

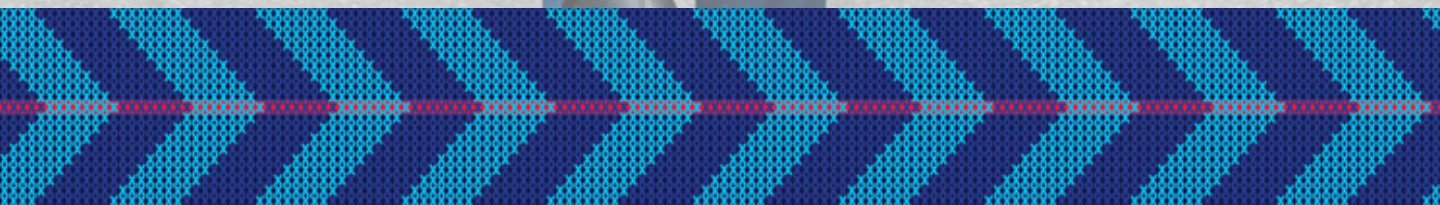


NEW ZEALAND
POLICE
Ngā Pirihimana o Aotearoa



Tactical Options

2020 Annual Report





NEW ZEALAND
POLICE
Ngā Pirihimana o Aotearoa

FRONTLINE CAPABILITY

The TOR Annual Report series provides transparency and accountability to the New Zealand public about use of force by NZ Police, examining and reporting tactical option use over the preceding year.

The TOR Annual Report has evolved substantially over the last few years, moving away from simply reporting data to provide contextualised descriptions and explanations of what the data shows, and linking to NZ Police Strategic Objectives.

When citing information from this report, please provide one of these links to the full report:

Print version:

<https://www.police.govt.nz/sites/default/files/publications/annual-tactical-options-research-report-9-print.pdf>

Web version:

<https://www.police.govt.nz/sites/default/files/publications/annual-tactical-options-research-report-9-webversion.pdf>

Previous reports can be found here:



2012

2013

2014

2015

2016

2017

2018

2019

Or see <http://www.police.govt.nz/about-us/publication/tactical-options-research-reports> for a list of links to all reports.

Foreword

Statement from Assistant Commissioner Frontline Capability, Tusha Penny



on to put themselves in harm's way to keep the public safe. Increasingly, they face threats from those willing to use violence against police, and others.

In recent years we have responded to terror attacks, the increasingly sophisticated nature of organised crime, gang-violence, the availability of illegal firearms, and devastatingly – the death of our own Constable Matthew Hunt, who was murdered while undertaking routine policing duties.

Each and every day our frontline staff head out into the communities they serve to respond to and prevent crime, such as family harm, disorder, and burglary. Each week our Emergency Centres receive an average of over 18,000 calls on 111 asking for help.

This annual report provides an overview of the incidents in 2020 when our staff used force in the execution of their duties to protect themselves and our communities. As with previous reports, it shows the use of force by our staff continues to be a rare occurrence, used at less than 0.2% of events, with the vast majority of interactions with members of the

public not resulting in any use of force.

However, events can be complex and escalate rapidly. Accordingly, there are occasions when use of force is unavoidable and it is necessary to take steps to resolve situations before there is further risk of serious harm or worse to our staff, the parties involved, and the wider public. In these situations our staff have access to a variety of tactical options, depending on the nature of the threat they face.

Police recognise that the use of force is a significant power granted to us and our Tactical Options Framework ensures our response is always proportional to a person's threatening, violent and/or life endangering behaviour. Police use the least amount of force required to safely resolve the situation.

We understand that policing by consent carries significant responsibilities, and that our communities must have trust and confidence in the way we deliver our services. We proactively release this information every year in recognition of that.

Nothing is more important to us than the safety of our people and our communities across New Zealand.

We cannot succeed in our vision to make New Zealand the safest country unless we are doing everything we can to keep our staff and communities safe, and do that in a style of policing that New Zealanders expect and deserve.

Our frontline officers operate in a dynamic and unpredictable environment and are often called

Police must use physical force only when the exercise of persuasion, advice, and warning is found to be insufficient to obtain public co-operation to the extent necessary to maintain law and order, and to use only the minimum degree of physical force which is necessary on any particular occasion for achieving a police objective.



Our Business

NZ Police's Strategic Intent



OUR BUSINESS



TĀ TĀTOU UMANGA

POLICING BY CONSENT – TO HAVE THE TRUST AND CONFIDENCE OF ALL

WHY WE'RE HERE HE AHA TĀTOU I TŪ AI HEI RŌPŪ	WHAT WE DO HE AHA Ā TĀTOU MAHI	HOW WE DO IT HE PĒHEA E MAHIA AI E TĀTOU
<p>OUR VISION</p>  <p>OUR MISSION</p> <p>TO PREVENT CRIME AND HARM THROUGH EXCEPTIONAL POLICING</p>  <p>OUR PURPOSE</p> <p>TO ENSURE EVERYBODY CAN</p> <p>BE SAFE & FEEL SAFE</p>	<p>OUR GOALS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ SAFE HOMES FREE FROM CRIME AND VICTIMISATION  ▲ SAFE ROADS PREVENTING DEATH AND INJURY WITH OUR PARTNERS  ▲ SAFE COMMUNITIES PEOPLE ARE SAFE WHEREVER THEY LIVE, WORK AND VISIT  <p>OUR FUNCTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KEEP THE PEACE • MAINTAIN PUBLIC SAFETY • LAW ENFORCEMENT • CRIME PREVENTION • COMMUNITY SUPPORT & REASSURANCE • NATIONAL SECURITY • POLICING ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE NEW ZEALAND • EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT <p>OUR OPERATING MODEL</p> <p style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 2px; text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">PREVENTION FIRST</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; text-align: center;">"TAKING EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO PREVENT HARM"</p> <pre> graph TD A[CRITICAL COMMAND INFORMATION] --> B[INSIGHTS REPORT] B --> C[INTERPRET CRIME & CRASH ENVIRONMENT] B --> D[ASSESS THE IMPACT] C --> E[TASKING AND COORDINATION] D --> E E --> F[OPERATIONAL ACTIVITY] </pre> <p>OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH MĀORI TE HURINGA O TE TAI</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; text-align: center;">"BETTER OUTCOMES FOR ALL BY WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH MĀORI"</p>	<p>OUR PRIORITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ BE FIRST, THEN DO STRENGTHENING HOW AND WHO WE ARE AS AN ORGANISATION ▲ DELIVER THE SERVICES NEW ZEALANDERS EXPECT AND DESERVE UNDERSTANDING AND PROVIDING WHAT THE PUBLIC WANT FROM THEIR POLICE ▲ FOCUSSED PREVENTION THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS FOCUSSED POLICE EFFORT AND WORKING WITH OTHERS TO ACHIEVE BETTER OUTCOMES <p>OUR PEOPLE</p> <p>ARE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAFE AND FEEL SAFE • VALUED • FAIR TO ALL • COMPASSIONATE AND REFLECTIVE <p>OUR LEADERSHIP</p> <p>CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE WE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LIVE OUR VALUES, INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY • ARE INCLUSIVE – EVERYONE CAN BE THEMSELVES • ENABLE OUR PEOPLE TO BE THEIR BEST, USING THE PHPF <p>OUR CULTURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COLLECTIVE EFFORT FOR SHARED OUTCOMES • BRINGING HUMANITY TO EVERY INTERACTION <p>OUR PARTNERS</p> <p>WORKING WITH AND BESIDE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GOVERNMENT AGENCIES • MĀORI, PACIFIC, AND ETHNIC COMMUNITIES • COMMUNITY GROUPS • INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS • INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS 
<p>OUR VALUES >> PROFESSIONALISM >> RESPECT >> INTEGRITY >> COMMITMENT TO MĀORI & THE TREATY >> EMPATHY >> VALUING DIVERSITY</p>		

Our Business is a summary of NZ Police's strategic intent. It provides details of why we are here, what we stand for, and how we go about delivering our services.

