



# CHIEF CONSTABLE OF CLEVELAND

## Firearms/Taser Service Records

FINAL

Internal Audit Report: 6.16/17

1 September 2016

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We have no responsibility to update this report for events and circumstances occurring after the date of this report.

# 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## 1.1 Background

We have conducted an audit to ensure that there are adequate and effective arrangements in place to manage the Force's firearms, including tasers.

Cleveland police officers have access to a variety of equipment to perform their assigned duties. Firearms are only issued to Authorised Firearms Officers (AFOs) who are 58 in number and are specifically trained to handle firearms. AFOs must undergo training in accordance with the College of Policing Training Curriculum. The training involves a variety of scenario-based training; in addition, AFOs must qualify for handling lethal weapons every six months and less-lethal weapons every 12 months which includes taser training.

The Force also has approximately 140 Specially Trained Unit (STU) officers who are trained to carry tasers as part of their police duties. When booking out tasers, officers must sign the Taser Issuing Book and must have their Authority Card checked by a Duty Sergeant/ Supervisor. The Authority Card must also be left within the taser lockers.

Every eight weeks taser data is downloaded onto a system called evidence.com that acts as an audit check for the purpose of reviewing data to allow for fault analysis and timely indications of improper or unaccounted use. The Firearms Operations Inspector is notified of any faults, improper or unaccounted use identified by the Administration Assistant based at Durham.

To track and account for firearms, the Force purchased and utilises an electronic database known as Chronicle. This database is designed to be an all-inclusive firearms system for storing all assets of the Force and for use when AFOs book out firearms for operations. It currently has records of all the assets (both firearms and tasers) across all the Force's locations. The system will soon be utilised for the booking out of weapons and will automatically check whether an officer requesting a particular firearms has received the relevant training.

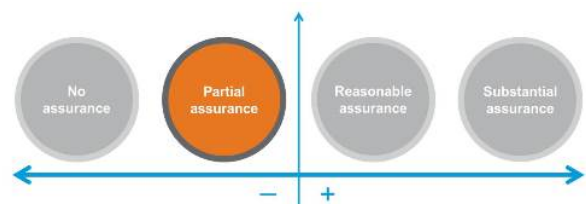
## 1.2 Conclusion

We have identified some areas of non-compliance with documented controls that has resulted in two 'high' and three 'medium' priority management actions in relation to:

- Taser downloads had not been performed every eight weeks and regular firearms audits had not been performed at all sites.
- A post implementation review of the Chronicle system had not been performed.
- The Authority Cards had not been left in the lockers per the Force's policy.
- The issuing and returning of tasers had not been appropriately signed out or returned by the officers.

### Internal Audit Opinion:

Taking account of the issues identified, the Chief Constable of Cleveland can take **partial assurance** that the controls to manage this area are suitably designed and consistently applied. Action is needed to strengthen the control framework to manage the identified area.



## 1.3 Key findings

The key findings from this review are as follows:

- The Force has defined that overall responsibility of firearms and tasers lies with the Chief Constable. The Head of Firearms Operations (CDSOU) has operational responsibility of operations, firearms and taser procedures across the Force.
- The Force has a Standard Operating Procedure for the use of tasers by STU officers which details local guidance for the operational deployment of tasers by STU officers in non-firearms situations. The procedure is reviewed every two years and we found that it was last reviewed on 27 May 2016.
- We selected a sample of 55 firearms in the three areas broken down as following:
  - Cleveland Headquarters - 20 firearms;
  - Wynyard Armoury - 10 firearms; and
  - Tactical Training Centre - 25 firearms.

In all instances, we were able to reconcile the location and firearms serial number to the Chronicle system accurately.

- We also selected a sample of 60 operational tasers and in all instances we found the taser serial number corresponded with the records on Chronicle system.
- We confirmed appropriate security arrangements were in place for the sites visited during the audit. All tasers were kept in a secure cabinet and access to the cabinet keys was appropriately restricted.

### Wynyard Park and Cleveland Police Headquarters

- We noted that access to the firearm's armoury was through a key which was kept in a safe with restricted access. Only authorised personnel were allowed access.

