



Police Department Manual

General Order: 371.0

Effective Date: October 4, 2001

Subject: M26 Advanced Taser

I. Purpose

This policy sets the guidelines for the Waite Park Police Department's policy regarding deployment of the M26 Advanced Taser, referred to from here on in as M26.

II. Discussion

The M26 is deployed as an additional police tool and is not intended to replace firearms or self-defense techniques. The M26 may be used to control dangerous or violent subjects when deadly physical force does not appear to be justified and/or necessary; or attempts to subdue the subject by other conventional tactics have been or will likely be, ineffective in the situation; or there is reasonable expectation that it will be unsafe for officers to approach within contact range of the subject.

Each M26 has a data port that stores the date and time of each firing of the weapon. The data protects the officer from claims of excessive force by providing complete and accurate documentation of each firing. The M26 falls into the category of less lethal force technology and equipment defined as:

Those items, when used properly, are less likely to result in death or serious physical injury than force commonly referred to as "deadly".

Less lethal force is defined as force used to subdue or render a subject non-threatening, with a lower probability of effecting fatal consequences.

A. The M26 fires two probes up to a distance of 21 feet from a replaceable cartridge. These probes are connected to the weapon by high voltage insulated wire. When probes make contact with the target, the M26 transmits powerful electrical pulses along the wires and into the target through up to two inches of clothing. The pulses send 26-watt electric signals to temporarily override the central nervous system and directly control the skeletal muscles. This causes an uncontrollable contraction of the muscle tissue, allowing the M26 to cause temporary physical debilitation to a person, regardless of pain tolerance or mental focus.

III. Procedure

A. The M26 shall be issued to and used only by officers who have completed the Waite Park Police Department's user or instructor taser training program.

B. Only properly functioning and charged M26's shall be carried on duty.

C. Each discharge, including accidental discharges, of a M26 shall be investigated and documented. A Response to Resistance Report shall be completed after each use of the M26. Discharges of the M26 during an approved training session, and at the beginning and end of shift testing, will not require routine completion of these forms or further investigation unless an injury occurs during the training session.

D. The M26 is programmed to deliver a 5-second "electrical current." The officer using the weapon can shorten the automatic 5-second cycle by turning the weapon off. It is recommended that during field deployment and use of the weapon, the full 5-second cycle be delivered to gain maximum effectiveness and compliance of the subject tasered.

E. NEVER aim the M26 at the eyes or the face. It is laser sighted. The top probe will follow the front and rear sights and the laser sight. The bottom probe will travel at an 8-degree downward angle below the aim point/laser sighted area. The bottom probe will drop approximately 1 foot for every 7 feet it travels from weapon to target.

F. Keep hands away from the front of the weapon at all times unless the safety is forward and the M26 is deactivated.

G. DO NOT fire the M26 near flammable liquids or fumes. The M26 can ignite gasoline and other flammables. Some self-defense sprays are flammable and should not be used in conjunction with the M26. Do not deploy the M26 in highly flammable crystal meth labs.

H. Replace the cartridges by the expiration date. All expired cartridges will be turned into the Taser Coordinator for use during training exercises or for disposal. All batteries will be recharged every two weeks.

IV. Chief/Deputy Chief of Police or Designate Responsibilities

A. Review each use of an M26 by officers.

B. Ensure training on less lethal devices is provided as needed.

i. A certified M26 instructor will conduct training--Basic user certification for the M26.

ii. All training should be coordinated through the M26 Advanced Taser instructor.

