	15:19
Location	Chesterfield, Derbyshire
Subject	Male 21 – 64 years White – North European
Type of force used	Taser Red dot, Taser Arced.
Impact Factors (from Use of Force form)	Psychological.

<p>Incident summary</p>	<p>Officers were called to attend to an incident where a male had absconded from a mental health facility and was intimating suicide by bridge or train line.</p> <p>Upon locating the individual, the male showed aggression towards the officers. The male ignores the officer's instructions to stop, and the officer withdraws the taser and red dots the male, the officer then arced the taser.</p> <p>The officer tries to use tactical communication to engage the male, but he continues to ignore the officer's instructions. Mental health professionals present also attempt to use tactical communication with the male. The male assaults the officer and is handcuffed by the officers attending the incident and detained. He is then returned to the mental health facility.</p>
<p>Outcome (i.e. arrested)</p>	<p>Detained. No further action.</p>
<p>Body Worn Video</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
<p>Panel Observations</p>	<p>An IM commented that the officer mentions their concern for the DP's safety last when explaining the reason, they are present and lists the concern for all the other people at the scene before mentioning the DP.</p> <p>An IM questioned whether the DP thought the officer had a gun because he told the officer to shoot him. PM explained that the officer had warned the DP that he had a taser and would shoot and explained that the same terminology is used with firearms.</p> <p>An IM felt that the officer was calm and consistently emphasizing he was there for the DP's safety.</p> <p>An IM felt that the BWV illustrated that the officer was patient with the DP and didn't want to use the taser and kept using verbal tactics.</p> <p>An IM noted that they liked that the officer arced the taser to demonstrate the next stage of the use of the taser.</p> <p>An IM asked whether the force would pursue the assault on the officer. PM explained that in this instance it is unlikely action would be</p>

	taken because the DP was a patient on a mental health ward. However, if the DP had caused injuries to an officer or mental health professional present then this may be pursued because the DP should know right from wrong.
Panel Decision	Justified and proportionate Use of Force.
Actions taken by Police/ feedback	PM to share feedback with officer involved with the incident.

Case 4:

Date	01/04/2024
Time	00:37
Location	Alfreton, Derbyshire
Subject	Male 18 – 30 years White – North European
Type of force used	Taser Red Dot.
Impact Factors (from Use of Force form)	Alcohol, Drugs.
Incident summary	<p>Officers were sent to an address after receiving information that a male was in an address and had breached a restraining order. The male was in possession of a knife, and it had been reported that he was going to stab officers when they arrived and threatened to burn the house down.</p> <p>On arrival at the address, the mother of the DP let officers know the male had a screwdriver, but she had taken this off him. The officer with a taser entered the room and red dotted the male. The officer used tactical communication to test compliance and officers handcuffed the male to the rear. The male was removed from the property and taken to custody.</p>
Outcome (i.e. arrested)	Arrested. Detained in custody.
Body Worn Video	Yes.
Panel Observations	An IM felt that the officer present had done a perfect job.

	<p>An IM commented on the mother of the DP going into a different room after directing police to where the DP was in the property.</p> <p>An IM felt that the officer did a good job regarding a straightforward incident. Officers remained controlled and calm.</p> <p>An IM commented that the DP looked either very sleepy or under the influence and asked if this was a marker. PM explained that the DP was a known drug user but in this instance, it may have been a combination of the two.</p>
Panel Decision	Justified and proportionate Use of Force.
Actions taken by Police/ feedback	PM to share feedback with officer involved with the incident.

Case 5:

Date	23/03/2024
Time	18:25
Location	Derby, Derbyshire
Subject	Male 31 – 64 years White – North European
Type of force used	Taser Drawn.
Impact Factors (from Use of Force form)	Alcohol.
Incident summary	<p>Two officers were set to an incident where a male had contacted the police stating he was outside of his address with a knife and wanted to end his life.</p> <p>The officer arrived at the address and the male was not outside. The officer knocked on the door of the address and the male came to the door with the knife down his sleeve.</p> <p>The officer pointed the taser whilst activated at the floor and provided clear instructions to the male, who complied.</p> <p>The male was detained and arrested by a second officer at the scene.</p>

Outcome (i.e. arrested)	Arrested.
Body Worn Video	Yes.
Panel Observations	<p>An IM commented to say that officer did a good job.</p> <p>An IM felt that the instructions provided by the officer with the taser were confusing because the officer had initially asked the DP to put their hands on the wall, and then asked the DP to step forward and kneel on the ground. PM explained that the officer's instructions changed when the officer became aware that the DP had a knife up his sleeve. When the DP put the knife on the floor the officer instructed the DP to step forward to move the DP away from the knife.</p> <p>An IM noted that the officer had drawn the taser but did not have the red dot aimed at the DP. PM explained that this was based on the officer's perception of the threat and that in this instance the officer felt that it was safe enough to not red dot the DP.</p> <p>An IM commented that it was tactically very smart of the officer to knock on the door and then to take a significant step back based on the information provided.</p>
Panel Decision	Justified and proportionate Use of Force.
Actions taken by Police/ feedback	PM to share feedback with officer involved with the incident.

Further Actions

HC to let PM know of any themes that the IAG would like to be considered at future Use of Force Taser scrutiny panel meetings.

Date of next meeting

Wednesday 21st August 2024.