Product Warnings – Law Enforcement

IMPORTANT SAFETY AND HEALTH INFORMATION

Read, understand, and follow the training, safety instructions, and warnings before using the TASER device. (*These warnings are effective June 8, 2006, and supersede all prior revisions for TASER devices.)*[1]

This warning label appears on newer TASER device models.

TASER® electronic control devices are weapons designed to incapacitate a person from a safe distance while reducing the likelihood of serious injuries or death. Though they have been found to be a safer and more effective alternative when used as directed to other traditional use of force tools and techniques, it is important to remember that the very nature of use of force and physical incapacitation involves a degree of risk that someone will get hurt or may even be killed due to physical exertion, unforeseen circumstances and individual susceptibilities.

OPERATIONAL SAFETY

To minimize the risk of injury before, during, and after use, consider the following:

Minimize Risks Before Use

Read and Heed. Read, understand, and follow all instructions and warnings before using the TASER device.

Complete Training First. Do not attempt to use a TASER device unless you have been trained and certified by a TASER International, Inc. certified instructor in its application.

Obey Applicable Laws. Carry and use the TASER device in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws as well as your law enforcement agency's guidance—policies, procedures, training, etc. Each TASER device discharge must be legally justified.

Store in a Secure Location. Store TASER device(s) in a secure location inaccessible to children and other unauthorized persons. TASER devices are not toys, and users should avoid any inappropriate deployments and/or activations, which may result in serious bodily harm to the user or others, including animals.

Minimize Risks During Use

Avoid Torturous or Other Misuse.

Assume Device is Loaded. Always assume that a TASER device is loaded.

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[1] These warnings cannot address all possible force application circumstances. They are intended to inform you about potential risks of harm, but the decision to use the TASER device in a particular circumstance must be made in light of applicable legal standards and available alternatives. These warnings do not create a more restrictive standard of care than applicable legal standards.

Avoid Unintentional Activation. Keep finger away from trigger until ready to use.

Keep Body Parts Away From Front. Keep your hands and body parts away from the front of the TASER cartridge.

Avoid Static Electricity Discharge. Avoid contact between static electricity and the TASER cartridge since static electricity can cause unexpected discharge.

DEPLOYMENT WARNINGS

To minimize the risk of injury during or from deployment, follow these guidelines:

Deployment Safety Procedures

Avoid Weapons Confusion. Handguns have been confused with TASER devices. Learn about the differences in physical feel and holstering characteristics between the TASER device and your handgun. This will allow you to confirm device identity under stressful situations. Follow agency's equipment carrying guidelines and training.

Select Preferred Target Areas. The preferred target areas are the subject's torso (center mass) or legs. Avoid intentionally aiming a TASER device at the head or face without justification.

Avoid Sensitive Areas. Significant injury can occur from TASER device deployment into sensitive areas of the body such as the eyes, throat, or genitals—avoid intentionally targeting these areas without justification.

Avoid Known Pre-Existing Injury Areas. When practical, avoid deploying a TASER device at a known location of pre-existing injury (e.g., avoid targeting the back for persons with known pre-existing back injuries, avoid targeting the chest area on persons with a known history of previous heart attacks, etc.). These injuries may be provoked by such deployment.

Beware—TASER Device Can Ignite Explosive Materials, Liquids, or Vapors. These include gasoline, other flammables, explosive materials, liquids, or vapors (e.g., gases found in sewer lines, methamphetamine labs, and butane-type lighters). Some self-defense sprays use flammable carriers such as alcohol and could be dangerous to use in immediate conjunction with TASER devices.

Reload and Deploy. If a TASER device application is ineffective in achieving the desired effect, consider reloading and redeploying or using other force option(s), according to approved training and policy.

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

Control and Restrain Immediately. Begin control and restraint procedures as soon as it is reasonably safe to do so in order to minimize the total duration of exertion and stress experienced by the subject. User should avoid touching the probes and wires and the areas between the probes during TASER electrical discharge.

Deployment Health Risks

Sudden In-Custody Death Syndrome Awareness. If a subject is exhibiting signs or behaviors[2] that are associated with Sudden In-Custody Death Syndrome,[3] consider combining use of a TASER device with immediate physical restraint techniques and medical assistance.

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[2] Signs of Sudden In-Custody Death Syndrome include: extreme agitation, bizarre behavior, inappropriate nudity, imperviousness to pain, paranoia, exhaustive exertion, "superhuman" strength, hallucinations, sweating profusely, etc.

Continuous Exposure Risks. When practical, avoid prolonged or continuous exposure(s) to the TASER device's electrical discharge. In some circumstances, in susceptible people, it is conceivable that the stress and exertion of extensive repeated, prolonged, or continuous application(s) of the TASER device may contribute to cumulative exhaustion, stress, and associated medical risk(s).

Other Conditions. Unrelated to TASER exposure, conditions such as excited delirium, severe exhaustion, drug intoxication or chronic drug abuse, and/or over-exertion from physical struggle may result in serious injury or death.