V. Sergeants/Senior Officer Responsibilities

- A. Respond to scenes where the M26 has been or is expected to be deployed.
- B. Evaluate scene and ensure appropriate investigative units respond when necessary.
- C. Ensure that officers who discharge the M26 complete a Response to Resistance Report.
- D. Ensure the reports are forwarded through the chain of command to the Chief/Deputy Chief of Police. A copy of the Response to Resistance Report shall be forwarded to Chief/Deputy Chief of Police.
- E. Investigate each incident where the M26 is used on a subject (with actual firing of probes or touch stunning). Review the officer's incident report, and Response to Resistance Report.
- F. Ensure that EMS personnel examine the subject that the M26 was deployed on.
- G. Ensure photographs are taken of the probe penetration sites and any secondary injuries caused by falling to the ground, etc.
- H. Each supervisor with officers assigned a M26 shall be supplied with gloves, alcohol swabs, adhesive bandages, biohazard containers and evidence tape. These supplies shall be provided to the officer on the scene responsible for securing the M26 evidence and removing probes from the subject.
- I. Ensure that incidents involving any discharge of the M26 is investigated and appropriately documented.
- J. Ensure only trained officers are issued and using the M26.
- K. Ensure that the M26's are signed out and properly tested at the beginning and end of each shift and that all M26's are accounted for and secured at the end of the shift.

VI. Field Officers Responsibilities (Not issued a M26)

- A. Upon encountering a situation, which may require the use of the M26, request a supervisor and an officer equipped with an M26.

B. When practical, do not escalate the situation before arrival of a supervisor and M26 officer.

VII. M26 Equipped Officers

A. Carry the M26 on duty unless specifically exempted by higher authority.

B. The M26 shall be carried in the issued fanny pack. Each fanny pack will contain an M26 Advanced Taser and three 21' cartridges. One will be loaded in the weapon and one will be in each side pocket. The zippered front pocket will contain: one pair of gloves, alcohol wipes, adhesive Bandages and evidence tape. Each vehicle will be equipped with a biohazard container that also includes gloves, alcohol wipes, adhesive bandages and evidence tape. This container will be stored in the vehicle medical bag.

C. When not in use the M26 shall be secured properly in a carrying case and treated as a weapon. Each M26 will be properly concealed when not being carried. M26's are not to be subjected to prolonged heat or cold. If the M26 must be stored in the office it must be secured in the gun locker.

D. Ensure the batteries of the M26 are properly charged. Nickel Cadmium are the only authorized batteries. In the event they are needed the Duracell Alkaline AA batteries may be substituted. When checking the batteries, the air cartridge must be removed. A blinking LED light indicates the M26 is on. The M26 must be tested at the beginning and end of each shift without a cartridge.

E. Upon discharging an M26 the officer shall request a supervisor to the scene if one is not present. Although preferable to wait for a supervisor's arrival prior to the use of the M26, deployment and use is at the discretion of the trained officer.

F. Before discharging the M26, the officer should notify other officers on the scene and responding officers so they are aware that its use is imminent. This should be done by using the code word, "Taser."

G. The air cartridge and probes shall be retained as evidence. The officer should wear protective latex gloves when handling the cartridges due to the potential biohazard. The wires shall be wound around the cartridge and the probes inverted into the portals they deployed from. This will prevent the sharp ends from penetrating the evidence envelope. Tape should be placed over the portals to secure the probes in the cartridge. The evidence shall be placed in a biohazard container and sealed with evidence tape.

VIII. Treatment of Persons Subjected to the M26

A. After securing the subject in handcuffs and other appropriate restraints, the M26 officer shall remove the probes using prescribed methods. However, if the

probes imbed in soft tissue areas such as the neck, face and groin, the officer shall require the subject to be treated at a hospital and the probes removed only by medical personnel. Removal from other areas will be at the discretion of the on-scene supervisor.

i. Removal of Probes: (The cartridge shall be removed from the M26 prior to removal of probes.)

1. Officer shall don medical latex gloves

2. The officer shall place one finger on either side of the probe and stretch the skin taut.

3. Using a brisk pull, the officer shall pull the probe out of the subject.

4. The puncture site shall be wiped with a sterile alcohol swab and an adhesive bandage applied to the site.

5. Alcohol swabs, gloves and bandage packaging shall be disposed of in a biohazard bag or receptacle. If appropriate, the biohazard receptacle on the ambulance can be used. If not the debris shall be packaged in a biohazard waste bag, taken to the Hospital Emergency Room for disposal.

