



**POLICE
SCOTLAND**

Keeping people safe

POILEAS ALBA

**Specially Trained Officers
Standard Operating Procedure**

This SOP provides clear direction and procedural instruction to provide a consistency of response in accordance with force policy, however it is recognised that policing is a dynamic profession and the standard response may not be appropriate in every circumstance. In every situation, your decisions and actions should be supported by the National Decision Model and based on the values and ethics of Police Scotland. You may be expected to provide a clear and reasonable rationale for any decision or action which you take.

Owning Department:	Specialist Services
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1. Purpose / Scope

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) supports the Police Service of Scotland, hereafter referred to as Police Scotland, Policies for:

- Armed Policing Policy
- Major Incidents and Emergencies Policy
- Specialist Operations Policy
- Training, Leadership and Development Policy
- Death or Serious Injury Following Police Contact Policy.

The purpose of this document is to provide structured instruction on the:

- Assessment and Selection of Specially Trained Officers (STO) and;
- Operational Deployment of Taser.

This document applies to **Individuals** that are issued with Taser as well as those officers and police staff that are involved in arranging and providing a response to incidents (e.g. Control Room Staff, Local Policing Officers and Supervisors).

The term **individual** will be used to refer to Police Officers, Special Constables and Authority / Police Staff from this point forward (provisions for any particular group will be clearly identified).

2. Definition

A Conducted Energy Device (CED) / Taser is classified as a 'prohibited weapon' by virtue of Section 5 Firearms Act 1968.

Tasers are classified by the National Less Lethal Weapons Working Group as 'work related equipment' (in the same way as firearms) and not as personal protective equipment (PPE).

Police officers whilst acting in their capacity as such, are exempt from the requirements of the legislation and do not need any additional legal authority to possess a CED.

Police Scotland has authorised the use of CED for Specially Trained Officers (STOs) and will deploy in accordance with national policy agreed by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and College of Policing (COP) Authorised Professional Practice.

Police Scotland will deploy STOs equipped with the Taser X2 dual optically-sighted device that discharges a single cartridge with the ability to quickly re-engage with a second cartridge.

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Taser may be deployed and used as one of a number of operational safety tactical options only after application of the National Decision Model (NDM).

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The following table outlines the processes and responsibilities when dispatching STOs:

Area Control Room (ACR) Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Alert ACR Supervisor of any incident that may necessitate the deployment of STOs.
ACR Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Assess all incidents brought to their attention using the National Decision Making Model.Consider whether the deployment of Specially Trained Officers should be considered as an option if available, endorse the incident command log to that effect and add the TASER TAG.FLAG the incident to Overview by applying the OVERVIEW TAG.When / if deploying STOs, provide all details as per the incident log to the attending officers.Ensure the local supervisor is informed of the deployment so that local command protocols are established.Ensure a divisional unit is dispatched to the incident as support if appropriate and available.Endorse the Command and Control Log with strategy and rationale applied. This must include an assessment of the level of risk and a NDM based rationale for deployment including the appropriate working strategy.Maintain an overview of the incident and escalate / deescalate where appropriate.In the event of a Taser discharge by a STO, inform Duty Officer Service Overview of the discharge.
Overview Duty Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Consider the necessity or otherwise of specialist resources, in particular firearms resources.Assume command should firearms resources be required under an initial firearms authority.Maintain overview of the incident until the threat of escalation is no longer viable.Inform the on call PSD officer of any Taser discharge by a STO that is brought to their attention by ACR Supervisor.
Local Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Assume command of the incident following notification by ACR Supervisor.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Through application of the NDM, ensure that the force is providing a proportionate level of response.• Ensure that any wider aspects of the incident such as cordons and road closures are managed effectively.• Ensure that the appropriate level of post deployment procedures, if implemented, are applied as per the Death and Serious Injury following Police Contact Police and Post deployment SOP.• Ensure that wellbeing of staff is considered at all times.• Ensure relevant paperwork is submitted to the Force STO Lead.
STO	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• On arrival at the incident carry out a NDM based assessment as per their training ensuring that they consider all tactical options open to them to resolve the incident and that the level of response is measured and proportionate through the application of the NDM.• If Taser is used, ensure local supervisor and ACR is immediately notified and ensure relevant incident codes are applied.• If Taser is used, submit deployment form and Use of Force report.
Local Inspectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that local supervision undertake proactive management of the Incident.• Ensure that an Incident of Note is submitted if applicable.

