



Use of Force Reporting Practices: Findings from a survey of UK Police Forces.

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Executive Summary

As part of the review into Use of Force Reporting, the NPCC and Home Office requested a survey of use of force reporting practices in UK police forces in order to help identify current practice, and best practice recommendations. This report sets out findings and implications from this survey, and puts UK practices into context by reviewing international practices. The key findings are as follows:

- Of the 34 forces that responded, 27 (79%) indicated they have an in house data collection system in place for use of force, and many forces are adopting elements of good practice that could be built on nationally. However, as many of these systems have been developed independently, the extent and nature of the data collected, how it is captured and to what extent it is analysed and utilised, varies considerably. General trends are reported here but, as the percentages indicate, definitions used, variables captured and detail recorded differs greatly.
- That said, the majority of forces with an in-house data collection system report the use and drawing of irritant spray, use and drawing of baton, and use of canines, restraint belts or other fabric restraints, non-compliant handcuffing, and empty hand techniques, with some such techniques more commonly recorded than others. Even if we assume most non-respondent forces have no systems in place, which may or may not be correct, the results show a substantial proportion of UK forces are already capturing some data when force is used.
- The majority of forces with an in-house data collection system record information on officer perceived subject characteristics (including the age, gender, ethnicity and mental health status of the subject, their conduct, whether they were armed, and whether they had consumed drugs and alcohol, as perceived by the officer), and officer characteristics (including gender, rank, role and length of time since Personal Safety Training). Details about the incident (including the number of subjects and officers, incident type and location, including whether it took place in custody, and why force was necessary) are also recorded by the majority of these 27 forces. Certain forces internationally also capture subject, officer and incident data.
- However survey results point to a lack of detailed data capture on crucial issues, including:
 - The precise details of the force used (which techniques were used in what order, how many times and for how long).
 - Officer, subject and bystander injuries. More than 40% of forces with an in-house database indicated they were not capturing whether officers and subjects were incurring injuries as a result of force used, or whilst using force. Even fewer forces record important details including how many subjects were injured, the severity of officer and subject injuries, particular force technique that inflicted the injury, and if bystanders were injured.
 - When force is used in mental health settings, or to detain someone under the Mental Health Act, with only a minority recording such information on their use of force systems, although such data may be captured on separate forms elsewhere.
- Whilst some forces indicated that the data they gathered was analysed and fed back into policing practices, others felt there was a need for further improvement in this regard.
- There was a strong appreciation amongst the majority of respondents of the benefits of use of force reporting, with some respondents commenting specifically on the utility of a national approach - as long as this is quick and easy to complete, and analysed effectively. A study of reporting practices internationally also indicates that adopting a national approach to such reporting could also position the UK as a global leader on this issue.

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Introduction

As part of the ongoing review into Use of Force Reporting Practices in the UK, announced by the Home Secretary in October 2014, the NPCC and Home Office requested a survey be conducted of current use of force reporting practices in place in UK police forces, in order to capture current practice, identify different use of force reporting models in use and help to inform best practice recommendations, in conjunction with other work-streams. This report, funded by the ESRC / SWDTC ¹, sets out key findings and implications from this survey, and puts UK practices into international context by reviewing use of force reporting practices in use elsewhere. Specifically, it aims to understand the voluntary data collection efforts undertaken by UK forces, as one of a series of four use of force reporting measures currently in place. As such it helps inform, and constitutes an Appendix to, the NPCC and Home Office report presented to the Home Secretary in October 2015.

At present, use of force in UK policing is captured in at least four ways. First, when officers use force, they record details in their pocket notebook – a system that, by its very nature, is not intended to be easily searchable or to allow systematic analysis of the frequency or implications of the force used. Second, there is a national requirement for all officers to fill out standardised forms when Taser, firearms and AEP are used, with such forms centrally collated. Whilst these forms contain some important details, and lend themselves more readily to further analysis than the former, only a limited amount of information is collected, analysed and published, and there are serious concerns about the accuracy of the data that does exist. Moreover, these forms were not intended to cover all use of force incidents, but only the use of certain force techniques. Third, the Authorised Professional Practice for Detention and Custody states that ‘officers must make a record of any force used on any person who has been arrested (including those detained under the Mental Health Act 1983)... Forces are expected to record all instances of use of force electronically and in such a way that allows for ready retrieval and analysis of this information’ – but this system is not able to capture information about the use of force on individuals who are not arrested. Fourth, forces can, but are under no obligation to, adopt their own, additional in-house data collection system, requiring officers to fill out some kind of form when force is used. The extent of reporting required and analysis conducted varies from force to force ², and these different practices are not fully understood; hence this report.

