

General Order: 06-01	
Use of Electro-Muscular Disruption Device (TASER)	
Effective Date: July, 2006	Review Date: October, 2009

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the appropriate use of an Electronic Control Device (E.C.D.), specifically the Advanced Taser X26 herein after referred to as the Taser. This policy establishes guidelines for the use of force and ensures proper training for all personnel as it relates to the use of the Taser.

DEFINITION

The Taser is an Electronic Control Device that falls into the category of Non-Lethal force. It transmits an electrical pulse that causes an uncontrollable contraction of the muscle tissue, which then causes a temporary physical debilitation to a person.

NON-LETHAL WEAPONS (U.S. Department of Defense) – Weapon systems that are explicitly designed and primarily employed so as to incapacitate personnel, while minimizing fatalities and permanent injury to personnel.

X26 ADVANCED TASER – An Electronic Control Device that utilizes a 26 watt electrical discharge which disrupts the body’s ability to communicate messages from the brain to the muscles causing neuro-muscular incapacitation. The deployment of the air cartridges uses compressed nitrogen to project two probes with a maximum range of 25 feet. The probes are attached to the power source by insulated wire leads. The X26 Taser also features a drive stun mode that affects the sensory nervous system, as an alternative defense system.

ANTI-FELONY IDENTIFICATION DEVICE – The A.F.I.D. tags are confetti like I.D. tags. Each cartridge contains 20 – 30 identification tags that are ejected when the Taser is discharged. The tags contain the serial number of the cartridge used, which allows for identification of the officer assigned to that air cartridge.

AIR CARTRIDGE – A single use item that contains compressed nitrogen, A.F.I.D. Tags, two darts and the insulated wires. It is identified with a serial number and is tamper resistant.

DATA PORT – The X26 Taser is designed with a data port located inside the digital power magazine port. This data port allows for the downloading of the usage record for that weapon. Each X26 Taser records the dates, times, duration, temperature, and battery status of the last 1,500 times the Taser was discharged.

NOTE: The Taser is an additional law enforcement tool and is **not** intended to replace firearms, or replace other tools or techniques. The Taser should be used only when it is

appropriate for the situation present. The utilization of a Taser is considered use of force and as such, its usage **must** comply with the use of force guidelines. The Taser is equivalent to the use of pepper spray on the use of force continuum.

A. **Taser Procedures**

1. Only a department-approved Taser shall be carried and used.
2. Each Taser unit shall be inspected prior to carrying. Only a properly functioning Taser may be carried on duty.
3. No officer shall carry a Taser unless he/she has successfully completed a department-approved training course. The training will consist of a minimum of 4 hours for initial certification. Re-certification training will be conducted on a periodic basis.
4. When possible, the Taser should be used before empty-hand control techniques, or other intermediate weapons, such as pepper spray or the use of an impact weapon.
5. Personnel may use an approved Taser when:
 - they are required to use physical force to take a person into custody
 - to protect himself/herself from physical assault
 - to protect a subject from injuring himself/herself or others
 - against animals who pose a serious threat towards the officer or others
6. The Taser shall not be intentionally aimed at a person's head, neck or genitals.
7. Any discharge, other than the function (Spark) test, either intentional or accidental, shall necessitate the notification of the Taser Instructor, either in writing or via e-mail, and shall include the Taser serial number, date and time of discharge. The Taser instructor shall investigate each incident and ensure the proper reports are submitted.
8. Prior to the use of a Taser, an Officer shall, if practical, give fair warning to the subject. The officer shall inform the subject that if he/she doesn't comply, he/she would receive an electrical shock from the Taser. The Officer's intent would be to prevent the further escalation of force and gain subject compliance by the threatened use of a Taser.
9. Officers shall inform others in the immediate area of their intent to discharge the Taser by announcing "TASER, TASER, TASER!"