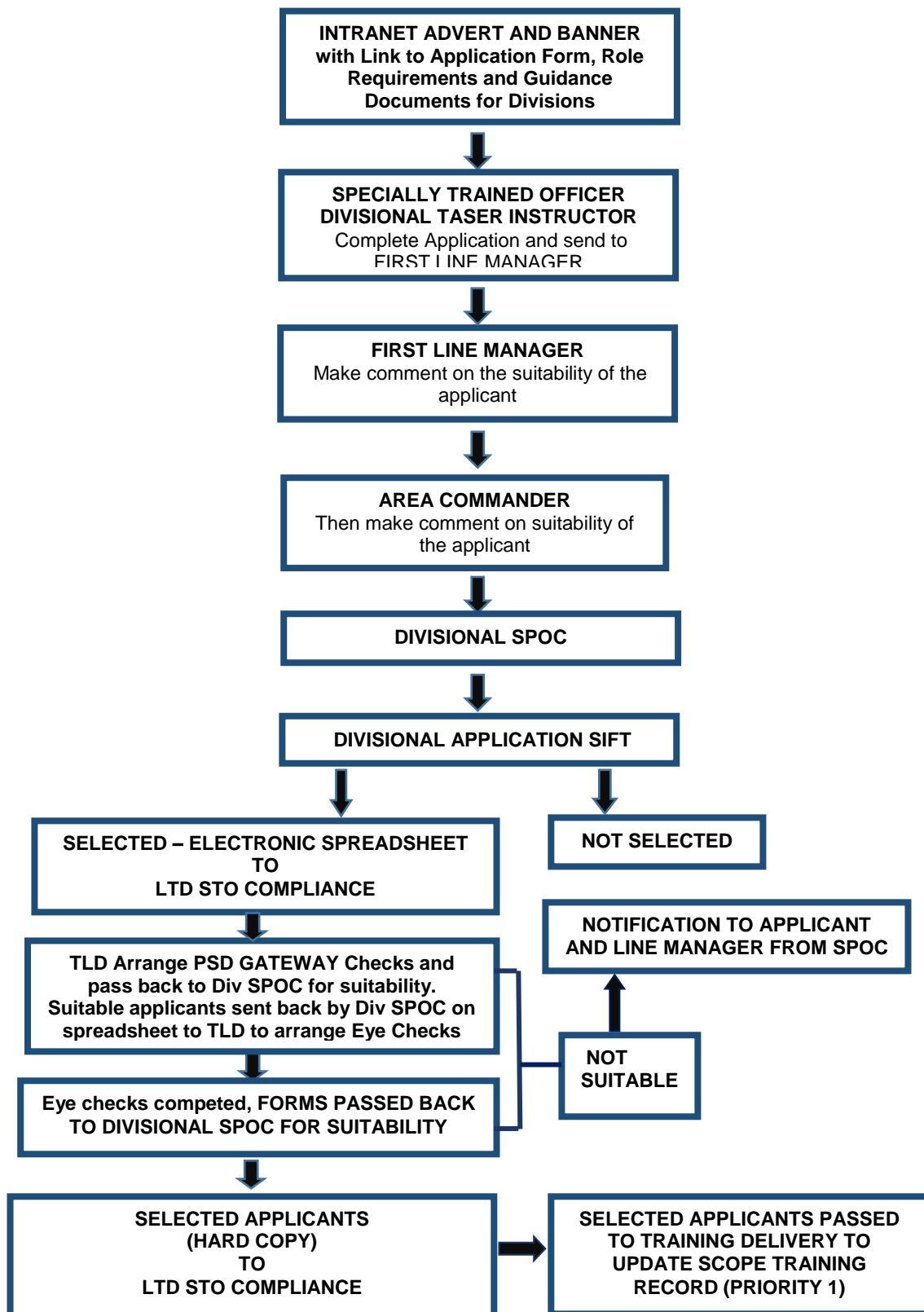
4. Assessment and Selection Process

Officers who have completed two years' service and have successfully completed their probationary period, may be eligible to be trained and deployed as a STO.

