



LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT

USE OF FORCE

DIRECTIVE

UOF Directive No. 15

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ELECTRONIC CONTROL DEVICE TASER 10

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Directive is to familiarize officers with the use, nomenclature, and operation procedures for the TASER 10.



PROTOCOL

The Department's guiding principle when using force shall be reverence for human life. Officers shall attempt to control an incident by using time, distance and cover, communication, and available resources in an effort to de-escalate the situation whenever it is safe, feasible, and reasonable to do so. When warranted, Department personnel may use objectively reasonable force to carry out their duties. Officers may only use a level of force that they reasonably believe is proportional to the seriousness of the suspected offense or the reasonably perceived level of actual or threatened resistance.

Use of an intermediate force option, including the TASER, is an appropriate force option when an officer reasonably believes either of the following:

- There is an immediate threat to the safety of the officers or others; or,
- If the threat is not immediately addressed, there is an articulable risk the incident could escalate to the use of deadly force.

Intermediate force options should not be used on a suspect or subject who is believed to be unarmed, and, is passively resisting or merely failing to comply with commands. Verbal threats of violence alone do not justify the use of an intermediate force option.

Each application and subsequent re-application of the TASER shall be objectively reasonable and proportional based upon the totality of the circumstances. When administering the TASER as a force option, Department personnel should continually assess to determine if the continued application of the TASER is appropriate and effective. Department personnel should avoid simultaneous activations of the TASER on a single suspect or subject.

The Department uses the objectively reasonable standard and the totality of the circumstances when evaluating the reasonableness of the force used, which includes the number of times a particular force option was utilized. If the force option being utilized appears to be ineffective, Department personnel should consider transitioning to another, potentially more effective force option or tactic.

Officers who encounter an armed self-mutilating or suicidal individual shall not use a TASER against that person, unless the officer reasonably believes that either there is an immediate threat to the safety of the officers or others; or, if the threat is not immediately addressed, there is an articulable risk the incident could escalate to the use of deadly force. If officers choose to use a TASER in these situations, they should utilize distance and cover, when feasible, to avoid placing themselves in a vulnerable position. Officers are reminded that it is not a criminal act to express suicidal ideations or commit/attempt to commit suicide or self-mutilation in the State of California.

The TASER may also be effective against aggressive animals to protect officers or others from serious injury.

Tactical Considerations

- Continually evaluate the situation
- Consider another force option if the TASER appears to be ineffective
- Avoid repeated TASER applications where practicable to avoid possible injury

Deployment Considerations

When practicable, officers should avoid using the TASER on individuals who:

- Are on an elevated or unstable surface which could cause a fall that could result in a significant impact injury;
- Are operating or riding any mode of transportation where the risk of injury would be substantially increased by use of the TASER;
- Are located in water, mud, or a marsh, and the ability to move is restricted;
- Are known to have a pacemaker, be pregnant, under 12 years of age, elderly, or visibly frail;
- Are near flammable or combustible fumes/liquids;
- Are in custody, e.g., handcuffed, restrained, or otherwise incapacitated or immobilized; and,
- Are fleeing/running away – Officers should consider containment, when feasible, as a tactical option to mitigate risk of injury, in addition to continually assessing the situation while considering the most appropriate tactical plan.

Note: Officers should not intentionally activate more than one TASER at a time on the same suspect or subject.

Use of Force Warning

An officer shall, when feasible, give a verbal warning prior to using the TASER to control an individual. A warning is not required when an officer is attacked and must respond to the suspect's actions. Additionally, if a tactical plan requires the element of surprise to stabilize the situation, a warning is not required. An example of this would be a hostage situation. However, officers are reminded that the surprise/tactical element must still be needed at the actual time the TASER is deployed.

The verbal warning should include a command and a warning of the potential consequences of the use of force. The command should be similar to "drop the weapon" or "stop what you are doing" followed by a warning similar to "or we may use the TASER, and that may cause you injury." Officers also have an additional option of using the TASER's Warning Alert feature in an effort to assist with de-escalation.

