



CONDUCTED ENERGY DEVICES

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I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this order is to establish procedures for the deployment and use of a conducted energy devices commonly known as the "TASER®".

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Iowa City Police Department that officers shall use the least amount of force necessary to accomplish their lawful objectives while safeguarding their own lives and the lives of others. Consistent with this policy, the Department authorizes the use of conducted energy devices by officers certified in their use as an incapacitating weapon to: control a subject exhibiting active aggression when an officer reasonably believes that his/her life is in danger; effect a lawful arrest, or to otherwise control a combative, uncooperative person when verbal commands and persuasion have been ineffective in inducing cooperation; or to prevent a subject from harming himself/herself or others. A conducted energy device is never to be used on a passive subject, or as a pain-inflicting device to ensure compliance or punitively for purposes of coercion, or in an unjustified manner.

III. DEFINITIONS

Conducted Energy Device (CED) – A weapon primarily designed to disrupt a subject's central nervous system by means of deploying electrical energy sufficient to cause uncontrolled muscle contractions and override an individual's voluntary motor responses. The device fires probes or a projectile with barbed electrodes. The probes/electrodes are connected to the CED's battery by a high-voltage insulated wire. Electrical pulses are sent along the wires to the probes/electrodes with the intended effect being to temporarily incapacitate the targeted subject.

After Firing Identification Dots (AFID) – Small identification tags ejected from the cartridge when the Taser® is fired. The AFID's have the individual unit's serial number printed on them which identifies which unit was fired.

Gas Cartridge – The replaceable cartridge which contains and fires the electrical probes. The Gas Cartridge has an expiration date and ejects AFID tags when fired. The Gas Cartridge has two probes on the front allowing it to be used as a contact device. When the Gas Cartridge is removed the device can also be used as a contact Electro-Muscular Disruption device.

Probes/Electrodes – Barbed projectiles that are fired from a conducted energy device and penetrate the skin; wires are attached to the probes/electrodes leading back to the CED.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. DEPLOYMENT OF CONDUCTED ENERGY DEVICES

1. A conducted energy device should not be pointed at any individual unless the officer reasonably believes it will be necessary to use the device.
2. For maximum effect, a conducted energy device should be fired at center body mass. The head, face, breast or genitalia should be avoided if possible.
3. When deploying a conducted energy device, officers should under normal circumstances use it for one standard cycle/application and then evaluate the situation while using verbal commands. Should an aggressive subject not comply with the commands of the deploying officer, he/she may deliver a subsequent application as reasonably necessary and re-evaluate the situation before delivering another cycle. Alternate methods to subdue the subject should be considered.
4. When possible, an officer who deploys a conducted energy device will give a verbal warning prior to deployment, unless to do so would place any other person at risk. This verbal warning will fulfill these purposes:

- a. give an aggressive subject a final warning that his/her actions are dictating use of the device
 - b. warn other officers and bystanders that the conducted energy device is about to be deployed.
5. The deploying officer will then direct the actions of any assisting officer(s) on the scene in handcuffing the subject. The conducted energy device will not deliver its charge to a second person unless that person places his/her hand or a body part in between the two probes. The conducted energy device should not be used on handcuffed subjects unless they are actively resisting or exhibiting active aggression and other control options would place the officer or others in imminent danger.
6. Assisting officers shall approach the subject with caution so as not to break the wires connecting the probes to the conducted energy device.
7. Following a conducted energy device deployment, officers shall use a restraint technique that does not impair respiration.
8. The conducted energy device “probe mode” should be the primary setting option with the “drive stun” mode generally used as a secondary option.
9. A supervisor shall respond to all incident scenes where a conducted energy device has been discharged and conduct an initial review of the deployment.

B. SITUATIONS WHERE CONDUCTED ENERGY DEVICES MAY BE USED

1. When an officer reasonably believes that the subject will become, or is engaged in violence directed towards the officer or others; or the subject's demeanor indicates they will engage in active aggression and other options would place the officer or others at risk (active aggression is a greater standard than active resistance). In addition, conductive energy devices may be used when a person is threatening death or serious injury to themselves. As with all use of force incidents; the decision to use a particular tool or technique will be evaluated in conjunction with General Order 99-05, Use of Force.
2. To stop a dangerous animal.

