

## COMMISSIONER'S INDEPENDENT SCRUTINY REPORT

### Use of Force Scrutiny

Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2025

Scrutiny Panel:	USE OF FORCE
<b>Members:</b>	<p>           Brian Churm            Caroline Strike            Garry Hamblin            Emma Shutt            Vicki Gwynne            John Buckle            Robert Spencer         </p> <p>           Also in attendance:            Chief Inspector Cliff Goodwin            Michelle Ryan – SCO            Holly Sproston – SCO            Lorraine Roberts - HMICFRS         </p>
<b>Purpose:</b>	<p>That the Use of Force policy and procedure have been followed and the Body Worn Video reviewed are compliant with the law and are being used effectively. The panel will focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whether Body Worn Video policy was adhered to</li> <li>• Whether the Use of Force level used was necessary</li> <li>• Whether the Use of Force level used was proportional to the incident</li> <li>• Is the action/behaviour justified</li> <li>• Has it been explained adequately</li> <li>• Has it been recorded properly</li> </ul>
<b>Panel Findings:</b>	<p>The period selected for the Use of Force incidents was from 01 September 2025 to 29 September 2025. 1960 UOF incidents were recorded in this period. The panel initially randomly selected 15 incidents at their pre-meeting on 07 October 2025. It was agreed to hold an additional meeting on 13 November to ensure enough Use of Force incidents was reviewed.</p> <p>Of those 15 incidents, 8 were selected to be reviewed at the meeting on 23 October 2025. 7 will be reviewed at the meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup> of November 2025.</p>

Of those 8 selected

- 1 incident had no BWV. Further investigations identified that this incident was a report of a theft, and the STORM log reflected arrangements for a voluntary interview.
- 1 incident had BWV but no STORM log. The Panel viewed the body worn video footage but could not validate if the use of force was necessary or appropriate.

### **The Incidents viewed are outlined in Appendix 1**

STORM logs of the incidents were provided. Panel members were reminded that the STORM log is a live record of events as they happen and indicate calls and information being provided by officers as the incident unfolds. It is not the investigation record. The STORM logs are provided to give some context to the incident leading up to the use of force being deployed and enables panel members to be cognisant of the situation in determining whether the use of force was appropriate in a potentially quickly developing situation.

#### **Observations and Recommendations:**

- The panel felt that the Use of Force had been necessary, reasonable and proportionate in most of the incidents viewed.
- In Occurrence 21250147330 the STORM log was not available but the body worn video footage was viewed. The BWV appears to show an aggressive approach by officers. However, the STORM log may have indicated the offender was violent and therefore may have necessitated this type of approach.
- The panel indicated that they were impressed with the approach of all the officers in these difficult situations.
- The panel were particularly impressed with the skills of officers in Occurrence 21250145786 and would like their appreciation fed back to the officers concerned.

#### **Force Lead Response:**

The Panel reviewed a selection of Use of Force incidents and concluded that, in most cases, the force applied was necessary, reasonable, and proportionate. As force lead I note the panel expressed confidence in the professionalism and approach demonstrated by officers during challenging situations they reviewed.

During the review of Occurrence **21250147330**, the STORM log was unavailable; however, body-worn video footage was examined. The panel noted that the footage appeared to show an assertive approach by officers. It was acknowledged that the STORM log may have provided additional context, such as whether the individual involved was violent, which could have justified the officers' actions. To ensure appropriate scrutiny, this occurrence has been referred to the Professional Standards Department for further review.

Additionally, the techniques employed in Occurrence **21250098813** have also been submitted to the Professional Standards Department for assessment.

I further note the panel commended the overall conduct of officers and highlighted their professionalism in managing complex and high-pressure situations. In particular, that the panel was impressed by the skills demonstrated in Occurrence **21250145786** and I will personally ensure that their appreciation is formally communicated to the officers involved.

The feedback provided by the panel will inform ongoing learning and development.

**Chief Inspector Cliff Goodwin**



## Appendix 1 Matrix of Use of Force Incidents.

Occurrence No.	Date	Tactic Type Used	UOF Necessary?	UOF Proportional?	Description / Comments
21250143846	29/09/2025	Unarmed skills			<b>BWV not found</b>
21250148980	29/09/2025	Baton / Taser drawn/ Take down	Yes	Yes	Adult white male. Boxing in of suspicious vehicle on busy motorway. Markers indicate possible drugs and weapons in the vehicle. Driver damages police car and attempts to drive off. Drive removed from vehicle with threat of baton and taser. Panel members felt the move was well executed.
21250098813	29/09/2025	Pava/ non-compliant handcuffing	Yes	Yes	Adult Asian male. Locked himself in car to prevent police accessing him. Allegations of domestic assault. Male was intoxicated and openly taking drugs in front of police. Officers made several attempts to de-escalate the situation and extricate the individual from the vehicle. Panel felt officers were very patient in the situation.
21250146024	23/09/2025	Dog deployed	Yes	Yes	Adult, Mixed Ethnic Background, Male. Illegal entry into partner's house. Reports of screaming. Offender has markers for violence. Single crewed Officer with dog arrives. Officer is very assertive with clear instructions. Officer controlled the situation effectively and well.
21250145786	22/09/2025	Arm restraint /Take down/	Yes	Yes	Adult Black female. Entered a local shop, drunk, taking alcohol, opening it and drinking it in the shop. Assaulted shop worker. Two officers restrained female. Handcuffs were too large for the offender's wrists so had to be physically restrained. Officers were patient and calm and explained every action to



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					ensure understanding from offender who was intoxicated. The panel were impressed with how this situation was handled by the officer.
21250144372	21/09/2025	Armed Response/ Ground restraint/ compliant handcuffing	Yes	Yes	Young person White male. Armed Response Officers looking for two males suspected of being armed with knives. Located in a MacDonalds. Effective execution of restraint in a busy location. Swift and concise with clear instructions to offenders. Panel were impressed how this situation was handled and how swiftly it was executed.
21250141414	17/09/2025	Non-compliant handcuffing	Yes	Yes	Adult white male. BTP requested removal of an intoxicated male who was being abusive to passengers on a train. Offender was verbally abusive and aggressive.
21250147330	25/09/2025	Taser drawn/ non-compliant handcuffing			There was no STORM log available for this clip, so the panel were unable to see the context of incident or what intelligence/ markers were on or known about the individual. The offender was apprehended in a carpark, and the officer indicates reports of motor vehicle theft. Officers initial tone appears aggressive. However, the panel did not have any information from the STORM log which may have indicated the offender was violent and therefore may have necessitated this type of approach. The offender appears not to understand English. As the STORM log was not available the panel could not clearly indicate if the UOF was necessary or appropriate.

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