A Note on Methods, and Survey Response

A survey on use of force reporting, comprising both close-ended and free-text questions, was drawn up on behalf of Chief Constable David Shaw, via consultation with the College of Policing, NPCC, Home Office, and the Programme Board. The survey was sent, via the NPCC, to Chief Constables of all 43 English and Welsh forces, the Police Services of Northern Ireland, Scotland, Guernsey, the Isle of Man, Jersey and the British Transport Police for them to redirect as they considered appropriate, and reminders were also sent. The survey was completed by a range of respondents, including individuals in Health and Safety, Human Resources, Business and Performance Departments, as well as Personal Safety Trainers and Chief Inspectors - with respondents’ occupation likely to impact their answers.

34 forces responded by the deadline ³ and, of these, 27 indicated they had additional, voluntary data

¹ The author’s time has been funded via an Economic and Social Research Council / South West Doctoral Training Centre doctoral placement scheme, with travel funded by the NPCC. The author is an ESRC Funded PhD Candidate at the Department of Sociology, Philosophy and Anthropology at the University of Exeter and the University of Bristol Law School. She is a serving member of the Metropolitan Police’s TASER and Firearms Reference Group, works part-time for the UK NGO the Omega Research Foundation and received travel costs from TASER International to attend the Annual Conference of the Institute for the Prevention of In Custody Deaths and to visit their Headquarters in Scottsdale, Arizona between 2nd to 8th November 2014. All views are the author’s own, and not those of the various organisations with which I am affiliated. Email to ad426@exeter.ac.uk.

² Payne-James, J., Rivers, E., Green, P. and Johnston, A. (2014). ‘Trends in Less-Lethal Use of Force Techniques by Police Services within England and Wales: 2007–2011.’ *Forensic Science, Medicine and Pathology* 10: 50–55.

³ Some forces responded after the deadline. Whilst their answers will be reviewed as part of the project, they are not included here.

collection measures in place (although one of these was concerned solely with use of canines). Non respondent forces include both those with data capture systems in place, as well as those with little, if any, additional reporting practices, but it is considered likely that the latter make up a larger proportion of non-respondents. Thus survey responses should not be considered representative.

The report focuses on forces that have indicated they have an in house database in place, and is structured as follows. Benefits to use of force reporting identified by respondent forces are discussed, and the report then looks at; *what* data is collected (including the type of force recorded, officer and subject characteristics, situational characteristics and injury data and assessments of under-reporting); *how* it is collected and analysed (including systems for data collection and feeding the information back into practice); and respondents' views on good practice from their experiences of use of force reporting systems. The report then looks, briefly, at data collection practices in place internationally. It concludes with some implications for use of force reporting gleaned from the survey, and drawing on the author's own ongoing ESRC funded doctoral level research analysing data from a UK police's own internal use of force reporting system. Unless otherwise stated, percentages and proportions are a fraction of all of those forces (N = 27) known to have an additional in-house data collection system in place.

Benefits of Use of Force Reporting

Forces were asked to detail these in their own words benefits to use of force reporting, if any at all. They identified a range of perceived benefits, which may or may not be fully realised in practice, including an ability to:

- Adapt and improve personal safety training, including by ensuring that such training is focused on the most effective techniques, and protects officers and public alike.
- Protect officers and subjects via a better understanding of injury rates and impact factors.
- Capture increases in assaults and aggressive behaviour towards officers.
- Provide the organisation, and public, with confidence that use of force is monitored, and that there is oversight of the gender, race and age profiles of those subject to force.
- Underscore the gravity of the decision to use force.
- Show that police forces are transparent, and provide data for FOI requests.
- Demonstrate that unjustifiable force is not used, showing officers' 'honesty and integrity'.
- Provide protection for officers when complaints are made, and assist with statement writing.
- Identify 'areas of dis-proportionality' in the use of force where these exist, and check officer compliance with policies and guidance, addressing reputational threats at an early stage.
- Inform management decisions on issues such as district staffing levels.