B. Once in custody, the arresting officer shall advise the paramedic or emergency room staff that the person has been subjected to the M26 and relate the time of the incident. If the probes penetrate the skin, the puncture sites shall be brought to the attention of the emergency room staff, paramedic and officer's supervisor. Only emergency room staff may remove probes that embed in soft tissue areas such as the neck, face, groin or eyes.

C. After examining the affected person, the paramedics will make the determination if the person should be transported to the hospital for additional treatment.

D. If treatment, including removal of probes, is administered at a medical facility, officers should follow department procedures for evidence retention at a medical facility.

E. In no cases shall the suspect be placed in jail or other detention facilities until paramedics or emergency room personnel have cleared them.

F. Officers must be aware that one easily overlooked aspect of injury in shooting a subject with the M26 is that of falling from a standing position. Paramedics

should perform a thorough physical examination with particular emphasis on secondary injuries.

IX. Tactical Deployment

- A. Use verbal commands and point laser sight at subject prior to firing.
- B. Have additional cartridges available or a second M26 ready to fire in case probes miss the target or there is a malfunction.
- C. Have back up present to prepare to arrest or use other force options as appropriate and necessitated by the situation.
- D. Aim at center mass and from the rear if possible.
- E. Use cover and distance to ensure officer safety.
- F. If the suspect runs, the officer must run also to prevent wires from breaking.
- G. Avoid use on slanted roofs or on the edge of buildings to eliminate the possibility of the subject falling.
- H. Avoid use on subjects in swimming pools or deep bodies of water due to the chance of drowning.

X. Response to Resistance Issues

- A. The use of the M26 constitutes a "response to resistance."
- B. The M26 is placed on the force continuum verbalization and firm grip-pain compliance techniques.
- C. The M26 may be used from up to 21 feet away when:
 - i. The suspect is punching or kicking, or
 - ii. Threatening to punch or kick, or
 - iii. Lesser response options are ineffective, or
 - iv. Likely to be ineffective, or
 - v. The officer reasonably believes the suspect is a credible threat, or
 - vii. The suspect is a threat from a distance and the officer is at risk of injury if he/she attempts to close the gap.
 - vi. Other deployment considerations include:
 - 1. Imminent threat to officers or others.
 - 2. Suspect actively resisting arrest.
 - 3. Circumstances are tense, uncertain and rapidly evolving.

4. Severity of the crime.
5. Attempting to evade by fight or flight.

viii. Officer/Subject factors that may be considered:

1. Age
2. Sex
3. Pregnancy (avoid use if possible on late term women as the M26 could cause complications from a secondary injury or fall.)
4. Skill level
5. Multiple subjects/officers
6. Relative Strength

ix. Special Circumstances

1. Closeness of weapon
2. Injury or exhaustion of officer
3. Officer on ground
4. Distance between officer and subject
5. Special knowledge
6. Availability of other options

XI. M26 Advanced Taser Instructor

- A. The M26 Instructor shall receive, inspect and ensure the maintenance and replacement of the M26 devices assigned to department personnel.
- B. Establish and maintain systems to record issuance of the M26 and air cartridges. Serial numbers should be recorded.
- C. Maintain an adequate supply of batteries, and air cartridges for replacement.
- D. Return defective or damaged M26 tasers and cartridges to supplier.
- E. Obtain service and or replacement for defective or damaged M26 components from the supplier.
- F. Receive and maintain used cartridges packaged as evidence in conjunction with the evidence room technician.
- G. Provide annual retraining to certified users.
- H. Coordinate training for certification as requested by the Chief/Deputy Chief.

I. Review copies of the Response to Resistance Report for completeness. Retain one copy in the deploying officers training file, one copy in the M26 use file and send one copy to Air Tam International for inclusion in the national use data base.

J. Maintain training updates from Air Tam international.

I have read the preceding policy on the use and deployment of the M26 Advanced Taser and fully understand it. Any questions that I may have had have been explained to my satisfaction.

Officer's Signature: _____

Date: _____

The above officer has reviewed this policy in my presence and has indicated to me that he/she fully understands it and that any questions they may have had have been explained either by the M26 Advanced Taser instructor or me.

Supervisor's Signature: _____

Date: _____

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