

NZ Police TASER National Roll-out Research Report

22 March 2010 to 30 June 2011

Tactical Options Research Team

Introduction

This research report analyses and monitors TASER and other tactical options deployment by New Zealand Police (Police) during the initial roll-out of TASER to all districts, from 22 March 2010 to 30 June 2011.

The purpose of this report is to provide transparency and accountability to the public for the deployment of TASER and other tactical options, and to assist evidence-based decision-making to improve staff and public safety.

The report is part of an ongoing series of TASER publications, and follows the TASER Reintroduction Period Research Report. These reports are compiled by the Tactical Options Research Team, in Operations Group, Police National Headquarters.

Tactical Options Reporting data

The data in this report is derived from Tactical Options Reports, and presents Tactical Options Reporting (TOR) events. A TOR event is the reportable use of one or more tactical options, by one officer, against one individual.

Key findings

- During the TASER national roll-out period there were 6,141 TOR events, comprising approximately 0.3% of all face to face contacts between police and the public (n=2,251,759). TASER events comprised an even smaller proportion (0.04%) of these face to face contacts.
- Tactical options were deployed in a very small minority of Police apprehensions (2%). TASER was deployed in only 0.3% of apprehensions by Police, which equates to 31 TASER TOR events per 10,000 Police apprehensions.
- The most commonly used tactical options at TOR events – empty hand tactics (37%), OC spray (35%), and handcuffs (34%) – all involved lesser degrees of force.
- There were 846 (14%) TOR events where TASER was deployed (shown or discharged) against a person; an average of 56 TASER events a month. The trend line for the number of TASER events per month declined slightly during the 15-month national rollout period.
- In 87% (n=736) of TASER events, the highest mode of deployment was a TASER show (ie, presentation, laser painting, and arcing).

- The TASER show to discharge ratio was 6:1; that is, for every six shows of TASER, there was one TASER discharge.
- Nearly two thirds (62%; n=68) of the people involved in TASER discharge events were armed with a weapon.
- In nearly three quarters of TASER discharge events (74%; n=81), police used only a single TASER discharge (ie, discharge with probes or contact stun) against the person.
- Eighty-two percent (n=601) of TASER shows and seventy-three percent (n=80) of TASER discharges were deemed effective in de-escalating the incident.
- The 14-16 and 17-20 year old age groups had the lowest rate of TASER events per 10,000 apprehensions, at 12 and 19 events, respectively.
- The 31-40 year old age group had the highest rate of TASER events per 10,000 apprehensions, with 57 events reported.
- TASER was deployed against Pacific Island peoples, Māori, and European, at 42, 34, and 27 TASER events per 10,000 Police apprehensions, respectively. This data does not account for people's behaviour at TOR events.
- The vast majority of the thousands of mental health (98%) and attempted suicide (99%) related incidents that police dealt with, did not involve TASER deployment.
- Excluding minor probe injuries, TASER was one of the least likely tactical options to result in injury to the person; in over 99% of TASER deployments there was no injury reported. There were seven TASER-related injuries. Most (71%; n=5) were of minor injury severity.

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Tactical options used at TOR events, 22 March 2010 to 30 June 2011

This section examines tactical options used by Police at TOR events during the TASER national roll-out period.

- During the TASER national roll-out period, there were 14 TOR events per 10,000 population.
- TOR events comprised approximately 0.3% (n=6,141) of the 2,251,759 face to face contacts that police had with the public.
- Apprehensions by police rarely resulted in use of force against the public, with 2% of Police apprehensions resulting in tactical options being deployed.
- In 6,141 TOR events, 8,454 individual tactical options were reported to have been used: an average of 1.4 tactical options reported per TOR event.

View from the frontline...

"Constable [X] and I approached a group of three intoxicated females...[female 1] was highly intoxicated and couldn't walk properly unaided...I then observed Constable [X] offer the females' transportation to their respective homes. One female immediately accepted the offer, while [female 1] and the other associate declined...The females all considered that [female 1] should get a ride home now as she was in no fit state to be in town. From my observations of [female 1's] physical capacity it was clear that if she declined a ride home it was likely that she would be taken into the police station to detox for her own personal safety. As [female 1] neared the police vehicle, she began to become highly agitated and started struggling against her friends. Both Constable [X] and I attempted to communicate with [female 1] however she kicked my right upper leg and then kicked Constable [X] at least once in the groin area. I immediately informed [female 1] that she was under arrest for Assaults Police. She continued to kick at both me and Constable [X]. Handcuffs were applied and we got her to sit down in the patrol vehicle. I saw her kick Constable [X's] and bite Constable [X's] arm...Observing that our efforts to effectively restrain her were being ineffective, I used OC Spray. The effective option was OC spray...we [then] transported her to the police station."

Table 1. Non-TASER tactical options : TASER ratio, by district

Northland	15:1
Waitemata	7:1
Auckland City	11:1
Counties Manukau	9:1
Waikato	8:1
Bay of Plenty	8:1
Eastern	8:1
Central	10:1
Wellington	12:1
Tasman	7:1
Canterbury	9:1
Southern	12:1
Total	9:1

- As shown in Table 2 and Figure 1, the most commonly used tactical options at TOR events involved lesser degrees of force: empty hand tactics (37%; n=2,266), OC spray (35%; n=2,136), and handcuffs (34%; n=2,067). TASER was deployed at 14% (n=846) of TOR events.
- Police dogs (7%; n=392), firearms (5%; n=305), batons (3%; n=188), and carotid hold (1%; n=61) were less frequently used by Police. 'Other' tactical options were mostly weapons of opportunity (eg, a police torch), and represented 3% (n=193) of tactical options used at TOR events.
- As shown in Table 1, the non-TASER tactical options uses to TASER use ratio was 9:1; that is, for every 9 non-TASER tactical option deployments there was one TASER deployment. Waitematā, and Tasman districts reported the highest proportionate TASER deployment, with a ratio of 7:1; that is, for every 7 non-TASER tactical option deployments there was one TASER deployment.
- Northland, Wellington, and Southern districts reported the lowest proportionate TASER deployment, with ratios of 15:1, 12:1 and 12:1, respectively. This data does not account for people's behaviour at TOR events.

Table 2. Tactical options used at TOR events, by district and locality, 22 March 2010 to 30 June 2011 ¹

	Handcuffs	OC spray	Empty hand	Baton	Dog	Carotid hold	TASER	Firearm	Other
Northland	116	127	110	12	29	6	29	14	8
Waitemata	174	135	198	15	19	4	90	48	18
Auckland City	235	163	290	25	31	0	77	36	31
Counties Manukau	279	303	281	27	19	4	115	50	15
Waikato	137	208	145	26	32	2	76	27	11
Bay of Plenty	250	288	262	19	38	16	112	22	24
Eastern	174	176	191	18	31	5	81	20	12
Central	164	184	178	11	35	6	62	24	13
Wellington	163	210	193	13	71	9	58	28	21
Tasman	73	81	76	5	22	2	42	7	7
Canterbury	148	129	172	8	41	6	59	10	21
Southern	154	132	170	9	24	1	45	19	12
Total	2067	2136	2266	188	392	61	846	305	193
National average	172	178	189	16	33	5	71	25	16
Upper North ²	804	728	879	79	98	14	311	148	72
Lower North	888	1066	969	87	207	38	389	121	81
South	375	342	418	22	87	9	146	36	40

¹ An officer may use more than one tactical option (eg, handcuffs, OC spray) at a TOR event. Table 2, Figure 1, Figure 2 and Figure 3 count whether a particular tactical option was used at a TOR event, not the number of times that tactical option was used at that event. See page 15 for tactical options deployments that are reportable in a Tactical Options Report.

² There are three localities in New Zealand Police, each under the leadership of an Assistant Commissioner: 'Upper North', comprising Northland, Waitemata, Auckland City, and Counties Manukau; 'Lower North', comprising Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Eastern, Central, and Wellington; and 'South', comprising Tasman, Canterbury, and Southern.

