

SCOTTISH POLICE
AUTHORITY

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| Meeting | Public SPA Board Meeting |
| Date | Tuesday 19 December 2017 |
| Location | City Suite, Apex City Quay, Dundee |
| Title of Paper | Police Officer Safety – Use of Conducted Energy Device (CED) (Taser) |
| Item Number | 6.3.1 |
| Presented By | DCC Gwynne |
| Recommendation to Members | For Noting |
| Appendix Attached | No |

PURPOSE

The purpose of this briefing paper is to provide the Scottish Police Authority with an overview of the proposed deployment model and dispositions of Taser X2 (Conducted Energy Device/CED) for non-firearms officers known as Specially Trained Officers (STOs).

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The introduction of Specially Trained Officers (STOs) is a response to wider officer safety concerns. Police Officers in Scotland are regularly faced with threats involving knives and other potentially lethal weapons. In 2016, 2671 use of force incidents were recorded, resulting in 764 officers being assaulted. 139 of these incidents reported the use of a knife.
- 1.2 In addition the terrorist threat level to Police Personnel remains at Severe and whilst generally speaking the initial response to a terrorist attack will be undertaken by armed officers, the profile of recent attacks in London involve the use of bladed weapons which could be mitigated by a Specially Trained Officer.
- 1.3 Recent Terrorist attack methodologies worldwide have been largely through unsophisticated methods using bladed weapons and vehicles as opposed to firearms.
- 1.4 Within police approved professional practice, CEDs like CS Spray/PAVA are very much considered and classified as a less lethal option and not a conventional firearm. This is the position every UK force adopts which will also be adopted by Police Scotland. Indeed presently PSOS Authorised Firearms Officers (AFOs) and STOs within British Transport Police (BTP) already carry Taser operationally in Scotland.
- 1.5 The benefit of STOs will be to provide an enhanced response to violent incidents allowing for an anticipated increase in officer and public safety by reducing police assaults and injury to the public in general. In addition this should reduce officer absences due to injury and reduce complaints against officers.

2. FURTHER DETAIL ON THE REPORT TOPIC

- 2.1 The delivery of the Operational intent, policy/guidelines here is being delivered and gripped through a project structure. The SRO is ACC Operational Support.
- 2.2 Project Aim
 - To select, train, equip and support police officers who will be deployed operationally as STOs.

2.3 Project Objectives

- Ensure project is managed effectively and efficiently adhering to proposed timelines (although CED is not a conventional firearm, the professional discipline lies with Armed Policing)
- Develop and implement a robust selection process adhering to College of Policing (COP) Approved Professional Practice guidelines
- Ensure all training is developed and delivered as per COP National Police Firearms Training Curriculum
- Design a sustainable training delivery model
- Develop a Standing Operating Procedure
- Procure relevant equipment ensuring best value
- Develop a sustainable future governance model
- Engage with Local Policing to establish an operational deployment model
- Develop and implement an internal/external communications and engagement strategy to communicate relevant aspects of the project to the public, partners and identified stakeholders

2.4 CEDs and CS/PAVA spray are defined under Section 5 of the Firearms Act 1968 and fall within the category of prohibited weapons. CEDs do not fit the criteria of a conventional firearm; (ie they are not a barrelled weapon of any description from which a shot, bullet or missile can be discharged).

Similar to CS/PAVA spray, CEDs (whilst already carried by AFOs) will now also be used as a tactical option for trained STO officers. Within police approved professional practice, CEDs are considered a less lethal option and not a conventional firearm, capable of discharging an electric charge in appropriate circumstances by trained officers.

2.5 The deployment of STOs in Scotland is based on a multi-phase implementation plan consisting of two phases. Phase 1 is estimated to be completed within 9 months (circa autumn 2018), training 500 Response Officers from across all Local Policing Divisions. Phase 2 will conduct a review of the project identifying any future learning, potential developments and progressing any relevant recommendations.

2.6 The Operational Deployment Model is based on STOs being allocated across Scotland, with each station being equipped with the necessary IT systems and storage facilities.

- 2.7 The deployment of these officers remains the remit of Local Policing Divisional Commanders to ensure that the allocation of resources is based on local knowledge of demand and geography.

In addition to the training of STOs the delivery programme will utilise existing, but upskilled, Officer Safety Training Instructors (OSTIs) based within Division to deliver initial and ongoing refresher training. Currently training delivery is being considered at various locations.

- 2.8 The proposed introduction has clear links with the objectives of Policing 2026, and continues to preserve public engagement and activity through a new dynamic deployment model which reflects current threat and demand.

Officers will be empowered through robust training, providing them with additional skills and experience to operate effectively in serving the communities where they are deployed.

The use of new technology will provide secure, effective, efficient and auditable data collection and management. It is intended to deploy the most up to date Taser X2 which allows for enhanced forensic recovery and improved download capability to ensure superior evidence management and digital audit.

- 2.9 Ongoing governance and review to monitor effectiveness will be discharged by the Use of Force Monitoring Group. The UOFMG will continue to assess deployment figures and monitor any PIRC referrals and action associated learning.

- 2.10 Any move to the carriage of CED by Divisional officers has required engagement with public and partners. A formal engagement programme has taken place including engagement with key stakeholders, viz:

- Scottish Police Authority
- Scottish Government
- Opposition Parties (through Scottish Parliament Justice Committee)
- HMICS
- Staff Associations
- Local Authority Chief Executives
- Council Leaders
- COSLA

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Funding has been approved by Police Scotland, Corporate Finance and Investment Board and Strategic Leadership Board. This funding includes the acquisition of Taser X2 devices and associated equipment for operations and training such as IT software/hardware, storage and retention system. This funding also provides for external and internal training costs for instructor and student training across Scotland.
- 3.2 A national procurement framework is in place providing access to Taser X2 related products. Capital funding is being used for the initial purchase of weapons, ancillaries and the extension to the Chronicle Firearms Management System.

4. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are personnel implications associated with this paper.
- 4.2 STOs will be retained locally within Divisions and be available for conventional policing deployment. Local policing will be impacted by training abstractions, both from officers attending the STO course and local policing OSTIs who will require to be abstracted to deliver both initial and annual recertification training.
- 4.3 Full engagement with Scottish Police Federation, the Association of Scottish Police Superintendents and internal Health and Safety has taken place and will continue as part of ongoing monitoring and review processes.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The use of particular types of prohibited weapon for a policing purpose requires to be authorised by the Home Secretary (as most firearms control is a reserved matter). In addition, there is the potential for increased referrals to the PIRC. Discharges of Taser require a referral to PIRC, any other use of Taser (e.g. drawing or pointing a device at an offender) requires a use of Taser form which is submitted to Police Scotland National Armed Policing Command.

6. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The thoroughness of the training regime in line with the national UK Approved Professional Practice aims to ensure that this equipment

is properly deployed by police officers. This therefore limits the likelihood of reputational risk.

7. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no social implications associated with this paper.

8. COMMUNITY IMPACT

8.1 There are community implications associated with this paper.

8.2 It is anticipated that the changes proposed will have a positive impact on communities across Scotland and the ability to meet local priorities including equity of access to specialist resources and enhanced safety provision across our communities.

8.3 A comprehensive engagement programme has been delivered in tandem with the revised Armed Policing Deployment Model to ensure appropriate visibility of both issues at the same time with key stakeholders.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no equality implications associated with this paper.

10. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no environmental implications associated with this paper.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are requested to:

Note the information contained within this report.