

STATE COLLEGE POLICE DEPARTMENT ANNUAL TASER REPORT 2019



OVERVIEW

The State College Police Department officially equipped officers with TASERs in February of 2015. Shortly after implementation of the program a separate Taser Advisory Committee was established to review policy and procedure. This external committee recommended that the State College Police Department publish an annual report providing the public with information relative to the taser program. The department has published annual reports since 2016. Following is the 2019 Annual Taser Report.

2019 TRAINING

All State College Officers received re-certification in the use of the TASER during January and February 2019. That recertification consisted of an AXON (Formerly TASER International) 4-hour course that included a practical examination. The training consisted of an approved and updated TASER curriculum current with recent case law and trends regarding TASER use. The practical examination included targeting subjects from multiple positions as well as continued scenario-based training. Three newly hired officers were also given initial TASER certification prior to authorization to carry. In October 2019 Officers Nick Raia and Mike Williams completed instructor certification. Both instructors began testing the latest or newest taser model (X7) at certification class.

2019 TASER PURCHASES

In February 2019 the department purchased 5 new X26P TASER devices. The purchase totaled \$9,537.00. It included extra batteries, cartridges and training equipment for 2020 training. Two tasers were found to be malfunctioning and were replaced under warranty free of charge. The 2019 purchase and replacement of malfunctioning devices brought the

department's compliment to a total of 43 - X26P TASER devices. Still not enough tasers to equip each officer, however, certainly enough to equip all uniformed officers working during special event deployments.



The department currently owns 43 - X26P TASER Devices

2019 TASER DEPLOYMENTS

YEARLY COMPARISON

Deployment vs. Threats of Use



**A threat of deployment includes the officer arming the TASER and pointing it at the subject while verbally advising the subject he or she is going to be tased if he or she does not comply or stop resisting.*



There were three TASER deployment incidents and three threats of a TASER deployment in 2019. These total numbers remain below the first three years of the program. All three of the TASER deployments were reviewed by the Department Conduct and Procedures Review Board as per department policy. The Board reviews the reasonableness of the deployment along with consistency with established department policy. The Board recommendations may include policy changes, training needs or referral to Internal affairs.

- Following is a listing of each incident where a TASER was deployed in 2019:

1. January 2019 – An Officer deployed a TASER drive stun on a 22 yr old Hispanic male that was intoxicated and actively resisting arrest, refusing to allow himself to be placed on an ambulance gurney. The TASER was effective obtaining cooperation from the subject, and he was transported to the hospital.
2. February 2019 – An Officer deployed a TASER on a 45 yr old white male suffering from a mental health crisis after he attempted to grab the officer's TASER from his belt and ripped his badge from his shirt. The TASER was ineffective as the first cartridge malfunctioned and on a second attempt, one of the probes failed to contact the subject. The initial cartridge failure was believed to be a result of the subject attempting to take the TASER from the officer's belt. This may have partially unseated the cartridge from the TASER.
3. March 2019 – An Officer deployed a TASER on a 29 yr old African American male suffering from a mental health crisis when the male ran at officers with a knife. The TASER deployment was ineffective stopping the attack due to the distance of the subject from the officer.

- Following is a list of 2019 incidents where a TASER was threatened to be used by an officer in an attempt to gain voluntary compliance. In all three cases the threat of the TASER was successful in obtaining compliance.

1. February 2019 – 20 yr old white male suffering from a mental health crisis reported to be armed with a knife however was not.
2. March 2019 – 31 yr old white male under the influence of drugs who was reportedly holding a person against her will.

3. July 2019 – 33 yr old white male under the influence of drugs and alcohol and suspect in an assault investigation.



INJURIES

There were no injuries beyond a signature or contact burn from a drive stun or small punctures from a probe deployment. All subjects exposed to the TASER received medical evaluation/attention as per department policy.

FURTHER STATISTICS

2019 Ethnicity Breakdown of Deployments vs. Threats

2019 Subjects Under the Influence or Suffering from
Mental Health Crisis



*Some subjects may have been under the influence of more than one substance/condition

SUMMARY

TASER deployments and the threats of deployment remain comparatively low from the first three years of the program. There were three deployments and three threats of deployment this year. Overall, the taser was effective 4 out of 6 times obtaining compliance from the intended subject.

Regarding purchases and training, the State College Police Department has budgeted to acquire 9 X26P TASER devices in 2020 that will replace the TASERs that were purchased in 2014. Those 2014 TASERs will be taken out of circulation so the total compliment of available tasers will remain at 43. The department will continue to certify in-house instructors and will conduct 2020 officer TASER re-certifications as well as provide first time certification to all newly hired officers before they are authorized to carry the TASER on patrol. The department plans to continue scenario-based training in 2020. Department instructors will also continue to evaluate the new TASER (X7) device for effectiveness.

The Department's Conduct and Procedures Review Board will continue to review each TASER deployment for consistency with department policy. These reviews will consider possible training needs and policy changes. The department will also continue to monitor and review court decisions to ensure that policy is consistent with the law regarding reasonable use of the TASER.