Figure 1. Proportion (%) of tactical options used at TOR events, nationally (n=6,141), 22 March 2010 to 30 June 2011

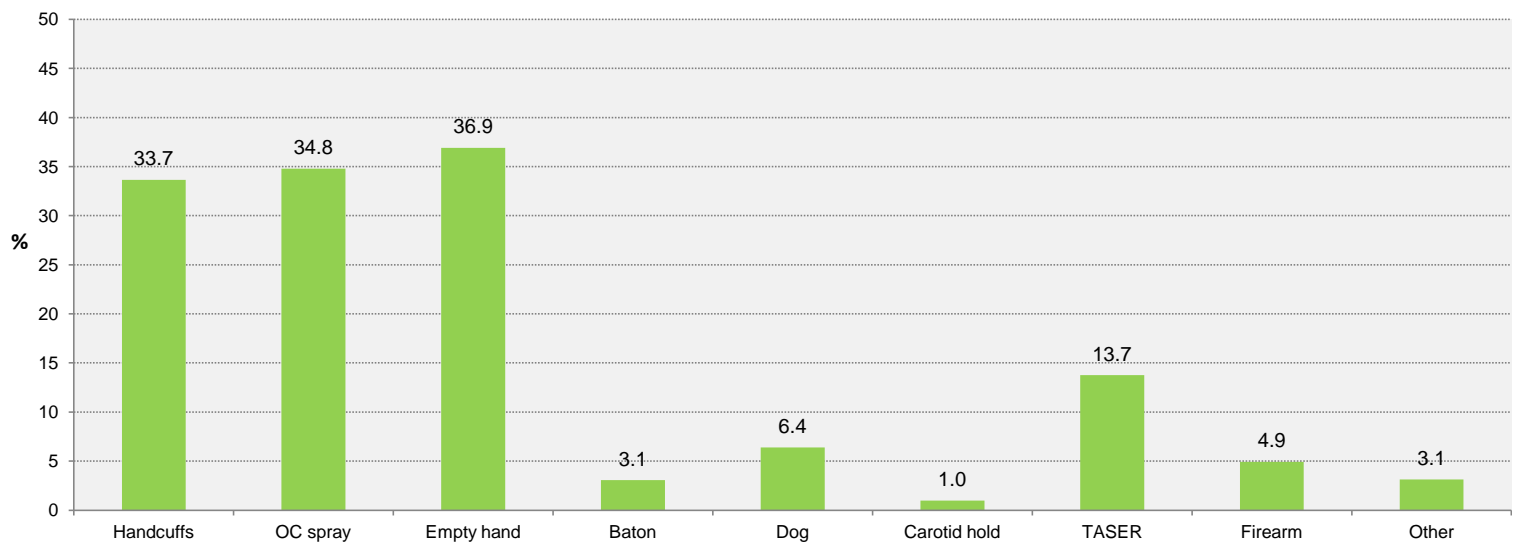


Figure 2. Tactical options used at TOR events, by locality, 22 March 2010 to 30 June 2011

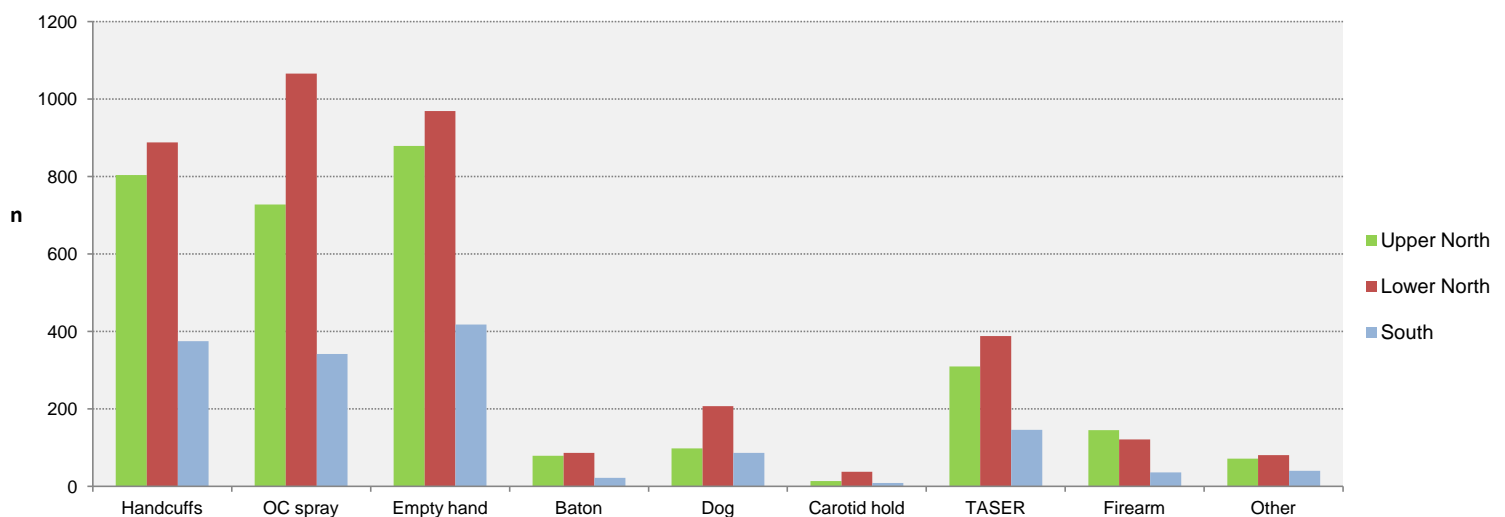


Figure 3. Tactical options used at TOR events, by district, 22 March 2010 to 30 June 2011





TASER deployment at TOR events, 22 March 2010 to 30 June 2011

This section examines TASER deployment during the national roll-out period.

- During the national roll-out period, TASER was deployed (shown or discharged) in 846 TOR events; an average of 56 events per month. As shown in Figure 4, the trend line for the number of TASER events declined slightly during the national rollout period.
- There was an average of two TASER events per 10,000 population across all 12 Police districts.
- Overall, apprehensions by Police rarely resulted in TASER deployment against the public (0.3%). This equates to a national average of 31 TASER events per 10,000 apprehensions.
- As shown in Table 3, Eastern district reported the highest rate of TASER TOR events per 10,000 Police apprehensions (n=44), followed by Auckland City (n=39), Waikato (n=39), Waitematā (n=38), and Bay of Plenty (n=38). Canterbury district recorded the lowest, with 20 TASER TOR events per 10,000 apprehensions, followed by Southern (n=23). However, differences between districts do not account for people's behaviour at TOR events.
- In the majority (68%; n=574) of TASER events officers used laser painting as the highest mode of deployment, followed by presentation (18%; n=155). Discharge was used in 13% (n=110) of TASER events, while arcing was used in 1% (n=7). This equates to a show to discharge ratio of 6:1; that is, for every 6 shows of TASER there was one TASER discharge. The show to discharge ratio during the earlier TASER trial was 6:1. Thus, proportionately, officers did not discharge TASER more during the national roll-out period than they did during the TASER trial.
- The vast majority of TASER shows (82%; n=601) and discharges (73%; n=80) were deemed effective in de-escalating the incident.
- Table 5 shows that in nearly three quarters of TASER discharge events (74%; n=81), police used only a single TASER discharge against a person, with 14% (n=15) involving two discharges, 8% (n=9) involving three discharges, 4% (n=4) involving four discharges, and 1% (n=1) involving five discharges. Note, that multiple TASER discharges may occur where a discharge, or discharges, had no or insufficient effect on the person.
- Table 6 shows that contact stuns represented 14% (n=23) of all discharges (n=159). Put another way, for every six times a TASER was discharged in probe mode, there was one contact stun reported (6:1).
- The most common incident location for TASER events was residential property (65%; n=553), followed by street/highway/motorway (16%; n=134), and outdoor public places (11%; n=89). Note, more than one incident location may be reported for each TOR event.
- As shown in Figure 7, there were 116 occasions where an officer discharged TASER unintentionally. On all of these occasions, the officer was conducting a pre-operational check of TASER prior to attending an incident. There were no occasions of the TASER being accidentally discharged at any person.
- There were 32 events where TASER was deployed against a dog posing a threat to police or public safety. On these occasions, there were 8 show events and 24 discharge events.