Responses often combined several of these elements. Thus, as one respondent noted:

'the existence of a reporting structure highlights the gravity attached to applying force and the need to approach matters at the lowest level necessary. By collating such information forces are also able to show that they monitor the behaviour of their officers. It would prove difficult to explain to the public that any use of force by an officer was considered and justifiable if we were unable to confirm how often force was used'.

As noted above, however, such answers often speak to the perceived benefits of use of force reporting which may, or may not, be fully realised. In order to look at what actually happens in practice it is necessary to look at what data is collected, and how it is analysed, the subject of the next two sections.

What Data is collected

What types of force are recorded

Amongst those forces that have in house data collection systems, there is a clear trend toward reporting the use of irritant spray, batons, canines, restraint belts, non-compliant handcuffing, and empty hand techniques, with some force options more commonly recorded than others. There is also a trend towards recording whenever use of force options—such as baton and irritant spray—are drawn, irrespective of whether they are subsequently used.

Of the 27 forces who responded to indicate that they had a use of force database already in place, all but one recorded when irritant spray was *used* and 89% recorded when it was *drawn*. All but two recorded when baton was *used*, and 85% recorded when baton was *drawn*. 74% recorded when dogs were present, with a similar percentage recording when they physically engaged an individual. 85% recorded if restraint belts, or fabric restraints, were used, 70% recorded non-compliant handcuffing and 15% recorded any time handcuffs were applied. 63 – 85% of forces recorded different types of empty hand techniques, though just over half recorded when an officer had pushed an individual. Even if we assume that non-respondent forces do not have arrangements for the systematic collection of such data in place—which may or may not be the case—that still leaves a substantial proportion of all UK forces who do collect use of force information. In over 80% of forces with data collection systems in place, filling out the form was mandatory for officers, PSCOs and Specials.

Over 80% of forces with a database indicated that they record whether each particular force technique used was deemed effective or not. However only 4 forces indicated that they record how many times force was used, only 5 record the order force is used in, and only 1 records the duration of the force used. This is important as such details can impact on whether, and to what extent, injuries are incurred by subjects and officers, as well as on whether force is perceived to be proportionate or excessive.

Officer and (officer perceived) subject characteristics

Most forces indicated they record some details on those subjected to force, and on those applying it, although some characteristics are more frequently recorded than others. The majority of forces with in house use of force collection systems in place indicated that they recorded the officer perceived age, gender, ethnicity and mental health status of subjects, and around a quarter recorded whether the subject was disabled. Over 80% of forces recorded whether the subject had consumed drugs or alcohol, if the subject was armed, and what with. Over 70% capture the conduct of the subject (e.g. spitting, violent resistance), and a third of forces recorded subject name. Nearly 90% of forces with a database required the officers using force to give either their name or their number, and all forces capture some additional information about the officers using force. Over half of forces require officers to detail their gender, rank, role and length of time since Personal Safety Training. Around a fifth of forces capture the age and ethnicity of officers, and just under half collect information on their length of service. 11% of forces record the length of time since Taser training.

Situational Characteristics

The majority of forces with an in house reporting system in place record some details about the situations in which force is used. Over 70% record the number of subjects and officers present, the type of incident, and the location of the incident, including whether it took place in custody, and why force was considered necessary. Around half of forces specifically recorded if the incident occurred in a health setting. Around a third recorded if the incident took place in a mental health setting, whether the subject was arrested or detained under the Mental Health Act.

