Purpose
To provide the Indiana University Police Department (IUPD) with guidance concerning the use of electronic control weapons (ECWs), also referred to as conducted energy weapons (CEW).

General Order
The IUPD will issue ECWs to sworn officers who are trained in the proper handling, care, and use of ECWs. Officers may deploy ECWs in situations where the use of an ECW is necessary and reasonable to reduce the likelihood of injury to any person. All deployments of ECWs for purposes other than training will be reported to a supervisor and administratively reviewed.

Definition
Electronic Control Weapon (ECW) – A device that uses electricity to impair voluntary motor responses or to cause discomfort to gain compliance; overcome resistance; or capture, control, and facilitate constraint. These devices are also called Conducted Energy Weapons (CEW).

Qualified and Authorized ECW Users (7.1.7 a)
All sworn officers will be issued or assigned an IUPD approved ECW upon completion of required training and demonstration of proficiency with the ECW.

Required Training for Qualified and Authorized Users (7.1.7 b)
Officers will receive comprehensive initial training from a certified ECW instructor prior to being issued an ECW. This training will cover topics including, but not limited to:

- A review of the following IUPD General Orders:
  - G7.1.1 – Reasonable Force
  - G7.1.7 – Electronic Control Weapons
  - G7.1.9 – Medical Aid after Use of Force
  - G7.1.10 – Reporting Use of Force Incidents
- Familiarity with the issued make and model of ECW.
- Procedures for:
  - Proper handling, care, and storage of the ECW.
  - Pre-duty assignment check of the ECW.
  - When and how to deploy the ECW.
  - Providing aid after ECW deployment.
  - Reporting ECW deployment.

Officers will demonstrate proficiency and complete refresher training as outlined in G7.2.4 Weapons Proficiency.
Situations Where ECWs Can and Cannot be Used (7.1.7 c)

An ECW is an impact weapon which, when used in a manner consistent with IUPD provided training, is not considered a use of deadly force or force likely to cause great bodily harm.

Officers are not expected to place themselves at unreasonable risk to deploy an ECW or deploy an ECW when confronted with a person with a firearm, or an extended distance deadly force threat, unless circumstances permit such use.

Officers may use an ECW when a person:

- Is actively and aggressively resisting an officer.
- Poses an immediate threat of harm to themselves, an officer, or another person through behaviors such as:
  - aggressive posture or behavior,
  - threats of physical violence,
  - displaying or brandishing a weapon

Officers may use an ECW against aggressive animals. Officers may use an ECW in other situations if they are able to specifically articulate that the use of the ECW was necessary and reasonable, and reduced the likelihood of injury to any person, to include the officer.

Officers will not use ECWs:

- To escort or prod people.
- To awaken unconscious or intoxicated people.
- Against a person offering passive resistance.
- Against a person who is fleeing who does not pose an immediate threat of harm to others or self.
- When there is a danger of fire or explosion as a result of an electrical charge.
- On persons whose skin/clothes appear contaminated with combustible substances.
- While the officer is operating a vehicle or bicycle in motion as the odds of a successful deployment are low.

Using an ECW on high risk populations could increase the risk of death or serious injury. As with any force option, the ECW use has not been scientifically tested on these populations. Officers may use an ECW on such persons only if the situation justifies an increased risk.

When practicable, officers will avoid using a ECW on a person in the following circumstances unless the situation justifies an increased risk:

- Is on an elevated or unstable surface (e.g., tree, roof, ladder, ledge, balcony, porch, bridge or stair);
- Could fall and suffer serious injury to the head or other area;
Electronic Control Weapons (7.1.7) Effective Date: 9/18/2018 Revised Date: 6/21/2022

Risks Associated with ECWs (7.1.7 d)

Successful deployment of an ECW results in the temporary neuromuscular inhibition, or incapacitation, of a person and that incapacitation, in combination with other factors presents the following risks.

Environmental Risks

Drowning – Persons who are in water and become incapacitated could drown.