Figure 4. Number of TASER TOR events, by month, 1 April 2010 to 30 June 2011

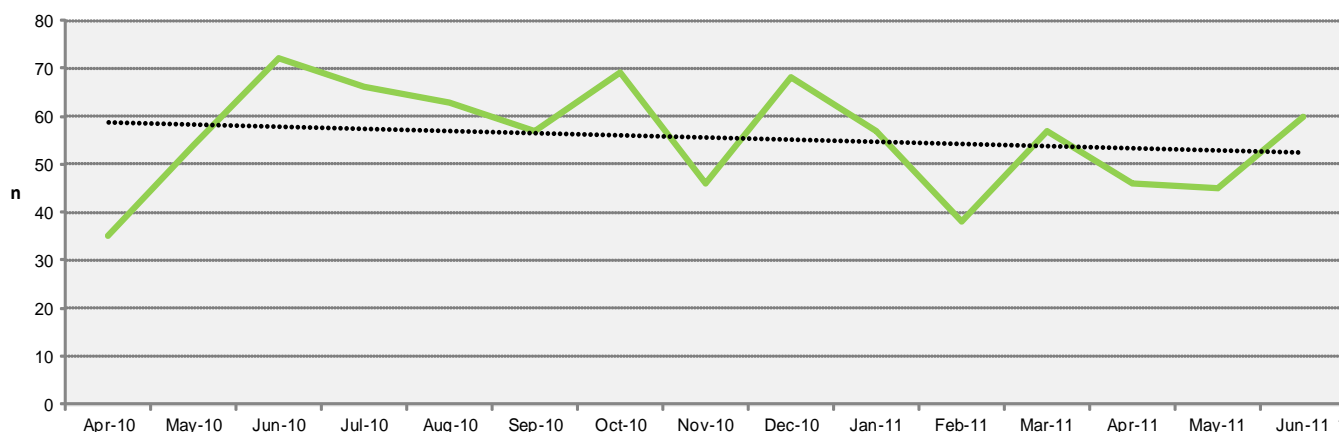


Table 3. TASER TOR events by highest mode of deployment, ³ by district and locality

	Presentation	Laser painting	Arcing	Discharge ⁴	Total	Per 10,000 apprehensions ⁵
Northland	4	16	0	9	29	24
Waitemata	11	62	1	16	90	38
Auckland City	12	49	1	15	77	39
Counties Manukau	13	93	0	9	115	31
Waikato	14	48	3	11	76	39
Bay of Plenty	36	67	0	9	112	38
Eastern	10	66	0	5	81	44
Central	17	36	1	8	62	28
Wellington	13	35	0	10	58	24
Tasman	9	30	0	3	42	32
Canterbury	2	47	1	9	59	20
Southern	14	25	0	6	45	23
National	155	574	7	110	846	31
District average	13	48	0.6	9	71	
Upper North	40	220	2	49	311	33
Lower North	90	252	4	43	389	34
South	25	102	1	18	146	24

³ TASER data is presented by 'highest mode of deployment', ie, the highest mode of use (presentation, laser painting, arcing, or discharge) is reported. Where TASER discharge is the highest mode of deployment, any TASER show that preceded or followed the discharge is excluded from the data. This caveat applies to Table 3, Figure 5, Table 4, Table 7, Table 8, Table 9, and Table 10.

⁴ TASER discharge data in Table 3 counts the number of TOR events in which a discharge(s) (either discharge with probes and/or contact stun) occurred, but not the number of discharges or modes of discharge (see Table 5 and 6).

⁵ Police apprehension data does not represent the number of offences or offenders, as one offender may be apprehended for multiple offences, or multiple offenders may be apprehended for one offence.

Figure 5. TASER TOR events, by highest mode of deployment, by district (n=846), 22 March 2010 to 30 June 2011