Table 1: The frequency with which different variables are collected⁴.			
75% or more record	50 – 74% record	25 – 49% record	Less than a ¼ record
Irritant spray drawn	Canines physically make contact	Name of subject (if known)	Compliant handcuffing
Irritant spray used	Non-compliant handcuffing	Incident in mental health setting	How many times force was used
Baton used	Age, gender, ethnicity of subject	Severity of officer injury	The order force was used in.
Baton drawn	Mental health of subject	Severity of subject injury	The duration of force used
Use of restraint belt	Conduct of subject	Whether subject disabled	Length of time since Taser training
Whether force was effective	Officer gender	Ethnicity of officer	Whether subject hospitalised
Subject consumed drugs, alcohol	Officer rank and role	Officer's length of service	Force technique that caused injury
Whether subject was armed	Incident in a health setting	Reason for arrest	Long term impact on officers
Name or number of officer	Length of time since PST training	If arrested or detained under MHA	Long term impact on subjects
No of subjects present	Why force was necessary		Age of officer
Type and location of incident	No. of officers present		If bystanders were injured
If incident took place in custody	Injuries to officers		
Force for which reporting is required (firearms, Taser, AEP)	Injuries to subjects		
Empty hand techniques, with frequencies ranging from 56% for pushing, to 85% for pressure point techniques.			

⁴ Of forces with an additional in house data collection system in place, N = 27.

Injury Data.

Just over half of forces with a database indicated that they recorded if officers and subjects incurred injuries as a result of force used, or whilst using force. The most common way of assessing whether subject injury had occurred was via the opinion of the officer, but some forces also considered the opinion of the subject, the opinion of the custody sergeant, the opinion of the FME (or other medical examiner in custody), and Accident and Emergency examinations.

Around a quarter of forces record the severity of officer and subject injuries, around a tenth record whether the subject was hospitalised, and a third of forces record how many subjects were injured (which could potentially be a highly relevant detail in situations involving multiple individuals). Where subject injury did occur as a result of police force, less than a fifth of forces detailed the specific force technique that caused the injury, which could again be highly useful information, particularly in instances where multiple force techniques were used. Less than a quarter of forces record if bystanders were injured, and at least one of these only records this information for CS spray.

Less than half of forces indicated that they conducted longer term follow up with officers as to the longer term medical and psychological effects of use of force incidents—often via occupational health or trauma management processes—and five indicated that they conducted longer term follow up with subjects on the medical and psychological effects. Of these five, three did not provide further details, and the remaining two indicated that this practice was not routine, and was conducted as a result of complaints or civil claims. Only one force indicated that they record information gathered about the longer term effects on officers and subjects on their reporting system.

Data collection and analysis

How is the data captured?

A variety of data capture systems are currently in place. 16 forces used their own in house database, 3 forces used the Niche reporting system, and most other forces used Microsoft Office Programmes (Word or Excel). No respondent forces had developed a mobile App, and one force relied on the submission of paper forms. The majority of databases are organised by officer, not by incident, and are comprised mainly of drop-down menus. Most also had space for officers to record whenever they had used TASER, AEP or firearms (i.e. officers were required to record this on their internal database, as well as through the mandatory reporting system). The vast majority of forms take less than 15 minutes to complete, and none take longer than 30 minutes. The majority of respondents indicated that their system was fairly user-friendly for those tasked with filling out the form.

The majority of forces do not have in built systems in place to cross-reference the use of force reports with other data sets, although a few forces include the custody number and occurrence reports (crime report or incident report) on their database, and one force noted that use of force forms are cross-referenced with command and control details. Forces using the Niche system to record force note that it is automatically linked to an event, and to crime and custody records.

What is the extent of under-reporting?

Most forces believed that under-reporting was an issue to some degree, with around a fifth of forces indicating it happened fairly or very often, and over half of forces indicating it happened sometimes. Some responses indicated that under-reporting was most common for minor incidents, including routine incidents where handcuffs had been applied, and lower levels of force were felt to be less exhaustively reported than higher levels of force. It was also noted that free-text fields tended to be less thoroughly completed than drop-down menus. One force noted a tendency to over-report incidents which may not constitute force, such as grabbing cycle handlebars to prevent escape.

Forces also indicated that levels of reporting had been enhanced by a series of measures, including raising awareness amongst officers, discussing the reporting form during training, embedding email prompts within the database system and requiring supervisors to do spot-checks of officers.

How is the data verified and analysed?

The majority of forces have no system to check whether the form has been correctly completed, and the extent of data analysis conducted also varies. Whilst over 70% of forces have a person or department tasked with analysis, nearly half noted that such analysis happened once a year or less, or was purely reactive in nature.

