



**ASSOCIATION OF
CHIEF POLICE OFFICERS**



**College of
Policing**

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Dear Home Secretary

I write to formally request your authorisation for the use of the Ziegler Wasserwerfer 9000 water cannon in England and Wales. Home Office Codes of Practice and Authorised Professional Practice (APP) require the police to seek approval from the Home Secretary in advance of the first use of less lethal weapons.

This request has the full support of Chief Constables' Council and the Metropolitan Police Service wishes to procure these water cannon at the earliest opportunity. This asset is primarily intended to be available for use in the Metropolitan Police area. However, in order for them to be available to support requests for mutual aid from other Chief Constables, this request is for authorisation for the use of the Ziegler Wasserwerfer 9000 in all forces in England and Wales. If authorised, the decision to deploy water cannon in any force will rest with the respective Chief Constable and it is inconceivable that this decision would be taken without consultation with the respective Police and Crime Commissioner.

To support this formal request, the following evidence is included to assist your consideration. These are:

- Operational Requirement

The operational requirement is provided in two parts and these are appended to this letter. The first part sets out the rationale for adding water cannon to the existing range of tactical options to deal with public order incidents. The second part identifies specific operational requirements relating to water cannon and follows the format of the Home Office Centre for Applied Science and Technology's (CAST) overarching operational requirement relating to less-lethal technology. This document has been approved by Chief Constable Justine Curran (National Policing Lead for Public Order and Public Safety).

- Technical requirement

The Technical Requirement relating to water cannon has been prepared by the Home Office Centre for Applied Science and Technology (CAST) and is appended to this letter.

- Information on the police training and tactics in the use of water cannon

The use of water cannon as a tactical option is detailed in existing Public Order Authorised Professional Practice (APP) and the National Public Order Training Curriculum (NPOTC). These form the basis for the current water cannon deployment in Northern Ireland and deployment in England and Wales will be based on these documents. A copy of APP is appended to this document. The NPOTC is not appended as its content is restricted and I understand that this correspondence will become public record.

- Independent medical statement from the Scientific Advisory Committee on the Medical Implications of Less Lethal Weapons (SACMILL)

The interim SACMILL statement is appended to this letter. Information provided to SACMILL has included a review of injuries relating to water cannon in Europe and technical data provided by CAST. Should you authorise the Ziegler Wasserwerfer 9000 for use in England and Wales, SACMILL will provide a full statement prior to any operational deployment. To assist with the preparation of this statement, the Ziegler Wasserwerfer 9000 will be modified and subsequently tested by CAST to ensure that output pressures do not exceed those of the Somati RCV9000 currently in use with the Police Service of Northern Ireland. Work is already underway to address the recommendations made in the SACMILL report. In respect of those relating to guidance and training, the relevant Authorised Professional Practice and training curriculum modules will be updated should authority be granted.

- National Impact assessment

I have prepared a national impact assessment which is appended to this letter. This document identifies potential issues and risks associated with the use of water cannon by police in relation to disorder incidents and planned public order operations and details measures in place to mitigate these. Many of these considerations are set out in Authorised Professional Practice. I would like to reassure you that safeguards will be in place to ensure that any use of water cannon is appropriate and that the impact of its use will always be robustly assessed.

Written confirmation of the Mayor of London's support for this request

I understand that Mayor Johnson has recently written to you following his period of engagement. I hope that the enclosed documentation reassures you regarding the necessary safeguards to which the Mayor refers in his letter. In addition, I can confirm that I and the Metropolitan Police Service will fully support the work of the ethics panel in considering the ethical framework within which water cannon will be deployed.

I hope this is useful and sufficient to enable you to make the decision to authorise. I stand ready to provide any further information that you may require.



David Shaw

CC: The Rt Hon Damian Green MP - Minister for Policing and Criminal Justice
Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe - Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service
Sir Hugh Orde – President of the Association of Chief Police Officers
Chief Constable Alex Marshall - Chief Executive Officer of the College of Policing
Chief Constable Lynne Owens - National Policing Lead for Uniformed Operations