

NEWS

Taser accident lands policeman in hospital

YASMINE PHILLIPS THE SUNDAY TIMES MARCH 20, 2010 7:00PM

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A YOUNG police officer was taken to hospital last weekend after being accidentally Tasered by a senior officer.

The *Sunday Times* understands the senior officer failed to warn his colleague he was about to fire his Taser during the arrest of a man at Perth train station.

Perth Police Station officer-in-charge Insp Allan Adams confirmed an officer was injured. But he said the Taser use was "in line with policy".

It is understood the young officer sustained a broken finger, caused by one of the Taser barbs puncturing the bone and tendon damage to another finger. He has been off work this week.

Insp Adams said the incident occurred when police attended a "suspected aggravated assault crime scene" in which a woman was lying on the ground bleeding.

"At the time of deploying the Taser the struggle between other police and the person of interest was occurring," Insp Adams said. "One of the officers struggling with the POI moved his hand into the line of fire and as a result was struck by both probes in the hand, receiving an electrical shock."

"The Taser was immediately put in the safe position and no further electrical shock was delivered to the officer."

Insp Adams said the injured officer was taken to hospital where the barbs were removed under local anaesthetic.

"From our end, the Taser use was in line with policy and the officer being hit, while unfortunate, is one of those situations that can occur during these types of incidents," he said.

A spokeswoman for Royal Perth Hospital confirmed a police officer had been treated after being shot by a Taser early last Saturday. Debate over the use of Tasers has raged since a Warburton man burst into flames when he was shot with one last year.

Opposition police spokeswoman Margaret Quirk said Tasers were a worthwhile tool when they were used "with some level of discretion".

"I think the public is generally concerned if they're used merely as instruments for compliance," she said.

"That's the fine line and that depends on the judgment and experience of officers. Whether that exists in all cases is a moot point."

A spokeswoman for Police Minister Rob Johnson said he was unable to comment on the incident because it was an "operational issue".

"As police may be conducting an inquiry into the issue, it would be inappropriate for the minister to comment," she said.

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Life on Mars
POSTED AT 8:48 AM MARCH 24, 2010

Yes, Rat Fink, this pet peeve of mine also doesn't take into account the intrusion you suffer while being found to have nothing to hide. For all those who believe this fallacious argument, then let the state put cameras in all rooms of your homes - after all if you have done nothing wrong then you have nothing to hide - bah humbug.

Rat Fink of Karratha
POSTED AT 3:24 PM MARCH 22, 2010

My pet hate is that mantra that we always hear "If you do nothing wrong you have nothing to fear". Could one of those who keep saying this without even thinking about what it actually means please tell me what wrong the young police officer was doing? From my point of view he was trying to do his job without using gratuitous un-necessary force and didn't deserve to be tasered for it.

behind the dust bowl of nui dat
POSTED AT 1:48 PM MARCH 22, 2010

Milgram of Perth Posted at 1:38 PM Today But yours do eh Minnow?

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