



Minutes

Use of Force Scrutiny Panel – Tuesday 5th February 2019

1. Welcome and introductions

The Chair opened the meeting, introductions were made around the room and apologies noted.

2. Minutes and actions from last meeting

It was agreed by the panel members that the minutes from the previous meeting held on Tuesday 4th December 2019 were accurate, no changes were made.

3. Volunteer Expenses

The volunteers are now able to claim their expenses.

4. Discussion re quarterly Use of Force Figures

The panel were satisfied with the format and content of the recorded use of Force figures. As discussed in the previous meeting, yearly figures were presented.

5. Input concerning the Use of Force and Mental Health

The Constabulary's use of force in mental health settings decreased by 50% from the previous quarter, which demonstrates officers understanding of individuals in crisis and how they respond to violence is changing in some instances.

We recognise that mental health is a contributory factor to individuals subject to the use of force and we will continue to support officers in managing conflict in these circumstances through awareness, training and feedback.

6. Input from Professional Standards Department - Quarterly Use of Force Data

A brief overview was given of how the use of force data is analysed. It was noted that there had not been a spike in the steady trend of officers being hurt over a 3 month period, it remained on average 1 per front line team. 90 % of complaints received around the use of force were not upheld. The regulations will be changing to (support and development) instead of (sanctioning & support). The panel were interested in the complaint procedure and requested an example.

ACTION

Professional Standards Department – To provide a dip sample use of force complaint for the panel members to examine.

7. Personal Safety Training

The Volunteer members stated that the personal safety training was extremely valuable and well presented, including a good explanation of the legal aspect of the use of force.

The panel were interested in attending the next round of Taser training. It was advised that scenario days and refresher courses would be ideal.

The next course would be running in April and the focus would be on vehicle skills, searching, and effectiveness of the use of a baton. The training would also cover decision making and confidence around the use of equipment, how and when it should be used, including handcuffs core skills.

ACTION

To send the panel some future dates to attend Taser training.

7. Review of Use of Force dip sampling focusing on, Handcuffs, PAVA, Taser, Escalated force, Spit Guard

- **Handcuffs**

The panel members watched the body worn camera footage, read the accompanying statement and discussed the outcome. It was agreed that the use of force applied was appropriate and necessary.

Decision – Appropriate Action Taken

- **Spit Guard** The panel watched the body worn camera footage and read the accompanying statement. Discussions were held around the need for ‘Spit Guards’ it was deemed by the panel members that they were necessary to protect the officers. Statistics revealed that over the last quarter 30 spit guards were used and on 29 occasions proved to be effective.

Decision – Appropriate Use of Force

- **PAVA**

The panel members watched the body worn camera footage, questions were raised over the use of PAVA however when they read the accompanying well written statement it became clear why the PAVA was used.

Decision – Appropriate Action Taken

- **Taser**

The panel members watched the body worn camera footage, no accompanying statement was available. An email was sent by the officer to explain why a statement had not been submitted on this occasion.

Decision – Appropriate Action Taken

- **Escalated Force**

The Panel watched the body worn camera footage and read the accompanying statement, it was agreed that there had been good decision making and appropriate measures were taken to protect the victim and officers.

Decision – Appropriate Action Taken

7. AOB

Date of next meeting: to be confirmed
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