

415 – Guidelines for Use of Electronic Controlled Weapons (ECWS)

Santa Ana Police Department

Departmental Order #415 – Guidelines for Use of Electronic Controlled Weapons (ECWS)

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Purpose

The purpose of this Order is to familiarize departmental personnel with the operational capabilities of Electronic Controlled Weapons and to establish guidelines regarding their use.

Background

The Santa Ana Police Department provides a variety of force options for officers to use in dealing with violent suspects. The department has made the X26 TASER available to officers for use in applicable situations. The X26 TASER, because of the technology used in its design, is classified as a less lethal control device. All officers who employ the TASER must fully understand that even though the X26 TASER is considered a less lethal weapon, the potential for serious injury or death still exists. All sworn employees below the rank of Deputy Chief shall be trained in the use of the X26 TASER (herein referred to as TASER).

Definition

- A. The TASER is a hand held electronic device, which fires two barbed probes. The probes are connected by fine wires to plastic cassettes and are charged by batteries housed within the weapon.
- B. When the probes make contact, a five-second high voltage, low amperage electrical charge is delivered to the target. It is during this period of temporary paralysis that the violent suspect should be approached and taken into custody.
- C. The TASER can be used in a drive stun mode without an Air Cartridge in place. The TASER will always fire a live cartridge when loaded and fired by the operator; therefore, it cannot be used in the drive stun mode without first firing or removing the live Air Cartridge. When used in the drive stun mode, the TASER should be activated against the subject's muscle or nerve points (front of torso, back of torso, sides, legs, arms and clavicle.) The head, face, eyes, neck, women's breasts and men's testicles should be avoided.

I. Procedures

A. Use of the X26 TASER

The procedures for use of the TASER are set forth in **Training Bulletin 01-16, "Use of the X26 TASER Electronic Weapon."** Department use of force policy is contained in **Departmental Order 425, "Use of Force and In-custody Injuries."** TASER Operators shall be familiar and comply with the policies contained in these Training Bulletins and Orders.

1. Officers that have successfully completed department approved training shall carry the TASER while working in a patrol capacity, unless they have written authorization from the Chief of Police excusing this requirement. Additionally, every two years personnel must also successfully complete the recertification training in order to carry the TASER
2. It is imperative that officers, when deploying the TASER, be able to articulate objective facts that justify their use of the TASER. An officer's subjective statement that he or she feared for his or her own safety or for the safety of others alone is not sufficient reason to deploy the TASER where objective facts do not support that the subject posed an immediate threat. A subject must pose an immediate threat to the safety of an officer or any other person before the TASER can be used against the threatening subject.

3. Any person who has been subjected to the electrical discharge of a TASER, whether in the probe mode or drive stun mode, shall be medically assessed by Santa Ana Fire Department Paramedics as soon as practical prior to being booked. The paramedics can remove probes that are lodged in a subject's skin as long as they are not affixed to the face, neck, groin, hands, or any other area deemed sensitive by the paramedics. Under these conditions, paramedics will transport the subject to the hospital for necessary treatment by a physician.
4. Expended TASER cartridges should be recovered and booked into evidence. The serial number of each expended cartridge should be included in the officer's police report. Expended TASER probes will be handled as a sharp biohazard, similar to a used hypodermic needle, and placed into a sharps container, and booked into evidence.
5. If a supervisor was not present when the TASER was used, one shall be called to the scene as soon as practical. The assigned supervisor shall respond and investigate the use of the TASER and ensure the incident is properly documented as directed in Department Order 425.

B. Reporting the Use of the TASER

A supervisor shall be assigned to complete a full report per Departmental Order 425 for each incident in which the TASER was used, regardless of whether it was used in the drive stun mode or the TASER mode.

Additionally, the supervisor shall forward a copy of the Supervisor's Use of Force Investigation Report to the Training Division Use of Force Coordinator.