

independent and effective investigations and reviews



Police Investigations &
Review Commissioner

18 FEBRUARY 2019

PIRC Investigation Findings

Taser Deployment
Aberdeen
June 2018

BACKGROUND

In June 2018 police officers traced a 33-year-old man to an address in Aberdeen following a report of an incident earlier that day involving the man's partner. One of the officers who attended this incident was a Specially Trained Officer (STO) who was equipped with and trained in the use of Taser. When the police gained access to the flat they found the man behaving in an erratic and unpredictable manner. He was threatening to kill himself, holding a knife to his throat and a pair of scissors to his abdomen.

The man then tried to hide what he was doing with the knife but when the STO saw him cutting his neck with the knife he discharged the Taser at the man to protect the man's life. The man was swiftly arrested and provided with medical attention. He did not sustain any significant injuries and was taken into police custody. The man was charged with a number of offences and later convicted.

REFERRAL TO THE PIRC

On 26 June 2018, the Chief Constable referred the incident to the Police Investigations & Review Commissioner (PIRC) in terms of the Police, Public Order and Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2006 as amended, and the Police Investigations and Review Commissioner (Investigations, Serious Incidents and Specified Weapons) Regulations 2013, for independent assessment.

PIRC INVESTIGATION

The PIRC investigation focused on the police handling of the incident, the decision making processes relating to the discharge of the Taser and the actions of the officers at the scene to establish whether the Taser discharges were necessary, proportionate and justified.

PIRC investigators obtained witness statements from police officers, police staff and civilian witnesses and they also examined Command and Control (STORM) logs, telephone and Airwave recordings, as well as Police Scotland Standard Operating Procedures. PIRC investigators were present whilst the Taser device was downloaded to provide an audit of how it had been used. Body worn video footage of the incident was also reviewed by PIRC investigators.

PIRC FINDINGS

Following investigation the Commissioner found that:

- The man posed a danger to himself and the responding officers
- In the circumstances the use of Taser to limit that danger and effect his arrest was necessary, proportionate and justified.

RECOMMENDATIONS

No recommendations were made.