Forces were also asked how often, if at all, data analysis was used for particular purposes. Responses indicated that data was used fairly regularly, or more frequently, to inform officer training in nearly 60% of forces, inform Professional Standards or minimise officer injuries in just under half of forces, minimise subject injuries in around a third of forces, assess individual performance in 15% and inform procurement and purchasing in 11% of forces. Some forces were concerned the data was not used to its full potential, with comments including:

- ‘Data is not collated and therefore not used’ and ‘there is no routine analysis of the data’.
- ‘The data isn’t (analysed), which may be why officers do not see the point of completing it’.
- ‘The forms are collated, but very little analysis (is conducted) other than from HMIC, and for Freedom of Information. Individual forms are inspected by PSD and legal’.

Other forces gave clear examples of how analysis had been fed back into practice. Forces noted:

- ‘(We found) almost two thirds of force used by officers takes place when there is one subject and two or more officers. As a direct consequence of this Personal Safety Training now significantly contains elements where two officers are using force on one subject’.
- ‘Trends in use of force and assault data is reviewed quarterly by the Force Health Advisory Board. New officer safety equipment has been purchased on the basis of trend analysis. The PST curriculum is weighted on reviewing trends in use of force and other information’.
- ‘It has been used to provide further information around resources, such as where taser units should be based, and how many’, and to ‘assist in setting district staffing levels’.
- ‘Complaints and trends in the use of force are analysed. Districts and areas are compared for levels of use of force and reasons looked at e.g. why is CS consistently higher in one area’.

How is the data published?

The vast majority of forces did not publish the raw data or analysis conducted of it, outside of freedom of information requests. One exception was the PSNI, who publish information on their website every six months, including the overall number of reported uses of Taser, attenuating energy projectiles, baton, CS spray, firearms, police dog and water cannon, broken down on a monthly basis⁵. Answering freedom of information requests on the use of force was estimated to take less than a day for the majority of forces, with FOI requests focusing on Taser, followed by irritant spray.

⁵ Available at http://www.psnipolice.uk/updates-statistics_on_police_use_of_force-2

What would forces like to see?

Forces were asked what they considered best practice, and what they would like to include and avoid in any future system adopted. Respondents noted that they valued a system with the following features ⁶:

- *A nation-wide solution* to enable consistency in reporting, together with national guidelines to ensure terms, criteria and definitions are also used consistently. However it was also noted the form should be able to be managed and analysed at the local level as well. Thus one force noted:

'Any future database has to be capable of being managed locally. If information is required centrally this should be provided from the local force in an agreed format... If we could supply the Home Office with a spreadsheet we could get our officers to complete exactly the same information on our system which would feed directly into our reporting system (as well).'

- *Ease of completion.* Forces expressed a desire for an 'App' or other online IT product that could be accessed through remote terminals, a form with little or no free text, and a system that had pre-populated/automatic responses where possible.
- *Speed of completion.* It was noted that any proposed system needs to be user friendly and is able to be completed promptly. One force felt that the form should take no longer than 15 minutes to complete.
- *In built mechanisms to minimise under-reporting and ensure full completion.* Suggestions included; coding use of force on incident logs, so that the incident cannot be closed until the form has been completed, having a mechanism to auto populate the database with officer details, and officers being unable to complete the form until certain mandatory boxes / areas are completed.
- *Analysis as an essential part of the process.* Respondents felt that having analysis of the forms fed back to them, in a format that would help them improve their practice, was essential and would also help with response rates, as officers would be able to see the added value generated. Two forces respectively noted that:

'(Data collection) needs a purpose that those filling out can see. Such as improving officer safety, recording violent encounters'.

'The starting point should not be how much data can we capture, but what do we want to do with it. Capturing data to simply report on it is a waste of everybody's valuable time'.

Having looked at the data capture and analysis systems in use throughout the UK, it was also considered important to assess use of force reporting in other jurisdictions, focusing initially on the United States of America, Canada and New Zealand, to understand how UK practice is situated worldwide, and to understand international best practice.

⁶ NB: this summary is based on answers that forces could choose to give in response to a free text question, and on additional comments that some forces chose to make. Some respondents chose not to provide answers in these fields, and such comments cannot necessarily be taken to be representative of all forces, but provide an interesting insight into what certain forces value.

International practices.

The United States of America.