The use or non-use of the warning shall be documented. The Non-Categorical Use of Force Report, Form 01.67.05, Use of Force Summary heading shall include:

- The name of the officer giving the warning; or,
- If no warning was given, an explanation and appropriate justification for not giving the warning.

Statements that the "element of surprise was needed" or "for officer safety reasons" will not alone justify the non-use of the warning. The explanation for non-use must:

- Clearly articulate why the element of surprise was needed;
- Explain in detail any officer safety considerations; and,
- List all pertinent reasons that justify why the warning was not provided.

The use of the warning or the reasons for non-use will be factors considered in the determination of whether the use of force was objectively reasonable.

PROCEDURES

Pre-Deployment Function Tests and Battery Life

Function tests **shall** be conducted at the start of watch. The goal of this test is to verify the condition of the TASER handle (e.g., battery charge, firmware version). **Do not press the trigger** during these function tests. With the safety switch in the down position, the TASER operator will hold constant pressure down on the safety switch prompting a blue circular symbol to appear along with an audible alert placing the TASER in Function Mode. While in Function Mode the firmware version and remaining battery charge (percentage) and any other potential malfunctions will display. After observing the battery

charge, firmware version, the user shall simply release the downward pressure on the safety switch thus placing the TASER 10 back into a safe mode.

Officers are encouraged to replace the battery if it shows below 50% during the function test even if the 30-day cycle is not complete. A battery at 20% or lower may negatively affect the TASER's operation during a use-of-force encounter, and Department employees shall switch to a fully charged battery when practical. An empty battery symbol indicates the battery is at a critically low level and must be replaced immediately with a fully charged battery. A review of the diagrams in the *TASER Characteristics* attachment is recommended to ensure the TASER is deployable.

Deployment Procedures

The TASER shall be carried in a Department approved holster on the support side of the duty belt in either a cross draw or support side draw configuration. A TASER should not be placed in a clothing pocket.

When the TASER is used effectively, it has the ability to cause “neuro-muscular incapacitation”, or NMI, which is the stimulation of the motor nerves causing uncontrollable muscle contractions that inhibit a suspect’s ability to perform voluntary coordinated movement.

The approved range of the TASER 10 is zero to 35 (0-35) feet. The area of the suspect’s or subject’s back, just below the neck, remains the preferred target area when practical. For frontal applications, officers should attempt to split the beltline area in an effort to place one cartridge above the waist and one cartridge below the waist for optimal effectiveness. When an officer needs a TASER, the officer shall broadcast the unit designation, location, and “Code Tom.”

Once activated on a suspect or subject, the TASER activation duration is five seconds. During this period of incapacitation that the suspect or subject experiences, the arrest team should take positions of advantage to immediately control the suspect or subject and take them into custody minimizing and mitigating the need to use additional force.

The TASER 10 magazine has a total of 10 individual cartridges capable of being discharged. The first cartridge that contacts the subject or suspect will not be energized. The second cartridge that contacts the target will be energized and potentially achieve NMI. The maximum number of cartridges that can be energized at once is four. The TASER 10 platform will select the optimal spread amongst the deployed cartridges to close the circuit with the goal of achieving NMI. The optimal spread between cartridges to achieve NMI is 12 inches or greater.

Note: The TASER 10 platform now requires that the cartridge make direct contact with skin to achieve electrical stimulation.

Contact Shots

The TASER 10 does not have a drive-stun option. However, the TASER 10 does have the capability to deploy *contact shots* – defined as the deployment of a cartridge at zero distance (i.e., while in direct contact with a subject's or suspect's skin or clothing). The primary objective of utilizing the cartridge in a contact shot is to address situations where the officer is confronted with immediate violence or finds themselves in close proximity to a potential threat that requires an immediate response. Following the initial contact shot, which is *not* energized, the officer should, when feasible, promptly create distance and prepare for a follow-up shot with optimal spread, with the aim of achieving NMI. If the officer is unable to create distance, it is important to quickly proceed with a second contact shot, ensuring optimal spread, to achieve the desired NMI effect.

Requirement to Intercede When Excessive Force is Observed

An officer shall intercede when present and observes another officer using force that is clearly beyond that which is necessary, as determined by an objectively reasonable officer under the circumstances, taking into account the possibility that other officers may have additional information regarding the threat posed by a subject.