C. SITUATIONS WHERE CONDUCTED ENERGY DEVICES SHALL NOT BE USED UNLESS DEADLY FORCE IS APPROPRIATE

1. Near flammable liquids, gases, blasting materials or any other highly combustible materials which may be ignited by the use of the device, including potential methamphetamine labs or subjects contaminated with such materials.
2. When it is reasonable to believe that incapacitation of the subject may result in serious injury or death. (i.e. falls, etc.)

D. SITUATIONS WHERE CONDUCTED ENERGY DEVICES SHOULD BE AVOIDED

Although not strictly prohibited, officers should give additional consideration to the unique circumstances involved prior to applying a conducted energy device in any of the following situations. There must be compelling reasons for deployment which can be clearly articulated.

1. When the officer cannot approach the subject within its effective range.
2. On persons in wheelchairs.
3. To control persons in operation of a vehicle.
3. On elderly persons.
4. On women known to be pregnant.
5. On persons with known heart problems.
7. On persons with an apparent debilitating illness or who are visibly frail.
8. On young children or those under 80 pounds.
9. On individuals with known neuromuscular disorders such as multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy or epilepsy.

E. POST DEPLOYMENT PROCEDURES

1. Probes, AFIDs, and cartridge packs used against individuals will be recovered and submitted as evidence.
2. Skin Penetrating Probes:
 - a. Officers should remove the probes/electrodes as trained and inspect them to ensure the entire probe/electrode has been removed. Removal of broken probes/electrodes should be done by medical personnel.

- b. In the event that a probe/electrode is broken off in the skin or the probe/electrode is not fully intact, the subject will be transported to a hospital.
 - c. Only hospital personnel are to remove probes/electrodes embedded in sensitive tissue areas such as the head, neck, throat, face, genitalia or female breast.
 - d. Probes/electrodes will be packaged in accordance with existing procedures for the storage and handling of bio-hazard materials. Probes/electrodes which may be contaminated shall be clearly indicated as such on their package.
 3. Probes/electrodes which have not penetrated skin will be packaged to ensure the safety of persons later handling the evidence packages.
 4. Packaging:
 - a. All probes/electrodes taken in accordance with this policy shall be packaged in accordance with the training received pertaining to the collection of the probes. When placed in temporary storage, the compartment containing the probes/electrodes should be clearly marked as containing a potential hazard.
 - b. Spent cartridges and a representative AFID sample from the spent cartridge will be packaged as evidence and may be placed in the same larger envelope as the spent probes.
 5. If practical, photos shall be taken of probe impact areas.

F. MEDICAL TREATMENT

1. Ensure the suspect's injuries or complaints of injury (if any) are appropriately treated by medical personnel. Monitor the suspect for signs of "excited delirium".
2. Medical treatment shall be obtained for any suspect that has received a conducted energy device discharge.

G. REPORTING

1. With the exception of training, all discharges of conducted energy devices will be documented on a Use of Force Report.
2. Aiming the device's dot or an arc display is considered a use of force.

3. Jail staff shall be notified of intake prisoners who have been exposed to a conducted energy device.
4. The Commander of Administrative Services or designee shall be notified (by e-mail) of deployments in order to download information from the device.

H. TRAINING

1. Certified instructors are the only authorized persons to instruct on conducted energy devices.
2. Only officers who have been trained by a certified instructor may employ a conducted energy device on which they are certified. Officers are required to be re-certified annually. Officers who fail to qualify/show proficiency will be provided with remedial training according to the lesson plan. The Training Sergeant will maintain records to ensure that officers receive the training at the appropriate times.

I. MAINTENANCE

1. Testing and maintenance of conducted energy devices will be consistent with the manufacturer's specifications and conducted by properly trained armorers.
2. Officers shall check the conducted energy device at the start of their tour of duty to ensure that the weapon has a functional charge.
3. Authorized officers will only carry a Department issued conducted energy device.
4. The holster will be carried on the duty belt on the side opposite the duty firearm. Non-uniformed officers will use an approved holster on the side opposite the duty firearm.
5. Officers shall not in any way alter or modify these weapons.

Samuel Hargadine, Chief of Police

WARNING

This directive is for departmental use only and does not apply in any criminal or civil proceeding. The department policy should not be construed as a creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third-party claims. Violations of this directive will only form the basis for departmental administrative sanctions.