The United States of America has no national, mandatory system in place, despite longstanding calls for its establishment⁷. However throughout the 1990s, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice and the International Association of Chiefs of Police developed a voluntary nationwide data collection system using a specially designed software program. The form was designed for officers and agencies to complete on an anonymous basis whenever force was used (although drawing of weapons, and routine compliant handcuffing were exempt), and captured incident characteristics (including the number of officers and subjects), the age, ethnicity and education of officers and subjects, subject and officer injury and details of complaints made⁸.

New Zealand.

New Zealand have a nation-wide reporting system and produce publicly available reports—which have been commended by various stakeholders, including civil society⁹--every six months. The unit of analysis is one officer using force against one individual, and they must fill out a form when handcuffs, empty hand, OC spray, baton, TASER, canines, or firearms are used. Subject and officer characteristics (gender, age, ethnicity, mental health, alcohol and drug consumption); incident characteristics (location, incident type, whether a weapon was believed to be present, and whether one was used); subject and officer injury, severity and location, and after-care are amongst the variables collected¹⁰. The number of face to face interactions in which officers are involved are also recorded.

Canada.

Public Safety Canada commissioned a report into force reporting which found that federal and provincial policing regulations require any officer involved in a use of force incident to complete a formal report. However there were variations in the amount of data provided in these reports and in the analysis conducted. The authors cited the example of one force that collected data on the full range of force techniques, from empty hand to firearms, and recorded information including details of subject resistance, officer and subject characteristics, the length of time since use of force training, injuries to officers and subjects, and the order in which force techniques were used¹¹.

International best practice.

Looking internationally, then, it is clear that reporting practices vary between jurisdictions. That said, most reporting systems are officer (not incident) based and make it mandatory to fill out a form whenever a range of force techniques—from empty hand tactics to weapons—are used. Information on officer and subject characteristics (including gender, age, ethnicity, mental health, alcohol and drug consumption); details of the incident (including levels of subject resistance, numbers of subjects and officers, incident type and location, whether a weapon was believed to be present, and whether a weapon was used); and details of injury (whether injury occurred to officer or subject, injury severity and location) are collected on this form. In addition, some forces record the order in which force was used, the number of officer-subject interactions that do not involve force, and conduct regular analysis of use of force data that is made publicly available.

⁷ See, for example, Gruber, C and Schmidt, W (2015) *Mandatory Nationwide Use of Force Reporting by Police and Correctional Agencies – and Why This is an Important Issue* (6) AELE Monthly Law Journal 6; 501 - 509

⁸ Henriquez, M (1999) 'IACP National Database Project on Police Use of Force' in National Institute of Justice *Use of Force by Police: Overview of National and Local Data* pp19 – 24.

⁹ Omega Research Foundation (2015) *Submission to the UN Committee Against Torture in Advance of the 54th Session*. www.omegaresearchfoundation.org/assets/downloads/publications/Submission%20to%20UN%20CAT_54th%20Session_Final%20Combined.pdf

¹⁰ The reports are available at www.police.govt.nz/about-us/publication/tactical-options-research-reports

¹¹ Kiedrowski, J; Melchers, R; Petrunik, M; Maxwell, C (2015) *A Discussion of the Collection and Analysis of Data on the Use of Force in Encounters between the Police and Members of the Public*. Available from Public Safety Canada.

Conclusions and implications.

This survey has shown that many police forces—at least 27 in the UK alone, and many more internationally—are capturing some useful data around police use of force. However, as UK forces have independently developed their own, in-house data collection systems, the extent and nature of the data collected, the type of data capture systems in place, and how and whether the information collected is analysed and utilised, has varied considerably. Generally speaking, alongside many promising features, the survey results also point to a lack of consistent data capture around the precise details of the force used and the nature and severity of officer, subject and bystander injuries, and to some limits to the extent to which the data collected is analysed and fed back into policing practice.

