



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2021-02565

Keyword: Operational Policing

Subject: Taser Deployment

Request and Answer:

Your request for information has now been considered. In respect of Section 1(1)(a) of the Act we can confirm that the Police Service of Northern Ireland does hold some information to which your request relates and this is being provided to you. We do not however hold information in relation to Request 2 “part b” below.

Request 1

How many times was a Taser deployed in any way and - as a separate number - how many times fired/discharged by your police force in the periods:

- a) 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018
- b) 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019
- c) 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020
- d) 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021?

Answer

Please note that ‘Taser®’ is a proprietary term and a registered trademark belonging to the company Taser International Inc. Therefore for the purposes of this request, PSNI will use the term Conductive Energy Devices in our responses.

Table 1 displays the number of occasions that PSNI officers deployed conductive energy devices (CEDs) during each of the last 4 financial years.

Table 1

Force used	1 Apr 17 - 31 Mar 18	1 Apr 18 - 31 Mar 19	1 Apr 19 - 31 Mar 20	1 Apr 20 - 31 Mar 21
CED deployed ⁽¹⁾	346	399	343	312
CED fired ⁽²⁾	35	22	26	24

(1) Refers to all uses of a CED, i.e. being drawn, aimed, arced, red-dotted, drive-stunned or fired

(2) Includes drive-stun

(3) An officer may have used force on more than one member of the public in a single occasion of using force.

Request 2

In what number or percentages of deployments and - as a separate figure - discharges did the person:

- have mental health problems
- have acute behavioural disturbance
- was under the influence of alcohol without mental health problems
- was under the influence of drugs without mental health problems?

Answer to Part (a)

When an officer uses force on an individual(s) they are required to record details of the incident on a use of force monitoring form, including what they **perceive** the incident was related to. This is a picklist from which the officer can choose one or more of the following four options: alcohol, drugs, mental health or other. These impact factors are recorded for each incident, which may involve multiple individuals, rather than for each individual on whom force was used.

Table 2 displays the number of occasions that PSNI officers deployed conductive energy devices (CEDs) during each of the last 4 financial years in which the officer perceived the incident to be related to mental health.

Table 2

Force used	1 Apr 17 - 31 Mar 18	1 Apr 18 - 31 Mar 19	1 Apr 19 - 31 Mar 20	1 Apr 20 - 31 Mar 21
CED deployed ⁽¹⁾	222	272	231	229
CED fired ⁽²⁾	32	19	25	23

(1) Refers to all uses of a CED, i.e. being drawn, aimed, arced, red-dotted, drive-stunned or fired

(2) Includes drive-stun

(3) An officer may have used force on more than one member of the public in a single occasion of using force.

(4) An officer may have perceived the incident to be related to one or more additional impact factors, as well as mental health.

Answer to Part (b)

Enquiries made in relation to this part of your request failed to locate any relevant records or documents as there is no indicator on the force monitoring form which would allow an officer to record that they perceived the incident to be related to acute behavioural disturbance.

Accordingly, we have determined that the Police Service of Northern Ireland does not hold the information to which you seek access.

Answer to Part (c)

Table 3 displays the number of occasions that PSNI officers deployed conductive energy devices (CEDs) during each of the last 4 financial years in which the officer perceived the incident to be related to alcohol and not related to mental health.

Table 3

Force used	1 Apr 17 - 31 Mar 18	1 Apr 18 - 31 Mar 19	1 Apr 19 - 31 Mar 20	1 Apr 20 - 31 Mar 21
CED deployed ⁽¹⁾	65	56	55	35
CED fired ⁽²⁾	2	2	0	0

(1) Refers to all uses of a CED, i.e. being drawn, aimed, arced, red-dotted, drive-stunned or fired

(2) Includes drive-stun

(3) An officer may have used force on more than one member of the public in a single occasion of using force.

(4) An officer may have perceived the incident to be related to drugs and/or 'other' impact factors, as

well as alcohol.

Answer to Part (d)

Table 4 displays the number of occasions that PSNI officers deployed conductive energy devices (CEDs) during each of the last 4 financial years in which the officer perceived the incident to be related to drugs and not related to mental health.

Table 4

Force used	1 Apr 17 - 31 Mar 18	1 Apr 18 - 31 Mar 19	1 Apr 19 - 31 Mar 20	1 Apr 20 - 31 Mar 21
CED deployed ⁽¹⁾	33	33	30	22
CED fired ⁽²⁾	1	0	0	0

(1) Refers to all uses of a CED, i.e. being drawn, aimed, arced, red-dotted, drive-stunned or fired

(2) Includes drive-stun

(3) An officer may have used force on more than one member of the public in a single occasion of using force.

(4) An officer may have perceived the incident to be related to alcohol and/or 'other' impact factors, as well as drugs.

If you have any queries regarding your request or the decision please do not hesitate to contact me on 028 9070 0164. When contacting the Corporate Information Branch, please quote the reference number listed at the beginning of this letter.

If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review. You should do this as soon as possible or in any case within two months of the date of issue of this letter. In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to the Head of Corporate Information Branch, PSNI Headquarters, 65 Knock Road, Belfast, BT5 6LE or by emailing foi@psni.pnn.police.uk.

If, following an Internal Review carried out by an independent decision maker, you remain dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office, under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, and ask that they investigate whether the PSNI has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act. You can write to the Information Commissioner at 'Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF', or use the ICO self-service portal available at www.ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/officialinformation-concerns-report/official-information-concern/

In most circumstances, the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out however, the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at their discretion.

Please be advised that PSNI replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public domain via our website @ www.psnipolice.uk

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.