Recruitment information, including the STO Role Profile, Application Form and Guidance are published on the OSD STO intranet page.

The key requirements of Local Policing Divisions in the selection process of Divisional STOs is contained within the Selection Process flowchart:

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5. Authorisation of Specially Trained Officers

Officers who successfully complete training and are qualified to carry Taser, will be issued with a Taser User - Authorisation Card (Form 064-029(B)) which will contain details of the weapon the officer is authorised to carry / use and the expiry date of that authority which will be twelve months from the date the authority was granted. If an officer's Taser authority expires, they cannot be deployed operationally as a STO until Taser re-qualification has been undertaken.

If an officer's Operational Safety Training (OST) / Scottish Police Emergency Life Support (SPELS) expires, they are not authorised to carry Taser, attend a Taser training course or deploy operationally until a re-qualification has been undertaken.

The authority card must be carried by the STO at all times when operationally deployed with a Taser.

The authorisation card may be examined by a supervisory officer / Taser Instructor at any time when the STO is:

- Self-issuing or returning a Taser;
- Operationally deployed with a Taser;
- At the commencement of Taser recertification training.

A STO must not draw or deploy with a Taser unless he / she is in physical possession of their authorisation card and has completed all required initial, or recertification, training and is in license with all mandatory training (Operational Safety Training and First Aid).

6. Retention of Authority

Supervisors must always be aware of the physical and mental well-being of the officers under their command. Where supervisors consider that the officer's physical fitness or state of mind is such that to have them issued with Taser would be inappropriate then the officer must not be deployed with the weapon and their authority must be withdrawn and the STO Lead informed.

The authority must only be re-issued when the STO Lead in collaboration with Divisional management are satisfied that the officer is fit to resume duties as a STO. To establish this position a referral to the Force Occupational Health Unit (OHU) may be required.

Officers must demonstrate a willingness and ability to use and deploy Taser in a responsible manner. Where officers fail to meet the high standards expected or

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where an officer's authority to carry Taser is brought into question then the occurrence must be reported by a supervisory officer to Divisional Management and the STO Lead. A reviewing panel consisting of the Area Commander / Divisional Representative and the STO Lead will convene. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Investigation of a Use of Force complaint;
- STO becoming unfit to deploy Taser due to welfare or other issues;
- Unintentional, Accidental, Negligent Discharge;
- Any other information which may bring into question the STOs ability to use and deploy Taser in a responsible manner.

The circumstances of the incident will be reviewed and the Reviewing Panel will make one or more of the following decisions:

- No further action;
- Further Training and reassessment;
- Temporary suspension of authority to carry Taser;
- Permanent withdrawal of authority to carry Taser;
- Refer the incident to Professional Standards Department (PSD) to consider disciplinary procedures.

All decisions to withdraw or reissue an officer with a Taser authority must be recorded in writing on a Withdrawal / Re-Authorisation of Authority – Specially Trained Officer (Form 064-030) and submitted to the STO Policy and Compliance Unit for recording on the officers' training record. A report outlining the full circumstances must also be retained on the officer's personal file for future reference. In all cases the officer's 'Authorisation Card' must be retained by the First Line Manager. The First Line Manager pending the officer resuming Taser duties will also retain the Withdrawal / Re-Authorisation of Authority – Specially Trained Officer (Form 064-030). When fully completed the form should be sent to STO Policy and Compliance Unit for storage in the officer's training record.

If an officer who is subject to the removal of his or her authority wishes to challenge the decision they must do so in writing to the relevant Divisional Superintendent who will review the decision and provide a reply in writing as soon as practicable and in any case within ten working days.

STOs can declare they are unfit to carry and must do so if there are any significant issues affecting them including life stresses. This may relate to illness, injury, and personal issues.

In this case the officer's supervisor will complete and adhere to the Withdrawal / Re-Authorisation of Authority – Specially Trained Officers (064-030) form. It is a matter for the STO Lead, following discussion with the Area Commander / Area TLI (Taser

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Lead Instructor), to determine, once an authority has been withdrawn, how long that withdrawal will be for (either permanent or temporary).

The return of an authority may necessitate the officer receiving support from OHU and / or some other form of intervention that helps confirm they are suitable to carry the device.