Our Business directly relates to the work our people do every day and provides a clear understanding of their purpose and how they contribute through their role. It supports a high

performance culture by providing all staff with a clear line of sight to our vision, mission and goals so we can all deliver outstanding results for New Zealanders.



Key Findings

Police rarely used tactical options.

On average, **one** out of every **518** events that Police attended involved the use of a tactical option (0.19%).¹

Police used **7011** tactics at **5395** TOR events.

There was a 9% increase in TOR events from 2019; this increase occurred in the context of an 18% increase in the number of events Police attended.

Empty Hand techniques were the most used tactical option.

Empty hand techniques were used at 39% of TOR events, followed by OC Spray (28%), TASER (25%), and Handcuffs-Restraints (15%).

Tactic usage rates remained stable over the past five years.

In 598 TOR events, subjects spat blood/saliva at Police (11% of all TOR events), a behaviour with increased risk in 2020 due to potential viral transmission during the COVID-19 global pandemic. In 358 TOR events, the subject was placed in a Spitting Hood.

Laser Painting was the most common TASER deployment method.

In 65% of TASER uses, laser painting was the highest level of deployment.

20% of TASER deployments involved a discharge; 80% involved only a TASER show.

The TASER show-to-discharge ratio remained stable with an average of four shows per discharge.

Baton use was very rare.

Baton use continued its downward trajectory, with only 21 reportable uses in 2020, down from 37 in 2019 and 54 in 2018.

Firearms were very rarely discharged.

98% of firearms deployments involved only a presentation.

The seven firearms discharges in 2020 occurred at five incidents: three resulted in fatal injuries, one in non-fatal injuries, and one missed the subject.

Injuries were associated with Empty Hand techniques.

Empty Hand techniques caused the largest proportion (47%) of subject injuries, with one injury occurring for every six uses.

There was a high rate of Empty Hand technique use at TOR events where staff were injured.

Most complaints were about Empty Hand techniques.

Empty Hand techniques accounted for 75% of complaints, with one complaint for every seven uses.

TASER accounted for only 3% of complaints, with one complaint for every 104 uses.

Subjects were armed at 1 out of every 5 TOR events.

Subjects who were armed were most likely to have cutting/stabbing weapons (45%) followed by bludgeoning weapons (30%).

At 121 TOR events (2.2%) the subject was armed with a firearm, almost identical to 124 TOR events in 2019 (2.6%).

1 in 9 TOR events occurred at a mental health incident or attempted suicide.

TASER use at Threaten/Attempt Suicide events (1X) dropped from 39% in 2019 to 26% in 2020, likely due to a decrease in the number of these subjects who were armed with cutting/stabbing weapons.

Males, people aged 17 – 40 years, and Māori were overrepresented.

Māori males aged 17 – 40 years make up less than 3% of the general population but accounted for 34% of all TOR events and 22% of all offender proceedings.

Males aged 17 – 40 years make up 17% of the general population, but accounted for 63% of TOR events, and 53% of offender proceedings. These two characteristics—being male and aged 17 – 40 years—have been largely overlooked in public discourse about Police use of force.

¹ Attended events data (reported here and throughout this report) is based on Communication and Resource Deployment (CARD) data.

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Tactical Options Framework

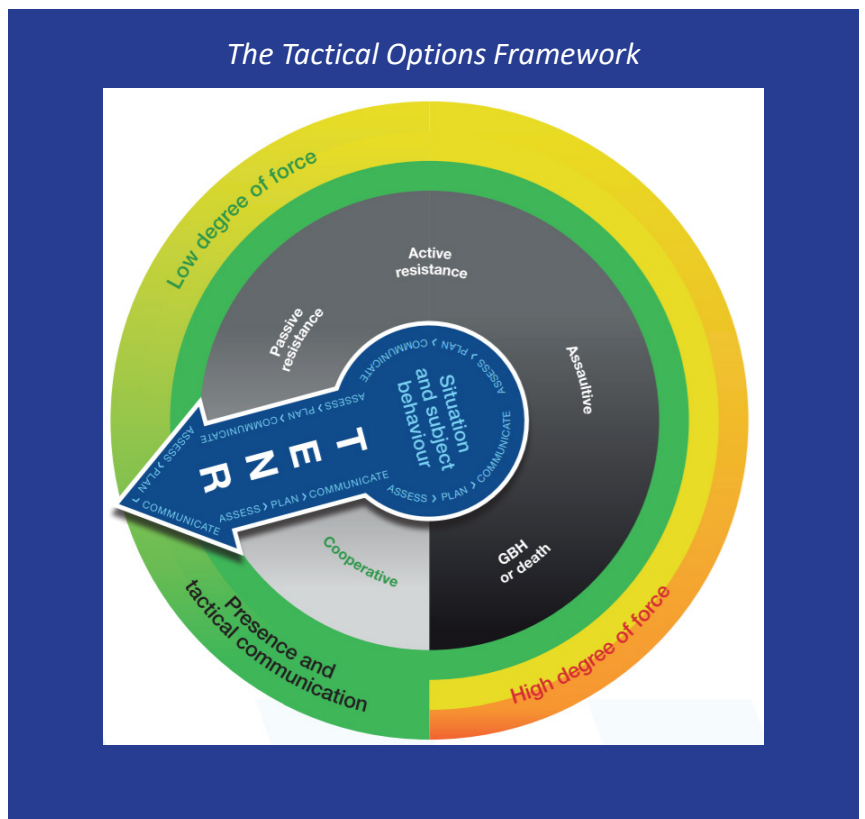
Police are trained to use the Tactical Options Framework (TOF) to inform their decision-making about use of force. The TOF guides police to only use force that is necessary and proportionate, given all the circumstances known at the time.

Threat Assessment

NZ Police’s threat assessment methodology ‘TENR’ (Threat Exposure Necessity Response) is a decision-making framework that supports the timely and accurate assessment of information directly relevant to the safety of police and members of the public. The response to any situation must be considered, timely, proportionate and appropriate. The overriding principle when applying TENR is that ‘safety is success’. Victim, public, and police safety are paramount, and every effort must be made to minimise harm and maximise safety.

Perceived Cumulative Assessment (PCA)

The PCA is represented by the inner grey/black ring of the TOF diagram, and refers to an officer’s subjective assessment, and continuous reassessment, of an incident, based on information known about the situation and the subject’s behaviour. The PCA may increase and/or decrease more than once during an incident. As such, police officers must continually reassess their PCA to ensure they choose the most reasonable response, including—if required—the most appropriate tactical option for the circumstances.



Communication

Ask-Why-Options-Confirm-Action (AWOCA) is the five-step tactical communications process that underpins the TOF. Tactical communication is represented by the green ‘officer presence and communication’ ring in the TOF diagram. This ring encircles the entire range of PCA (inner grey circle), and all tactical options in the TOF (outer green–yellow–

orange circle), emphasising the importance of using tactical communication throughout an incident, where possible.

Tactical communication is crucial to safely de-escalating an incident with uncooperative subjects, and should be attempted in every incident where police action is necessary in response to uncooperative subjects.

Tactical Options Reporting

NZ Police has established one of the most rigorous and robust processes in the world for reporting and review of use of force. Every use of force report undergoes at least two levels of scrutiny to ensure that the force used was necessary, proportionate and reasonable in the circumstances.

The Tactical Options Reporting Database

Most data in this Annual Report is derived from the Tactical Options Reporting (TOR) database (see page 59 for a full list of data sources). Police use the TOR database to report details about events where they have used force, capturing information about the broader context and sequence of the event, the people involved, the behaviours encountered and the tactical options used in response, as well as the officer's own thinking and decision-making leading up to and during the event. Every TOR report is reviewed first by the officer's immediate supervisor, and then by another District staff member at Inspector level or above.

