



Home Office

March 2014

Statistical News Release: Police use of taser statistics for England and Wales for 2012 to 2013

The latest statistics on police use of taser for England and Wales covering January 2012 to December 2013 produced by the Home Office are released today (27 March 2014).

Taser is a pistol-like conductive energy device that can incapacitate an individual through the use of an electrical current. It is less lethal than a conventional firearm and provides a valuable tactical option for the police when faced with violence or threats of violence of such severity that force is needed to protect the public, themselves or the individual concerned.

Every incident in which taser is deployed – whether it is fired or not – is recorded by the local police force, and a report is sent to the Home Office for collation. The data provides information as to taser's operational effectiveness, its medical implications, and makes transparent the levels and types of usage by the police.

Taser use is now recorded against seven categories: Drawn, Aimed, Arced, Red Dotted, Drive Stun, Angled Drive Stun and Fired. Only the final use after being drawn for each taser deployed is recorded.

Key findings are:

- Total police use of taser increased between 2012 and 2013, continuing the trend seen since 2009;
- The percentage of uses where the 'highest use' of a taser was 'fired' decreased between 2012 and 2013 (from 21% to 17%), having remained constant between 2011 and 2012.
- The most common use of a taser in each of the last two years was 'red dot' – accounting for 51% of use – which is consistent with the level seen in 2011.

Notes to editors

Police use of taser statistics England and Wales 2012 to 2013 is available online on the UK Statistics Authority website as well as the GOV.UK website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/police-use-of-taser-statistics-england-and-wales-2012-to-2013>

The table below provides information on each use and ranks them in terms of 'highest use'¹.

Highest use	Fired	The taser is fired with a live cartridge installed. When the trigger is pulled, the probes are fired towards the subject with the intention of completing an electrical circuit and delivering an incapacitating effect.
	Angled Drive Stun	The officer fires the weapon with a live cartridge installed. One or both probes may attach to the subject. The officer then holds the taser against the subject's body in a different area to the probe(s), in order to complete the electrical circuit and deliver an incapacitating effect.
	Drive stun	The taser is held against the subject's body and the trigger is pulled with no probes being fired. Contact with the subject completes the electrical circuit which causes pain but does not deliver an incapacitating effect.
Non-discharges	Red dotted	The weapon is not fired. Instead, the taser is deliberately aimed and then partially activated so that a laser red dot is placed onto the subject
	Arcing	Sparking of the taser without aiming it or firing it
	Aimed	Deliberately aiming of the taser at a targeted subject
Lowest use	Drawn	Drawing of taser in circumstances where any person could reasonably perceive the action to be a use of force

For all press enquiries, please contact the Home Office Press Office:

Newsdesk - **020 7035 3535**

Monday - Thursday: 07:00 - 21:00

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Emergency media calls, out-of-hours: **07659 174 240**

Please note: the press office deals with enquiries from the media only. Members of the public should phone **020 7035 4848**.

¹ The use of taser with the most physical impact is 'fired' and can result in incapacitation. For the purposes of the police's statistical reporting this is known as the 'highest use' of a taser. When a taser is just drawn this is known as its 'lowest use' and red-dotted is known as a 'non-discharge'