Falls – Persons who are incapacitated while in an elevated position can fall, resulting in injury or death.

Loss of control of a vehicle – Persons who are operating a moving vehicle and become incapacitated are no longer in control of the vehicle and this could result in injury or death to the person or others in the area.

Fire or Explosion – ECWs conduct an electrical charge and can result in a fire or explosion when flammable gases, fumes, vapors, liquids, or materials are present.

Medical Risks

Elevated Risk Populations – Officers should be aware that the potential for injury is increased when ECWs are deployed against persons who reasonably appear or are known to be elderly, medically infirm, pregnant, users of internal cardiac devices, or who have low body mass, such as small children, persons in medical/mental crisis, and persons under the influence of drugs (prescription and illegal) or alcohol.

Increased Risks Associated with Prolonged or Repeated Exposure – Some studies have suggested an increased risk of serious bodily injury or death when a person is exposed to multiple activation cycles from an ECW. Multiple other factors may contribute to this increased risk.

Deployment of multiple ECWs upon the same person, at the same time, should be avoided whenever possible. While multiple activations of an ECW may be necessary to subdue an actively resisting subject, multiple activations with continuous cycling should be avoided whenever possible. Officers will constantly monitor the effectiveness of the ECW and select a
different option to gain control of a subject if compliance isn’t obtained after the time period of exposure specified in training.

Officers should be aware of the increased risks associated with multiple or prolonged exposures, should actively and continually monitor the person for changes in medical condition, and should be prepared to provide immediate medical care to any person whose condition deteriorates after the use of an ECW. Officers will summon Emergency Medical Services to the scene of any incident where an ECW was used against a person as directed in G7.1.9 Medical Aid after Use of Force.

**Serious Bodily Injury** – ECWs discharge or contact the body using metal probes. Probes striking the face, head, neck or groin could result in serious bodily injury. Officers will not intentionally deploy probes or a drive stun targeting the face, head, neck, chest, or groin.

**Reporting and Accountability (7.1.7 e)**

In accordance with G7.1.10 Reporting Use of Force Incidents, any officer who intentionally deploys an ECW in any manner (including drawing and turning on to gain voluntary compliance, probe deployment, drive stun or warning arc) will complete all required documentation of the deployment and its level of effectiveness in a case report or supplement as appropriate and will fill out the IUPD’s Critical Decision Making (CDM) form. This is not required if the deployment was during training and at the direction of an instructor. These incidents will be reviewed in accordance with G7.1.11 Administrative Review of Use of Force Incidents.

In addition to the reporting and review requirements that are standard for all use of force incidents, the following steps will be completed for all use of force involving the intentional discharge of an ECW:

- The officer will immediately notify the shift supervisor.
- When feasible, a shift supervisor will respond to the scene.

The responding supervisor or officer will ensure the following:

- Document interviews of the involved officer(s), person(s) and witness(es).
- Photograph subject and officer injuries.
- Photograph cartridges and probes.
- Collect the ECW cartridges and probes used.

Photographs, the ECW, cartridges, and probes will be handled and processed as evidence. Data will be downloaded by an ECW instructor and the results processed and handled as evidence.
The responding supervisor will immediately notify their chain of command of an ECW deployment where:

- A person experiences serious bodily injury or death.
- A person experiences prolonged ECW activation.
- The ECW appears to have been used in a punitive or abusive manner.
- A person in an elevated risk population has been subjected to an ECW activation.
- There appears to be a substantial deviation from training.

Officers who unintentionally discharge an ECW, either through probe deployment or drive stun will complete a case report in IUPD’s Records Management System as well as a CDM Accidental Discharge form.

**Related Information**

**Indiana University Police Department**

- G7.1.1 – Reasonable Force
- G7.1.9 – Medical Aid after Use of Force
- G7.1.10 – Reporting Use of Force Incidents
- G7.2.4 – Weapons Proficiency

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