By retaining their authority card an STO is accepting that they are fit to carry Taser and that there are no physical or mental factors that will prevent them carrying out their duties with the device.

On commencement of duty, a STO must declare that they are fit to carry Taser by updating the Chronicle Asset Management System prior to issuing a Taser.

7. Deployment of Specially Trained Officers

STOs are regular patrol officers accessible 24 hours a day through Area Control Rooms if required.

STOs must have in their possession all of their authorised PPE when carrying Taser to enable them to choose the appropriate tactical option for dealing with any situation encountered.

If a controller deems an incident may require a STO to be dispatched they must alert the ACR Supervisor to assess the incident.

Following assessment of an incident, and where it is deemed appropriate to deploy an officer in their capacity as a STO, a rationale for dispatch must be added to the incident by an ACR Supervisor.

STOs may be dispatched as one of a number of tactical options only after application of the NDM. A STO may also need to resort to another option if the device does not have the intended effect. In addition the primary tactic of removing the public or victim from the threat to mitigate any risk remains extant.

The availability or deployment of STOs **should not be considered a replacement for conventional firearms if the relevant criteria for the deployment of armed officers are met.**

The decision to dispatch a STO to an incident may be based on a number of factors including:

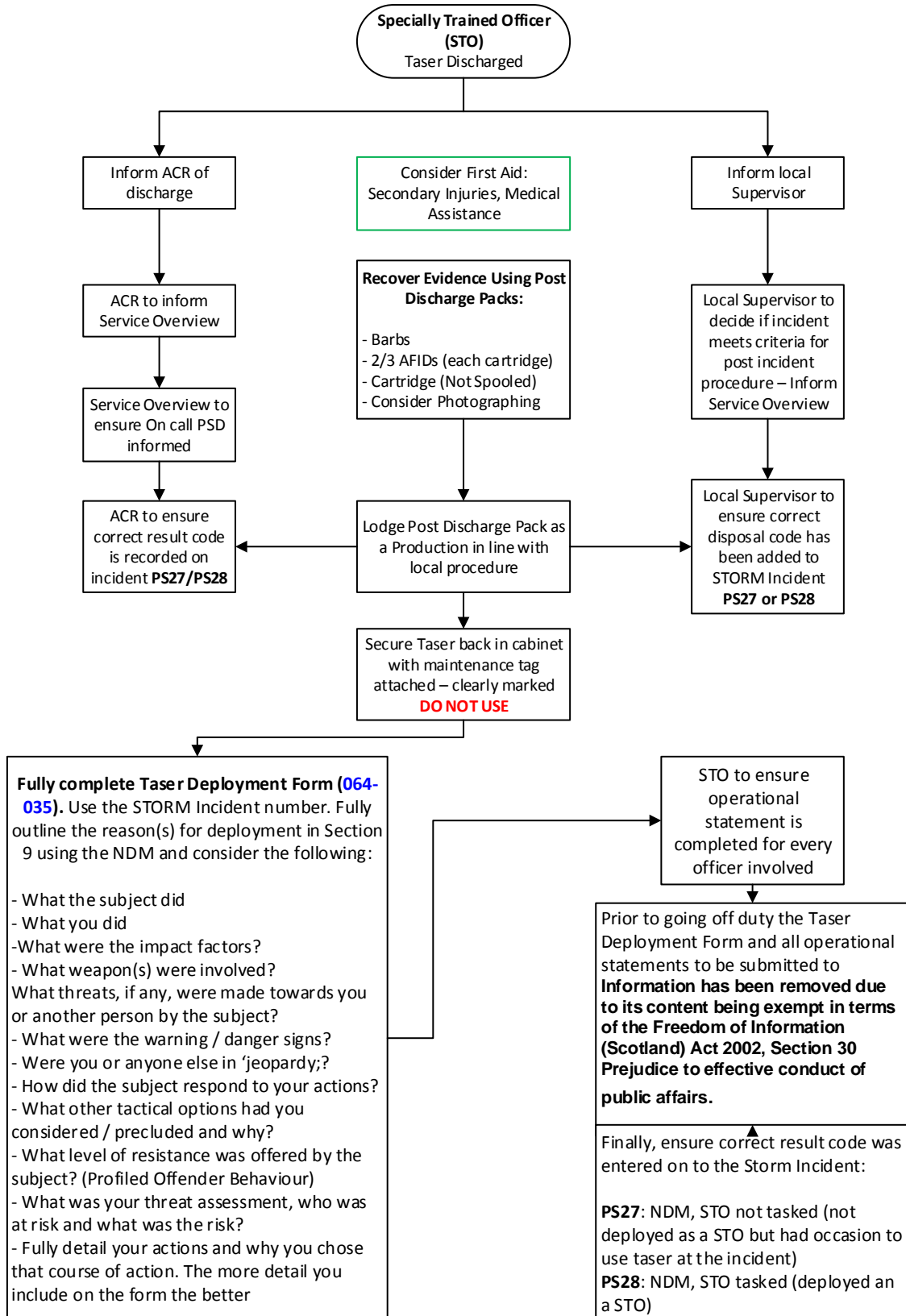
- Resource proximity to call;
- Call type and priority;
- Speed of response required;
- Skill and experience of officers;
- Resource status and availability.

