

STUN GUNS TO HIT CRIME

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TASMANIA Police are trialling an advanced stun weapon.

The hi-tech gun fires two harpoon darts which pump a 50,000-volt pulse of electrical charge and force the victim to collapse into a foetal position.

The darts are connected by high-voltage wire to the pistol and allow for repeated shock pulses.

A Tasmania Police spokesman confirmed the Special Operations Group was trialling the new "advanced taser" weapon.

"It hasn't been used in any situation yet but it is a less than lethal option," the spokesman said.

The advanced taser is a development on similar stun weapons used by some overseas police forces and features new electro-muscular disruption technology.

It delivers three times the wattage of previous models, known as air tasers.

"It's a fair thump when you get zapped," said George Hateley, spokesman for distributor FBIS International.

Mr Hateley said the new gun was an advance of previous stun weapons which interfered with the target's nervous system.

"It completely overrides the central nervous system and directly forces the muscles to go into uncontrolled contraction," he said.

Mr Hateley said extremely persistent and aggressive people had been able to "fight through" the pain and disability of capsicum sprays and early stun technology.

No amount of outrage could resist the EMD charge.

The new weapon, which costs \$1000, is said to leave no injury and is less likely to kill than batons or other impact munitions.

"Instead of shooting and killing people, which has unfortunately sometimes been necessary when an officer is in a life-threatening situation, this gives an in-between option," said Mr Hateley.

He said the weapon recorded the date and time of use and had a number of features designed to stop its abuse by police.

FBIS International, set up by former Victorian police commissioner Kel Glare, has distribution rights for the US-made guns.

The weapons have been used in the US for about a year and have become a popular alternative for Australian police who fear lawsuits where officers kill members of the public.

The weapons also are being tested in Western Australia and South Australia. New York police are training 19,000 officers in the use of the advanced taser.
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