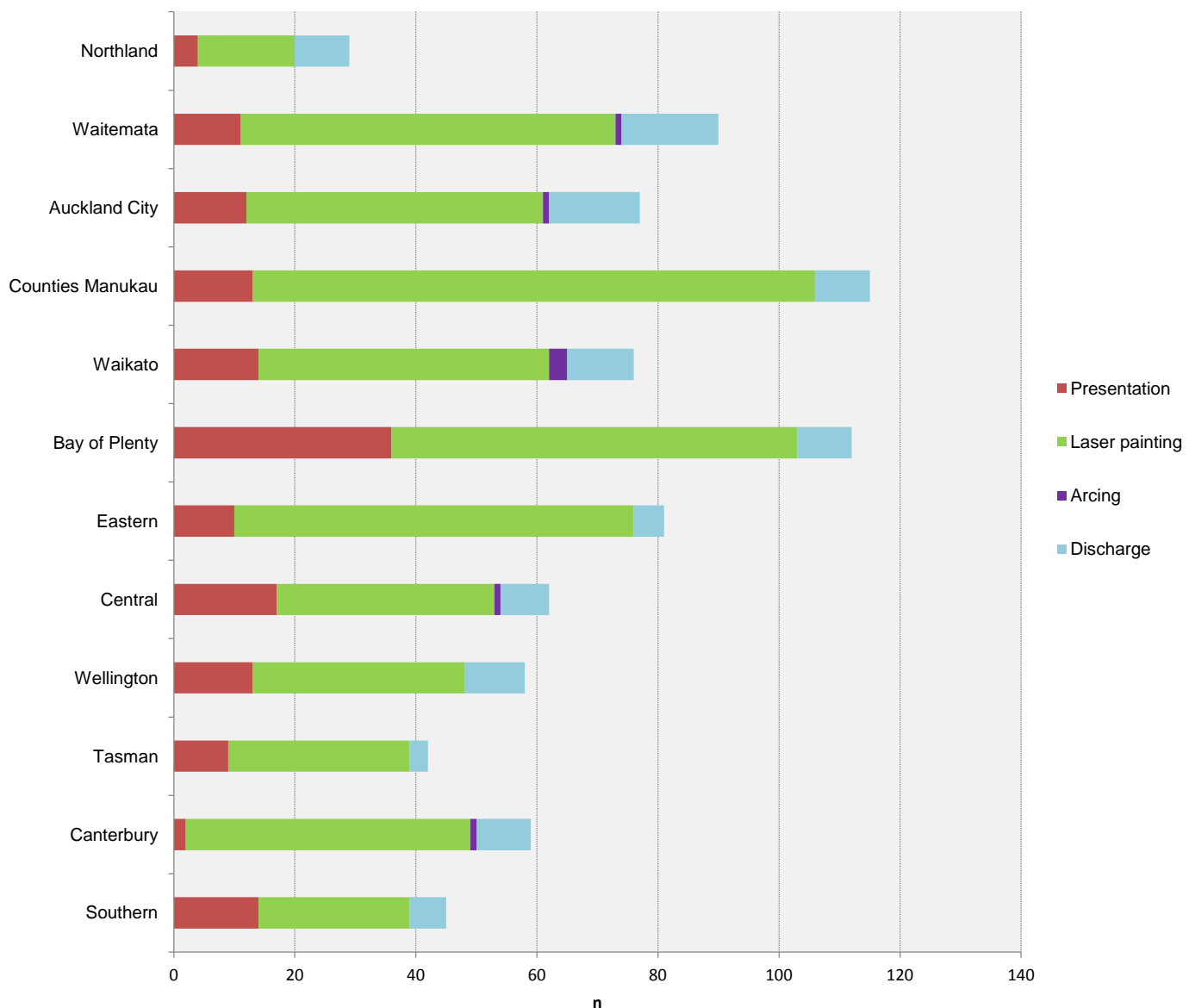


Table 4. TASER TOR events, by highest mode of deployment, by district and area

	Presentation	Laser painting	Arcing	Discharge	Total	Per 10,000 apprehensions
NORTHLAND						
Far North	1	6	0	6	13	33
Whangarei	3	10	0	3	16	20
WAITEMATA						
Rodney	3	21	0	1	25	68
Waitakere	5	22	1	9	37	30
North Shore	3	19	0	6	28	37
Auckland Motorways	0	0	0	0	0	0
AUCKLAND						
Auckland Central Area	4	17	0	3	24	25
Auckland East Area	5	18	1	3	27	40
Auckland West Area	3	14	0	9	26	45
COUNTIES MANUKAU						
Counties Manukau Central	4	35	0	2	41	50
Counties Manukau East	1	13	0	2	16	18
Counties Manukau South	3	24	0	2	29	30
Counties Manukau West	5	21	0	3	29	26
WAIKATO						
Hamilton City	10	25	3	5	43	43
Waikato East	1	10	0	3	14	31
Waikato West	3	13	0	3	19	40
BAY OF PLENTY						
Eastern Bay of Plenty	3	13	0	3	19	47
Rotorua	14	26	0	2	42	54
Taupo	6	11	0	3	20	35
Western Bay of Plenty	13	17	0	1	31	27
EASTERN						
Hawkes Bay	9	55	0	2	66	56
Tairāwhiti	1	11	0	3	15	23
CENTRAL						
Ruapehu	1	2	0	0	3	20
Palmerston North City	4	8	0	4	16	34
Palmerston North Rural	6	12	0	3	21	41
Taranaki Rural	0	7	0	1	8	37
Wanganui	5	5	1	0	11	31
New Plymouth	1	2	0	0	3	6
WELLINGTON						
Hutt Valley	4	16	0	3	23	31
Kapiti-Manā	2	7	0	5	14	24
Wairarapa	4	5	0	1	10	33
Wellington	3	7	0	1	11	13
TASMAN						
Marlborough	4	11	0	0	15	32
Nelson Bays	4	14	0	2	20	33
West Coast	1	5	0	1	7	30
CANTERBURY						
Northern Canterbury	0	10	1	3	14	18
Christchurch Central	0	15	0	3	18	19
Southern Canterbury	1	9	0	1	11	17
Mid South Canterbury	1	13	0	2	16	29
SOUTHERN						
Otago Rural	3	8	0	2	13	29
Dunedin	6	8	0	3	17	22
Southland	5	9	0	1	15	20
Total	155	574	7	110	846	31

Table 5. Number of TASER discharges at each TASER TOR event, by district ⁶

	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Northland	7	1	0	1	0	9
Waitemata	15	1	0	0	0	16
Auckland	11	2	2	0	0	15
Counties Manukau	5	3	1	0	0	9
Waikato	7	2	1	1	0	11
Bay of Plenty	6	2	0	1	0	9
Eastern	2	2	0	0	1	5
Central	7	0	1	0	0	8
Wellington	7	0	3	0	0	10
Tasman	2	1	0	0	0	3
Canterbury	7	1	1	0	0	9
Southern	5	0	0	1	0	6
Total	81	15	9	4	1	110

⁶ TASER discharge data in Table 5 includes all TASER discharges with probes and/or contact stuns. TASER may be discharged more than once in a TASER TOR event. In 81 TASER TOR events TASER was discharged once, in 15 events it was discharged twice, in nine events it was discharged three times, while in four events it was discharged four times, and in one event it was discharged five times; thus, there were 159 discharges at the 110 TASER TOR events (see Table 6). Note, that multiple TASER discharges may occur where a discharge, or discharges, had no or insufficient effect on the person.

Table 6. Number of TASER discharges, by discharge mode and district, 22 March 2010 to 30 June 2011

	Contact stun	%	Discharge with probes	%	Total discharges	Discharge with probe : contact stun ratio
Northland	5	22	8	6	13	2:1
Waitemata	1	4	16	12	17	16:1
Auckland	2	9	19	14	21	10:1
Counties Manukau	2	9	12	9	14	6:1
Waikato	1	4	17	13	18	17:1
Bay of Plenty	5	22	9	7	14	2:1
Eastern	4	17	7	5	11	2:1
Central	0	0	10	7	10	–
Wellington	1	4	15	11	16	15:1
Tasman	0	0	4	3	4	–
Canterbury	0	0	12	9	12	–
Southern	2	9	7	5	9	4:1
Total discharges	23	100	136	100	159	6:1

Figure 6. Number of TASER discharges, by discharge mode and district, 22 March to 30 June 2011

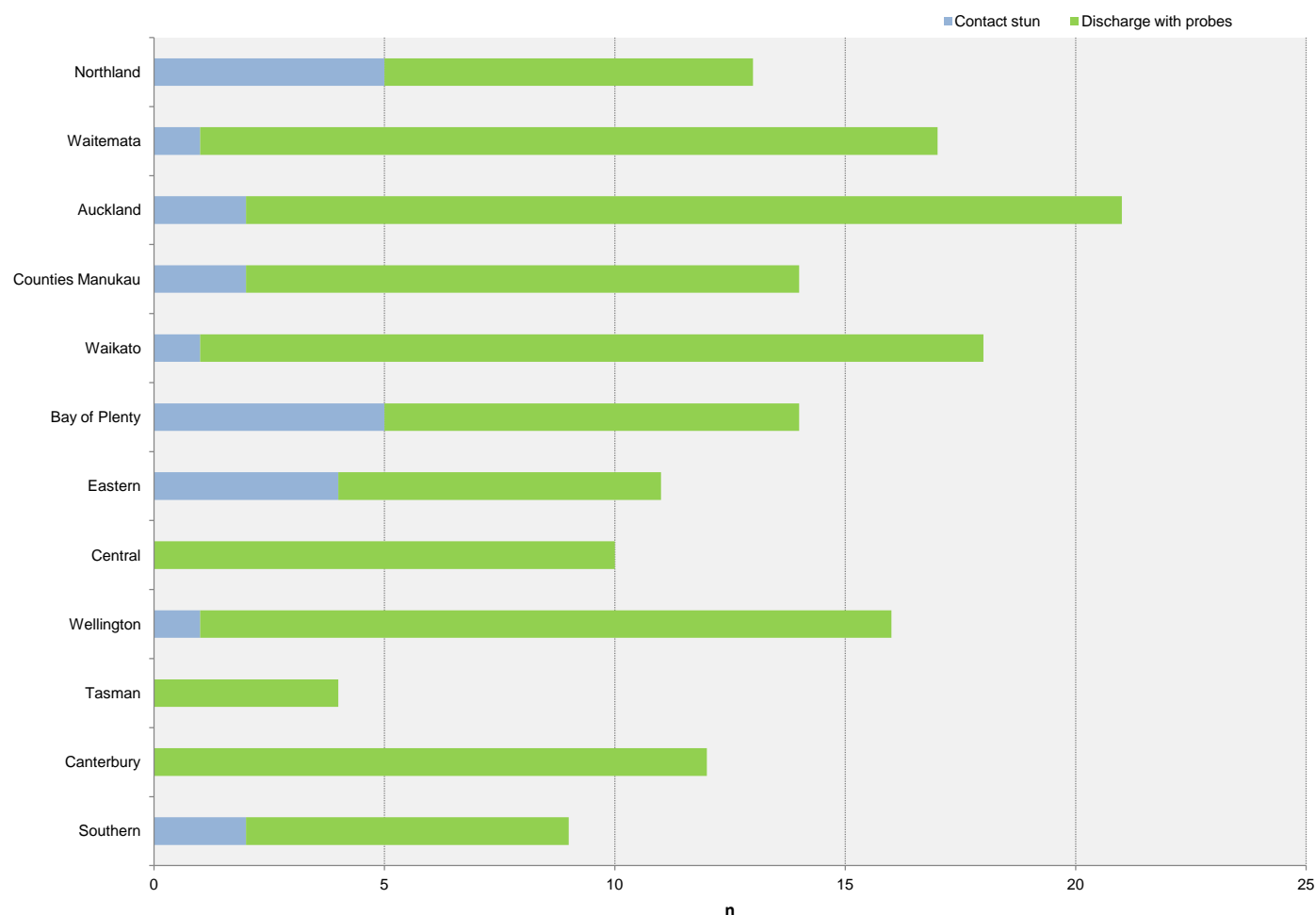


Table 7. TASER pre-deployment warnings ⁷

	Shows ¹⁰	% of shows	Discharges ¹⁰	% of discharges	Total	% of TASER events
Yes	626	85	78	71	704	83
No	107	15	30	27	137	16
Not reported	3	0	2	2	5	1
Total	736	100	110	100	846	100

⁷ Table 7 presents whether a verbal warning was given by officers in conjunction with TASER deployment at TOR events.

