

**AUTHOR: Chief Inspector Carl Bourne**

**SPONSOR:DCC Jon Stratford**

**DECISION NUMBER: D27-2019**

*(to be completed on approval)*

**SUBMITTED TO: Martin Surl, Police & Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire**

**SUBJECT: 2020 Taser uplift**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Tasers are an enhanced tactical option to be deployed in areas of greatest risk of harm to the public and our staff. Taser is not technically classed as PPE (officer safety equipment) thus there is no requirement for 100% of staff to be Specialist Taser Officers (STO's).

Officers cannot be mandated to carry a Taser.

The Taser training course is difficult and confrontational, and it is likely that the training would identify officers that would not possess the required skills to pass the Taser training course. The course requires an enhanced knowledge of the National Decision Making (NDM) and experience of its application in pressurised and confrontational situations.

Gloucestershire currently adhere to a Tri-Force Armed Policing Strategic Risk Assessment (APSTRA). This APSTRA mainly focused on Firearms assets so a localised STRA was developed in January 2019 (never published) in order enhance Taser decision making.

National guidance states that is it a matter for individual Chief Constables to decide who and how many officers will be trained in Taser, based on their STRA.

There have been two recent STO uplifts in our organisation (November 2017 & January 2019).

During this same time period our neighbouring forces have also had uplifts in Tasers and have already stated their intent to significantly increase further in 2020.

Taser training should be offered to more officers who are in roles with greatest risk of harm and more physical Tasers are required.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

PCC Governance Board is asked to note the following recommendations which were supported at CGB in November:-

- Purchase of 30 additional Tasers
- Increase the number of trained staff in the following units:-
  - FRU Constables and Sergeants to 85% - 67 staff to train
  - RPU Constables and Sergeants to 85% - 6 to train
  - Rural NHP Constable and Sergeants to 25% - 12 to train
  - SOCU (CROPS officers) to 25% - 1 to train

The extra cost of this option would be:

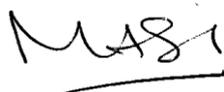
- £64,535 in year 1 – 2020-2021 financial budget
- £30,905 in every subsequent year- 2021-2022 and onwards

This additional cost will be funded from underspend and be added as growth for the next financial year.

The extra officers would be trained during the calendar year 2020.

**OUTCOME/APPROVAL BY:**

Signature:



Date: 26 November 2019

Police and Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire

**Public Access to Information**

*Information in this form and associated reports is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) Order 2011. Where it has been indicated that this is a decision of significant public interest, all of this form except Part Two will be made available on the website of the OPCC.*

*Any information that should not be automatically available on request should not be included in Part One but instead on a separate Part Two form.*

**Is this a decision of significant public interest?**

*This includes a decision with any impact on the community, expenditure in excess of £50,000, or any decision that would be of obvious interest to the media or the general public*

Yes, because:-

1. This will cost more than £50,000.
2. Also this will show our organisational support for a national drive to have more STO's which is likely to attract media attention.
3. Any decision to increase Taser deployment is of obvious interest to both the community and press.

**Is there a Part Two form?**

*This section should only include information that, if published:*

- a) *would, in the view of the chief officer of the police, be against the interests of national security;*
- b) *might, in the view of the chief officer of police, jeopardise the safety of any person;*
- c) *might, in the view of the chief officer of police, prejudice the prevention or detection of crime, the apprehension or prosecution of offenders, or the administration of justice; or*
- d) *is prohibited by any enactment.*
- e) *breaches commercial sensitivity*

No

<b>ORIGINATOR CHECKLIST (MUST BE COMPLETED)</b>	<b>Comments including who has approved the report if applicable</b>
Has legal advice been sought on this submission if required?	No
Has the Chief Finance Officer been consulted, if required?	Yes - Details added in this paper
Have equality, diversity and human rights implications been considered, as appropriate?	Yes and increasing more STO's in our organisation allows us to protect our employees and the public's right to life under article 2 ECHR
How is the recommendation consistent with the objectives of the Police and Crime Plan?	Yes - this supports Accessibility and accountability as this allows us to get the right resources with the right kit

	to the right situation the first time, every time, on time and dealing with the matter appropriately and effectively.
Has consultation been undertaken with people or agencies likely to be affected by the recommendation?	Yes - All linked persons and departments have been consulted and where necessary their comments have helped develop the report.
Has communications advice been sought on areas of likely media, community, staff or partner interest and how they might be managed?	No
Have all relevant implications and risks been considered?	Yes - These are covered in the main content of this report
Has this paper / proposal been submitted through any other Constabulary boards? If so, please detail along with the result.	Yes - Discussed initially at Executive Board on 12/9/19.  Also presented to OPIP on 7/11/19. Both supportive of general direction of report.  CGB – 19 November 2019

## **PART ONE – For publication**

### **1. Purpose of the report**

A report was presented to CGB on 19 November 2019, which outlined the proposal to increase the number of Taser trained officers.

