



TASER International Training Bulletin 12.0 – 04 June 28, 2005

Subject: Restraint During TASER™ System Application

Background: As a manufacturer, TASER International, Inc. ("TI") provides relevant technical information on the operation of its devices through its training programs. However, TI does not make policy recommendation on law enforcement tactics or use-of-force guidelines other than general recommendations associated with the operating parameters of TI brand devices. TI training has long encouraged that device operators consider the TASER system application as a "5-second window of opportunity," during which time an arrest team can begin restraint procedures. However, it has come to our attention that there may be a training issue where arrest teams are avoiding touching the subject during the TASER device application.

1. It is important to emphasize that arrest teams can handle the subject during TASER system application. Failure to begin restraint procedures during a TASER device application can unnecessarily prolong the duration or number of TASER device applications administered to a given subject.
2. Repeated, prolonged, and/or continuous exposure(s) to the TASER electrical discharge may cause strong muscle contractions that may impair breathing and respiration, particularly when the probes are placed across the chest or diaphragm. Users should avoid prolonged, extended, uninterrupted discharges or extensive multiple discharges whenever practicable in order to minimize the potential for over-exertion of the subject or potential impairment of full ability to breathe over a protracted time period.
3. Particularly when dealing with persons showing symptoms of excited delirium, use of the TASER system should be combined with physical restraint techniques to minimize the total duration of the struggle and minimize the total duration of TASER system stimulation. Excited delirium is a potentially fatal condition caused by a complex set of physiological conditions including over-exertion of the subject and inability for sufficient respiration to maintain normal blood chemistry. These subjects are at significant and potentially fatal health risks from further prolonged exertion and / or impaired breathing.
4. Subject matter experts believe a first step in providing critical care to these individuals requires expeditious restraint such that medical assistance can be provided. To this end, the TASER system may well be among the best force options to assist in expeditious restraint. It is important, however, that the user focus on the TASER device induced impairment as a window of opportunity during which physical restraint procedures should be initiated whenever practicable.
5. If circumstances preclude restraint procedures during TASER system application, such as a single officer acting alone:
 - a. The user should attempt to minimize the uninterrupted duration and total number of TASER device applications.
 - b. If the subject refuses to comply after multiple TASER device applications, the operator should consider whether additional applications are making sufficient progress toward compliance / restraint OR if transition to a different force option is warranted.
 - c. As with any use of force incident, the operator should be reminded that he / she should be able to justify the rationale for each additional TASER system application (or the rationale for extending the duration of an application) and that such justification should be in compliance with the use-of-force policies of the operator's agency.

As part of our safety and training programs, TASER International updates both our training and warnings on a regular basis. Attached are updated warnings as of June 28, 2005. Please distribute this bulletin and the attached warnings to all TASER device operators within your agency.

Please direct any questions or comments to Rick Guilbault, Director of Training, at (480) 905-2065 or Sarge@TASER.com

TASER Device Warnings and Risks Effective June 28, 2005

TASER devices are non-lethal weapons as defined by the U.S. Department of Defense as "weapon systems that are explicitly designed and primarily employed so as to incapacitate personnel or materiel, while minimizing fatalities, permanent injury to personnel, and undesired damage to property and the environment. . ."

It is important to note that Department of Defense policy does *not* require or expect non-lethal weapons "to have a zero probability of producing fatalities or permanent injuries." Rather, non-lethal weapons are intended to *significantly reduce* the probability of such fatalities or injuries as compared with traditional weapons which achieve their effects through the physical destruction of targets.

Do not attempt to use a TASER device unless you have received the required training per department SOP.

1. While extensive field use data, scientific, and other medical research and evidence supports that TASER devices generally do not cause lasting aftereffects or fatalities, it is important to remember that the very nature of a defensive response to aggressive behavior, resistance, use of force, physical control, confrontation or incapacitation involves some degree of risk of serious injury or death due to the subject's individual psychological, emotional, and physiological states and responses, physical exertion and stress, unforeseen circumstances, and the individual's preexisting medical conditions and susceptibilities (*i.e.*, self-ingested drugs, cardiac disease, pulmonary disease etc.). As with any use of force tool or technique there can be unforeseen and severe consequences and there will always be risk involved in the use of the TASER system.

2. TASER devices can ignite gasoline, other flammables, or explosive vapors (*i.e.*, gases found in sewer lines). Some self-defense sprays use flammable carriers such as alcohol and could be dangerous to use in immediate conjunction with TASER devices.

3. TASER devices can cause temporary incapacitation or the inability to catch oneself during a fall. This incapacitation with a resulting fall can be dangerous and even fatal under specific circumstances, such as a person drowning if they fall into a body of water while incapacitated. These risks may be elevated for persons with certain conditions such as pregnancy.

4. TASER devices can cause strong muscle contractions that can cause physical exertion or athletic type injuries to some people. These muscle contractions can result in injuries to tissues, organs, bones, muscles, tendons, ligaments, nerves, joints and stress/compression fractures to bones and vertebrae, especially to those people with pre-existing injuries or conditions such as osteoporosis which may make them more susceptible to these types of injuries.

