

**Question on Notice  
No.876  
Asked on 6 June 2007**

MR MALONE asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services (MS SPENCE)—

**QUESTION:**

With reference to the recent decision by the Police Service to trial the use of tasers by police—

- (1) What consultation has the government had with relevant community sectors of mental health and disabilities before deciding on the trial?
- (2) What research did the government consult when deciding to move to the trial of tasers and can she table this research?

**ANSWER:**

(1) & (2)

The Queensland Police Service will conduct a 12 month trial of the wider use of Electro Muscular Disruption (EMD) devices from 1 July 2007. The Police Service has successfully used a “Taser” brand EMD device 13 times since it was introduced in 2002 as part of the equipment used by the Special Emergency Response Team (SERT).

Figures obtained when the trial was first announced in March 2007 indicated that in the preceding 18 months there had been over 3,000 assaults on police officers across the State. The prevalence of drugs such as ICE means police officers need all the options available to them to contain violent offenders.

To facilitate the trial the Commissioner has decided that Tasers will be purchased and issued for use by all District Duty Officers or Regional Duty Officers in the Metropolitan North, Metropolitan South and South Eastern police regions. District Duty Officers and Regional Duty Officers are experienced supervising police officers usually at the rank of Senior Sergeant and Inspector respectively.

The Crime and Misconduct Commission has been invited to participate in the evaluation of the trial. Whilst the decision to trial various types of operational equipment by the Police Service is rightly one for the Police Commissioner to make, the trial will provide an opportunity to consider a range of community opinions prior to deciding on any proposal for the wider use of EMD devices by first response police. I encourage interested parties from all community sectors who may wish to inform the discussion and consideration about the wider use of EMD devices by police to make a submission to the Police Service about the trial.

In deciding on the trial a range of information was considered, including the results of a previous trial of Tasers by SERT, which led to their permanent introduction into the equipment used by that section and reports by the Australasian Centre for Policing Research (ACPR) on *National Guidelines for Incident Management, Conflict Resolution and Use of Force* (1998 and 2004). The ACPR was established by all Australian police jurisdictions to conduct research on important law enforcement and justice issues and to provide advice to guide national policy on policing issues.

The 12 month Taser trial will provide the Police Service with the opportunity to investigate new methods for dealing with dangerous and violent offenders with the aim of minimising the risk of injuries to both offenders and arresting officers. Ultimately the trial is about ensuring the safety of the public and police officers.