Table 8. TASER effectiveness ⁸

	Shows	% of shows	Discharges	% of discharges	Total	% of TASER events
Yes	601	82	80	73	681	80
No	135	18	30	27	165	20
Total	736	100	110	100	846	100

⁸ Table 8 presents the effectiveness of TASER in assisting officers to resolve an incident. Note, TASER discharges may be deemed ineffective because the TASER probe(s) or contact stun did not attach to the person eg, due to a fast moving target and/or environmental factors.

Table 9. TASER TOR events, by work group ⁹

	Shows	% of shows	Discharges	% of discharges	Total	% of TASER events
General Duties Branch	681	93	95	86	776	92
Armed Offenders Squad	6	1	10	9	16	2
Road Policing Units	12	2	0	0	12	1
Rural	13	2	4	4	17	2
Dog Section	5	1	0	0	5	1
Team Policing	6	1	0	0	6	1
CIB/Enquiries	6	1	0	0	6	1
Watchhouse	2	0	0	0	2	0
Tactical Crime Unit	1	0	1	1	2	0
Youth Services	1	0	0	0	1	0
Community	2	0	0	0	2	0
Other	1	0	0	0	1	0
Total	736	100	110	100	846	100

⁹ Table 9 presents TASER TOR events by Police work group.

Table 10. TASER TOR events, by location type ¹⁰

	Shows	% of shows	Discharges	% of discharges	Total	% of TASER events
Residence	478	65	75	68	553	65
Street, Highway, Motorway	119	16	15	14	134	16
Outdoor public area (e.g. car park)	81	11	8	7	89	11
Non-police vehicle	35	5	3	3	38	4
Other	23	3	4	4	27	3
Commercial property	8	1	2	2	10	1
Police cell	5	1	1	1	6	1
Gang Premises	6	1	0	0	6	1
Police car	2	0.3	2	2	4	0.5
Licensed Premises	4	1	0	0	4	0.5
Police interview room	2	0.3	0	0	2	0.2
Other police premises	2	0.3	0	0	2	0.2
Police receiving area	0	0	1	0.9	1	0.1
Total	761		110		876	

¹⁰ More than one location type may be reported for each TOR event, thus the total in this table exceeds the number of TASER TOR events (n = 846).

Figure 7. Number of unintentional discharges of TASER, by district (n=116)

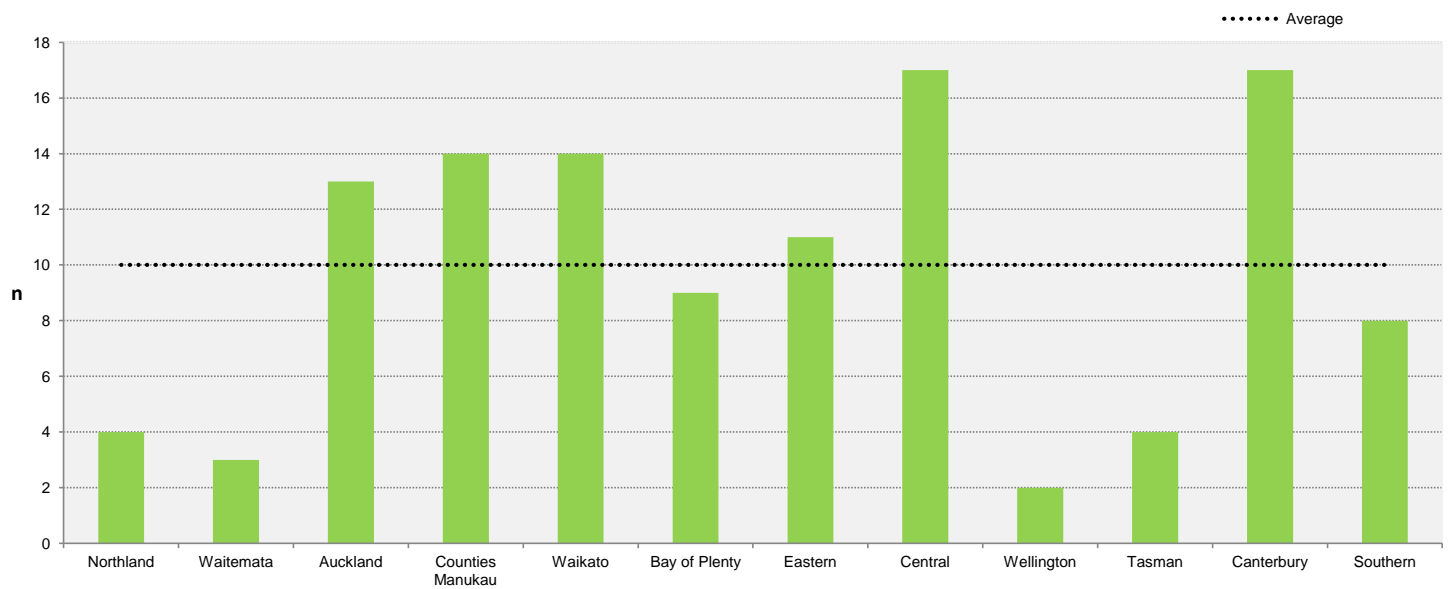


Figure 8. Number of unintentional discharges of TASER nationally, by month (n=116)