Breathing Impairment. Extended or repeated TASER device exposures should be avoided where practical. Although existing studies on conscious human volunteers indicate subjects continue to breathe during extended TASER device applications, it is conceivable that the muscle contractions may impair a subject's ability to breathe. In tests conducted on anesthetized pigs repeated TASER device applications did cause cessation of breathing during TASER device discharges, although it is unclear what impact the anesthesia or other factors may have had on the test results. Accordingly, it is advisable to use expedient physical restraint in conjunction with the TASER device to minimize the overall duration of stress, exertion, and potential breathing impairment particularly on individuals exhibiting symptoms of excited delirium and/or exhaustion. However, it should be noted that certain subjects in a state of excited delirium may exhibit superhuman strength and despite efforts for expedient restraint, these subjects sometimes cannot be restrained without a significant and profound struggle.

Permanent Vision Loss. If a TASER probe becomes embedded in an eye, it could result in permanent loss of vision.

Seizure Risks. 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.

Post-Deployment Procedures—Wound and Injury Care

Probe Removal. In most areas of the body, injuries or wounds caused by TASER probes will be minor. TASER probes have small barbs. There is a possible risk of probes causing injury to blood vessels. Follow your training and agency's guidance for probe removal.

Skin Wound Treatment. TASER devices can cause skin irritation, small puncture wounds, friction abrasions, minor burns, etc. As with any injury of this type, in some circumstances infection(s) may occur. Thus, appropriately cleanse any such wounds and if necessary seek medical attention.

HEALTH RISKS

Response to Exposure. The TASER device can cause temporary discomfort, pain, stress, and panic, which may be injurious to some people.

Muscle Contraction-Related Risks. The TASER device can cause strong muscle contractions that may result in physical exertion or athletic-type injuries. In certain instances this may be serious for some people, such as those with pre-existing conditions and/or special susceptibilities. This may also occur in instances where a person has an unusual and/or unanticipated response to the TASER device deployment and/or discharge.

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[3] Sudden in-custody death results from a complex set of physiological and psychological conditions characterized by irrational behavior, extreme exertion, and potentially fatal changes in blood chemistry. Promptly capturing, controlling, and restraining a subject exhibiting signs of these conditions may end the struggle and allow early medical care intervention.

Secondary Injury Risks. TASER-induced strong muscle contractions usually render a subject temporarily unable to control his or her psychomotor movements. This may result in secondary injuries such as those due to falls. This loss of control, or inability to catch oneself, can in special circumstances increase the risk(s) of serious injury or death. Persons who are physically infirm or pregnant are among those who may be at higher risk. Other persons at higher risk include: those located on elevated or unstable platforms (e.g., trees, roofs, ladders, ledges, cranes, loading docks), operating a vehicle or machinery, or those who are running. Persons located in water may drown if their ability to move is restricted.

Strain Injury Risks. It is possible that the injury types may include, but are not limited to, strain-type injuries such as hernias, ruptures, dislocations, tears, or other injuries to soft tissue, organs, muscles, tendons, ligaments, nerves, and joints. Fractures to bones, including vertebrae, may occur. These injuries may be more likely to occur in people with pre-existing injuries or conditions such as pregnancy, osteoporosis, osteopenia, spinal injuries, diverticulitis, or in persons having previous muscle, disc, ligament, joint, or tendon damage. It is believed that the risk of these injuries is comparable to or less than the risk(s) from vigorous physical exertion, such as weight training, wrestling, or other intense athletic endeavors.

Scarring. Use of a TASER device, especially 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.

Laser Beam Eye Damage. The TASER device incorporates a laser aiming aid. Laser beams can cause eye damage. Avoid intentionally aiming at the eye(s) of a person or animal.

MAINTENANCE

Avoid Dropping Device. Dropping a TASER device may damage it. If a device has been dropped or damaged do not attempt to place the safety switch in the up (ARMED) position until completing the procedure recommended in the current version of the TASER International, Inc. Instructor Training materials.[4]

Avoid Exposure to Significant Moisture. If a device has been exposed to significant moisture,[5] do not attempt to place the safety switch in the up (ARMED) position until completing the procedure recommended in the current version of the TASER International, Inc. Instructor Training materials.[4]

Use Only Approved Components, Batteries, Accessories, and Cartridges. The TASER device is a sophisticated electronic system. Only TASER International, Inc. approved components, batteries, proper accessories, and TASER Cartridges are to be used with the TASER device in order to ensure proper function and effects. Use of anything other than recommended batteries, TASER Cartridges, or other TASER-recommended accessories (excluding holsters), or repairs/modifications by unauthorized persons may cause malfunctions, will void the warranty, and may put the user, suspects, and others at risk of serious injury or even death.

[4] The TASER International, Inc. Instructor Training syllabus and other warnings and instructions are available online at www.TASER.com.

[5] Incidental moisture, such as brief exposure to light or moderate rain, should not affect the operation of the TASER device. If the TASER device has been drenched or immersed in water or other liquid, however, do not use it until it has been inspected and tested in accordance with the TASER International, Inc. Instructor Training syllabus.