



Home Office

User guide to ‘Police use of TASER ® X26 conducted energy devices statistics, England and Wales’

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1 Introduction

Statistics covered

The [‘Police use of TASER ® X26 conducted energy devices statistics, England and Wales, 1 January to 31 December 2016’](#) release contains a time series of official statistics on police use of TASER ® X26 conducted energy devices (referred to as TASER ® X26 hereafter) by the 43 Home Office funded police forces since 2011.

The figures in this report show the number of TASER ® X26 ‘uses’ as opposed to the number of TASER ® X26 ‘incidents’. This is to ensure full transparency on TASER ® X26 deployment as more than one TASER ® X26 may be used at an incident. Every time a TASER ® X26 is used, only its highest use is recorded. For example, if a TASER ® X26 is drawn, aimed, arced, red-dot, and then fired, only fired will be recorded.

The statistics in this release are based on aggregated figures submitted to the Home Office by individual police forces.

Note: See the Glossary section for a more detailed explanation of the types of TASER ® X26 use.

Uses of the statistics

Uses made of the statistics on police use of TASER ® X26 are listed below using the standard categorisation for official statistics (as shown in the UK Statistics Authority monitoring brief 6/2010, The Uses Made of Official Statistics).

a) Informing the general public’s choices:

- about the state of the economy, society and the environment. Figures on police use of TASER ® X26 are used by the media in articles on police use of force.
- about the performance of government and public bodies. Figures on levels and trends in police use of TASER ® X26 are requested via Parliamentary Questions and Freedom of Information cases to gauge performance in general or specific areas.

b) Government policy – making and monitoring: Police use of TASER ® X26 statistics are used to monitor the performance and effectiveness of police forces, government policy, and to inform policy and operational decisions by ministers.

c) Resource allocation – typically by central and local government: Policing statistics, including statistics on police use of TASER ® X26, demonstrate the range, extent and quality of police activities, and contribute to overall cases for police funding.

User experiences

The Home Office conducted a user survey alongside the [Police use of Taser, England and Wales, 2014](#) statistical release to enable the department assess how well it met users' needs and to potentially make improvements where possible.

There were 19 responses to the survey. Key points include the following:

- Respondents included users from police forces, universities/schools and the private sector.
- No respondent expressed any dissatisfaction with the commentary.
- One respondent expressed dissatisfaction with the data tables (spreadsheets) and the statistical news release.
- Uses made of the data included research, contextualising news coverage and benchmarking.
- Suggestions for improvement included providing information on how many officers are authorised to use TASER ® X26, social demographic information on the subject and officer, and the location of the incident.

Home Office statisticians are currently considering future publications on police use of force data and will consider the suggestions made in the survey as part of those wider publication considerations (see chapter 4 for more information on police use of force).

2 Glossary

Type of use	Definition
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Discharge

Fired	The TASER ® X26 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 device with a live cartridge installed. One or both probes may attach to the subject. The officer then holds the TASER ® X26 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 ® X26 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-Discharge

Red dot	The device is not fired. Instead, the TASER ® X26 is deliberately aimed and then partially activated so that a laser red dot is placed onto the subject.
Arced	Sparking of the TASER ® X26 without aiming it or firing.
Aimed	Deliberate aiming of the TASER ® X26 at a targeted subject.
Drawn	Drawing of the TASER ® X26 in circumstances where any person could reasonably perceive the action to be a use of force.

Only TASER ® X26 conducted energy devices manufactured by TASER International are currently authorised for use by police forces in England and Wales.

3 Quality and Methodology

Data collection and preparatory work

The statistics in the [‘Police use of TASER ® X26 conducted energy devices statistics, England and Wales, 1 January to 31 December 2016’](#) are based on aggregated figures for 2016 submitted to the Home Office by individual police forces.

This is the third year that Home Office statisticians have produced this release. As with the previous two releases, a data confirmation exercise was carried out with police forces. Police forces were asked to verify their data ahead of publication and where necessary to submit revised data, including a reason for the change. This is to minimise the risk of incorrect figures being published, and supports the Home Office in any disagreement with a police force over the figures published for that police force.

In addition, as part of the quality assurance process, data validation and variance checks were conducted to ensure any anomalous or large differences were queried with police forces.

Comparability with pre-2014 figures

The release provides figures on all types of TASER ® X26 use in 2016. However, prior to 2014, some police forces were unable to supply data for all types and therefore comparisons between figures prior to 2014 should be made with caution.

Rounding

Data are provided unrounded in the [‘Police use of TASER ® X26 conducted energy devices statistics, England and Wales, 1 January to 31 December 2016 tables’](#). This is to promote transparency and to allow users to exploit the data further. However, please note that the figures are not necessarily accurate to the last digit and as a result caution should be exercised when comparing small differences between time periods.