10. After an officer uses a Taser on a subject, the officer shall:
 - a. Assess the situation, for compliance; determine if a second or subsequent application is needed.
 - b. After the subject has complied, handcuff the subject immediately to minimize the threat of injury to either the officer or the subject, providing officer safety. Handcuffing may be accomplished safely while the electrical impulse is still being transmitted as long as the officer stays clear of the wire leads and probes.
 - c. Remove the Taser probes at the earliest opportunity. Only a certified Taser operator or a qualified medical person may remove the probes. If the probes are stuck in the facial area, soft tissue around the neck, genital area or breasts of female subject, only qualified medical personnel shall remove the probes.
 - d. Provide first aid following removal of the probes by applying an antiseptic wipe and Band-Aid to the wound sites, as needed. Officers shall inspect the probes after removal to ensure that the entire probe and probe barb has been removed. In the event that a probe, or probe barb has broken off and it is still embedded in a subject's skin; the subject shall be provided appropriate medical attention to facilitate the removal of the object.
 - e. Visually examine the subject to determine if an injury was sustained. Either a probe or gravity could cause an injury.
 - f. Collect a minimum of 3 of the A.F.I.D. tags and the spent cartridge and probes and place them into evidence. The Taser probes removed from the subjects body shall be considered a biological hazard and shall be handled in accordance with **General Order # 95-9**. Officers shall wear protective non-latex gloves when removing and handling probes.
11. When an officer, either intentionally or accidentally, uses a Taser, even if the subject was not struck, he/she shall prepare a Use of Defensive Tactics Form, department incident report, and the Taser Deployment Form. It shall be forwarded via the chain of command to the Chief of Police (Copies of all must be forwarded to the Taser Instructor as well).
12. It is strictly forbidden to use the X26 Taser in a manner in which is punitive and outside the scope of the officer's authority.

B. Maintenance and Care

1. Always replace air cartridges before their expiration date. Expired air cartridges will be used for training purposes only.
2. At the beginning of each shift, an officer shall SPARK TEST the unit by **removing the cartridge** from the Taser and test the X26 Taser to ensure that it is properly functioning. The spark test will consist of “arming” the Taser, checking the Central Information Display for proper battery level (20% or greater), depressing the trigger, observing rapid pulse rate, and placing the safety in the safe position. This spark test should last no longer than one second.
3. Only a properly functioning X26 Taser shall be carried on duty.
4. Officers shall, if possible, avoid using the X26 Taser in the following situations:
 - Any known or obvious pregnant female.
 - Any individual who is saturated with or in the presence of highly flammable or combustible materials or liquids, including Meth Labs.
 - Any subject who is likely to receive a secondary injury because of the surroundings, such as but not limited to, stairways, ledges, or any other elevated surfaces.
 - The area of the neck and face.
5. Do not store the X26 Taser near flammable liquids or fumes.
6. Do not place the air cartridges near any source of static electricity.
7. The Taser Instructor shall:
 - Receive, inspect and ensure the maintenance and replacement of the X26 Tasers.
 - Establish and maintain systems to record issuance of the X26 Taser and air cartridges. Serial numbers shall be recorded.
 - Maintain an adequate supply of digital power magazines and air cartridges.
 - Return defective or damaged X26 Taser devices and cartridges to the manufacturer or their authorized dealer or service center.

- Obtain service and/or replacement for defective or damaged X26 components from the manufacture or their authorized dealer or service center.
- Provide re-certification training to certified users.
- Review copies of the “Taser Deployment Form” for completeness, and forward copy to the manufacturer.
- Maintain training updates from the manufacturer and disseminate them to the certified users.

C. **Reporting Procedures**

1. The officer who has discharged the X26 Taser shall record the facts and circumstances on the incident report, and complete the Use of Defensive Tactics Form.
2. The officer who has discharged the X26 Taser shall complete the Taser Deployment Form. The Taser Deployment Form shall be reviewed by the Taser Instructor for completeness, and a copy of the form shall be kept of file for future reference.
3. In the event that the X26 Taser is presented to a subject, and that subject complies without discharging the X26 Taser. A Taser Presence/Non Use Form shall be completed. The Taser Presence/Non Use Form shall be reviewed by the Taser Instructor.
4. Photographs shall be taken, if possible, of the probe impact areas, if the skin has been penetrated. If a qualified medical person removes a probe, the Officer shall ask the medical person to take the photographs with the Officers camera. The photographs will be submitted into evidence.

By order of:
Ronald E. Trepkowski
Chief of Police