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Taser Discharge

The Discharge Flow Chart outlines the process to be followed if Taser is intentionally discharged:

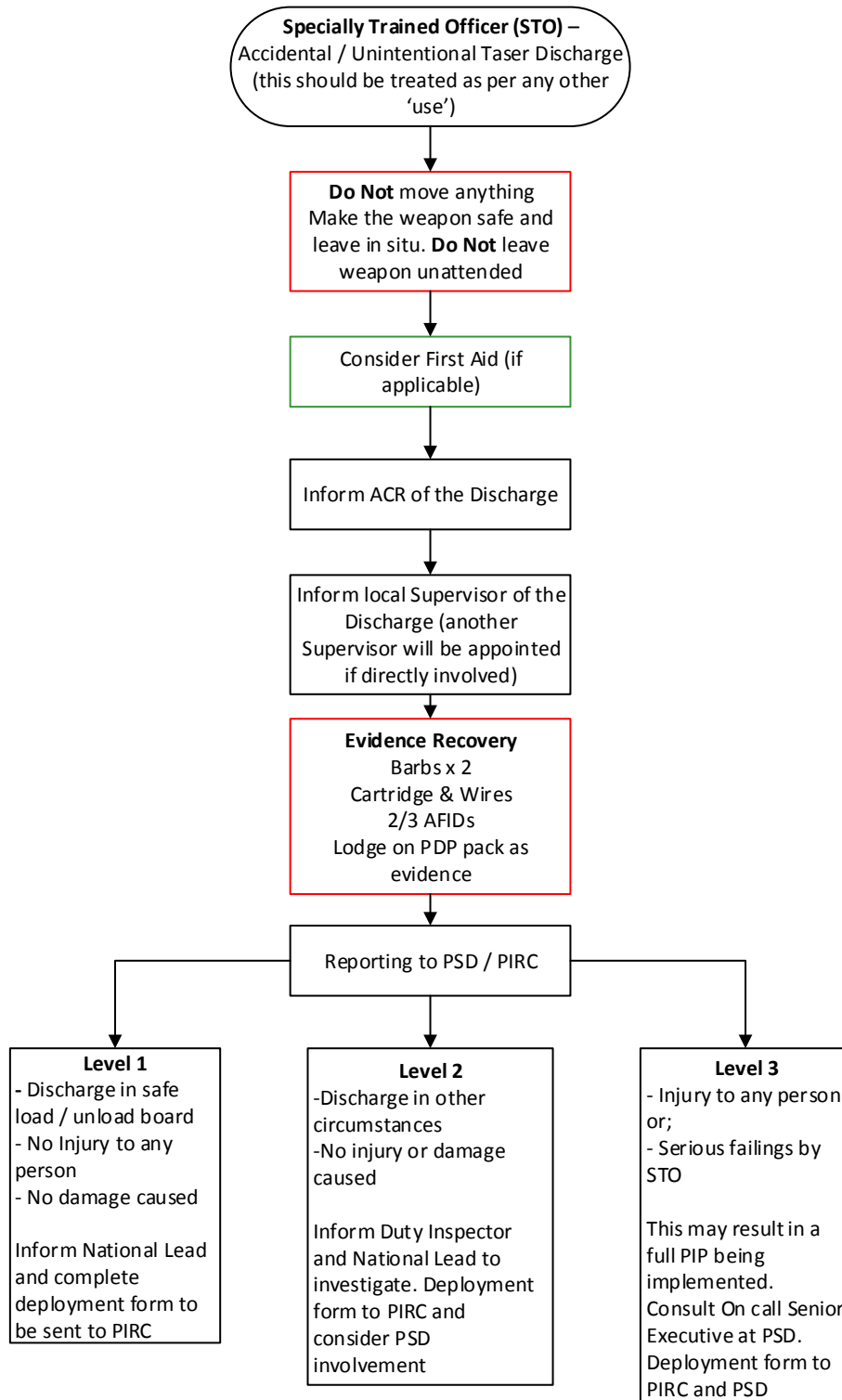
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Accidental / Unintentional Taser Discharge

