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Official Statistics

Police use of TASER ® X26 conducted energy devices statistics, England and Wales, 1 January to 31 December 2016

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1. Introduction

This release contains statistics on police use of TASER ® X26 conducted energy devices (referred to as TASER ® X26 hereafter), from the 43 Home Office police forces in England and Wales for 2016. TASER ® X26 use is recorded against seven categories: 'Drawn', 'Aimed', 'Arced', 'Red-dot', 'Drive stun', 'Angled drive stun' and 'Fired'. Definitions on each of the TASER ® X26 use types are set out in the user guide (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/police-use-of-taser-statistics-user-guide>).

Drawn, aimed, arced and red-dot are known as non-discharges as the TASER ® X26 does not make contact with the subject. Drive stun, angled drive stun and fired are known as discharges. While non-discharges have no physical impact, discharging the device will have a physical impact and can result in incapacitation.

Presented in this release is the number of TASER ® X26 'uses' as opposed to the number of TASER ® X26 'incidents'. This is to ensure full transparency on TASER ® X26 deployment as more than one TASER ® X26 may be used at an incident. Every time a TASER ® X26 is used, for the purposes of this report, only its highest use is recorded. For example, if a TASER ® X26 is drawn, aimed, arced, red-dot and then fired, only fired will be recorded.

The user guide (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/police-use-of-taser-statistics-user-guide>) provides additional information on the statistics in this release. It also includes a glossary, and sections on data quality and revisions.

The statistics in this release can be found in the 'Police use of TASER ® X26 conducted energy devices statistics, England and Wales, 1 January to 31 December 2016 tables' (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-use-of-taser-x26-conducted-energy-devices-statistics-england-and-wales-1-january-to-31-december-2016-data-tables>).

2. Key facts

- In 2016 there were 11,294 uses of TASER ® X26 by police, representing a 9% (904) increase on the previous year; of these, five 'uses' were due to accidental discharges and are reported by the police as 'not stated' in the release

Discharge

- Of the known 11,289 TASER ® X26 uses, 17% (1,910) were discharges; a decrease of 1% (-10) from the previous year
- Of the 1,910 discharges, 92% (1,755) were fired; this represents an increase of 2% (26)
- Drive stun and angled drive stun accounted for 8% (155) of discharges; a decrease of 19% (-36) from the previous year
- The proportion of discharges decreased by one percentage point to 17% when compared with the previous year

Non-discharge

- Of the known 11,289 TASER ® X26 uses, 83% (9,379) were non-discharges; an increase of 11% (912) on the previous year
- Red-dot was the most common use and accounted for 51% (5,744) of the total use in 2016, the same proportion as in the previous year