TOR Review Process

At each stage of the review process, the reviewer determines whether or not they support the officer's actions as being necessary, proportionate and reasonable in the circumstances, or whether they require further information. If the reviewer does not support the officer's actions, they must outline their view of the incident, and if relevant discuss with the officer and note any remedial training required. If there



are concerns specifically about excessive force, deliberate misrepresentation of the incident or other perceived inappropriate action, the Inspector-level reviewer must refer the incident to the Police Professional Conduct Manager, the relevant Human Resources Manager and the

District Commander or National Manager for further investigation.

TASER Discharges

After completing the two-stage review process, records from events involving TASER discharge are further reviewed by the TASER Assurance Forum, a panel of representatives from workgroups including Police Professional Conduct, Continuous Improvement, RNZPC Training, and Frontline Capability. The panel considers the TASER footage and the TASER discharge and connectivity data in combination with the relevant TOR report/s and reviewers' comments. If any concerns are identified, the panel refers the report to the appropriate people/groups for follow-up.

Firearms Discharges

Any firearms discharges—intentional or unintentional—that result in an injury or fatality are classified as Critical Incidents, and involve a number of further internal and external investigations.

IPCA Notifications

Events involving serious injury or fatality are notified to the IPCA to conduct an independent investigation of the event.

TOR Data Overview

Analysis of tactical options use is conducted at the level of “TOR events.” A “TOR event” is the reportable use of one or more tactical options by one officer against one individual.

Data Extraction

Data was extracted on 3rd May 2021. The final dataset was made up of 5385 TOR events that had completed the two-stage review process, as well as 10 TOR events reported to the TOR Fatalities and Shooting Injuries database. Fatalities and Shooting Injuries TORs are reported by a supervisor (rather than the officer/s involved), anonymised, and only contain high level data. These 5395 TOR events form the basis of the analyses reported here. Reports for a further 78 TOR events (1.4% of total) had not completed the two-stage review process at the time of data extraction and were excluded from further analysis.

Total TOR Events

There were 9% more TOR events in 2020 than in 2019 (2019 had 5001 TOR events including both complete and incomplete reports; see [2019 TOR Annual Report](#) for full details).

Attended Events¹

Police attended 2,793,981 events in 2020, 18% more events than in 2019 (n = 2,369,278). This increase in police-public interactions provides context for the 9% increase in TOR events. Put another way, this data shows that the rate of tactical options use actually decreased relative to the number of events police attended in 2020. More specifically, in 2020, on average, one TOR event

occurred per 518 attended events; in 2019 the equivalent rate was one TOR event per 488 attended events. In fact, comparing TOR events against attended events over the last five years shows that the rate is relatively stable, with TOR events roughly proportionate to 0.2% of attended events (ranging between 0.17% and 0.21%) across this timeframe, suggesting that changes in the number of TOR events may parallel changes in the number of police-public interactions.

Please note that previous Annual TOR reports have compared TOR events against Recorded Occurrences rather than Attended Events. However, Attended Events data better captures the number of police-public interactions that occur, providing a more relevant and meaningful baseline measure, and as such, will be used for comparison in this and future reports.

Offender Proceedings²

The number of proceedings against offenders continued its downwards trend from previous years. As a result, TOR events increased relative to Offender Proceedings, with 370 TOR events per 10,000 offender proceedings in 2020, compared to 332 per 10,000 offender proceedings in 2019.



² Offender proceedings data (reported here and throughout this report) is based on [Recorded Crime Offender Statistics](#) (RCOS) data.

Our Business

Prevent Crime and Harm

In some situations, NZ Police must intervene directly to prevent crime and harm. This duty is never more apparent than when police are called to attend Family Harm events. In these—and many other—events, staff must ensure that their actions prevent any further harm to victims and prevent any further crimes from being committed in what is often a very heated and complex situation.

TOR Incident Types

The likelihood of police being required to use force depends on the type of incident attended. Table 1 shows the ten most common incident types in which force was used, accounting for 84% of TOR events in total. Table A1 (Appendix, p. 62) displays equivalent comparison data for 2019, as the 2019 TOR Annual Report used Recorded Occurrences data rather than Attended Events to calculate rates of tactical options use (see previous page for further explanation).

TOR events were least likely to occur at Turnovers (vehicle stops; 3T) with one TOR event occurring for every 2544 events attended. In contrast, TOR events were most likely to occur at Drunk/Detoxification (1K) incidents, with one TOR event occurring for every 32 Drunk/Detoxification events attended. Despite having the highest rate of TORs, Drunk/Detoxifications accounted for the smallest proportion of TORs out of the most common event types, highlighting that police attend fewer Drunk/Detoxifications than the other types of events. Turnovers are much more common than



Drunk/Detoxification incidents in general, increasing the overall number of TORs that occur at Turnovers, despite the low likelihood of force being used at these incidents.

Similarly, Family Harm (5F) episodes account for highest proportion of TOR events (18%), but TOR events occurred on average at only one of every 143 Family Harm episodes attended, emphasising the large number of family harm episodes that police are called to. The vast majority of these incidents—142 out of every 143 (99.3%)—are resolved without any use of force.

Table 1 also displays the percentage of events that Police attended in response to a call for service, rather than as a result of

Police initiated activities (these percentages relate to all 2020 Attended Events of each type, not only TOR events). As the percentages illustrate, for seven of the ten most common incident types for TORs, a large majority of Police attendance was in response to a call for service. For instance 97% of 1X Threaten/Attempt Suicide events, and 96% of Family Harm events were attended in response to a call. The remaining three incident types—Arrest Warrant, Bail Check/Breach and Turnovers—showed the opposite pattern; the vast majority of these events were initiated by Police, which is as expected given the nature of these activities.

Table 1. Where Do TOR Events Occur?

<i>Incident Type</i>	<i>Total TOR events</i>	<i>Percent of all TOR events</i>	<i>Number of Attended Events per 1 TOR event (on average)</i>	<i>Percent of Attended Events where Police Responded to Call for Service</i>
Drunk/detoxification (1K)	261	5%	32 to 1	80%
Mental health (1M)	312	6%	50 to 1	91%
Breach of peace (1R)	899	17%	61 to 1	92%
Suicide attempt (1X)	277	5%	75 to 1	97%
Arrest warrant (2T, 2W)	342	6%	85 to 1	9%
Family harm episode (5F)	958	18%	143 to 1	96%
Suspicious car/person (1C)	382	7%	148 to 1	83%
Traffic incident (1U, 1V)	517	10%	186 to 1	64%
Bail check/breach (3A, 5K, 6D, 6E)	304	6%	846 to 1	5%
Turnover (3T)	299	6%	2544 to 1	0%
Other	844	16%	1609 to 1	21%
Overall	5395	100%	518 to 1	23%

Our Business

Law Enforcement

In the course of their duties, officers sometimes encounter resistant or assaultive behaviour that either prevents them from fulfilling their role in keeping the peace and maintain public safety, or that puts themselves or others at risk of harm. In situations such as these where police are required to use force, offenders may subsequently be charged with one or more offences.

TOR Event Outcomes

Over two-thirds of TOR events ended with the offender being charged with either single (n = 1951) or multiple offences (n = 1697), a pattern that is consistent with 2019. The remaining TOR events (n = 1747) ended with no charges being laid. Outcomes for these TOR events include situations where [1] alternative resolutions were used, [2] a subject escaped before his or her identity was confirmed, [3] the decision to lay a charge was still pending at the time the TOR report was submitted, [4] a decision was made not to charge the subject, such as in a mental health incident, [5] the subject died, or [6] the police intervention successfully prevented an offence from being committed and the TOR event was resolved without a chargeable offence occurring.

Charges Laid

Figure 2 illustrates the percentage of TOR events that resulted in a charge (or multiple charges) in each offence category. Consistent with previous years, in 2020 the most common charges laid were for violence offences, followed by drugs and anti-social offences. Some subjects faced charges from multiple categories, so the total percentage exceeds 100%.

