

Ministry of Community Safety
and Correctional Services

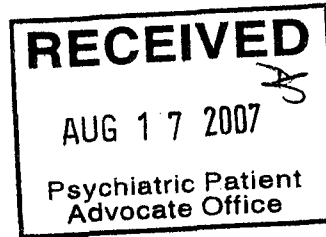
Office of the Minister

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Ministère de la Sécurité communautaire
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CU07-02978

AUG 14 2007

Mr. David Simpson
Acting Director
Psychiatric Patient Advocate Office
802-55 St. Clair Avenue West
PO Box 28
Toronto ON M4V 2Y7

Dear Mr. Simpson:

Thank you for your letter of July 19, 2007, expressing your concerns with regard to police use of TASERs. I am pleased to respond.

The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services has taken a measured approach to approving the use of TASERs by police services in Ontario. TASERs are permitted only for highly trained and specialized units, including tactical/hostage rescue, as well as preliminary perimeter control and containment teams, and trained front-line supervisors or their designates.

While the ministry is responsible for providing guidance and support to police services in Ontario, the day-to-day operations of a police service are the responsibility of the local chief of police/Commissioner of the Ontario Provincial Police or designate, and local police services boards. The ministry must not become directly involved in operational police matters. The decision to deploy the use of the TASER is within the sole authority of local police services. These may include situations where the subject is assaultive, other intermediate weapons are ineffective or where there is risk of serious injury or bodily harm.

Section 13(1) of the Adequacy and Effectiveness of Police Services Regulation (O. Reg. 3/99) requires every chief of police to establish procedures and processes on police response to persons who are emotionally disturbed or have a mental illness or a developmental disability. To support the Adequacy Regulations, the ministry developed a guideline entitled, *Police Response to Persons who are Emotionally Disturbed or Have a Mental Illness or a Developmental Disability*.

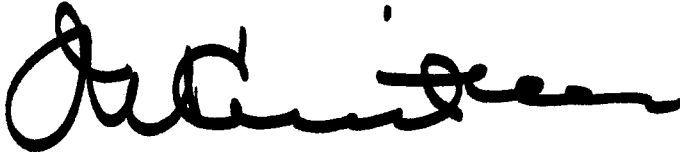
Mr. David Simpson
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The ministry acknowledges that two recent Coroner's juries have recommended that the ministry take whatever steps necessary to ensure all front-line police officers are authorized to carry a TASER. However, there are no plans to expand the use of TASERs beyond the current ministry-approved deployment designations.

Please be assured that the ministry takes this issue seriously. The McGuinty government is committed to supporting police services by using the most effective law enforcement equipment and ensuring both officer and public safety.

I trust you will find this information helpful. Again, thank you for writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Monte Kwinter', written in a cursive style.

Monte Kwinter
Minister

c: The Honourable George Smitherman
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

Chief Bill Blair, President
Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police

Mr. Murray Chitra, Chair
Ontario Civilian Commission on Police Services