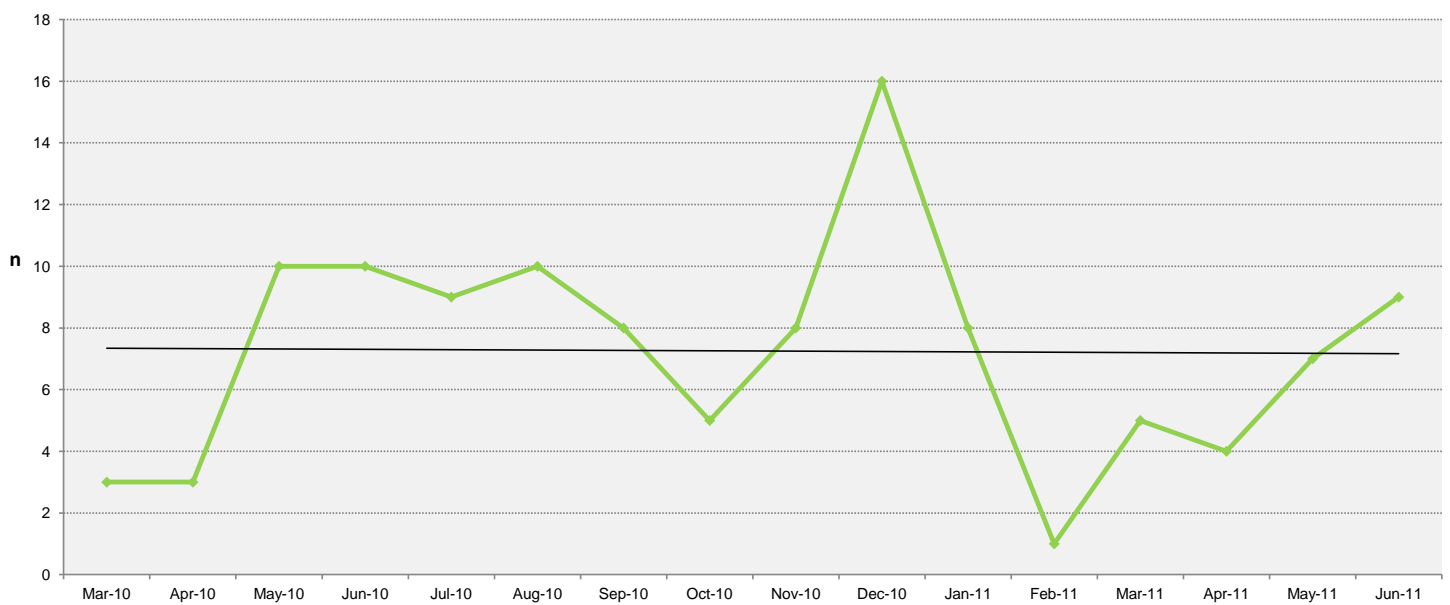
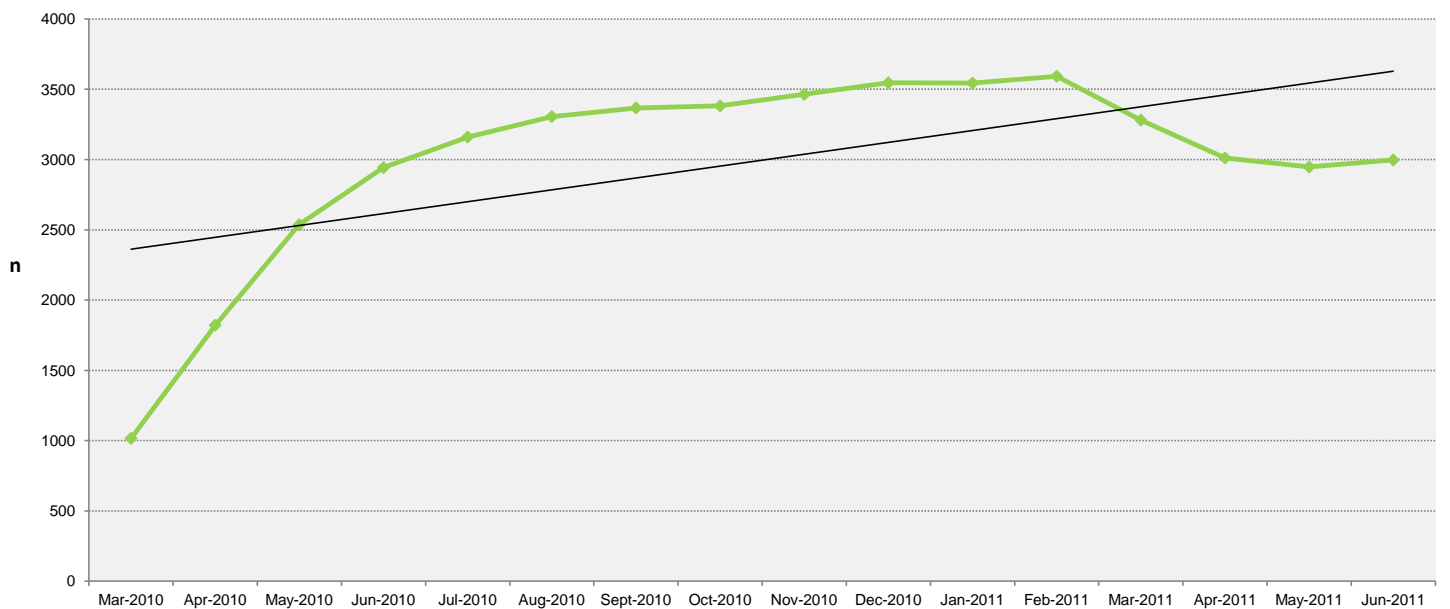


Figure 9. Number of staff certified as TASER operators, by month (n=47,916), 1 March 2010 to 30 June 2011





People involved in TASER TOR events, 22 March 2010 to 30 June 2011

This section examines characteristics of people (excluding police) involved in national roll-out period TASER events.

- As shown in Table 11, TASER discharge events were typified by verbal threats (55%; n=60), violence towards (42%; n=46) and weapons used (25%; n=28), all against police. Less frequently, discharge events involved violence towards non-police (17%; n=19) and people spitting blood or saliva at police (5%; n=5). Threats towards police (28%; n=204) and non-police (18%; n=133), and violence towards non-police (13%; n=94) were common issues at TASER show events. Note, people may display more than one type of behaviour at TOR events.
- Nearly two thirds (62%; n=68) of people involved in TASER discharge events were armed with a weapon.
- Weapons were less commonly present at TASER show events, with 42% (n=308) of people reported to have been in possession of a weapon.
- Table 12 shows that the majority of TASER deployments (shows or discharges) involved people who were impaired by alcohol (54%; n=459) and/or other drugs (21%; 180).
- Mental illness (25%; n=215) and suicidal behaviours (15%; n=129) were also common issues at TASER events. However, in the vast majority of mental health (98%; 13,950) and attempted suicide incidents (99%; 11,529) attended by police, TASER was not deployed. Note, an event may be characterised by one or more of these factors.
- Police knew that the person had a history of violence in 43% (n=360) of TASER events. In 28% (n=237) of events people also had a history of violence towards police, while 27% (n=226) of events involved people who had a history of carrying weapons. Note, people may have more than one known history at TOR events.
- As shown in Figure 10, the most common age groups involved in TASER events were those aged 21-30 and 31-40; accounting for 58% of TASER events. The youngest person against whom TASER was deployed was 14; and the oldest was 70. On both occasions the TASER was used in show mode only.
- No children (aged 0-13) were involved in TASER TOR events during the national rollout period, while 5% (n=41) of events involved youth (aged 14-16). The vast majority (n=39; 95%) of these youth events were TASER shows
- The 14-16 and 17-20 year old age groups had the lowest rate of TASER events per 10,000 apprehensions, with 12 and 19 events, respectively.
- The 31-40 year old age group had the highest rate of TASER events per 10,000 apprehensions, with 57 events reported.
- Table 13 shows that TASER was deployed against Pacific Island peoples, Māori, and European, at 42, 34, and 27 TASER events per 10,000 Police apprehensions, respectively. This data does not account for people's behaviour at TOR events.
- As shown in Table 14, those against whom TASER was deployed (shown or discharged) were most often male (n=775; 92%). Put another way, for every 11 males involved in TASER events, one female was involved (11:1).
- There were 32 events where TASER was deployed against a dog; an average of 2 TASER events per month. On these occasions, there were 8 show events and 24 discharge events.

View from the frontline.....

"I went to [the address] with Constable [X] looking for a male who may or may not reside at that address, and to warn him that another male had made threats towards him, and may show up. The male refused to come out of the room and opened fire with a .22 rifle as soon as the door was opened. Constable [X] was struck in the face, and police dog [X] was shot in the body... As the male advanced towards my position, I fired my TASER at him. It appeared to hit him, as he ducked back around the corner of the hallway. He then came back and presented the firearm at me again. I re-loaded the TASER before hearing the male go back into his room. I then left the house calling for assistance..."

Table 11. Subject behaviours at TASER TOR events, 22 March 2010 to 30 June 2011 ¹¹

	Shows ¹²	% of shows	Discharges ¹²	% of discharges	Total	% of TASER events
Threats towards police	204	28	60	55	264	31
Threats towards non-police	133	18	13	12	146	17
Violence towards police	70	10	46	42	116	14
Violence towards non-police	94	13	19	17	113	13
Spit blood / saliva at police	8	1	5	5	13	2
Weapons used against police	48	7	28	25	76	9
Other (incl. self harm and weapon possession)	270	37	24	22	294	35
Total	827		195		1022	

¹¹ Table 11 presents subject behaviours displayed at TASER TOR events; eg, in 42% of TASER TOR events where discharge was the highest mode of deployment, there was violence towards police. Subjects may display more than one type of behaviour at a TOR event, thus percentages may exceed 100%.