Figure 1. Percent TOR Event Outcomes

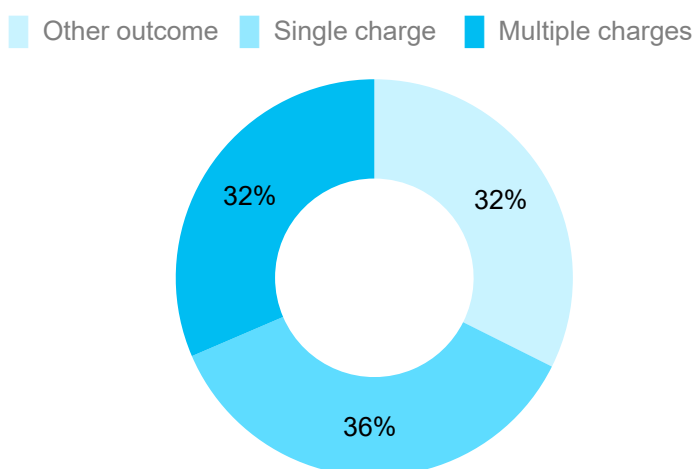
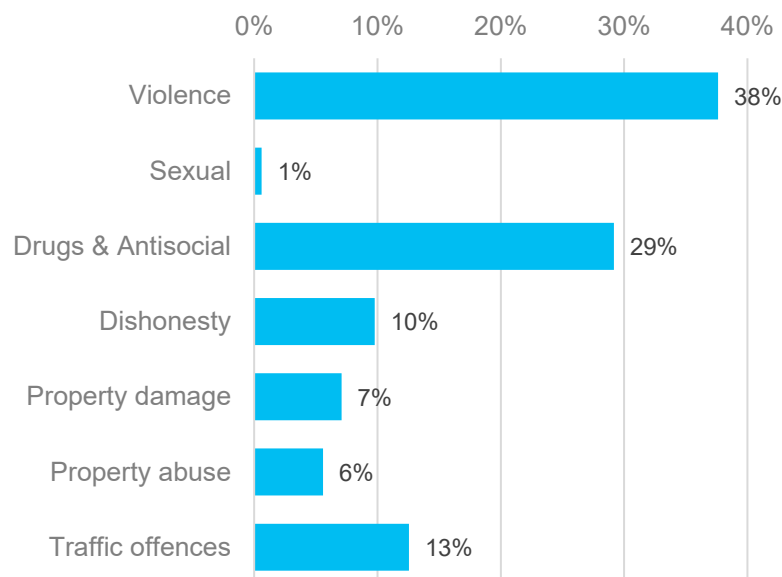


Figure 2. Offence Charges Laid



Like many policing activities, Armed Offenders Squad (AOS) deployments—whether emergency or pre-planned—have multiple goals. Emergency callouts require AOS intervention in an ongoing dangerous situation and are focused on immediate prevention of harm. Pre-planned callouts are typically focused on search and seizure of illegal weapons and drugs.

Table 2. AOS Deployments

<i>District</i>	<i>Emergency Callouts</i>	<i>Percent of Deployments</i>	<i>Pre-planned Callouts</i>	<i>Percent of Deployments</i>	<i>Total Deployments</i>
Northland	19	33%	39	67%	58
Waitematā	10	22%	35	78%	45
Auckland City	2	5%	35	95%	37
Counties Manukau	10	18%	47	82%	57
Waikato	37	26%	106	74%	143
Bay of Plenty	81	35%	151	65%	232
Eastern	26	50%	26	50%	52
Central	40	49%	42	51%	82
Wellington	28	20%	113	80%	141
Tasman	11	33%	22	67%	33
Canterbury	42	26%	120	74%	162
Southern	39	26%	111	74%	150
National	345	29%	847	71%	1192



AOS Deployments

There were 148 more AOS deployments in 2020 than 2019, with the increase driven by a higher number of pre-planned deployments. At a national level, pre-planned deployments increased from 687 in 2019 to 847 in 2020. Emergency deployments remained relatively stable, with 345 callouts in 2020 compared to 357 in 2019. The relative proportions of emergency and pre-planned deployments shifted to a ratio of roughly 3 emergency callouts to 7 pre-planned deployments.

At district level, there was a lot of variation from the previous year, with some districts' deployments

increasing and others decreasing—in some districts by a small amount and in others, substantially. The largest overall increase was seen in Bay of Plenty with higher emergency and pre-planned deployments compared to 2019 (an increase of 34 and 28 deployments respectively; 62 total). In contrast, Waikato saw decreases in both emergency and pre-planned deployments compared to 2019, (a decrease of 18 and 25 deployments respectively; 43 total). Canterbury saw the largest increase in pre-planned deployments, up 79% from 2019 with 120 pre-planned deployments in 2020 compared to 67 in 2019.

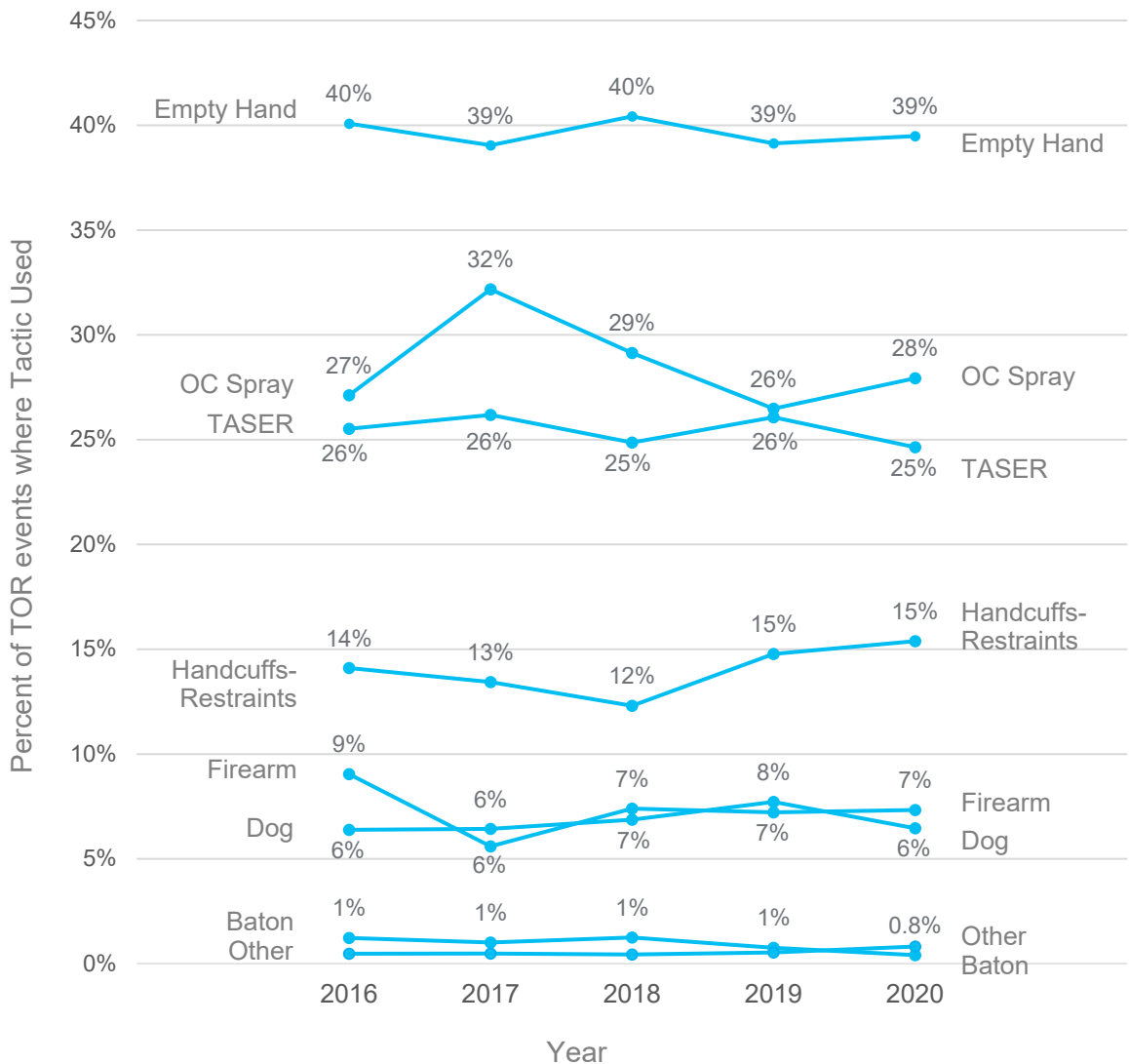
A high level of variation is both expected and typical due to the unique drivers of AOS deployments. Emergency deployments are highly dependent on demand and activity, with staff intervening to prevent harm in an immediate critical situation. On the other hand, pre-planned deployments typically involve searches to seize illegal weapons or drugs and may be the culmination of many months or years of preliminary investigations.