### Tactical Training Centre (TTC)

- Through observation and discussion with the Site Manager we found access to the armoury was restricted to appropriate personnel and the armoury was locked with restricted access.
- We reviewed the firearms booking system and found that the firearms were checked by officers at the time of booking out. The issuing officer/ supervisor checked if their training card was in date and supervised this process. Upon return of the firearms, a check was undertaken by the officers and signed back in to ensure that all firearms were returned promptly following an operation.

## 1.4 Additional information to support our conclusion

Area	Control design*	Non-Compliance with controls*	Agreed actions		
			Low	Medium	High
Firearms and tasers	1(10)	4 (10)	0	3	2
<b>Total</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>

\* Shows the number of controls not adequately designed or not complied with. The number in brackets represents the total number of controls reviewed in this area.

## 2 ACTION PLAN

### Categorisation of internal audit findings

Priority	Definition
Low	There is scope for enhancing control or improving efficiency and quality.
Medium	Timely management attention is necessary. This is an internal control risk management issue that could lead to: Financial losses which could affect the effective function of a department, loss of controls or process being audited or possible reputational damage, negative publicity in local or regional media.
High	Immediate management attention is necessary. This is a serious internal control or risk management issue that may lead to: Substantial losses, violation of corporate strategies, policies or values, reputational damage, negative publicity in national or international media or adverse regulatory impact, such as loss of operating licences or material fines.

The table below sets out the actions agreed by management to address the findings:

Ref	Findings summary	Priority	Actions for management	Implementation date	Responsible owner
<b>Area: Firearms and Tasers</b>					
1	Two officers training for less lethal weapons was not up to date at the time of the audit.	Medium	The Force will review the training administrative errors to ensure that lessons are learnt.  Going forward all firearms officers who undertake the necessary core training will have their records kept up to date.	On-going	Stephen Drake, Acting Chief Firearms Instructor
2a	We found that the download of tasers was not being undertaken on an eight weekly basis as specified in the policy.	High	The Force will ensure downloads of tasers are performed every eight weeks to ensure compliance with policy/procedures. The Force will undertake investigations into the taser assets not on evidence.com and ensure that the discrepancies are resolved.	30 September 2016	Sergeant Kevin Taylor, Firearms Operations

Ref	Findings summary	Priority	Actions for management	Implementation date	Responsible owner
2b	Furthermore we found that firearm audits were not performed on a regular basis and evidence of this was not retained.	Medium	Furthermore, the Force will ensure that firearms audits are carried out on a quarterly basis. Evidence of this will be retained in the audit file book.		
3	During our spot check testing we found that we could not ascertain if tasers were being returned promptly following the end of an officer's shift.	-	See management action four.	N/A	N/A
4	<p>We found several instances where the officers were not signing the return of tasers.</p> <p>There were also instances where no signatures were evident from a supervisor documenting the physical check.</p>	High	<p>The procedures for booking out tasers will be refreshed and communicated to all Officers via the intranet. Officers will be reminded that when booking out a taser, their Authority Card must be physically checked by a supervisor and both officers will sign the Taser Issue Book.</p> <p>The return of all tasers will include the completion of the date and time of return and will document in all cases a witness signature by a second officer.</p>	30 September 2016	Sergeant Kevin Taylor, Firearms Operations

Ref	Findings summary	Priority	Actions for management	Implementation date	Responsible owner
			<p>A new Taser Issue Book will be re-designed to ensure that there is consistency across the Force and it will include all the necessary information as per the procedures so that the date and time of the return of tasers can be recorded.</p> <p>The Force will ensure that taser officers leave their Authority Cards in the respective lockers to ensure compliance with the procedures.</p>		
5	We identified instances when the taser Authority Card was not left in the taser cabinet as required by the Force policy.	-	See management action four.	N/A	N/A
6	<p>The Force currently does utilise the Chronicle system to manage its firearms.</p> <p>Discussions with the Sergeant - Firearms Operations noted that there had been no post implementation review of the Chronicle system to ensure that the project objectives had been achieved.</p>	Medium	The Force will undertake a post implementation review to ascertain if the benefits of the Chronicle system have been realised.	31 January 2017	Sergeant Kevin Taylor, Firearms Operations



### 3 DETAILED FINDINGS

This report has been prepared by exception. Therefore, we have included in this section, only those areas of weakness in control or examples of lapses in control identified from our testing and not the outcome of all internal audit testing undertaken.