At the same time, there is a strong appreciation amongst the majority of the 34 police forces responding to this survey of the benefits of use of force reporting—as long as this is quick and easy to complete, and is accompanied by useful data analysis—and the survey also shows that many forces are adopting elements of good practice that could be built on nationally. There is also a clear opportunity for the UK to draw on good practice elsewhere, and to become a world leader in use of force collection and analysis. Some elements of good practice, and their implications are as follows:

- 1) Recording the use of a range of force options—not just the use of weapons, but the use of empty hand techniques and the *drawing* of weapons—and making it mandatory for those using such force, whether they are officers, PSCOs or Specials, to fill out such a form. Capturing empty hand force is important as research indicates these are some of the most commonly used techniques in the UK, used in the vast majority of force incidents ¹².
- 2) Detailing how many times force techniques were used, for how long, in what order, and whether they were effective. Such details can impact on whether, and to what extent, injuries are incurred by subjects and officers, as well as on whether force is perceived to be proportionate or excessive. Although such details are not as commonly reported, the survey shows that some forces already do capture this information. This information is particularly important given that research in the UK and internationally indicates incidents involving Taser often also involve another form of force ¹³. Given the importance of such variables, they should be considered for inclusion in any reporting system that may be adopted in the future.
- 3) Recording not just whether injuries to subjects and officers have occurred (which just over a half of forces with a reporting system do collect), but additional information, including the detail and severity of such injuries, how many subjects were injured, whether bystanders were injured and the force technique (or combination of techniques) that caused the injury. Whilst fewer forces capture this information, some forces both in the UK and overseas do collect such details. Such information can be highly relevant in situations where multiple force options have been used, and/or multiple people have been present. Such variables should be considered for inclusion in any future reporting system.
- 4) Capturing details about the subject (including age, gender, ethnicity, mental health and disability status, whether they have consumed drugs and alcohol, their conduct / levels of resistance offered, and whether they are armed), and the incident (including the number of subjects and officers present, the type and location of the incident, if the incident took place in a mental health setting or in custody, why force was deemed necessary and whether the

¹² Dymond, A (2015) 'Patterns of Use in a UK Police Force' Paper presented at *Taser Experts Meeting*, 18th March 2015, Queen Mary University. Notes of the day available at <http://www.law.qmul.ac.uk/docs/events/157351.pdf>

¹³ Terrill, W and Paoline, E (2012) 'Conducted Energy Devices (CEDs) and Citizen Injuries: The Shocking Empirical Reality' *Justice Quarterly* 29 (2): 153-182 ; Dymond, A (2015), as above.

subject was arrested or detained under the Mental Health Act). Forces currently capture such information to varying degrees.

- 5) Recording details about the officer, including protected characteristics, length of service and length of time since Personal Safety Training. Forces currently capture such information to varying degrees, and consideration should be given on how to collect such details in a time-effective fashion, for example by prepopulating fields with officer details.
- 6) Capturing data on the level of resistance / violence offered by subjects and the risks they pose to themselves or others, if any, in order to put police use of force in context and the assess proportionality of force used.
- 7) Ensuring that the reporting system can capture, and easily retrieve, instances where force is used in mental health settings, or when force is used to detain someone under the Mental Health Act. The survey indicates that a minority of forces record such information on their use of force systems, although such data may be captured on separate forms elsewhere.
- 8) Collecting information that would facilitate future analysis. Understanding the longer term medical and psychological effects of police force on officers and subjects – an important topic for future research ¹⁴. Few, if any, forces routinely collect and capture such details, and discussions at the Programme Board illustrate both the importance of such data, and concerns about the capacity of forces to conduct such analysis. It might be worth considering including individual name and contact details so that outside agencies could conduct such analysis in the future.
- 9) Utilising a system based on officer (as opposed to incident) reporting, as this is the unit of analysis used by most forces. However if such officer based reporting is adopted there should be a mechanism in place to enable data capture according to incidents (e.g. an automatically generated, unique incident number). It was also felt important that the form take no longer than 15 minutes to complete, and has inbuilt reminders in place to maximise form completion.
- 10) Finally, given the concerns expressed over the extent of data analysis conducted, and the importance of this issue, mechanisms for providing data analysis, and for feeding the results of such analysis back into police practice, via training curricula, SACMILL and other appropriate fora should be considered at the earliest opportunity. In keeping with international best practice, regular publication of the raw use of force data, and of subsequent analysis conducted on it, should also be considered.

¹⁴ Meade, B; Steiner, B; Klahm, C (2015) 'The effect of police use of force on mental health problems of prisoners' *Policing and Society: An International Journal of Research and Policy* (Advanced access; no page numbers). Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2015.1049602>