5. Use of a TASER device in drive (or touch) stun mode can cause marks, friction abrasions, and/or scarring that may be permanent depending on individual susceptibilities or circumstances surrounding TASER device use and exposure.

6. TASER devices can cause temporary discomfort, pain, stress, and panic, which may be injurious to some people.

7. As with any use of force or restraint tool, technique or device, the use of a TASER device upon a person or animal may be stressful and contribute to exertion or exhaustion, including injury or death caused by an individual's exhaustion or over-exertion. Repeated, prolonged, and/or continuous TASER device exposure(s) may contribute to or cause cumulative exertion or exhaustion results or effects.

8. Repeated, prolonged, and/or continuous exposure(s) to the TASER electrical discharge may impair breathing and respiration, particularly when the probes are placed across the chest or diaphragm. Users should avoid prolonged, extended, uninterrupted discharges or extensive multiple discharges whenever practicable in order to minimize the potential for over-exertion of the subject or potential impairment of full ability to breathe over a protracted time period. Particularly when dealing with persons showing symptoms of excited delirium, use of the TASER device should be combined with physical restraint techniques to minimize the total duration of the struggle and minimize the total duration of TASER device stimulation. Excited delirium is a potentially fatal condition caused by a complex set of physiological conditions including over-exertion of the subject and inability for sufficient respiration to maintain normal blood chemistry. These subjects are at significant and potentially fatal health risks from further prolonged exertion and / or impaired breathing. Subject matter experts believe a first step in providing critical care to these individuals requires expeditious restraint such that medical assistance can be provided. To this end, the TASER device may well be among the best force options to assist in expeditious restraint. It is important, however, that the user focus on the TASER device

induced impairment as a window of opportunity during which physical restraint procedures should be initiated whenever practicable. If circumstances preclude restraint procedures during TASER device application, such as a single officer acting alone:

d. The user should attempt to minimize the uninterrupted duration and total number of TASER device applications.

e. If the subject refuses to comply after multiple TASER device applications, the operator should consider whether additional applications are making sufficient progress toward compliance / restraint OR if transition to a different force option is warranted.

f. As with any use of force incident, the operator should be reminded that he / she should be able to justify the rationale for each additional TASER application (or the rationale for extending the duration of an application) and that such justification should be in compliance with the use-of-force policies of the operator's agency.

9. The TASER device fires projectiles that can cause significant damage to, or loss of an eye if the projectile impacts the eye directly. The projectile may also cause injury to sensitive areas such as testicles or the larynx if hit directly. Accordingly, users should avoid intentionally aiming at the head or face when practicable. Also, intentional targeting of the projectiles toward an individual's genitals or a female's breasts should be avoided if practicable.

10. The TASER device should be handled carefully according to manufacturer's guidelines and department policies and training while following similar safety protocols to those used for firearms or other weapons systems. It should be stored in a secure location inaccessible to children and non-authorized persons. The device should only be aimed at a person when the use or threat of use of the TASER device is legally acceptable and intended. Users' hands and other body parts should be kept clear of the front of the Air Cartridge at all times.

11. The TASER device is a sophisticated electronic system. Only TASER International approved components and proper accessories may be used with the TASER device in order to ensure proper function and effects. Use of non-approved batteries, Air Cartridges, or other accessories (excluding holsters) may cause malfunctions, will void the warranty, and may put the user and/or others at risk of serious injury or even death.

12. Repetitive stimuli such as flashing lights or electrical stimuli can induce seizures in some individuals. This risk is heightened if electrical stimuli or current passes through the

head region. Accordingly, users should avoid aiming the TASER device at the head region whenever practicable.

13. As with any use of force, or its application, numerous federal, state, local, and/or international laws and regulations may control or dictate the possession, transport, use, application, and/or reporting of a TASER device related event. Any possession or use of a TASER device must be in full and complete compliance with any and all applicable legal standards of care.

14. Removal of probes shall be done in accordance with manufacturer's guidelines; emergency care providers directives; department policies, training and procedures; and/or as dictated by event circumstances.

15. CAUTION – TASER devices are not toys and users should avoid any, inappropriate deployments and/or activations, etc. which may result in serious bodily harm/injury to the user or others, including animals. Like a firearm, never point a TASER device at an individual, animal, or object unless there is justification for its anticipated use. Always consider, presume, etc. that the TASER device is loaded and handle safely and properly.

16. No weapons system, tool, or technique is effective in 100% of deployments. Consider legally acceptable options, alternatives and backup plans in case of ineffective deployment when deploying, activating, or otherwise using a non-lethal weapon, including TASER devices.

17. Avoid intentionally touching the wires, probes, or areas on the subject between the probes while the TASER device is activated.

18. Avoid shining the laser into eyes.

19. Avoid aiming the TASER device at the eyes or face.

20. Dropping a TASER device may damage the unit. If a weapon has been dropped or damaged, or if a weapon has been exposed to significant moisture, do not attempt to place the safety switch in the UP (FIRE) position until completing procedure recommended in the current version of the TASER International Instructor Training syllabus.

21. These warnings supersede all prior warnings for TASER devices and are effective June 28, 2005. Only warnings issued by TASER International, Inc. with a later date shall supersede these warnings.