Our Business

People are Safe Wherever They Live, Work, and Visit

In fulfilling their duties, frontline police encounter a wide range of behaviours, ranging through cooperative, resistant, assaultive, up to behaviour that could cause grievous bodily harm or death. Staff are equipped and enabled through training in a suite of tactical options and through the tactical appointments made available to them. As such, staff are always prepared for any situation and are able to respond appropriately to keep themselves and the communities they serve safe—wherever they live, work and visit.

Figure 3. Tactical Option Use



Officers may use more than one tactical option (e.g. Handcuffs and OC spray) at a TOR event, so the total percentage exceeds 100%.



Tactical Option Use

Police used 7011 tactical options at 5395 TOR events, an average of 1.3 tactics per TOR event. In comparison, in 2019 police used 6355 tactical options at 4860 TOR events, also an average of 1.3 tactics per TOR event.

NZ Police have a range of tactical appointments and techniques to use; the decision to use force, and the specific technique or equipment used can be influenced by a multitude of factors including—but not limited to—the behaviour encountered, the number of people present and/or involved, the size and demeanour of the subjects, apparent alcohol or drug intoxication, whether the subjects are armed and the types

of weapons involved, as well as the physical location of the event.

Empty Hand Techniques

As Figure 3 shows, Empty Hand techniques are consistently the most used tactical option, used at around 40% of TOR events over the last five years (39% in 2020; see also Table 4). Although the proportion of TOR events where Empty Hand techniques used was similar to previous years, the total number of Empty Hand techniques used was higher, with 2406 uses (compared to 2182 uses in 2019).

Baton

Baton use has been consistently low over the last five years and continued to drop in 2020—used at only 21 TOR events, down from

37 in 2019 and 54 in 2018.

However, tactical options reporting may underestimate baton usage, as it only captures reportable uses of force – when a baton is used to strike a person. Police staff may use batons in other ways in the course of their duties that do not constitute reportable uses of force (e.g. to break a window), meaning that tactical options reporting may underestimate overall baton usage and usefulness. Regardless, the consistently low tactical option usage stresses the need to consider the potential opportunity-cost associated with training time focused on using batons as a tactical option. (*continues next page*)

In addition, Baton training can result in injuries (10 recruits sustained injuries from baton training in 2020) and these injuries may preclude recruits from full participation in other aspects of training, further exacerbating the costs of Baton training. As shown on Table 8 (p.31), Baton also has a high subject injury rate, with 1 injury for every 6 uses.

Handcuffs-Restraints

This category refers to handcuff use only when combined with pain compliance (see [2019 Tactical Options Report](#) for further information), as well as use of other restraints such as a Restraint Chair or Spitting Hood. Overall, Handcuffs-Restraints were used at 15% of TOR events, identical to 2019 (see also Table 7 on page 29 for information about Handcuffs-Restraints usage).

Spitting Hoods made up 40% of Handcuffs-Restraints uses, with 360 uses in 2020 (at 358 TOR events; 7% of all TOR events). In 344 of these events, the subject was reported to be spitting blood/saliva at police or biting police. In another 7 TOR events the subject specifically threatened to spit at police, and in 6 TOR events the subjects' behaviour and demeanour suggested it was a risk (3 of these subjects were also known for spitting at police in the past). Finally, one subject was deemed to be a COVID risk and was fitted with a Spitting Hood after repeatedly removing a surgical mask.

In contrast, at 254 TOR events, subjects were reported to spit blood/saliva at police, but were not fitted with a Spitting Hood. Put another way, of the 598 TOR events (11% of all TOR events) where subjects spat blood/saliva at Police, only 60% resulted in the subject being fitted with a Spitting Hood, despite the increased risks associated with viral transmission during the COVID-19 global pandemic. The rate of spitting at Police during TOR events was consistent with 2019 (10%), but is much higher than observed elsewhere. Data from 10,000 use of force events in the US showed that spitting occurred at 3.6% (see [Strote, Warner, Scales, & Hickman, 2021](#)). However the US events occurred over a longer timeframe, and reporting practices may differ from New Zealand.

19 subjects who were fitted with a Spitting Hood had been exposed to OC Spray.

Metal Handcuffs with pain compliance made up 38% of Handcuffs-Restraints uses, with 341 uses in total, at 341 TOR events (6% of all TOR events).

Restraint Chairs were used 153 times, accounting for 17% of all Handcuffs-Restraints uses.

Other Restraints The remaining Handcuffs-Restraints uses (<5%) included Vehicle Leg Restraints, Waist Restraint Belts and Plastic Ties, which are all only reportable uses of force when used with pain compliance or combined with another tactical option (see page 29 for further details).

OC Spray; Dogs; TASER; Firearm

As shown on Figure 3, use of these tactical options remains relatively stable, with no significant changes observed over the last 5 years (see also Table 4, p. 25 for detailed 2020 data).

Firearms use prior to 2018 does not include incidents where an injury/fatality occurred because these were previously not included in TOR reporting. These events are very rare, however the values for years prior to 2018 may slightly underestimate firearms use in comparison to values for 2018 onwards.



Table 3. Firearm Use at TOR Events by Highest Mode of Deployment

<i>District</i>	<i>Presentation</i>	<i>Discharge</i>
Northland	18	1
Waitematā	39	
Auckland City	41	
Counties Manukau	80	1
Waikato	23	
Bay of Plenty	64	2
Eastern	12	
Central	42	3
Wellington	28	
Tasman	8	
Canterbury	13	
Southern	20	
National	388	7