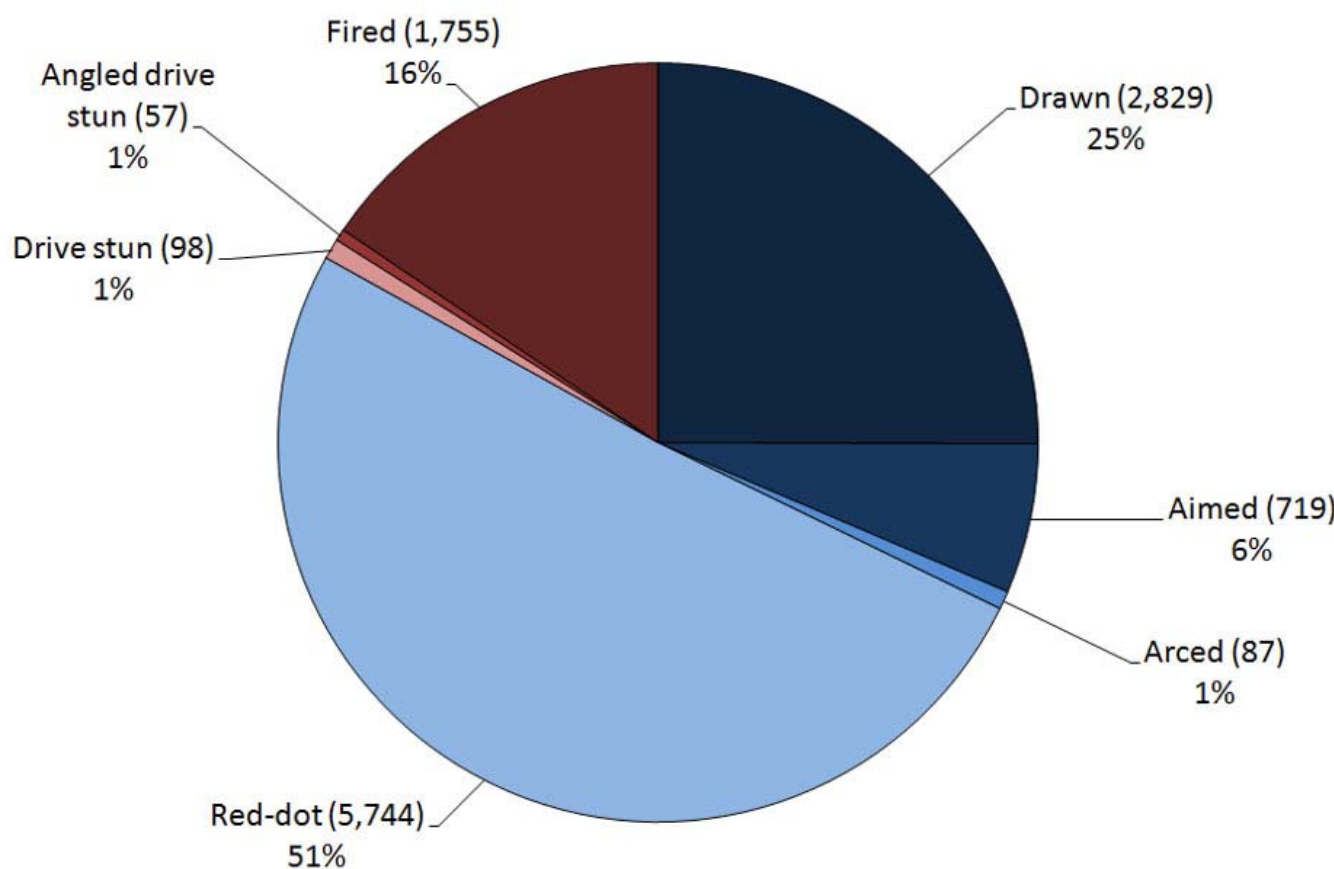
- The proportion of non-discharges increased by one percentage point to 83% when compared with the previous year

3. TASER ® X26 use by type in 2016

There were 11,294 uses of TASER ® X26 in 2016, including five uses which were 'not stated'. Red-dot was the most common use accounting for 51% (5,744) of all uses. The least common use was angled drive stun which accounted for 1% (57) of the total use.

The proportion of non-discharges accounted for 83% (9,379) whilst discharges accounted for 17% (1,910) of the total TASER ® X26 use in 2016.

