

**T. MEYER's 'REVIEW OF EVIDENCE'
for Stakeholder's Meeting of May 5, 2017**

I. Tasers are LETHAL weapons

E.g. 2016 Baltimore Sun Analysis (See: BASF Rpt., June 29, 2016, p.9)

“Over 400 have died nationwide since 2009 in which Tasers have been used and California tops the list at 60”

E.g. Zimring, “When Police Kill” (Harvard Univ. Press, 2017) pp. 49, Table 3.1 [quoting the Guardian of Dec. 21, 2015]

“The full year 2015 produced a death toll of 50 persons in the U.S. from Taser Use by the police.”

E.g. Even Taser International admits the weapon “can cause serious injury or death.” See, BASF Report of June 29, 2016 (hereafter “BASF Rpt.”), p. 11, note 34.

II. Tasers often DON'T WORK

E.g. L.A. Times 2016 Review of Reports of LAPD for 2015. (BASF Rpt., p.6, note 12)

A Los Angeles Times review of reports of the LAPD found that “nearly a quarter of the people shot by on duty LAPD officers last year (2015) - at least 8 of 36 - were wounded or killed during encounters in which officers said they tries to use a Taser without success. “LAPD officers fired Tasers over 1,100 times last year,” according to a report published last month. The devices had the desired outcome - causing someone to submit to arrest - only 53% of the time - a fact that Captain John McMahon found “very disappointing.”

“One of the LAPD’s preferred weapons to help officers avoid shootings often doesn’t work,” April 1, 2016, Kate Mather, Reporter, available at:
<http://www.latimes.com/local/crime/la-me-lapd-tasers-20160401-story.html>.

III. Tasers are used DISPROPORTIONATELY against PEOPLE OF COLOR and PSYCHOLOGICALLY VULNERABLE POPULATIONS.

A. AFRICAN AMERICANS

Nationally, police officers use Tasers on African Americans more frequently than on White Civilians. Andrea J. Ritchie & Joey I Mogul, *In the Shadows of the War on terror: Peristent Police Brutality and Abuse of People of Color in the U.S.*, 1 De Paul J. Just. 175, 193-194 (2008)

San Francisco is no exception to this pattern. The Ritchie & Mogul article investigating the SFPD found that 40% of victims of excessive force were African-Americans who make up less than 8% of San Francisco’s population.

B. MENTALLY ILL Population

According to a 2011 report by the ACLU of Northern California, S.F.'s Emergency Dispatch Center receives more than 10,000 mental health calls for service per year, or 30 per day. See, BASF Rpt., *supra*, p.11. The S.F. Chronicle adds that "more than 60 percent of all fatal shootings by the S.F. P.D. since 2010 involved people with mental health problems or who were acting erratically at the time of the incident. See, ft.nt. 36 , p.12, of BASF Rpt. Indeed, at this point, the link between risk of Taser injury and death and high risk populations is virtually undisputed.

Experts such as **U.C.S.F. cardiologist Dr. Zian Tseng**, who has previously testified 3 times in front of the Police Commission, is again prepared to address the Commission about the risks that people in an excited mental health state have for sudden death by virtue of being tased.

Finally, the advantages that Crisis Intervention Teams ("CIT") have over Tasers as a method for dealing with persons experiencing mental illness is exemplified by cities like Seattle and Memphis which experienced dramatic reductions in Taser deaths after starting CIT training.

IV. The Use of Tasers is **INCOMPATIBLE with DE-ESCALATION PRINCIPLES** which lie at the heart of 21st Century Policing

The **Police Executive Research Forum ("PERF")** reflects the current research and best practice on use-of-force issues from the perspective of many of the nation's leading police chiefs.

PERF's Guiding Principle No. 17 emphasizes "De-escalation" strategies, which it states should be based, among others, on the following key principle:

"whenever possible, officers should be trained to **use distance and cover**" to "slow the situation down" and create more time for them to continue communicating and developing options" (Emphasis added.)

PERF's sole reference to Tasers appears in Principle 27:

"An ECW deployment that is not effective does not mean that officers should automatically move to firearms." Instead, it should prompt officers to re-assess the situation and take proportional actions.

Boalt Hall Criminology Prof. Franklin Zimring, argues that:

- it is **not the type of weapons (be it guns or Tasers) that matters;**
- it is what he calls the "Rules of engagement" under which they are used, namely the specific situations in which they **should not be used.**
(See, "When Police Kill," *supra*, pp., 227-232)

END