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## **Medical Examiner Finds TASER® Was Not Cause of Death During In-Custody Death of Hollywood Man**

### **Result Consistent with Historical Experience Similar Result from Other Past Cases**

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz., April 2, 2002 - TASER International, Inc. (Nasdaq: TASR and TASRW) today announced that a Broward County medical examiner concluded that the ADVANCED TASER was not responsible for the death of a man shot with an ADVANCED TASER by Hollywood, FL police while trying to arrest him. A Broward County medical examiner stated that Vincent Delostia died from a cocaine overdose.

An employee of a Hollywood hotel called police on January 27, 2002 and told the dispatcher a strange man, Delostia, was behaving violently in the lobby, said Hollywood Police Department spokesman Lt. Tony Rode. When police arrived, Delostia was behaving irrationally and was disruptive in front of the Entrada Hotel. According to Lt. Rode, Police believe Delostia was on drugs, and refused orders to get on his knees and put his hands behind his back. Police fired an ADVANCED TASER at Delostia while trying to subdue and arrest him. Delostia later stopped breathing and was dead by the time he arrived at Memorial Regional Hospital.

Three recent deaths have occurred where suspects were subdued using the ADVANCED TASER and later died in custody. These cases have received significant media attention, implying the TASER may have contributed to these fatalities. With this finding, the ADVANCED TASER has now been cleared in all three cases.

The first of these cases was closed on January 25, 2002 when Butler County Coroner Dr. Richard Burkhardt signed the death certificate of Marvin Hendrix, an Ohio man who died while in police custody, listing the cause of death as "cocaine abuse / accidental." During the investigation, investigators learned that Hendrix had swallowed a plastic bag containing an "eight-ball" of crack cocaine in efforts to conceal it from officers. The bag later burst, releasing toxic levels of cocaine.

The second case involved Anthony Spencer, 35, who was brandishing a 7-inch knife, naked, intoxicated and high on cocaine when Philadelphia Police used a chemical spray and an ADVANCED TASER to subdue him on February 12, 2002. "He was conscious at the time. He was talking the whole time, ranting the whole time on the way to the hospital," said Capt. Thomas Lippo of the Homicide Division. "At some point, he became unconscious and expired," said Lippo. Tests indicated Spencer died of a cocaine overdose and that electrical current delivered by the ADVANCED TASER did not contribute to his death, city health department spokesman Jeff Moran said on March 7, 2002, citing autopsy results.

"Unfortunately, there's a tendency for people to rush to conclusions in these cases," said TASER International CEO Rick Smith. "Every year approximately 12,000 people die as a result of drug

overdoses in the U.S. Since one of the early indicators of toxic drug levels is violent psychosis and paranoia, many of these people are confronted by police officers called to protect other citizens during these violent outbursts. It is not surprising that some of these people will be hit with the TASER as police seek to subdue them before they can hurt themselves, or others. If someone is in the throes of a drug overdose, the application of the TASER will not stop (or exacerbate) the ongoing chemical reactions that will lead to the eventual death of the subject.”

“There have been many of these cases since the TASER was first introduced in 1974 – we know of at least 20,” Smith continued, “However, once the medical reviews have been completed, the TASER has never been linked as a definitive cause of death in any of these cases. We are not surprised that the medical examinations in all three incidents from Hamilton Ohio, Hollywood Florida and Philadelphia Pennsylvania cleared the TASER from any implication in these deaths.”

“As the use of the TASER becomes more widespread, we can anticipate it will be used to subdue even more individuals who are in the course of a toxic, fatal overdose. Based on decades of experience and over 5,000 human volunteers, we are confident the results will continue to exonerate this effective, safe technology. In order to help people learn more about this complex topic, we have posted additional information on our website at [www.TASER.com](http://www.TASER.com).” Smith concluded.

#### **About TASER International, Inc.**

TASER International, Inc. provides advanced less-lethal weapons for use in the law enforcement, airlines, private security, and personal defense markets. Its flagship ADVANCED TASER® product uses proprietary technology to incapacitate dangerous, combative, or high-risk subjects that may be impervious to other less-lethal means. This technology reduces injury rates to suspects and officers, thereby lowering liability risk and improving officer safety. The ADVANCED TASER is currently in testing or deployment at over 1100 law enforcement and correctional agencies in the U.S. and Canada.

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