Figure 1: Police use of TASER ® X26 by type, England and Wales, 2016

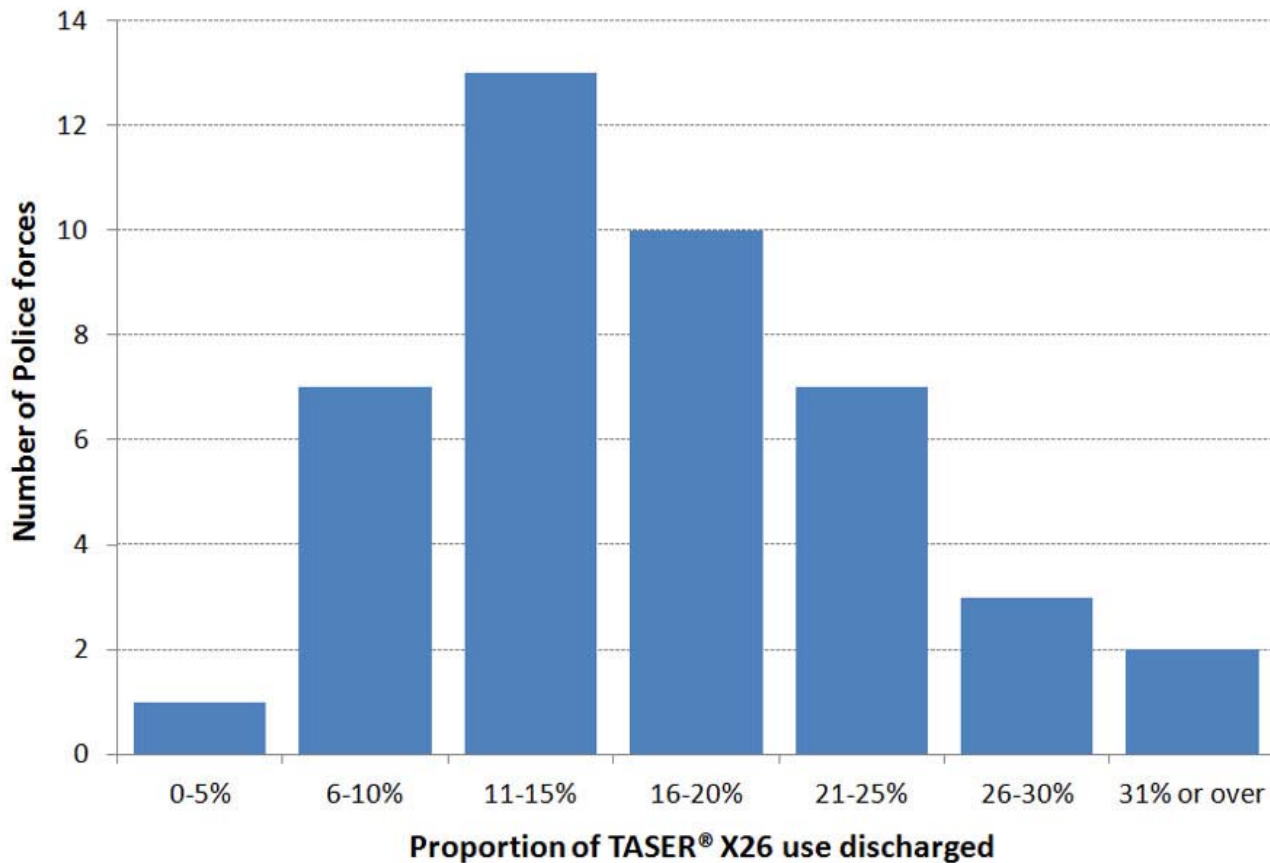


Source: Home Office. 'Police use of TASER ® X26 conducted energy devices statistics, England and Wales, 1 January to 31 December 2016 tables': Table 1 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-use-of-taser-x26-conducted-energy-devices-statistics-england-and-wales-1-january-to-31-december-2016-data-tables>).

Note:

1. Percentages have been rounded.
2. Excludes 'not stated'.

The proportion of discharges across all 43 police forces ranged from 3% to 40% of uses. Figure 2 shows the number of police forces and their proportion of discharges for 2016. Almost half of police forces (49%) discharged their TASER ® X26 up to 15% of the time. The average discharge use across all police forces in 2016 was 18%.

Figure 2: Number of police forces by the proportion of discharges, England and Wales, 2016

Source: Home Office. 'Police use of TASER® X26 conducted energy devices statistics, England and Wales, 1 January to 31 December 2016 tables': Table 2 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-use-of-taser-x26-conducted-energy-devices-statistics-england-and-wales-1-january-to-31-december-2016-data-tables>).