Ref	Control	Adequate control design (yes/no)	Controls complied with (yes/no)	Audit findings and implications	Priority	Actions for management
<b>Area: Firearms and Tasers</b>						
1	<p>All training is completed in accordance with the College of Policing National Police Firearms Training Curriculum. Firearms officers have to complete core firearms training (which includes the use of a carbine, glock, launcher and taser) and then qualify in all areas before they are able to use a firearm or taser.</p> <p>Non-firearms officers</p> <p>Every STU officer must undertake taser training at the Norton Tier/ Army Reserve Centre by a Personal Safety Training Officer. Both firearms and non-firearms officers have to undertake a refresher taser training course every 12 months.</p> <p>The responsibility of ensuring firearms training is up-to-date currently lies with individual officers. Supervisors must check that individual officers' training is up-to-date when they book out firearms/tasers.</p>	Yes	No	<p>We selected a sample of 28 STU officers who had booked out tasers in the current year and confirmed in all cases that their training was up-to-date. We also took a sample of four firearms officers who had handled tasers at the Wynyard Centre and confirmed that their training was up-to-date in all cases.</p> <p>However from a sample of 10 firearms officers we found that at the time of the audit, eight officers had up-to-date training and were qualified in all four-core areas (carbine, glock, launcher and taser). In one instance, the officer's taser and launcher qualification had expired on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2016. Further investigation found that the officer had re-qualified on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2016 that was a month later than required.</p> <p>In the second instance, we found that the officer's training records had not been updated; hence at the time of the audit the records showed that the officer's taser and launcher training had expired on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2016. Further investigation by the Chief Firearms Instructor (CFO) found that in both instances, an administration error had been the cause of the training records being out of date.</p> <p>Further discussions with the CFO at the time of the debrief noted that a further seven training records with administrative errors had been discovered and were due to be updated. Failure to record data records accurately could result in officers handling firearms or tasers when</p>	Medium	The Force will review the training administrative errors to ensure that lessons are learnt. Going forward all firearms officers who undertake the necessary core training will have their records kept up to date.

Ref	Control	Adequate control design (yes/no)	Controls complied with (yes/no)	Audit findings and implications	Priority	Actions for management
				their training is out of date resulting in their misuse or reputational damage to the Force.		
2	<p>Taser data is downloaded to evidence.com, the data management system. This is carried out every eight weeks, or each time a taser is deployed during duty. Information downloaded includes device battery power, amount of time it is been switched on, any defects, amount of times the trigger has been pulled, etc.</p> <p>Full firearms audits are undertaken by the Firearms Operations team at least quarterly every year.</p>	Yes	No	<p>We tested 75 tasers across Wynyrd, Middlesbrough, Hartlepool, Kirkleatham, Thornaby, Stockton, South Bank and confirmed they were on evidence.com apart from the following cases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There was one taser at the Wynyrd site that was not on evidence.com; however it was on the Chronicle system listed as a Cleveland Police asset. Discussions with the Firearms Operation Sergeant noted that the taser was registered as belonging to Nottingham Police. We found that this taser was assigned to the wrong station; however, no actions had been taken to resolve this.</li> </ul> <p>There is currently a risk that issues with the taser will not be identified as the Force will not be able to access Nottingham's evidence.com.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11 out of 14 tasers at the Norton Training Centre were not on evidence.com, the Administration Officer confirmed that this was because they had originally set them up on Durham Police's evidence.com site in error.</li> </ul> <p>There is a risk that the Force will not be able to access taser data including defects which could result in non-operational tasers not being identified in a timely manner.</p> <p>For the 68 tasers that were on evidence.com we tested how often a data download had been carried out and found that there were only 18 cases where a download had been completed within eight weeks of the previous download. In all other cases the data downloads were not completed within eight weeks of each other and the</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Medium</p>	<p>The Force will ensure downloads of tasers are performed every eight weeks to ensure compliance with policy/procedures. The Force will undertake investigations into the taser assets not on evidence.com and ensure that the discrepancies are resolved.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Force will ensure that firearms audits are carried out on a quarterly basis. Evidence of this will be retained in the audit file book.</p>