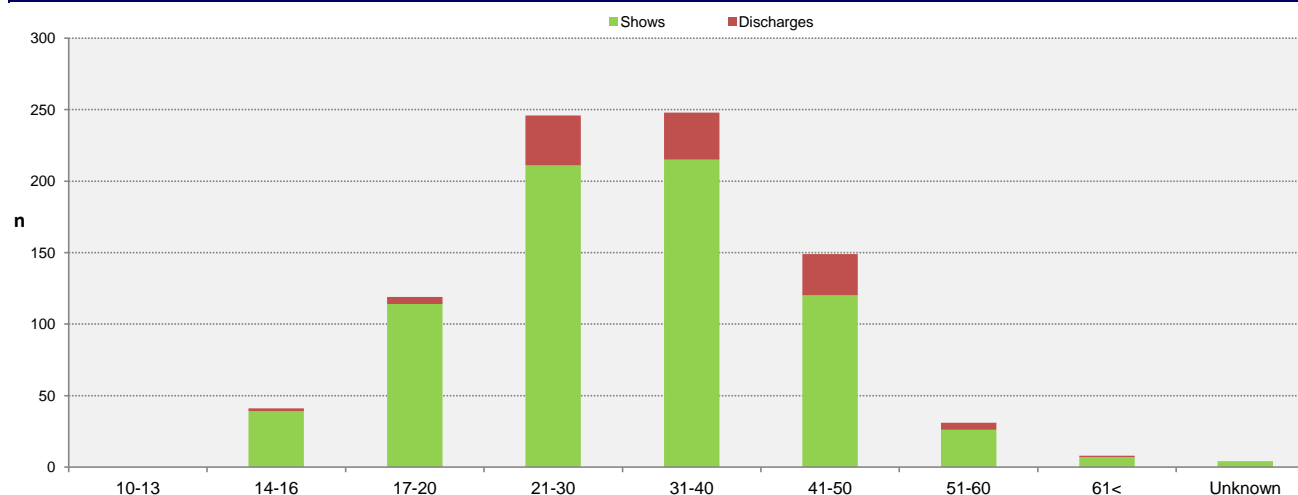
¹² TASER data is reported by highest mode. Shows = presentation, laser painting, and arcing. Discharges = discharge with probe and/or contact stun.

Table 12. Relevant factors at TASER TOR events, 22 March 2010 to 30 June 2011 ¹³

	Shows	% of shows	Discharges	% of discharges	Total	% of TASER events
Mental illness	176	24	39	35	215	25
Suicidal	95	13	34	31	129	15
Alcohol	398	54	61	55	459	54
Drugs	149	20	31	28	180	21
Excited delirium	28	4	7	6	35	4
History of carrying weapons	198	27	28	25	226	27
History of violence against police	205	28	32	29	237	28
History of violence	312	42	48	44	360	43
Medical condition	38	5	13	12	51	6
Nil/unknown	48	7	3	3	51	6
Other	89	12	10	9	99	12
Total	1736		306		2042	

¹³ Table 12 presents the broader factors relevant to TASER TOR events; eg, in 55% of TASER TOR events where discharge was the highest mode of deployment, the subject was impaired by alcohol. Subjects may display more than one relevant factor at a TOR event, thus percentages may exceed 100%.

Figure 10. TASER TOR events by age range, 22 March 2010 to 30 June 2011 ¹⁴



¹⁴ The youngest person who had TASER discharged against them was aged 15 years, while the oldest person was aged 67.

Table 13. TASER TOR events, by ethnicity, 22 March 2010 to 30 June 2011

	Shows	% of shows	Discharges	% of discharges	Total	Per 10,000 apprehensions ¹⁵
European	265	36	47	43	312	27
Māori	358	49	43	39	401	34
Pacific Island Peoples	94	13	17	15	111	42
Other	17	2	3	3	20	–
Unknown	2	0	0	0	2	–
Total	736	100	110	100	846	

¹⁵ Police apprehension data not represent the number of offences or offenders, as one offender of may be apprehended for multiple offences, or multiple offenders may be apprehended for one offence. The data in Table 13 does not account for subject behaviours at TOR events.

Table 14. TASER TOR events, by sex, 22 March 2010 to 30 June 2011

	Shows	% of shows	Discharges	% of discharges	Total	Per 10,000 apprehensions ¹⁵
Male	669	91	106	96	775	36
Female	66	9	4	4	70	12
Unknown	1	0	0	0	1	–
Total	736	100	110	100	846	



Injuries at TASER TOR events, 22 March 2010 to 30 June 2011

This section examines injuries received by members of the public and police involved in TASER events during the national roll-out period.

- Consistent with international research, Figure 11 shows that the highest injury rate occurred when police dogs (89%; n=348) were deployed. Physical empty hand tactics (32%; n=717) and baton strikes (23%; n=43) were next most likely to result in injury to a person.
- In contrast, excluding minor probe injuries, TASER had one of the lowest injury rates; in over 99% of TASER events, there was no subject injury. There were seven TASER-related injuries. Most (71%; n=5), were of minor injury severity requiring nil, staff, or self treatment.
- There was one moderate injury that required medical treatment (but no hospital admission), and one severe injury that required treatment in a hospital. On this occasion, the person received stitches to the head region following a fall after the TASER was discharged.

- As shown in Table 17, in the vast majority (97%; n=28) of TASER events, officers did not report sustaining any injuries. Most injuries reported by officers were minor (75%; n=21), however, there were two serious injuries that required hospital admission.

"Constable [X] approached the male, with his TASER drawn, but not presented. As he approached [the male] he could see that his hands were empty, but he had a pistol tucked in the middle of his waist band/belt area... [he] stopped but began slowly reaching with his left hand for the pistol, he was warned again, but continued to reach for his pistol. Fearing immediate harm to himself and potentially the other officers present and needing to neutralise the threat and arrest the male, Constable [X] discharged the TASER... Total muscle incapacitation was caused and [he] dropped to the ground...The firearm was recovered from his waist band, and it was found to be a single shot air pistol, which was loaded. The probes were removed at the scene and minor injuries were caused."

View from the frontline...

"I was advised by Police Communications that a male from that address had been running around with a knife. He had had an epileptic seizure and was now unconscious and unresponsive. The only other person at the address was his wife and she had stated that she had taken the knife from him. I removed the TASER from the lock box and strapped it on my leg advising comms...[On arrival] the female advised me that the male was inside. She also handed me a key to the front door...Sergeant [X] advised me the male lunged at him with a large knife stating he was going to kill the female... [The male] was approximately 1-1.5 meters in front of us. He was holding the knife in a manner I deemed to be a threat to Sergeant [X] and myself. The blade was pointed up and directed at us and he was acting in a threatening manner to us. I advised him I was in possession of a TASER and to put the knife down...fearing for our immediate safety I activated the TASER. The TASER took immediate effect..."