Note

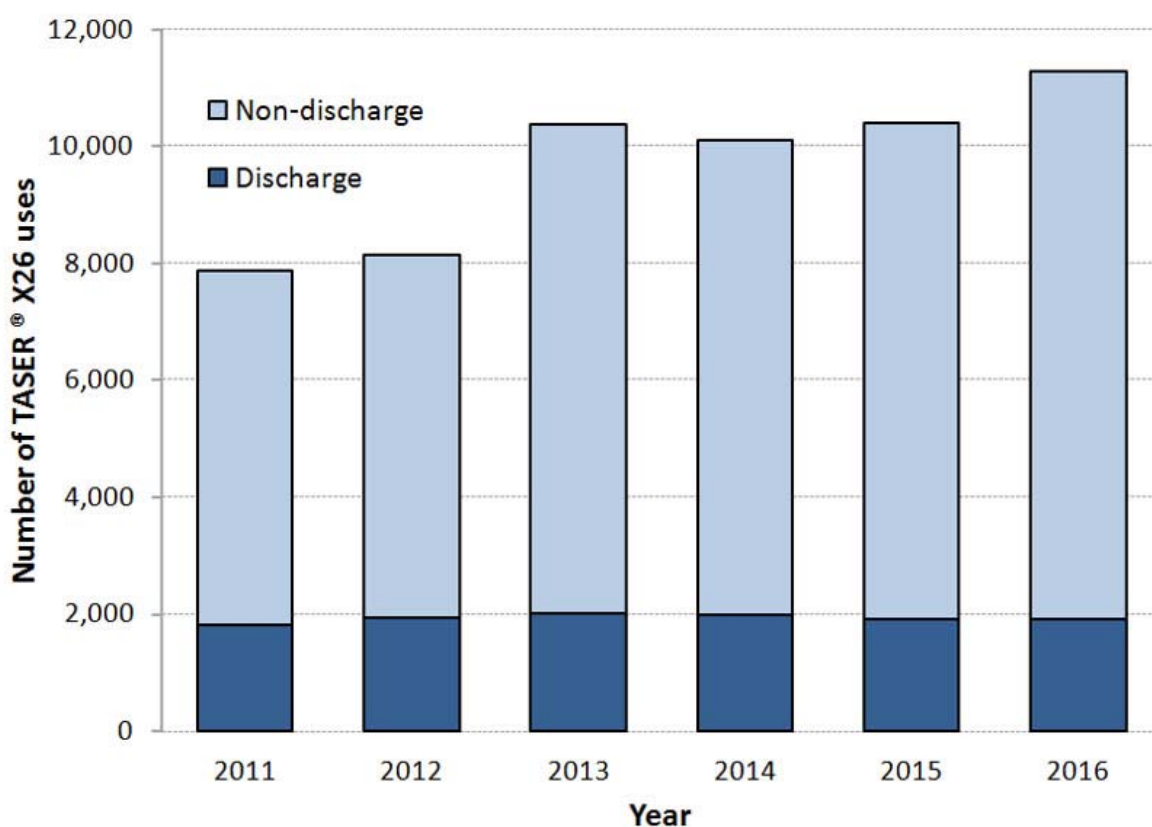
1. Percentages have been rounded.

4. Trends in TASER® X26 use, 2011 to 2016

In 2016 there were 11,294 uses of TASER® X26 by police, a 9% (904) increase on the previous year. This increase is due to an 11% (912) rise in non-discharges when compared with the previous year. The number of discharges decreased by 1% (-10) when compared with the previous year.

Figure 3 shows a rise in overall TASER® X26 use from 2011 to 2016, with the exception of 2014. The rise is largely due to an increase in the number of non-discharges, while the number of discharges has remained stable (between 17% and 24% of total TASER® X26 use). The increase in TASER® X26 use coincided with the roll out of TASER® X26 to Specially Trained Units (STUs) for all 43 Home Office police forces, which was completed in 2013. Police forces also reported an increase in the number of officers trained to use TASER® X26 conductive energy devices in 2016; such decisions were based on strategic threat and risk assessment within individual police force areas.

Figure 3: Police use of TASER® X26 by type, England and Wales, 2011 to 2016



Source: Home Office. 'Police use of TASER ® X26 conducted energy devices statistics, England and Wales, 1 January to 31 December 2016 tables': Table 1 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-use-of-taser-x26-conducted-energy-devices-statistics-england-and-wales-1-january-to-31-december-2016-data-tables>).

Notes:

1. Total figures exclude 'not stated'.
2. 2013 was the first year in which all 43 Home Office police forces in England and Wales completed the rollout of TASER ® X26 to Specially Trained Units, see appendix.

The 'Police use of TASER ® X26 conducted energy devices statistics, England and Wales' release is an Official Statistics output produced to the highest professional standards and free from political interference. It has been produced by statisticians working in the Home Office Science Directorate in accordance with the Home Office's 'Statement of compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics' (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statement-of-compliance-with-code-of-practice-for-official-statistics>) which covers our policy on revisions and other matters. The Chief Statistician, as Head of Profession, reports to the National Statistician with respect to all professional statistical matters and oversees all Home Office National Statistics products with respect to the Code (https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/images-codeofpracticeforofficialstatisticsjanuary2009_tcm97-25306.pdf), being responsible for their timing, content and methodology.