Ref	Control	Adequate control design (yes/no)	Controls complied with (yes/no)	Audit findings and implications	Priority	Actions for management
				<p>amount of downloads carried out in the last year ranged from one to five.</p> <p>By not carrying out the downloads of tasers every eight weeks this is violating the Force's policy and could result in tasers being damaged or faulty and this will not be identified in a timely manner.</p> <p>We obtained three firearms audits performed on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2016 (Wynyard Armoury), 7<sup>th</sup> June 2016 (Cleveland HQ) and 5<sup>th</sup> January 2016 (Wynyard Armoury). We noted from review of the audit file that the above locations were the only sites that had received an audit. We therefore could not find evidence of audits being performed at all sites by the Firearms Operations team.</p> <p>There is currently a risk that assets across the Force are not subject to regular audits.</p>		
3	<p>At the end of the shift the STU officers must return all tasers and it is the area responsibility to ensure that all tasers have been returned.</p> <p>Firearms officers handed over their firearms to other officers at the start of the shift and hence the firearms are the same.</p> <p>Tasers that are booked out are written in the Taser Issue Book at each site. The officer that books out the taser should also sign this book when the taser is returned.</p>	Yes	No	<p>We reviewed the Taser Issue Books at seven sites visited (Middlesbrough, Wynyard Park, Hartlepool, Kirkcaldy, Southbank, Stockton and Thornaby) found that the book did not have a facility for ensuring that the date and time details of when the tasers were returned was captured. Therefore, we were unable to determine if tasers had been returned at the end of the shift and/or if the tasers had been kept beyond operations/shifts.</p> <p>There is a risk that tasers booked out by officers cannot be easily located and identifiable to the police officers in their possession.</p> <p>We reviewed the firearms booking system and found that the firearms were checked by officers at the time of booking out. The issuing officer/ supervisor checked if their training card was in date and supervised this process. Upon return of the firearms, a check was</p>	-	See management action four.

Ref	Control	Adequate control design (yes/no)	Controls complied with (yes/no)	Audit findings and implications	Priority	Actions for management
				undertaken by the officers and signed back in to ensure that all firearms were returned promptly following an operation.		
4	<p>There are two commands – North and South. The Force has the following areas where firearms and/or tasers are kept:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Redcar, Hartlepool, Stockton, Middlesbrough stations;</li> <li>Satellite areas:-Thornaby, Loftus, Guisborough and South Bank; and</li> <li>Norton Training facility (we did not perform a physical test of tasers within this facility as it was noted to be a training facility hence no tasers were booked out from therein).</li> </ul> <p>Tasers issued from the local command stations must be supervised and managed by the Duty Sergeant who conducts a physical check of the taser officer's Authority Card prior to issue.</p> <p>Firearms and tasers are also kept at the Wynyard Centre. Every time a taser is booked out this must be recorded in the site's Taser Issue Book, the officer booking out the taser and an issuing officer signs the book. When the taser is returned the officer and a witness signs the book. When a taser is booked out, the issuing officer checks the officer's Authority Card, which has details of the officer, their taser training and the date of</p>	Yes	No	<p>We undertook spot checks of the Taser Issue Books at Wynyard Centre and Hartlepool police station and found that at Wynyard Centre the entries were not being signed by an issuing officer or a return witness, there were also some cases where the tasers had not been signed as returned.</p> <p>At Hartlepool police station we found that half of the entries were not signed by an issuing officer or a return witness. We found at all sites, apart from Kirkleatham (Redcar), there was limited recording of a second signature. In addition, there were cases where the same officer that had booked out the taser had also signed the issuing officer box, which means the booking out of tasers and checking of Authority Cards is not being done by a second member of staff.</p> <p>There were also cases where the same officer returning the taser had signed the return witness box, so if the taser were to go missing there would be no other officer to confirm that the taser was returned.</p> <p>When on-site at Middlesbrough we noted through discussions with the Sergeant on duty that officers booked out tasers and then the Sergeant would sign the book at a later date.</p> <p>Failure to record the signing in and out of tasers could result in the loss of assets and distribution of tasers to officers that do not have appropriate training. This could result in a reputation risk to the Force.</p>	High	<p>The procedures for booking out tasers will be refreshed and communicated to all officers via the intranet. Officers will be reminded that when booking out a taser, their Authority Card must be physically checked by a supervisor and both officers will sign the Taser Issue Book.</p> <p>The return of all tasers will include the completion of the date and time of return and will document in all cases a witness signature by a second officer. A new Taser Issue Book will be re-designed to ensure that there is consistency across the Force and it will include all the necessary information as per the procedures so that the date and time of the return of tasers can be recorded.</p> <p>The Force will ensure that taser officers leave their Authority Cards in the respective lockers to ensure compliance with the procedures.</p>

