

“ PPP ”

People for Proper Policing in North Wales

POLICE in North Wales have drawn US style TASER stun guns more times than almost every other force. Officers issued the 50,000 volt-charge Tasers to tackle violent thugs **47 times and actually fired them on 12 separate** occasions between April 2003 and December 2006.

Only the Met and West Yorkshire police – both of which are much bigger forces – responded to more incidents using the controversial weapons, according to Home Office figures released yesterday.

Clive Wolfendale, Deputy Chief Constable, said: *"Tasers have proven to be very successful in controlling violent individuals. It is a much safer weapon than a baton or the spray because it has no after-effects.* In coming years this development will save many lives, including those of members of the public, suspects and police officers."

However, **critics have linked their use to dozens of deaths**, but Taser says they save lives by reducing the use of firearms. Late **last year a man in County Durham died three days after being shot with a Taser.**

North Wales is expected to have a higher number of incidents than most areas because it was one of the original regions that tested out the weapons. But its rate is still much higher than that of the other forces that took part in the original trial. Thames Valley has only recorded **10 incidents, firing them five times**, Lincolnshire reported **21 occasions, firing six times**, and there were **12 incidents in Northamptonshire, with five firings recorded.** Merseyside Police recorded **18 incidents but only one where the Taser was actually fired.** Gwent has had just four occasions where officers used them but they were fired only twice. South Wales police have only used and fired the weapons once. The guns, which look like fluorescent pistols, use compressed air-to-fire two darts that trail an electric cable back to the handset. When the darts strike, **a five-second charge** is released down the cable, **temporarily paralysing the target's muscles.**

A spokeswoman for the Home Office **said:** *"At the moment only firearms units are authorised to use them but we will be choosing pilot areas where specially trained officers will also be able to use them. It is up to chief officers to make the decisions about when they will be available during incidents. They can be used instead of or as well as firearms."*

The PPP comments ... Wolfendale and Co are forever claiming how safe North Wales is and how they have achieved massive reductions in crime. This hardly equates to the highest use of such weapons. **AND we can imagine who will be volunteering North Wales as a Pilot Area! The TASER company website is at www.taser.com** It is interesting to note that the work to study the effects of Tasers on pacemakers and hearts was carried out on Pigs and financed by TASER!