



Conducted Energy Weapons (CEWs)

CEWs (commonly referred to as Tasers[®]) are recognized by the global policing community as a valuable tool and a less dangerous option than a firearm.

Police Officers are required to respond and intervene in a variety of situations involving the risk of violence, injury or death to members of the public and the police. Often these situations demand immediate intervention, where the condition and emotional state of the subject is uncertain. Police officers require a range of options regarding the use of force, often referred to as the use of force continuum. These include verbal commands, negotiation, physical restraint, intermediate force options, and deadly force. CEWs are one such intermediate force option, and have been successful in reducing injury to officers and violent subjects.

CEWs have become linked with sadly controversial applications. These unfortunate incidents obscure the larger picture. The ability of front-line police to do their jobs as well as possible is compromised by the seriously incomplete understanding of CEWs.

In Ontario to date, there have been eight inquests at which the juries have made recommendations that all front-line police officers be authorized to carry a CEW.

The Police Services Advisory Committee (PSAC, composed of representatives from the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, Ontario Association of Police Services Boards and front-line police officers) approved a CEW Use of Force Guideline that includes training standards, equipment control, reporting and accountability measures. These guidelines and standards received unanimous support from all the stakeholders of PSAC and were approved by the Minister in March 2010.

Under the current Use of Force Guideline, use of CEWs are restricted to members of tactical units/hostage rescue teams, members of preliminary perimeter control and containment teams, and front-line supervisors or their designates.

In order to reduce injury to members of the public, violent subjects and police officers, all police officers should receive appropriate training, after which they should be equipped with this life saving tool. The PAO is seeking an amendment to the Use of Force Guideline that would permit **ALL** trained and qualified police officers to be equipped with a CEW.

[For additional information please contact](#)

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Conducted Energy Weapons Ontario Inquests Recommending Front-line Authorization

Inquest:

Peter Lamonday
May 2005

Otto Vass
November 2006

O'Brien Christopher-Reid
December 2007

Jerry Knight
June 2008

Michael Douglas
November 2008

Jeffrey George Black
January 2009

Trevor Colin Graham
March 2009

Harold James Maltar
October 2009

Jury Recommendation:

The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services should take whatever steps are necessary to ensure all front-line police officers are authorized to carry a TASER.

The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services should take the necessary steps to ensure that all "front line" or "primary response" police officers are authorized to carry a TASER.

The Toronto Police Service should immediately implement the use of TASERs for all primary response officers.

To consider authorizing all front-line police officers to carry a TASER or have access to a TASER.

The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services should assess the feasibility of all front-line police officers carrying conducted energy weapons.

The Ministry should amend the necessary laws, regulation or guidelines so that they permit front-line primary response police officers to carry Conducted Energy Devices (TASERs) as an additional intermediate weapon in order to provide another alternative to the use of lethal force.

That the use of tasers by police services continue to be investigated as options for use by front line officers.

That the OPP study the costs and benefits of expanding the policy, training and availability of conductive energy weapons for use by front line officers.

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