Note: For the purposes of this section, “intercede” includes, but is not limited to, physically stopping the excessive force (when safe and reasonable to do so) and recording the excessive force, if equipped with a body worn video (BWV) camera. Officers shall attempt to document on BWV the efforts to intervene, efforts to de-escalate the excessive use of force, and confronting the offending officer about the excessive force during the use of force. If the offending officer continues to use excessive force, the witnessing officer shall immediately report the excessive force to a superior officer.

Requirement to Report Potential Excessive Force

An officer who is present and observes another officer using force that the present and observing officer believes to be beyond that which is necessary, as determined by an objectively reasonable officer under the circumstances based upon the totality of information actually known to the officer, shall report such force to a superior officer.

Medical Treatment

Whenever the TASER is used, and the cartridge(s) make contact with the suspect's clothing or skin, the suspect shall be examined by medical personnel. If the suspect loses consciousness or if another medical emergency situation exists, officers shall render medical aid as required and request a rescue ambulance to respond to their location.

Note: The TASER cartridge(s) shall only be removed by medical personnel. Medical personnel shall include a doctor or a nurse at a contract hospital or jail dispensary. If it is clear that a cartridge(s) has only made contact with clothing and

not the skin of the subject, the cartridge(s) may be removed by on-scene personnel.

Reporting

All discharges or activations of less-lethal devices (e.g., TASER), excluding (1) tactical discharges, and (2) Warning Alerts, are reportable uses of force and shall be reported in accordance with Department policy, whether or not the projectiles/munitions or device make contact with the suspect or subject, including their clothing.

Note: Use of the laser sight or a Warning Alert (audible sound and visual light display) of the TASER for purposes of gaining compliance is not considered a use of force nor a tactical discharge.

Warning Alerts

A Warning Alert may de-escalate the situation without having to deploy the cartridge. Officers do not have to remove the live cartridges or magazine to initiate a Warning Alert. Simply place the safety switch in a sustained-up position holding it there against spring tension as long as the officer believes the alert is deemed necessary. **It is imperative that officers understand, when cartridges have already been deployed, that the safety switch placed in the up position with spring tension is no longer an alert but will instead re-energize the cartridges that have already been deployed.**

Data Downloads

Supervisors shall direct officers to dock their battery to download the data from the TASER after a reportable non-categorical use of force incident. Supervisors are required to ensure the TASER data is printed, scanned, and attached electronically to the use of force report. If used during a categorical use of force incident, Force Investigation Division will assume responsibility for TASER data after docking.

DEFINITIONS

Range: The approved range for the TASER 10 is 0-35 feet.

Optimal Target Areas: The optimal target areas for cartridge use are the back, or the area split by the beltline. For close contact use, the optimal target areas are the forearm, outside of the thigh, or calf muscle. Avoid discharging the TASER at the head, face, throat, and groin.

Cartridge: The projectile that is fired from the TASER 10 platform.

Magazine: Contains the cartridges that are fired from the TASER 10 platform

Note: Many factors affect an officer's ability to hit the intended target area of a suspect. When a suspect is struck in a location outside the optimal target area, the officers should be prepared to explain the deviation.

Points to Remember

- Range is 0-35 feet
- First cartridge does not deliver electricity
- Must have a minimum of two cartridges deployed to achieve Neuro-Muscular Incapacitation
- Optimal spread between cartridges is 12 inches or more
- TASER 10 can only energize up to a total of four cartridges at any given deployment
- Direct skin contact with the cartridge is necessary to achieve electrical stimulation
- Data downloaded following a reportable use of force

Important Reminder

Deviation from these basic concepts sometimes occurs due to the fluid and rapidly evolving nature of law enforcement encounters and the environment in which they occur. Deviations may range from minor, typically procedural or technical, to substantial deviations from Department tactical training. Any deviations are to be explained by the involved officer(s), and justification for substantial deviation from Department tactical training shall be articulated and must meet the objectively reasonable standard of the Department's Use of Force Policy.



