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Sent: 02 December 2014 17:31

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: MOD Police - Tasers

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- **The Ministry of Defence Police (MDP) is a civilian police force (not military) which carries out specialised policing tasks for the MOD, in particular the armed protection of the nuclear deterrent and other key Defence assets.**
  - **MOD Police train all Authorised Firearms Officers in the use of Taser in accordance with national armed policing policy.**
  - **Since most MDP officers are armed, they follow national armed policing standards to have a range of “less lethal” options available to reduce the potential for recourse to conventional weapons.**
  - **The MOD’s Police Committee, which is independently chaired, and whose role is to oversee the proper functioning of the MDP, supports the recommendation from HM inspectorate of Police (HMIC) last year, that MOD Police increase Taser training to all public-facing officers, and is tracking progress on its implementation.**
1. *British military police are building up a stockpile of Tasers which has cost £150,000 in the last six months alone - despite using the controversial weapon just once in a decade.*
  2. *Military police have spent £361,185 on 363 Tasers since the weapons were first bought in 2007.*
  3. *Yet they have been drawn from their holsters no more than 13 times, and were discharged on a suspect just once, during an incident in 2011.*
  4. *Of the remaining Tasers, seven were aimed using a ‘red dot’ laser sight and five were drawn but not aimed.*
  5. *Despite this - and the fact not a single Taser was drawn from its holster in 2013 - military police are continuing to buy the weapons in large numbers.*
  6. *Almost two thirds of the entire stock was bought in the last 18 months: 67 Tasers in 2013/14 and 150 since April this year.*

My questions are as follows:

- Why has the number of Tasers increased so much since April 2013? **HM Inspector of Constabulary** did a routine police firearms inspection last year and recommended that all front-line officers (forward facing or public facing eg on the steps of Main Building) be trained to use Tasers, as a “less lethal” option to the use of firearms. It is mandatory in the police world for firearms officers to have a range of other

options to deploy , to reduce the potential for recourse to conventional weapons. Currently there are fewer than 400 Tasers in the Force, and the stock is shared. Obviously a number are used in standard police training, and some will be damaged and need to be replaced on a continuous basis etc.

- Who/which departments ordered & signed off the purchases? MOD Police do their own procurement of police equipment. They buy Tasers against the same contract used by all the other civilian police forces in England & Wales.
- How do you justify this increase at a time of military cutbacks, especially now that Theresa May has ordered an in-depth review on the use of Tasers amid concerns they are used too much?\* This is not a military cutback. The MOD Police are a wholly civilian force. As a police force with a very large number of armed officers (the Force is 2600 strong, and most officers are armed), HMIC judged that it was important for all front-line officers to be trained to use a less lethal option.
- In what units are they used – e.g. only in Britain, on active service etc. MOD Police serve only in the UK. Most armed officers are stationed at the Aldermaston Nuclear Weapons Research establishment in Berkshire, or at the nuclear submarine bases on the Clyde in Scotland.
- What are the regulations for their use? Are they carried routinely by military police officers – if so, when did it become routine? MOD Police are not military - they are wholly civilian and the regulations for Taser use are based entirely on the rules which apply in all other civilian police forces. All Frontline officers are gradually being trained in the use of Taser.
- Can you give any more information on the one incident in which one was discharged, in 2011? A local police force asked MDP for assistance at a domestic incident involving a man with a knife threatening two women. MDP officers were nearby, arrived on the scene, and decided to taser the man to prevent him using the knife against the women. This successfully defused a life-threatening situation.