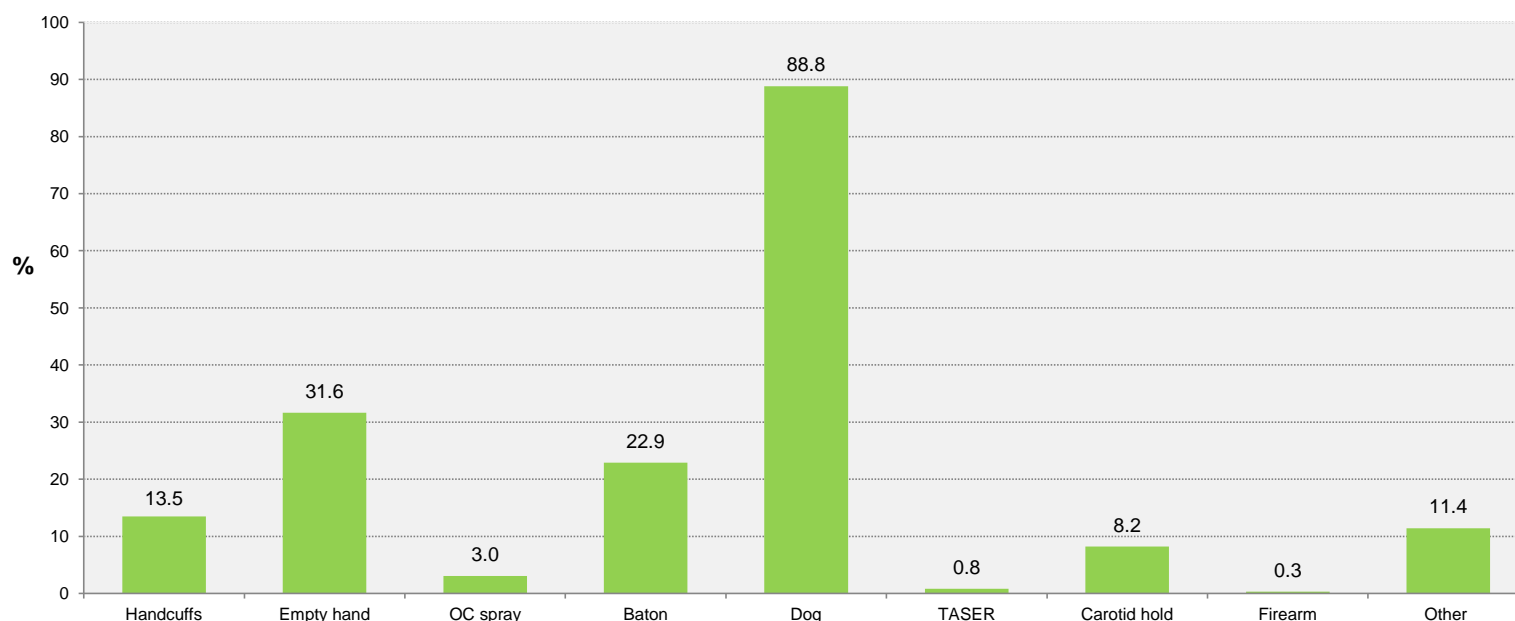
"I was called to a disorder involving three people in a residential area... [The male] was located... His dog was hovering nearby, which is a Neapolitan Mastiff and is known to be very protective of [the male]. The dog was hovering nearby, and began to get aggressive due to [the male] yelling. The dog attacked [the male] to his lower leg briefly, but it appeared to be attempting to pull [the male] away from us. When [the male] continued to struggle, and kick out, Constable [X] instructed me to remove the TASER and use a contact stun. [The male] was warned that he would be TASERed if he continued to kick. I removed my TASER when [the male] was still wrestling around waving his legs. I removed the cartridge and deployed a contact stun to his lower leg. At this stage his dog began to attack myself, barking and nipping at my legs. He grabbed my lower right leg once and I managed to [get him off] briefly, but he soon returned and held on tight to my lower right leg. Constable [X] was able to assist and pepper sprayed the dog, which kept him at bay."

Table 15. Number of tactical options used resulting in subject injuries, by district ¹⁶

	Handcuffs	Empty hand	OC spray	Baton	Dog	TASER	Carotid hold	Firearm	Other	Total
Northland	12	31	2	1	28	0	0	0	2	76
Waitemata	24	45	7	8	14	1	0	0	4	103
Auckland City	34	87	6	4	28	1	0	0	2	162
Counties Manukau	39	92	7	4	14	0	0	0	1	157
Waikato	16	44	8	6	28	1	0	0	3	106
Bay of Plenty	29	77	9	1	41	1	1	0	3	162
Eastern	15	71	2	5	30	0	0	0	1	124
Central	22	59	2	5	28	0	0	1	2	119
Wellington	22	84	10	2	59	2	3	0	2	184
Tasman	13	17	0	1	19	0	0	0	0	50
Canterbury	25	56	5	3	38	1	1	0	2	131
Southern	28	54	7	3	21	0	0	0	0	113
Total	279	717	65	43	348	7	5	1	22	1487
% of all injuries	18.8	48.2	4.4	2.9	23.4	0.5	0.3	0.1	1.5	

¹⁶ More than one subject injury may be reported as a result of a TASER TOR event. Table 15 and Figure 11 present injuries caused by each tactical option, as a number and proportion of all injuries caused by all tactical options.

Figure 11. Injury rate (%) for each tactical option used at TOR events, nationally (n=1,487) ¹⁷



¹⁷ Figure 11 shows the injury rate (%) for each tactical option eg, 89% of dog bites resulted in subject injury. As the injury rate for each tactical option is independent, percentages cannot be summed.

Table 16. Subject injuries resulting from TASER discharges, by severity, and district ¹⁸

	Minor	Moderate	Severe	Total
Northland	0	0	0	0
Waitemata	1	0	0	1
Auckland	1	0	0	1
Counties Manukau	0	0	0	0
Waikato	0	0	1	1
Bay of Plenty	1	0	0	1
Eastern	0	0	0	0
Central	0	0	0	0
Wellington	2	0	0	2
Tasman	0	0	0	0
Canterbury	0	1	0	1
Southern	0	0	0	0
Total	5	1	1	7

¹⁸ More than one subject injury may be reported as a result of a TASER discharge.
Minor = nil, self, or staff treatment; moderate = medical treatment (but no hospital admission); severe = hospital admission.

Table 17. Staff injuries at TASER TOR events, by severity, and district ¹⁹

	Minor	Moderate	Severe	Total
Northland	2	0	0	2
Waitemata	1	0	0	1
Auckland	3	1	0	4
Counties Manukau	0	0	1	1
Waikato	2	1	0	3
Bay of Plenty	2	2	0	4
Eastern	1	0	0	1
Central	6	0	1	7
Wellington	1	0	0	1
Tasman	1	0	0	1
Canterbury	1	0	0	1
Southern	1	1	0	2
Total	21	5	2	28

¹⁹ Officers can only report one injury and injury severity type received at a TASER TOR event. Minor = nil, self, or staff treatment; moderate = medical treatment (but no hospital admission); severe = hospital admission.



Tactical Options Research Team

This report was compiled by the Tactical Options Research Team, in Operations Group, Police National Headquarters. The Team undertake research, analysis, monitoring and evaluation of police use of force, to provide accountability and assist evidence-based decision making, to improve police and public safety.

Notes on Tactical Options Reporting (TOR) data

The data in this report is derived from Tactical Options Reports, and presents Tactical Options Reporting (TOR) events. Some TOR events involve the use of more than one tactical option; thus, the number of TOR events is lower than the number of tactical options used.

The following deployments of tactical options are reportable: shows and discharges of a TASER and/or firearm (with the exemptions below); handcuffs with pain compliance, or without pain compliance when used with another reportable tactical option; OC spray bursts; empty hand tactics; baton strikes; dog bites and/or injuries; carotid hold; and weapons of opportunity.

TASER data is presented by highest mode of deployment, ie, the highest mode of use is reported. Modes of TASER deployment are: shows (presentation, laser painting or arcing); and discharges (discharge with probes and/or contact stun).

The Armed Offenders Squad (AOS) and Special Tactics Group (STG) are exempted from reporting shows (but not discharges) of TASER and firearms. Fatalities associated with the use of force are also not reported in a TOR form, but are subject to internal and external investigations. Accordingly, some use of force data is not included in this report.

TASER Tactical Options Reporting (TOR) data limitations

TASER TOR data presents a quantitative overview of TASER deployment; it does not provide a nuanced understanding of factors that influence TASER deployment, and thus, TOR data. Further, where the numbers in these reports are small, slight increases or decreases in these numbers may result in large percentage differences. Accordingly, caution should be exercised when interpreting TOR data, including when comparing TOR data across districts and areas.

Disclaimer

TOR data in this publication is provisional, and is the most accurate available at time of extraction. Data entry errors were corrected where possible; however, given the large number of data categories in the TOR database, some data entry errors may remain. As such, data from the TOR database - like all large administrative databases - cannot be regarded as absolutely accurate. While some data inaccuracies may remain, however, New Zealand Police is confident that the data is more than sufficiently accurate to monitor and describe reported TASER deployment by police. Police makes no warranty, expressed or implied, nor assumes any legal liability or responsibility, for the accuracy, correctness, completeness, or use of, the data or information in this publication. Further, Police shall not be liable for any loss or damage arising directly or indirectly from reliance on the data or information presented in this publication.

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