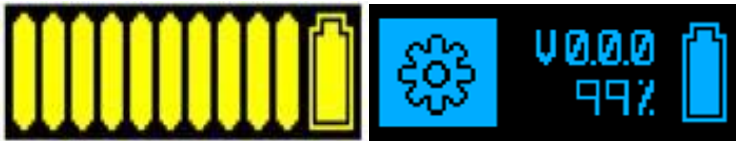
JIM McDONNELL
Chief of Police

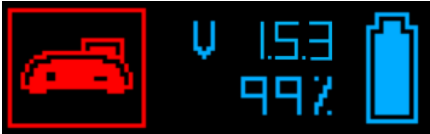
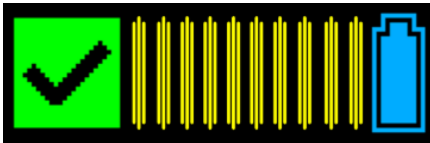
DISTRIBUTION "A"

Attachment: TASER Characteristics

KEY POINTS	TASER CHARACTERISTICS
Current Model	• Department issued: AXON TASER 10 (yellow)
Neuro-Muscular Incapacitation (NMI)	• Occurs when a TASER causes involuntary stimulation of both the sensory and motor nerves • It is not dependent on pain and can be effective on subjects with a high level of pain tolerance • There are different levels of NMI ranging from limited area effects to significant body lockup • The greater the spread of the probes, the higher likelihood of NMI • The TASER may not achieve total NMI • A subject may maintain muscle control, particularly in arms and legs (depending on many factors, including probe locations) • Be prepared with other force options if necessary and when reasonably appropriate
Weapon Inspection/ Function Test	• Function tests <u>shall</u> be conducted at the start of watch. • DO NOT unload the TASER magazine • Point the TASER in a safe direction toward an area that will capture or contain the probe away from other people. With the Safety Switch DOWN (off) press the safety switch down holding against spring tension and wait for the audible alert and CID screen display to show the results. Then switch the Safety Switch to the armed position and check for a GREEN checkmark. Keep your fingers away from the front of the TASER ○ Green check mark ○ There are ten cartridges present ○ There is sufficient battery capacity • Check CID for battery life and current firmware • DO NOT PRESS THE TRIGGER. Pressing the trigger will deploy a cartridge • Place the safety switch in the DOWN (off) position • Reholster the TASER
Holster Wearing	• Shall be worn on the support side of the duty belt in either a cross draw or support side draw configuration • The current Department approved holster is produced by S.O. TECH, Safariland, and Blade-Tech. Additional holsters may be approved in the future • The TASER 10 must be carried in a Department approved TASER 10 compatible holster

KEY POINTS	TASER CHARACTERISTICS
TASER Cartridges	• The TASER 10 is a ten-cartridge system. • A DUTY magazine is black in color • A training Inert cartridge is red in color • A HALT Suit Cartridge is blue in color • There is only one way to install the TASER 10 cartridge • Safety and inspection of magazine: • Check that magazine is intact • No cracks in the magazine • Keep hands away from the front of magazine • Do not inadvertently point cartridge at yourself or anyone else • All cartridges have an expiration date • TASER cartridges are deployed by an electrically initiated primary that activates a piston driven system
TASER Loading and Unloading	• Loading sequence: ○ Point the TASER in a safe direction ○ Ensure the safety switch is in the down (SAFE) position ○ Slide the magazine onto the TASER 10 rails and firmly press back • Unloading sequence: ○ Point the TASER in a safe direction ○ Ensure the safety switch is in the down (SAFE) position ○ Keep your hands away from the front of the magazines ○ With your support hand, grip the bottom of the magazine ○ Firmly drive the magazine forward causing it to slide off the rails
De-Escalation Technique Considerations	• A Warning Alert display may de-escalate the situation without having to deploy the cartridge. You do not have to remove the live magazine to initiate a Warning Alert. Simply place the safety switch in a sustained-up position holding it against spring tension as long as the officer believes the alert is deemed necessary • A simple sweep up will activate a short single audible and visual alert • Use of the laser sight or alert of the TASER for purposes of gaining compliance is not considered a use of force.