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The Unintentional Discharge Flowchart below outlines the process to be followed if Taser is unintentionally discharged:



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If Taser is unintentionally discharged the Specially Trained Officer X2 Taser Deployment Report Form (Police Scotland 064-035) form must be completed.

The OST Guidance on Conducted Energy Devices (Taser) document provides non-STOs information on Police Scotland's approach to the training and deployment of STOs and the knowledge and skills required to safely manage incidents involving use of CED and to provide an awareness of how CED's work and where the device may be deployed. This document is also designed to assist Line Managers, ACR and Custody staff in developing a better understanding of CED's, how they will be deployed, how officers are selected and trained and the responsibilities of supporting departments.

Carriage of Taser

STOs may retain possession of Taser when conducting interviews at a Police Station, but only if there is no approved storage cabinets at the station where the interview is to be conducted.

Information has been removed due to its content being exempt in terms of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, Section 35 Law Enforcement.

Medical Assessment

All persons subjected to Taser discharge **must** ultimately be examined and assessed by a registered medical practitioner – a doctor (e.g. a Forensic Physician (FP) or Emergency Department doctor) who is familiar with the nature of Taser-associated risks and complications. If the doctor is unfamiliar with these unique risks and complications, he or she must be provided with a copy of Form 064-012A to inform them. If the subject is not showing any adverse side effects, they must be taken to a custody facility in the first instance to be assessed by a Health Care Professional who will advise the FP who will then attend and examine the subject. If there is any doubt about the subject's condition they must be taken straight to hospital.

8. Recording and Reporting

A Specially Trained Officer X2 Taser Deployment Report Form (Form 064-035) must be completed on every occasion where a Taser is used **and emailed to the Specially Trained Officer Compliance Team at**
Information has been removed due to its content being exempt in terms of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, Section 30 Prejudice to effective conduct of public affairs.

The form must be completed prior to the end of each tour of duty, but in any case within 24 hours of the use.

Under no circumstances will a STO submit a Taser deployment Form directly to the Police Investigations & Review Commissioner (PIRC).

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If Taser has been fired / used in drive stun or angled drive stun mode **or** If Taser is used within the Custody Suite environment **in any capacity** the Taser deployment form will be forwarded to PSD to review, in line with NPCC recommendations. This must be forwarded by the STO Lead, once the form standard has been reviewed.

9. Key Contacts

For additional information please e-mail

Information has been removed due to its content being exempt in terms of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, Section 30 Prejudice to effective conduct of public affairs.

Additional guidance and information can also be found within the following:

Non STO Aide Memoir

STOs and Conducted Energy Devices (Taser) Presentation

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Compliance Record

Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EqHRIA) Date Completed / Reviewed:	02/09/2020
Information Management Compliant:	Yes
Health and Safety Compliant:	Yes
Publication Scheme Compliant:	No

Version Control Table

Version	History of Amendments	Approval Date
1.00	Initial Approved Version	31/05/2018
2.00	Paragraph 13.18.4 and 13.18.5 amended to reflect changes to ACR and Duty Officer responsibilities. Paragraph 14.7 included to provide direction to STOs when conducting prisoner escorts to Prison establishments. Amendment to Paragraph 19 to include direction that persons subjected to Taser discharge must be examined by a qualified medical professional.	16/01/2019
3.00	Content fully revised, rationalised and reformatted in line with the SOP Review Guiding Principles.	03/12/2020