Ref	Control	Adequate control design (yes/no)	Controls complied with (yes/no)	Audit findings and implications	Priority	Actions for management
	expiry of this training.  The card is left in the individual cabinet of the taser that has been booked out.					
5	When a taser is drawn from an area secure locker the officer must place their taser Authority Card within the respective secure locker to identify their possession of the taser.  Firearms officers retain their Authority Cards on their person. Tasers issued from the local command stations must be supervised and managed by the Duty Sergeant who conducts a physical check of the taser officer's Authority Card prior to issue.	Yes	No	<p>During our spot checks across the areas tested we found ten instances where the tasers had been booked out at the time. We therefore found the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In two instances at the Wynyard site, the officers were authorised firearms officers hence there had been no requirement to leave the Authority Card within the lockers.</li> <li>In two cases we found that their Authority Cards had been retained within the lockers;</li> <li>However in six instances, we found that the Authority Card had not been retained within the locker as specified within the Force Taser policy.</li> </ul> <p>There is a risk that taser officers are not following Force procedure resulting in supervisors not being aware of which officers had the tasers and whether or not the officer's Authority Card is in date.</p>	-	See management action four.
6	The Chronicle system is in place but is not being fully utilised by the Force to manage the all aspects of firearm and taser records.	No	-	<p>At the time of the audit we found that the Force had in place the Chronicle system which had been implemented in January 2015. However we found that the Force was still utilising paper based processes which were meant to be superseded when the Chronicle system was installed. The issues identified during this audit were found to be interlinked with the failure to use the Chronicle system.</p> <p>Discussions with the Sergeant - Firearms Operations noted that a post implementation review of the Chronicle system had not taken place.</p>	Medium	The Force will undertake a post implementation review to ascertain if the benefits of the Chronicle system have been realised.

Ref	Control	Adequate control design (yes/no)	Controls complied with (yes/no)	Audit findings and implications	Priority	Actions for management
				<p>There is therefore currently a risk that the Force is incurring costs for a system that is not fully utilised.</p> <p>There is also a risk that value for money has not been achieved from the system purchase and that efficiencies are not being achieved.</p>		

# APPENDIX A: SCOPE

## Scope of the review

To evaluate the adequacy of risk management and control within the system and the extent to which controls have been applied, with a view to providing an opinion. The scope was planned to provide assurance on the controls and mitigations in place relating to the following area:

### Objective of the area under review

To ensure that there are adequate and effective arrangements and processes in place to manage the Force firearms including tasers.

The following areas were considered as part of the review:

- Responsibility for firearm/taser assessment management has been clearly defined.
- Documented policies and procedures are in place and have been disseminated appropriately.
- Initial recording of firearms and tasers.
- Appropriate staff training (Non-Firearm Officers and Firearm Officers) has been provided based on the allocation of the weapon.
- Adequate security of firearms and tasers.
- Data Management.
- Weapons booking in and out process has been adequately defined and appropriate access controls are in place.
- Checks undertaken on any items booked out beyond the anticipated timescales.
- Spot checks at command areas to confirm appropriate sign out and testing of tasers in accordance with the Force's procedures.

### The following limitations apply to the scope of our work:

- Testing was undertaken on a sample basis.
- We have not confirmed the weapons distributed to officers were appropriate or representative of other forces.
- We have not commented on the appropriateness of the levels or use of the Force's firearms or tasers.
- We have not reviewed the procurement of firearms or tasers to ensure Value for Money has been achieved.
- We have not reviewed the processes for seized firearms or firearms licensing.
- Our work does not provide absolute assurance that material errors, loss or fraud do not exist.

## APPENDIX B: FURTHER INFORMATION

### **Persons interviewed during the audit:**

- Kevin Taylor, Sergeant - Firearms Operations
- Nick Sutton, PC, Firearms Operations
- David Logan, John Laing Office Manager
- Anthony Simpson, Sergeant on Duty at Middlesbrough station
- Stephen Drake, Chief Firearms Instructor

### **Documentation reviewed during the audit:**

- Taser Guidance/Policy 2016
- Taser Booking Issue, Middlesbrough, Wynyard, Hartlepool, Southbank, Thornaby, Stockton
- Evidence.com
- Firearms audit file
- Chronicle



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