KEY POINTS	TASER CHARACTERISTICS
Optimal Target Areas	• Optimal target areas are the back or splitting the belt line • If practicable, aim the TASER at the suspect's back where the clothes fit tighter and there is more muscle mass • Officers should split the belt line to place one cartridge above the waist and one cartridge below the waist for optimal effectiveness • Avoid targeting the head, face, throat, and groin
Drive Stun Mode	• Drive Stun is not available on the TASER 10 platform
Central Information Display (CID)	This CID shows in Function Test Mode. With the safety in the down (SAFE) position, the TASER operator will press the switch down in a sustained manner until you hear three audible alerts. The firmware version and remaining battery charge is displayed. Place the safety switch back up into the armed position to complete the function test. Placing the Safety Switch down will return the TASER to an operational mode.  This CID also shows when a cartridge is either missing or has been deployed, when the battery life is below optimal operational parameters, the TASER handle is completely malfunctioning, countdown or a magazine malfunction.  Cartridge Missing or Deployed  Battery Life Below Optimal / Handle Malfunction

KEY POINTS	TASER CHARACTERISTICS
CID Display During Function / Spark Test	When a function test is initiated, a circle forms on the CID.  This displays at the beginning of a function test.  This indicates the battery pack has not been docked in 30 days. The battery pack should either be updated or swapped for a new one. This red dock icon will display during the Function Test Mode when the conditions for its appearance are met.  After the selector switch is moved to the up (ARMED) position, the check mark icon indicates the electronic control device passed the function test. With firmware version 1.5.3, the CID will now display which magazine is loaded and how many cartridges are detected.  If the X icon alternates after a function test, the energy weapon did not pass. 

KEY POINTS	TASER CHARACTERISTICS
Batteries/ Docking Station/ Data Downloads	- Batteries should be charged once every Deployment Period (~30 days) - Routine battery docking will ensure latest firmware updates are being uploaded onto the TASER 10 - Docking station automatically uploads weapon data to AXON Evidence (Evidence.com) - Supervisors shall direct officers dock the battery to upload the data from the TASER after a reportable non-categorical use of force incident  The battery is fully charged.  The battery has a significant amount of charge remaining.  The battery has a low level of charge remaining and should be recharged.  A red, blinking icon means the battery should be recharged as soon as possible.
Maintenance and Care	- Avoid dropping the TASER 10 - Check battery regularly - Always store TASER 10 with battery inserted - Keep secured in protected holster - Avoid exposing to excessive moisture
Components	TASER 10 COMPONENTS    Cartridge(s) TASER 10 Energy Weapon Standard Duty Magazine

TASER 10 Indicators – Quick Reference

Sidelight	Meaning	Magazine
Yellow	Weapon Use	LIVE (Black)
Blue	Training Use, In Functional Test Mode	HALT (Blue) TRAINING (Purple) INERT (Red)
Red	Critical Error	Any, Blinking (Display will also show error)
None	No Magazine	None, Sidelights Disabled as Agency Setting

Display	Meaning	Magazine
Yellow	Projectile will Deploy	LIVE (Black) HALT (Blue) TRAINING (Purple)
Blue	Training Use, No deployments	INERT (Red)
Red	Error Indicator	Cartridge Icon (DNF) Battery Icon (Pack Interaction) Large Blinking X (Critical Fault)

Audio	Description	Condition
Armed Indicator	Short 'Chirp'	Armed from Safe, Passing Functional Test Mode
Warning Charge	Repeating 'Charging' Capacitor	Momentary Up Switch (MUS) Pressed/Held
Connection Alert	Loud Constant 'Connected' Tone 2.7 kHz	Load is detected between Cartridges, Inert Demo
Low Battery	Powering Down Tone	This occurs on Transitions into Low Power (30% battery life)
Critical Fault	Short 'Dying' sound,	Handle is reporting it has detected a condition which may result in Failure to Operate, Out of Ammo with INERT magazine only
Dart Deployment	Short High to Low Pitch	Sounds on Trigger pull with NO Magazine, Used with INERT Magazine on Mock Deployment
Beep x3	Functional Test Mode	Enter Functional Test Mode