Firearms Deployment

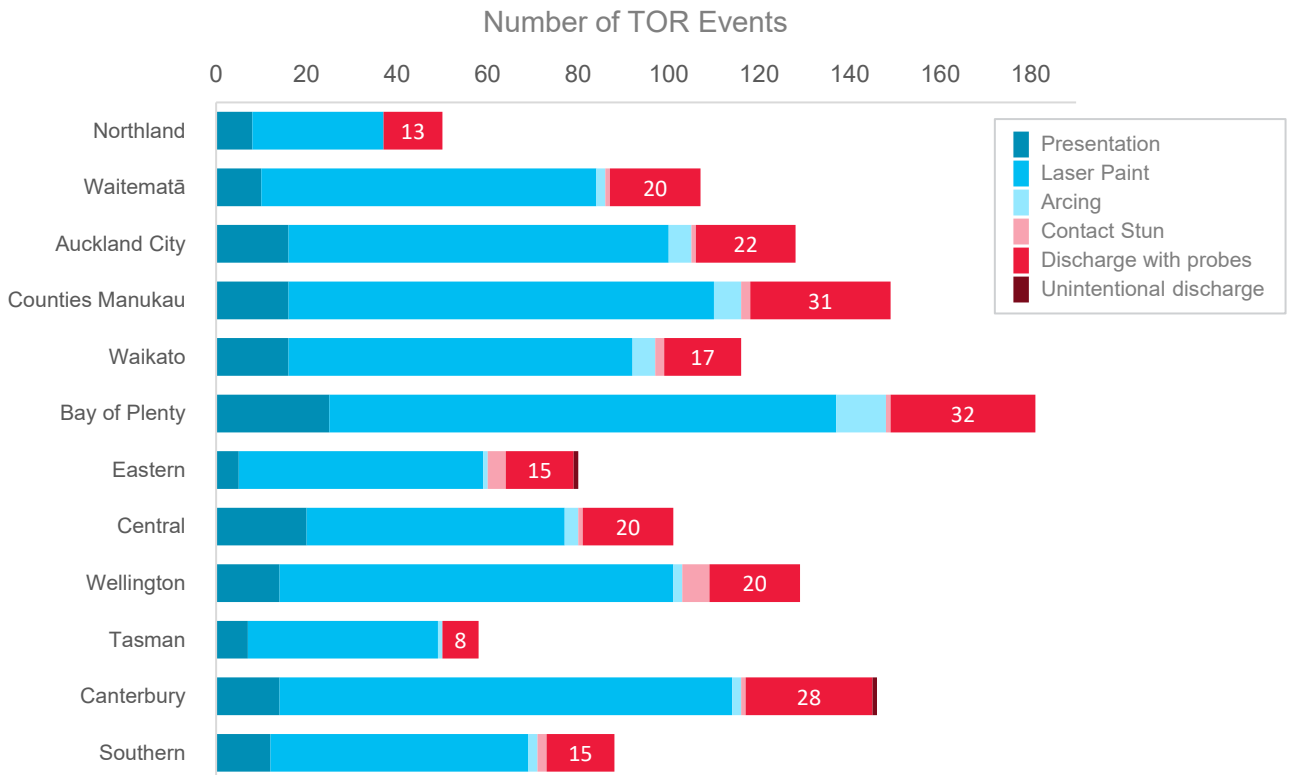
Table 3 shows the number of TOR events where police used firearms by the highest mode of deployment. The vast majority of times that police used firearms (98%) the highest mode of deployment was presentation only.

Police discharged firearms during seven TOR events; three of these TOR events occurred at one incident (Central District). Three subjects sustained fatal gunshot wounds (Bay of Plenty; Counties Manukau, Central), one subject sustained non-fatal gunshot wounds (Northland), and at one

TOR event the firearm discharge missed the subject (Bay of Plenty).

There were no unintentional firearms discharges in the operational environment.

Figure 4. TASER Use at TOR Events by Highest Mode of Deployment



TASER Deployment

Figure 4 illustrates TASER use at TOR events by the highest mode of deployment only (see also Table A3, Appendix, p. 64). Blue-toned segments represent TASER shows and red-toned segments represent TASER discharges. The legend displays TASER deployment types in order of increasing intensity from Presentation only (lowest) to Discharge with probes (highest). There were 1331 TASER TOR events in 2020 (see also Table 4; 25% of all TOR events), compared to 1267 in 2019 (26% of all TOR

events). Consistent with 2019, laser painting was the highest mode of deployment at 65% of all TASER TOR events (n = 866). Other TASER shows were made up of presentations (n = 163; 12%) and arcing (n = 40; 3%). TASER discharge occurred at 262 TOR events (20%). In 21 TOR events (2%), the discharge was a contact stun, and in the remaining 241 TOR events (18%), the TASER was discharged with probes, the highest level of TASER deployment. These proportions are almost identical to 2019.

2020 was the second consecutive year that the TASER show-to-discharge ratio held steady at 4:1, suggesting this rate may have stabilised, after decreases in previous years. In other words, on average, for every TOR event that involved a TASER discharge there were four that involved only a TASER show, suggesting that TASER show is a very effective tactical option. There were two operational unintentional discharges. Neither of these discharges hit anyone and no property was damaged.

Table 4. Tactical Option Use by District

<i>District</i>	<i>Empty Hand Techniques</i>	<i>OC Spray</i>	<i>TASER</i>	<i>Handcuffs- Restraints</i>	<i>Firearm</i>	<i>Dog</i>	<i>Baton</i>	<i>Other Tactic</i>	<i>Total</i>
Northland	86	95	51	38	19	28	0	1	318
Waitematā	261	64	109	95	39	19	1	3	592
Auckland City	182	104	129	81	41	25	1	1	564
Counties Manukau	393	141	156	143	81	49	3	1	974
Waikato	157	143	121	57	23	23	3	10	538
Bay of Plenty	222	161	183	70	66	29	2	7	740
Eastern	173	152	79	62	12	22	1	3	505
Central	294	194	103	76	46	34	3	5	755
Wellington	244	169	131	113	28	56	3	8	752
Tasman	94	101	59	25	8	9	0	1	297
Canterbury	198	146	147	103	13	39	2	2	651
Southern	102	70	88	33	20	18	2	3	336
Total Uses	2406	1540	1356	896	396	351	21	45	7011
TOR Events	2130	1508	1331	831	395	348	21	44	5395

Table 4 shows the total number of uses of each tactical option in each District (see Table A2, Appendix, p. 63 for a District breakdown of the number of TOR events where each tactic was used). Because an officer may use

a given tactical option multiple times at the same TOR event, total use of each tactical option is higher than the total number of TOR events where a given tactical option was used. Because multiple tactics may be used at the same

TOR event, the total number of TOR events where each tactic was used is greater than the total number of TOR events.

Our Business

Ensuring Everybody Can Be Safe and Feel Safe

NZ Police is often the first responder to events involving mental distress, and the frequency of these events continues to increase each year. Approximately 1 in 9 TOR events occurred at either a 1M mental illness or a 1X threaten/attempt suicide incident, and at approximately 1 in 5 TOR events either mental illness or suicidal behaviour (or both) were flagged as relevant factors. These events present unique challenges and—as with any other type of event—police must tailor their response to the specific personal and situational factors to prevent harm and keep people safe.

Table 5. TOR Events at Mental Health Incidents

<i>District</i>	<i>Mental Illness (1M)</i>	<i>Percent TOR Events</i>	<i>Suicide Attempt (1X)</i>	<i>Percent TOR Events</i>
Northland	18	8%	5	2%
Waitematā	27	6%	26	6%
Auckland City	18	4%	24	5%
Counties Manukau	38	5%	49	7%
Waikato	33	8%	16	4%
Bay of Plenty	54	9%	28	5%
Eastern	24	6%	11	3%
Central	19	3%	35	6%
Wellington	25	4%	27	5%
Tasman	8	3%	8	3%
Canterbury	24	5%	27	5%
Southern	24	9%	21	8%
National	312	6%	277	5%



1M & 1X Incidents

Officers select an incident type that best describes the nature of the incident at which tactical options were used.³ 1M and 1X incidents accounted for 11% (589) of all TOR events in 2020 (see also Table 1, p. 16), very similar

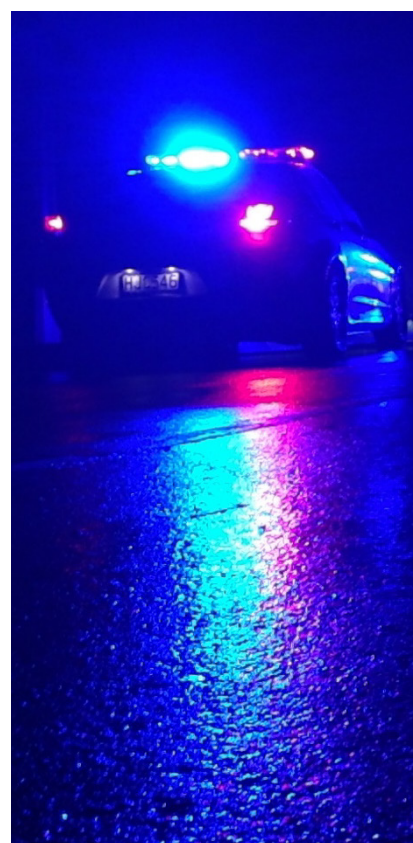
to the 2019 rate of 10% (495 TOR events). It is likely that the increased number of 1M and 1X TOR events is at least partly due to the overall increase in TOR events. Of note, the number of 1M and 1X events Police attended increased from 33,443 in 2019 up

to 36,464 events in 2020, a 9% increase. Only 1.6% of these interactions (1 out of every 62) involved the use of a tactical option in 2020 (see also Table 1). However, this rate is slightly higher than the 2019 rate of 1.5% (1 in out of every 68).