Percentages are rounded to the nearest per cent using the round-half-away-from-zero method. For example, 23.5 per cent will be rounded to 24 per cent, and -23.5 per cent will be rounded to -24 per cent.

Where data are rounded, they may not sum to the totals shown, or, in the case of percentages, to 100 per cent, because they have been rounded independently.

Revisions to previously published data

Following the data confirmation exercise with police forces, six police forces revised their 2015 figures for at least one of the TASER ® X26 use types.

As shown in the table below, the revisions to police forces' figures resulted in a 1% (61) increase in the total TASER ® X26 use in 2015.

Police use of TASER ® X26 by type, England and Wales, comparison of 2015 figures published in April 2016 and April 2017

Category	April 2016 publication	April 2017 publication	Numeric change	% change	Number of police forces that made revisions
Drawn	2,445	2,457	12	0%	5
Aimed	619	630	11	2%	2
Arced	106	106	0	0%	0
Red-dotted	5,238	5,274	36	1%	6
Total Non-discharge	8,408	8,467	59	1%	6
Drive stun	104	104	0	0%	0
Angle drive stun	87	87	0	0%	0
Fired	1,730	1,729	-1	0%	4
Total discharge	1,921	1,920	-1	0%	4
Not stated	0	3	3	-	1
Total	10,329	10,390	61	1%	6

Source: Home Office

The data for the latest year (and for previous years) may be revised in due course. It is standard practice across all Home Office statistical releases to incorporate revisions for previous years' data in the latest release. Corrections and revisions follow the [Home Office corporate revisions policy \(see page 6\)](#).

4 Use of force data review

The Government is committed to improving transparency and accountability on the police use of force, which is why in 2014, the then Home Secretary asked former CC David Shaw (Chief Constable for West Mercia until July 2016) to lead a review into what data should be recorded and published.

The Review recommended that a range of core data should be recorded and published every time the police deploy a tactic categorised as a use of force. These tactics include the use of restraint techniques, batons, CS spray, attenuating energy projectiles and conductive energy devices. The core data includes information on the gender, ethnicity and age of the individual, the location of the incident, the reason force was used, and the outcome of the incident.

All police forces will publish the full record-level data locally on a quarterly basis. A subset of the key information collected will be provided to the Home Office as part of the Annual Data Requirement (ADR).

The use of force data collection is intended to hold police forces to account and to provide the public with greater information on the different types of force used, in what context and whether it was proportionate. The collection of data through the ADR ensures greater consistency between police forces together with an expectation of higher quality as it should be signed off by individual Chief Constables. Furthermore, collecting the use of force data through the ADR underlines the importance of the data to Ministers and the Home Office.

The use of force ADR collection will bring together data on all uses of force in one collection, including the police use of conducted energy devices (TASER ® X26 and TASER ® X2). It is expected that this collection will replace the existing collection on TASER ® X26 conducted energy devices, resulting in a single publication on police use of force covering the 2017/18 financial year.

The current Police use of TASER ® X26 collection reports on the calendar year, January – December, while the police use of force ADR collection will report on the financial year, April – March. To ensure there are no gaps in the data (i.e. January – March 2017), the 2017/18 Police use of force publication will also include a separate table covering the police use of TASER ® X26 from 1 January to 31 March 2017.

5 Additional Information

Where are the latest published figures?

Forthcoming publications are pre-announced on the statistics release calendar on the GOV.UK website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/announcements>

'Police use of TASER ® X26 conducted energy devices statistics, England and Wales' statistical releases can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/use-of-taser-statistics>

Police use of firearms

The Home Office publishes annual figures for each police force in England and Wales on the number of police operations in which firearms were authorised; the number of police firearms operations involving armed response vehicles; the number of authorised firearms officers; and the number of incidents where conventional firearms were used by the police.

These statistics are Official Statistics and can be found on the [Police use of firearm statistics](#) pages of GOV.UK.

Feedback and enquiries

If you would like to make an enquiry about this release or have any general feedback about this release, please email the Chief Statistician's Unit at:

PublicOrderStatistics@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk or write to: Chief Statistician's Unit, 1st Floor, Peel Building, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF.

The 'Police use of TASER ® X26 conducted energy devices statistics, England and Wales' release is an Official Statistics output produced to the highest professional standards and free from political interference. It has been produced by statisticians working in the Home Office Science Directorate in accordance with the Home Office's '[Statement of compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#)' which covers our policy on revisions and other matters. The Chief Statistician, as Head of Profession, reports to the National Statistician with respect to all professional statistical matters and oversees all Home Office National Statistics products with respect to the [Code](#), being responsible for their timing, content and methodology.