San Francisco Police Commission

Taser Discussion June 21, 2017
Presented by Officer Matt Masters
Kansas City, Missouri

Kansas City
- Largest city in Missouri
- 37th largest city by population in the U.S.
- 23rd largest geographical city in the U.S.
- 10th most dangerous city in America

KCPD
- Largest police agency in the state
- Formed in 1874
- 1400 sworn officers, 1,904 total employees
- The Kansas City Board of Police Commissioners is responsible for the operation of the KCPD

State of Missouri
- 18th most populous state
- Over 6 million residents
- Borders 8 different states
Matthew Masters

- Kansas City, MO Police Officer 20+ years joining law enforcement in 1996
- Former Field Training Officer
- Tactical Enforcement Officer for 8 years
- Two officer involved shootings
- Former point man for KCPD’s Street Crimes Unit leading over 1000 High Risk Search Warrants
- Assignments in Patrol Division, Tactical Response (SWAT), Street Crimes (Narcotics, Vice, and Gang), Community Action Network Officer, and Human Resources (Employment Unit).
- Certified Instructor
- Taser Certified and part of the original Taser presentation to the KCPD Board of Police Commissioners (much like the your commission)
• Married for 25 years
• Three children ages 22, 20, and 10
• KCPD’s Tactical Response Teams began looking at additional “less lethal” options in 2002-2003. At the time, the city of Springfield, MO was the only agency in Missouri to have implemented Tasers.
• Making use of our tactical squad as “test subjects” I was exposed to numerous Taser deployments which were then utilized as part of a group presentation to our Board of Police Commissioners...much like your commission here today.
• KCPD implemented Tasers department wide in 2004
• Originally policy required all KCPD officers to be shot with the Taser. That policy lasted approximately two weeks before it was rescinded. We do not expose our members to a Taser shock.
The “Future” of Law Enforcement

Taser was billed as the future of law enforcement. My belief and trust in Tasers prior to 2014:

- Safe for suspects
- Safe for officers
- No risks other than possible injury from falls
- Absolutely no cardiac risks
- No residual affects like OC spray
- Reliable and easy to use
- Designed to utilize muscle memory much like a firearm. Just point and aim for available center mass.

If you have to put your hands on someone...why risk getting hurt? Just Taser them!

Corporation is about PROFIT not about PEOPLE

- 2012: $114.7 million
- 2013: $137.8 million
- 2014: $164.5 million
- 2015: $197.9 million
- 2016: $268.2 million

These people are not cops, they buy cops to do their marketing

OFFICERS COULDN’T WAIT TO USE THEM...SOME EVEN MAKING BETS ON WHO WOULD BE THE FIRST TO GET A “FIVE SECOND RIDE”. FUNNY TASER VIDEOS FILLED TRAINING SLIDES.

THE CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION AND BRAINWASHING WAS JUST BEGINNING AND IT STILL PERMEATES LAW ENFORCEMENT TO THIS DAY.
Respected Taser's power and capabilities. X26’s power was ramped up 4x’s previous model

Excruciating pain (in my opinion)
One of only a handful of KCPD officers to have been exposed to Taser.
Apprehensive about even using it.

- Preferred de-escalation tactics
- It really, really is painful
- Believe distance and cover is cop’s best friend

- Never put the safety of a suspect ahead of your own
- Follow basic Tactical Triage
- What’s the hurry? Slow down!
- Taser’s aren’t reliable and often times fail for many seen and unforeseen reasons. 30% Failure Rate at KCPD

Didn’t have a Taser before 2004 and have never used one since having them.
Bryce Masters

- Excellent student
- Athletic and in great physical shape
- Honor Roll Student
- In the 99% for Mathematics and considered gifted in various academic areas
Traffic stop
- 17 year old high school student
- Just started senior year
- Headed to friends house to play video games
- Stopped about 50 yards from his friend’s house at 3pm in the afternoon on a Sunday
Tased in the chest for 23 seconds