³ Selection of 1M (mental illness) and 1X (threaten/attempt suicide) incident types does not constitute a formal diagnosis of the subject's mental state.

Table 6. Mental Health Relevant Factors at TOR Events

<i>District</i>	<i>Mental Illness (1M)</i>	<i>Percent TOR Events</i>	<i>Suicide Attempt (1X)</i>	<i>Percent TOR Events</i>
Northland	43	18%	19	8%
Waitematā	70	16%	57	13%
Auckland City	80	18%	35	8%
Counties Manukau	101	14%	77	10%
Waikato	65	16%	37	9%
Bay of Plenty	116	20%	50	9%
Eastern	65	17%	19	5%
Central	92	16%	67	12%
Wellington	95	17%	47	8%
Tasman	43	17%	24	10%
Canterbury	93	18%	58	11%
Southern	76	30%	38	15%
National	939	17%	528	10%



1M & 1X Relevant Factors

Regardless of the overall incident type, the reporting officer also makes a subjective assessment of relevant factors observed at the TOR event.⁴ As shown in Table 6, mental illness was deemed a relevant factor in 939 TOR events (17%), the same proportion observed in 2019. In 528 TOR events (10%), the reporting officer deemed that the subject was suicidal, also the same proportion

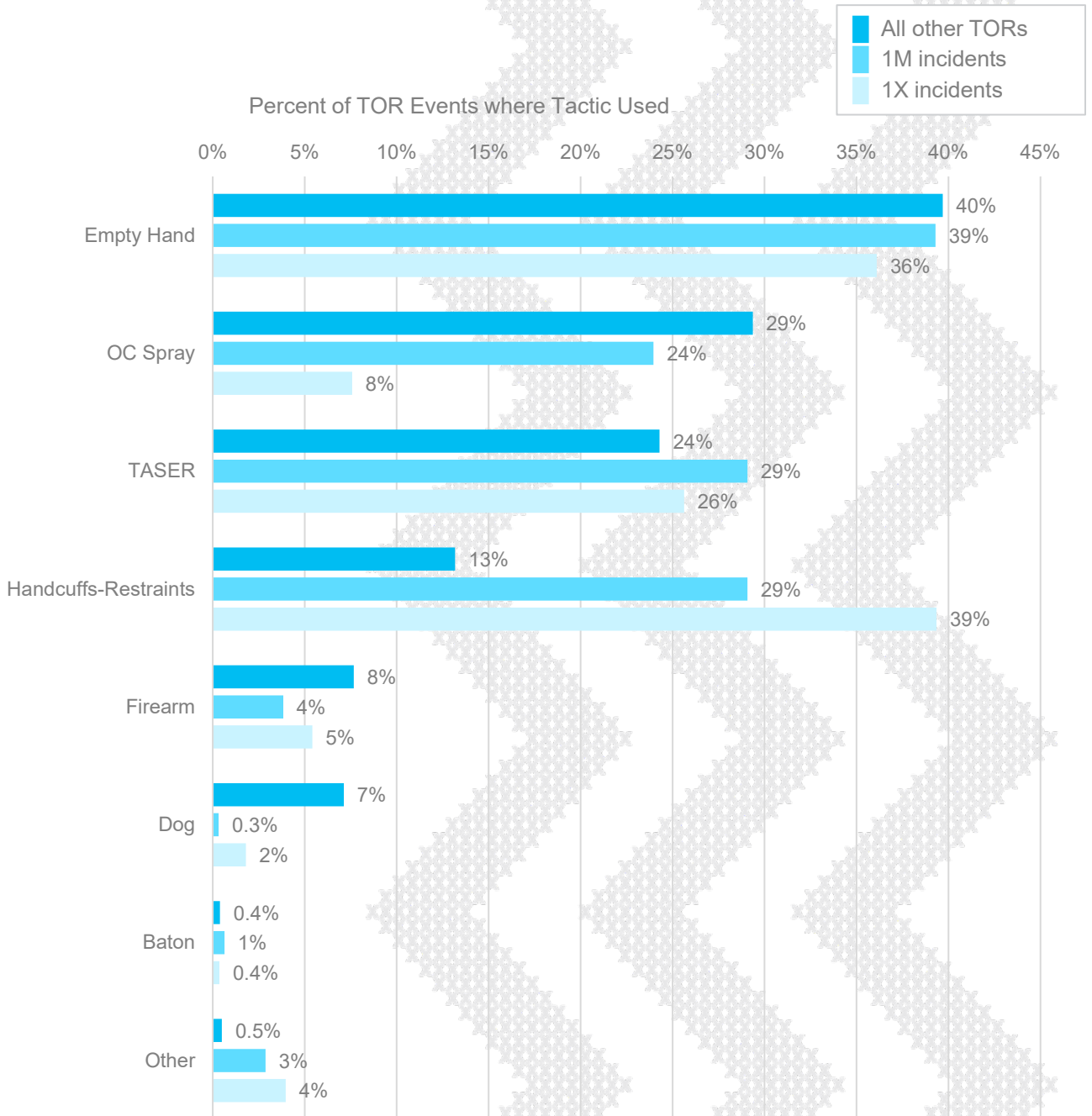
observed in 2019.

Officers may assign only one incident type, but may report multiple relevant factors. In 2020, 323 TOR events had both 1M and 1X flagged as relevant factors. In total, there were 1144 TOR events where either one or both factors were flagged as relevant, equivalent to 21% of TOR events, or approximately one TOR event out of every five; this rate is identical to 2019.

The proportion of TOR events with 1M and/or 1X flagged as a relevant factor/s remained stable from 2019. However, the actual number of these events increased, paralleling increases in the overall number of TOR events observed in 2020.

⁴ These factors do not reflect a formal diagnosis of the subject's mental state.

Figure 5. Tactical Option Use at 1M, 1X, and all other TOR Events



Officers may use more than one tactical option (e.g. Handcuffs-Restraints and TASER) at a TOR event, so the total percentage exceeds 100%.

Tactical Option Use at 1M and 1X TOR Events

Figure 5 shows the rate of tactical option use at 1M, 1X and all other TOR events. Although usage rates were broadly similar for each tactical option across the groups, some key differences were observed. For instance, OC Spray was used less frequently at 1X TOR events than either 1M or other TOR events, and Dogs and Firearms were used less frequently at both 1M and 1X than other TOR events.

One clear point of difference was in the use of Handcuffs-Restraints, which were used more frequently at 1M and 1X TOR events compared to other TOR events. Although this difference and the usage rates at 1M and other TOR events are consistent with the previous year, the usage rate at 1X events was substantially higher than 2019, with Handcuff-Restraints use at 1X TOR events in 2020 more than triple the rate of Handcuff-Restraints uses at other TOR events. Many of the restraint options available are specifically intended to prevent self-harm (e.g. Restraint Chair), explaining the high usage rate in 1M and especially 1X TOR events.

Table 7 provides a breakdown of restraints used at 1M, 1X and other TOR events in 2020.