Tasers are an enhanced tactical option to be deployed in areas of greatest risk of harm to the public and our staff. Taser is not technically classed as PPE (officer safety equipment) thus there is no requirement for 100% of staff to be Specialist Taser Officers (STO's). Officers cannot be mandated to carry a Taser. The Taser training course is difficult and confrontational, and it is likely that the training would identify officers that would not possess the required skills to pass the Taser training course. The course requires an enhanced knowledge of the National Decision Making (NDM) and experience of its application in pressurised and confrontational situations.

Gloucestershire currently adhere to a Tri-Force Armed Policing Strategic Risk Assessment (APSTRA). This APSTRA mainly focused on Firearms assets so a localised STRA was developed in January 2019 (never published) in order enhance Taser decision making.

National guidance states that it is a matter for individual Chief Constables to decide who and how many officers will be trained in Taser, based on their STRA. Unfortunately it took until October 2019 before the NPCC issued refreshed precise guidance with regards to the content of a STRA, so a new refreshed Local STRA will not be fully developed until early 2020.

## **2. Background**

### **Taser review history**

2005 - Taser was deployed within the Constabulary. At that time, only Authorised Firearms Officers (AFO) were trained and able to deploy with Taser alongside conventional firearms.

2011 - The Constabulary began training Specialist Taser officers STO's and recommended:

- 150 (STO's) over and above specialist officers e.g. ARV, Dog Handlers, Specialist Training.

2013 - A review identified the Constabulary were not effectively managing trained staff i.e. right people, with right skill, in right place and recommended:

- 150 (STO's) to be maintained but they should be evenly distributed across Local Policing Areas.

2015 - A review of Taser capacity was commissioned linked to the new operating model. Due to staff moving to other departments and retiring a further 74 STO's had to be trained to reach the new recommendation:

- 160 (STO's) to be trained.

It agreed that FRU would be the primary staff trained to carry Taser - moving away from NHP and Local Investigation Team Officers being trained.

2017 - Gloucestershire Police first produced a local Armed Policing Strategic Risk Assessment APSTRA in November 2017. A linked MEB paper made many recommendations. The main one that directly linked to this CGB paper was:

- 230 STO's to be trained by the end of 2018 (not including Firearms officers) additionally 60% of Response officers would be trained by end of 2018

2019 - A local APSTRA was completed which identified that STO numbers had dropped to 201 which was below the 230 recommendation. The APSTRA and linked CGB paper recommended an additional 18 urban NHP officers to be trained in Taser to support the risk they face in NTE policing. This was actioned and a Taser panel was convened to analyse and evenly distribute and recruit new and old STO's.

- 248 STO's to be trained by the end of 2019 (not including Firearms officers)

### 3. Recommendation

On 19 November 2019, CGB approved option 1 in the paper which was:-

#### **Option 1 - Increase the total number of STO's from 248 to 334 (+86).**

This necessitates:-

- Increase of 30 Tasers
- Increase of 6 blocks of lockers (£479)
- Increase the number of trained staff in the following units:-
  - FRU Constables and Sergeants to 85% - 67 staff to train
  - RPU Constables and Sergeants to 85% - 6 to train
  - Rural NHP Constable and Sergeants to 25% - 12 to train
  - SOCU (CROPS officers) to 25% - 1 to train

#### **Objective benefits:**

- The benefits mitigate the risk of harm to our staff and the public, because we are equipping our “greatest risk” officers with additional tactical options to protect themselves and others from harm. I.e.;
  - FRU face a significant risk of harm to them. Taser should be core to role
  - RPU are always single crewed and often attend response incidents and thus also face significant risk, thus Taser should be core to role
  - In January 2020 rural NHP will be conducting NTE duties which increase the risk they are exposed to
  - Rural NHP are often the closest resource to back up a FRU officer who is attending a violent incident solo crewed
  - Certain select NHP rural officer's statistics demonstrate that they also support rural FRU policing significantly with incident attendance, backup, arrests, and searches.

