

Notes from NGO and Community Organisation Roundtables on
TASERD: Taser use and its Association with Social, Ethnic and Racial Disparities in policing.
A research programme on the causes of ethnic / racial disparities in the police use of Taser.

11th April 2022.

Please note these are anonymised notes of proceedings and are intended to capture the main points, but may not necessarily provide a detailed account of everything that was said. A copy of the presentation slides is available on the website.

Points raised by attendees included:

On the project overall and issues associated with it:

- Concerns about the degree of public engagement that was envisaged in the bid.
- Voice of black communities need to be centred.
- Concerns about the State co-opting the research and giving them a tick box to justify further roll out of taser / acting as window dressing.
- Concerns about the College of Policing refusing to publish the report.
- No amount of reports will change anything unless there is a genuine engagement and willingness to change from the police. How will this be different from other research that has been done?
- Easy to be exploitative of testimonies – need follow up and support.
- Research is needed and important that it is taking place.

On topics that the research team should consider:

- How much overlap is there between stop and search and taser figures in disparity?
- The research should look at the use of taser under the mental health act and section 136.
- Disaggregating data amongst various ethnicities, including Gypsy and Roma communities.
- Disaggregating data by ethnicity and age.
- Cases of concern mentioned – although an individual approach is not being taken is there scope to use video footage from cases of concern?
- The research team should highlight issues with the use of force form and data not being captured on that form.
- How do the team plan to engage community members and how can young people support the research?
- Children and young people – processes of adultification, lack of safeguarding concerns, the need for police to use different communications skills.
- The interaction between race, age and development.
- The need to speak with children and young people, including younger people, which will be different from engaging with older teenagers and testing out the language and questions with young people originally to make sure it makes sense for them.
- Would be interesting to see if forces have done Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) around taser (and, if so, their content).

On methods of engaging and next steps:

- Possibility of using ‘Twitter space’ and / or TikTok / Instagram Live to engage young people.
- Idea for a Community Testimony Day for children and young people.
- Interest in another event at a point that makes sense for the project

Actions for the research consortium include:

- Explore possibility of collecting data on; the use of taser under Section 136 of the MHA; the use of taser on Traveller, Gypsy and Roma communities; and any EIAs done on taser.
- Explore possibility of analysing data by; disaggregating data by ethnicity; disaggregating by ethnicity and age.
- Explore highlighting where relevant information is not captured by the use of force form (or elsewhere).
- Explore possibility of exploring the tasering of children and young people in the research e.g. processes of adultification.
- Liaise with Black led mental health organisations to ensure appropriate support and care for those who attend Community Testimony Days.
- Explore a Community Testimony Day for children and young people.
- Explore using a ‘Twitter space’ and / or TikTok / Instagram Live as a form of online engagement with young people affected by Taser.
- See which forces have done Equality Impact Assessments around taser (and, if so, their content).
- Organise another roundtable to update attendees at a point that makes sense for the project (likely September).