



LESS LETHAL IMPACT MUNITIONS

<i>Date of Issue</i> MAY 12, 2000	<i>General Order Number</i> 00-03
<i>Effective Date</i> May 23, 2007	<i>Section Code</i> OPS-15
<i>Reevaluation Date</i> MAY 2008	<i>Amends / Cancels</i>
<i>C.A.L.E.A.</i> 1.3.4, 1.3.5, 1.3.9, 1.3.11	<i>Reference</i>

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Use of Force Matrix

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this order is to identify the conditions under which officers may deploy and use less lethal impact munitions.

II. POLICY

The Iowa City Police Department places the highest of value on human life. The department is authorized and trained in the use and deployment of less lethal munitions. Less lethal munitions is a concept of planning and force application, which meets operational objectives, with less potential for causing death or serious physical injury than conventional police tactics/equipment.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Iowa Code, Chapter 704.2 defines less lethal munitions as: "projectiles which are designed to stun, temporarily incapacitate, or cause temporary discomfort to a person without penetrating the person's body."
- B. Kinetic Energy Impact Projectiles - Flexible or non-flexible projectiles (E.g. "beanbags"), which are intended to incapacitate a subject with minimal potential for causing death or serious physical injury, when compared to "conventional" rounds.

IV. PROCEDURES FOR USE

Less Lethal Extended Range Impact Weapons

EVALUATION OF LESS LETHAL PROJECTILES FOR USE

Kinetic energy impact projectiles will be evaluated for use on the following criteria:

- A. Accuracy
 - 1. This is the primary consideration, since proper shot placement greatly assists in controlling the other two evaluation criteria.
 - 2. This will be evaluated based on the anticipated ranges of deployment.
 - 3. The minimal standard of accuracy of such a round is:
 - a. 12 - inch group at 15 yards for the 12-gauge system. The group shall consist of 3 rounds.
- B. Effectiveness
 - 1. This is the potential for the round to cause incapacitation and reduce the subject's ability to continue their inappropriate behavior.
 - 2. The level of energy necessary to cause incapacitation creates the potential for injury, but when properly deployed, use should result in a low probability for causing serious physical injury or death.
- C. Potential for causing death or serious physical injury
 - 1. The potential for causing death or serious physical injury with such projectiles is a reality. This potential is greatly reduced when impacts to the head, neck and chest are avoided, and when appropriate medical examination is provided in cases where the subject is struck in an area that might conceal a closed injury. (including such areas as the chest, back, thoracic and abdominal cavities and groin)
 - 2. When engaging a subject, the officer shall evaluate the effectiveness of each round after each shot. Compliance and/or incapacitation are the desired goal, and alternative target areas/response should be considered when rounds are not effective. Alternative target area/response considerations will be based on the circumstances the officer is encountering.

TARGET AREAS

- A. Less Lethal projectiles shall be delivered to suspect target areas based on the circumstances of the situation and the level of force authorized. The deployment of less lethal projectiles shall be in conformance with departmental training guidelines pertaining to recommended target areas.
- B. Head/Neck and Chest - Intentional impacts to these areas should be avoided unless the use of deadly force is justified, necessary and appropriate.

USE OF FORCE CONTINUUM

The Iowa City Police Department recognizes five levels of force. The use of less lethal impact projectiles are considered a level IV response (subject is assaultive), when deployed to areas of the subject's body that are considered unlikely to cause serious physical injury. In addition, less lethal projectiles may be used when a person is threatening death or serious injury to themselves. The use of these projectiles is recognized as a level V, Deadly Force, if *intentionally* deployed or directed at the head or neck.

When assessing the appropriate use of force level, prior to the transition to less lethal projectiles, the officer shall consider in addition to other factors:

- A. The level of force being confronted.
- B. The proximity/access of the subject to the officer or others.

DEPLOYMENT TECHNIQUES

Weapons used for the deployment of less lethal munitions shall be dedicated to that purpose. These weapons shall be clearly marked. The use of other than less lethal rounds in these weapons is prohibited unless necessary to protect the life of the public or officer.

When deploying less lethal munitions, the following procedures should be adhered to:

- A. Less lethal munitions should not be used at a distance of less than 15 ft (5 yards) from the target. With this in mind, the greater the distance, the less the accuracy.
- B. When practical, other officers involved in an incident in which less lethal munitions are deployed should be advised of the deployment prior to the discharge of the weapon.

- C. During the deployment of less lethal munitions, the officer in charge of the incident should constantly evaluate the option selected against changing circumstances.
- D. When practical, multiple tactics should be used to overwhelm the suspect. I.e. less lethal may be used in conjunction with a distraction device or chemical agent.
- E. A weapon loaded with less lethal munitions shall be treated with the same care and caution as weapons loaded with "lethal" munitions.
- F. Less lethal projectiles should not be employed without a cover officer with lethal munitions being assigned as an escort. If it is believed the subject is carrying a firearm, less lethal shall not be deployed without the use of a cover officer with lethal munitions.

Officers shall only deploy those less lethal munitions which are provided by the department.

The deployment of less lethal munitions shall only be performed by those officers trained and showing proficiency in their deployment.

HANDLING OF INJURED SUBJECTS

Suspects who are struck by less lethal projectiles shall be secured and transported to a medical facility for examination and treatment.

If a projectile strikes a bystander, medical personnel shall be summoned to the scene, and the subject shall be encouraged to seek examination at a medical facility.

REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION

Officers shall complete a departmental Use of Force Report, in addition to any other applicable reporting requirements, after deploying less lethal projectiles. This includes those situations where the weapon is removed from the vehicle and not discharged.

An investigation shall be conducted into any situation involving the firing of a less lethal projectile at a suspect. The investigation shall comply with departmental reporting directives contained in General Order 99-05, Use of Force.

TRAINING

Officers shall be provided training in the use and deployment of the departmental less lethal munitions prior to being allowed to deploy the weapons. On an annual basis, officers will receive refresher training in the use and deployment of less lethal munitions.

Samuel Hargadine, Chief of Police

WARNING

This directive is for departmental use only and does not apply in any criminal or civil proceeding. The department policy should not be construed as a creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third-party claims. Violations of this directive will only form the basis for departmental administrative sanctions.