#### **Subjective benefits**

- Fewer officer assaults
- Staff feel exposed and vulnerable in rural areas
- Staff feel 2nd rate by not being considered the same as urban NHP colleagues
- These small simple contributions would produce a significant positive uplift in morale to demonstrate that the organisation is listening.

#### **Dis-benefits**

- Increased financial costs
- Increases abstraction for training
  - Year 1- extra 366 working days abstracted for training<sup>1</sup>
  - Year 2 onwards- extra 194 working days abstracted for training<sup>2</sup>
- Slight increase in Taser administration

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<sup>1</sup>=(86x3)+(9x12)= 366 working days

<sup>2</sup> 86+(9x12)

#### 4. Financial and resource implications

##### Year 1(2020)

- 30 Tasers £30,000
- 6 locker blocks £479
- 86 officers £34,056 = **£64,535**

##### Year 2 (2021 onwards)

Additional costs above keeping STO establishment at 248.

This is calculated by £120,170 - £89,265= **£30,905**

Budget to keep 248 trained STO's	Budget to keep 334 trained STO's
50 x £396 = £19,800	67 x £396 = £26,532
198 x 247.50 = £49,005	267 x £247.50 = £66,083
372 x £55 = £20,460	501x £55 = £27,555
£89,265	£ 120,170

#### 5. Risk assessment

Increasing Tasers assets and STO's will increase the number of recorded times Taser is used as a tactical option for use of force.

The risks associated with this could be:

- Negative media attention (Reputational damage)
- Injuries to subjects from Taser usage
- Incorrect Taser usage
- Complaints from subjects.

The Taser SRO should be able to mitigate the above risks through the relevant training plan and scrutiny structure that is already in place.

In 2018 we switched from using an X26 Taser to now using an X2 Taser which are both produced by a company called AXON. AXON are developing a new style of Taser which is slightly smaller, and may fire cartridges an extra couple of feet, this is called "Taser 7". The development of "Taser 7" may cause a financial risk as at some point the production of the X2 will cease. There is no current end production date for this new device and AXON have not communicated any product specifications but the cost is £1400 per device which is an increase of £400 per device. To mitigate this risk we will ensure that we have sufficient X2 Tasers in our establishment with connected warranties to last until

financial year 2023. Additionally even if the “Taser 7” does come into production pre 2023 we will not switch to a new product before 2023.

## **6. Equality & Diversity impact assessment**

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 states that a public authority should carry out an assessment prior to implementing a policy or initiative, with a view to ascertaining its potential impact on equality. Nothing is relevant in this paper to this duty.

## **7. Environmental impact assessment**

Taser training requires officers to fire Taser cartridges that are then classed as waste as they cannot be reused. These items will be recycled in a method which can make best use of the materials of their original manufacture. A Taser cartridge will only be fired when absolutely necessary in the training environment.

Taser training will be conducted at a central location to reduce where possible the need for officers to use private transport to travel to the venue. All students will be reminded to share lifts to the training venue. These two actions will aim to reduce the environmental impact of increase vehicle use and Co2 emissions.

Assets will be bought in bulk to reduce any connected emissions that could be generated from delivery of any items.

Unfortunately there is only one supplier of Taser associated assets so as an organisation we cannot enforce our positive environmental priority on this supplier.

## **8. Consultation**

Full consultation has taken place with key stakeholders – details are contained within the attached CGB paper.

## **9. Discussed with Communications & Engagement**

The Taser uplift will require a Communications approach to inform the organisation and the public of the plans along with the reasons as to why this is appropriate and proportionate.

## **10. Conclusion**

CGB supported the proposal to increase the number of Tasers in line with the recommendation in the paper.

**SPONSORING BOARD MEMBER APPROVAL**

**Name:** Jon Stratford

**Job title:** Deputy Chief Constable



**Signature:**

**Date:** 19/11/19

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE APPROVAL**

I am satisfied that relevant advice has been taken into account in the preparation of the report and that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the PCC.



**Signature:**

**Date:** 19/11/19

Appendix 1 – CGB paper – 2020 Taser Uplift



4. Taser uplift -  
main paper.pdf