

**Law Enforcement Advisory Board:
Subcommittee on the Use of Conducted Electrical Weapons**

Summary of Subcommittee Actions as of December 23, 2013

The following is a summary of the actions taken by the Law Enforcement Advisory Board (“LEAB”) Subcommittee on the Use of Conducted Electrical Weapons (“Subcommittee”) as of December 23, 2013.

On March 11, 2013, the Vermont Attorney General’s Office (“AGO”) convened a public forum to evaluate Vermont law enforcement’s use of Conducted Electrical Weapons commonly referred to as Tasers (“CEWs”). The forum included a panel consisting of Senator Alice Nitka, Representative Bill Lippert, Vermont ACLU Executive Director Allen Gilbert, Ed Paquin from Disability Rights Vermont, and Attorney General Bill Sorrell. The forum also consisted of presentations by law enforcement and organizations such as Disability Rights Vermont. Finally, members of the public were invited to provide oral comments at the forum and written comments after the forum.

As a result of the forum and the public comments, the AGO made two requests. In the first request, the AGO asked Vermont’s Criminal Justice Training Council to conduct a comprehensive and formal review of the training provided to Vermont law enforcement officers regarding CEWs and regarding interactions with persons in crises or with cognitive disabilities or impairments. The LEAB understands that this review is currently ongoing. In the second request, the AGO asked the LEAB to review existing policies regarding the use of CEWs and to develop a statewide model policy on the use of CEWs.

In response to the AGO’s request, the LEAB formed a subcommittee to review existing CEW policies and draft a statewide model policy on the use of CEWs. This subcommittee consisted of Cindy Maguire from the AGO, Rick Gauthier from the Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council, Walter Goodell from the Vermont Department of Public Safety, Tom Hanley from the Middlebury Police Department, and Windham County Sheriff Keith Clark.

This subcommittee in turn assigned a number of individuals from their respective organizations to conduct this work. The AGO then submitted a request to each law enforcement agency known to employ CEWs for a copy of their CEW policies. The AGO received 26 policies. The AGO then used the most comprehensive of these policies to draft a model statewide CEW policy. Over a series of four telephone conferences between August and October of 2013, the AGO and other members of the working group assigned to draft the model policy discussed the AGO’s draft.

On November 13, 2013, the Subcommittee then sent a formal request to the Vermont ACLU, Disability Rights Vermont, Senator Nitka, Representative Lippert, and the Vermont League of Cities and Towns to provide additional input on the draft policy. The subcommittee received input from the ACLU, Disability Rights Vermont, and the League of Cities and Towns. The subcommittee also received additional comments from several members of the public.

On December 13, 2013, the subcommittee held an open meeting for the purpose of highlighting some of the common themes contained in the comments to the draft policy and to accept additional comments.

After this meeting, the subcommittee sent the draft policy, all of the comments to the draft policy, and the minutes from the December 13, 2013 subcommittee meeting to the full LEAB for its consideration.