- Instructed to respect law enforcement
- Educated on his rights and how to interact with police officers
- Instructed to be polite
- Taught to believe police officers to be professional and highly trained
- Informed he could ask questions and he could expect an answer
- Taught that he would be treated with dignity, consideration and basic human respect

***Knew he had done nothing wrong***
TASER INDUCED CARDIAC ARREST

- Clinically Dead for over 8
- AED’s in police cars.
- No action taken because didn’t understand the risks or recognize the problem
- Officer stated he DID NOT aim at the chest but aimed at the abdomen
- Officer stated he did not mean to hurt anyone
- Officer thought he was faking injury
- Officer stated he held the trigger down because he thought the TASER was not working or having any affect
This could be anyone’s son, daughter, parent, family, or friend

Is your trust in a weapon that has killed arguably over 1,000 people based on what the company that makes them has told you?
• Taser’s shock caused ventricular fibrillation
• Suffered anoxic brain injury
• Without oxygen for at least 8-9 minutes
• Paramedics resuscitated, shocking heart twice
• Therapeutic hypothermia (Code ICE)
• Coma, decorate posturing, scored 3 on Glasgow
✓ Forever impacted by a TBI
✓ Dropped from the 99% to 23% in academic testing
✓ Continues to struggle with cognitive disabilities
✓ Emotionally unpredictable
✓ Long list of struggles in every day life
✓ No longer able to attend college
This is an unreliable and dangerous weapon

- There are officers who believe this weapon has saved their lives…but you need to do your homework
- It does work...not going to argue against that or probably change the mind of the officer that has had a successful deployment without adverse affects
- Taser has shifted liability to you and your agency and insolated their company with fine print warnings and self serving “studies”
- What happens when you severely injure or kill someone that you did not intend to.
- Police officers and administrators have been fooled into believing this weapon wasn’t capable of killing anyone.
- As the deaths pile up it becomes impossible for Taser (Axon) to hide or dismiss them and self preservation as a company becomes a highly motivating factor
- My son’s case is not an isolated incident. This happens with some regularity…
• We are lucky our son was saved but he has to live with a TBI the rest of his life
• Been through hell and our entire family was traumatized
• The officer who did this is serving 4 years in federal prison and his family was devastated
• Don’t let my story become your story

❑ The more lawsuits that are brought, the more the liability is shifted to us as police officers, police agencies, and the ultimately the citizens we serve.
❑ There have been Taser-associated deaths in this department, in my own department, and across the nation but no one is counting

TASER DEATHS ARE NOT TRACKED

Taser (Axon) tracks deployments, lives saved, voluntary exposures in training. There ticker states to date “184,303 lives have been saved from death or serious bodily injury”

...Yet no one tracks how many people have died
“TASER ASSOCIATED DEATHS”

- This corporation is selling a product and it’s not even as effective as it once was because they have had to adjust to the deaths.
- Officers not understanding the real problems with this weapon leads to ESCALATION because it often doesn't work, putting both the officer and the community at greater risk.
- This corporation has duped officers into believing that it can't harm individuals, as was the case with my son. Until this happened to my son I believed it wasn’t possible.

My passion since 2014 has been to find the truth.
Thirteen (13) Taser Associated Deaths since May 12, 2017

1. Man dies after being tasered by police during 'struggle' in East Perth (May 12, 2017)
3. Indianapolis man dies after being tased by Greenfield police (May 13, 2017)
5. Man shot with Taser electronic weapon by police in Cornwall dies (May 24, 2017)
7. Belfast man, 71, dies after being Tasered by police (May 27, 2017)
8. APD: Albuquerque Man dies after police use Taser while trying to arrest him (June 2, 2017)
10. Man who died after being tased by police was mentally ill, off his medication and lost in Omaha, his mother says (June 5, 2017)
11. Man from Hickory County dies after Taser encounter with sheriff deputies (June 9, 2017)
12. Mentally ill Hamyang man dies after police shoot him with stun gun (June 16, 2017)

ON AVERAGE ONE PERSON HAS DIED EVERY 3 DAYS IN JUST THE LAST MONTH