



San Diego County Sheriff

Training Bulletin

William D. Gore, Sheriff

March 2017



TASER Conducted Electrical Weapon (CEW) Update

As a force option, the CEW shall only be used as a means of subduing and gaining control of a subject displaying assaultive behavior. Use of the CEW shall be restricted for use under circumstances where it is deemed reasonable and necessary to minimize the potential for human injury. When used as directed in probe-deployment mode, CEWs are designed to temporarily incapacitate a person, while reducing the likelihood of death or serious injury. *This training bulletin supersedes any previous instructions or warnings regarding the use of TASER/CEW. Deputies shall follow all of these guidelines:*

- **Minimize the number and duration of CEW exposures.** Use the shortest, objectively reasonable duration of CEW exposure to accomplish lawful objectives. Continually reassess the subject's behavior, reaction, and resistance before initiating or continuing the exposure. Multiple applications or continuous cycling of a CEW resulting in an exposure longer than 15 seconds (whether continuous or cumulative) may increase the risk of serious injury or death and should be avoided if possible. If the CEW is ineffective, consider alternative control measures. Always have a back-up plan!
- **Avoid simultaneous CEW exposures.** Do not use multiple CEWs or multiple completed circuits at the same time without sufficient justification. Doing so could have a cumulative effect and result in increased risks.
- **Control and restrain immediately.** Begin control and restraint procedures, including during CEW exposure ("cuffing under power"), as soon as reasonably safe and practical to minimize CEW cumulative effects and the total duration of exertion and stress experienced by the subject.
- **Target preferred areas.** Target the back below the neck or the lower center of mass below the heart if possible. Avoid intentionally targeting the face, eyes, head, throat, heart, breast, groin, genitals, or any known preexisting injury areas.

- **Higher risk populations:** CEW use on a pregnant, infirm, elderly, low body-mass index person or small child could increase the risk of death or serious injury. Only use a CEW on such persons if the use of force is objectively reasonable under the totality of the circumstances.

Additionally, certain individuals with heart conditions, asthma or other pulmonary conditions, and people suffering from excited delirium, profound agitation, severe exhaustion, drug intoxication or chronic drug abuse, and/or over-exertion from physical struggle may be particularly susceptible to the effects of CEW use. Deputies who use a CEW on these individuals should look for potential signs of distress and be prepared to provide medical care as needed.

- **Secondary injuries.** The temporary loss of control resulting from a CEW exposure may result in injuries due to a fall or other uncontrolled movement. When possible, avoid using a CEW when secondary injuries are likely (i.e. elevated or unstable surface, in motion or moving under momentum, in body of water, etc.). Handcuffed or restrained subjects are also less able to protect themselves during a fall.
- **Fire and explosion hazard.** CEW use can result in a fire or explosion when flammable gases, fumes, vapors, liquids, or materials are present. When possible, avoid using a CEW in known flammable hazardous conditions.
- **Safely perform spark (function) test before every shift.** Failure to maintain a CEW as instructed may cause the CEW to malfunction or fail to function optimally.
- **Carry CEW in approved holster on non-gun side.** Potentially confusing a handgun with a CEW could result in death or serious injury.
- **Medical treatment.** All subjects exposed to a CEW (i.e. probe-deployment or drive-stun application) will be transported to a medical facility for booking clearance. Probes may be removed by paramedics at the scene to facilitate transportation. If transported in a Sheriff's vehicle, two deputies will make the transport when practical. If a subject appears to be at risk for an in-custody death, summon emergency medical help immediately. Place them in a recovery position and monitor ABCs. If used in a detention setting, detention medical staff shall be contacted to initiate a medical evaluation of the subject. The CEW probes shall be removed by detention medical staff and the subject shall be examined by a physician as soon as practical.

See the attached TASER/CEW warnings for additional details. This Training Bulletin was prepared by Corporal Joseph Jarjura and Sergeant Chris Cross and edited for distribution by the In-Service Training Unit. If you have expertise in a particular subject and would like to write a training bulletin, please contact Corporal Daniel Gutierrez at In-Service Training, [REDACTED]
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