A Spitting Hood is used when a subject is spitting blood or saliva at Police (or threatening to do so) to reduce the risk to staff. The top of the hood is made of mesh and

the lower part prevents spitting. Other Restraints include Vehicle Leg Restraints (a fabric belt placed around the ankles to prevent kicking during transportation), Waist Restraint Belts (which link to wrist restraints at the waist to reduce arm movement), and Plastic Ties (used to secure wrists or ankles). Closer examination of this data shows that the increase in Handcuffs-Restraints use at 1X TOR events was at least partly driven by increased use of Restraint Chairs in 2020: Restraint Chairs were used at 31% of 1X TOR events in 2020 (87 uses), up from 20% in 2019 (58 uses). Put another way, on average, one out

of every three 1X TOR events involved the use of a Restraint Chair, a considerable increase from an average of one out of every five 1X TOR events in 2019. In total, Restraint Chair use accounted for 74% of all Handcuffs-Restraints usage at 1X TOR events in 2020, in comparison with 57% in 2019.

Ten of the twelve NZ Police Districts had increased Restraint Chair usage in 2020, although the magnitude of these increases varied. Increased Restraint Chair use follows initiatives in some districts to improve custody training and awareness of self-harm risks. (continues next page)

Table 7. Types of Handcuffs-Restraints Used at 1M, 1X and Other TOR Events

Handcuffs-Restraints Type	Mental Illness (1M)	Threaten/ Attempt Suicide (1X)	Other TOR Events	Total
Spitting Hood	48	16	296	360
Metal Handcuffs	20	12	309	341
Restraint Chair	28	87	38	153
Other Restraints	7	2	33	42
Total Uses	103	117	676	896
TOR Events (with Handcuffs-Restraints Use)	90	109	632	831
Total TOR Events	312	277	4806	5395

Subjects who were placed in a Restraint Chair (all incident types) sustained less injuries than other TOR subjects, with 1 out of every 26 Restraint Chair subjects sustaining an injury during a TOR event, compared to 1 out of every 7 Non-Restraint Chair subjects. The rate of subject injuries directly related to Restraint Chair use was 1 injury per 51 uses, demonstrating the capacity for Restraint Chairs to reduce harm to subjects who are intent on hurting themselves.

NZ Police is engaged with the Health Sector to continue to learn and improve restraint practices and tools that strike the balance between keeping people safe from harm and maintaining dignity. Restraint Chairs are used as a last resort to help protect someone who is violent, intent on harming themselves or others, is engaging in harmful behaviour that could result in serious injury or death (such as striking doors or walls with their head) and where other available restraints would be ineffective or inappropriate. Careful consideration is required to balance people's rights and dignity while ensuring they are kept safe from harm; the decision to use a Restraint Chair must always be deemed necessary and proportionate relative to the nature of the behaviour displayed.

In an instance where a Restraint Chair is deemed to be the most appropriate response, at least one staff member present must be trained and certified in the use of

this mechanical restraint. This person will manage and lead the situation, providing guidance to other staff assisting.

Spitting Hood use accounted for 14% of Handcuffs-Restraints use at 1X events, but nearly half (47%) of Handcuffs-Restraints use at 1M events (see Table 7, p. 29), an increase from 37% in 2019.

Consistent with 2019, 1M and 1X TOR events accounted for a disproportionate amount of Handcuff-Restraints use: 24% of all Handcuffs-Restraints use occurred in 1M and 1X TOR events, although these event types made up only 11% of all TOR events. In addition, 1M and 1X TORs were respectively three times and five times more likely than other TORs to use only Handcuffs-Restraints: at 27% (74) of 1X and 16% (50) 1M TORs events, Handcuffs-Restraints were the only tactical option used. In contrast, Handcuffs-Restraints were the only tactical option used in only 5% (254) of other TOR events.

At one out of every four 1X TOR events, the only tactical option used was Handcuffs or Restraints

Of note, TASER use at 1X events was substantially lower in 2020 (26%) than the previous year

(39%), bringing the TASER usage rate for 1X TOR events close to the rates observed in 1M and other TOR events. Further examination suggests that this drop was driven by a decrease in the number of 1X TOR events where subjects presented with cutting/stabbing weapons (104 in 2019 compared to 67 in 2020; 37% and 24% of 1X TOR events respectively). The rate of TASER deployment in these circumstances—1X TOR events where the subject was armed with a cutting/stabbing weapon—was similar across years, with TASER used at 80% of these events in 2019, and 76% in 2020. This finding demonstrates how Police use of tactical options occurs in response to subject behaviour: a broad scale change in the behaviour police encountered has manifested in a broad scale change to the observed police response. Whether the lower rate of TASER use at 1X TOR events is maintained over time will be determined by whether the observed change in subjects' behaviour is maintained over time.

Despite the decrease in the proportion of 1X TOR events where subjects were armed with cutting/stabbing weapons, this proportion was still much higher in 1X than 1M or other TOR events. Specifically, 24% of 1X TOR events involved a subject armed with a cutting/stabbing weapon compared to 16% of 1M TOR events and only 7% of other TOR events.

Our Business

Taking Every Opportunity to Prevent Harm

Tactical options support frontline police to prevent harm by enabling them to intervene effectively when someone's behaviour puts either themselves or other people at risk of harm. Staff also have the opportunity to minimise harm by selecting the safest and most effective tactical option for the circumstances, to reduce the risk of injuries to both members of the public and themselves.

Table 8. Subject Injury Frequency and Injury Rates for Each Tactical Option

<i>Tactic</i>	<i>Total Injuries</i>	<i>Percent of all TOR Injuries</i>	<i>Tactic Uses per 1 Injury (on average)</i>
Empty Hand	414	47%	6 to 1
OC Spray	36	4%	43 to 1
TASER	38	4%	36 to 1
Handcuffs-Restraints	51	6%	18 to 1
<i>Handcuffs without pain compliance^{5,6}</i>	28	3%	45 to 1
Firearm	7	1%	57 to 1
Dog	295	33%	1 to 1
Baton	4	0%	6 to 1
Other tactic	11	1%	4 to 1
Overall	884	100%	8 to 1
<i>Other cause—not tactic</i>	85		

Tactical Option Injury Frequency: Subjects

Overall, subjects sustained 884 injuries at 850 TOR events, a decrease from 939 subject injuries in 2019.⁷ At 818 TOR events, the

subject sustained 1 injury, at 30 TOR events the subject sustained 2 injuries and at 2 TOR events, the subject sustained 3 injuries.

As Table 8 shows, most injuries were caused by Empty Hand

techniques and Dog deployment, a finding that is consistent with previous years (see Table 9, p. 33 for injuries at District level).

⁵ For example, a subject struggling on the ground while being handcuffed sustained grazes.

⁶ Not all uses of Handcuffs without pain compliance are recorded, the number of usages per injury is likely to be much higher than what is reported here. See [2019 TOR Annual Report](#) for further details.



Table 8 also shows the injury rate for each tactical option. Dog deployment had the highest injury rate, with an average of one injury resulting from every use. Dog deployment is only required to be reported as a tactical option if the dog bites or injures someone (dogs are often used for tracking, which is not a use of force). Put another way—on average—for every dog bite (or injury), subjects sustained one injury. Note that not every dog bite causes an injury: there were 55 TOR events with Dog as a tactical option but no associated injury. In 8 of these TOR events, other tactical options were also used (with 3 causing subject injuries), but for the remaining 47 TOR events, Dog deployment was the only tactical option used. Dogs expand Police capability when other tactical options would be ineffective, especially over distance (e.g. due to the subject running away).

Empty Hand techniques had the next highest injury rate, with one injury for every six uses; however this rate was an improvement from 2019, which had a rate of one injury per five Empty Hand technique uses. Consistent with previous years, Empty Hand

techniques were also the most used tactical option (used at 39% of TOR events), and account for nearly half (47%) of all injuries. Taken together, these findings highlight a potential opportunity for police to reduce harm through reduced use of Empty Hand techniques. Empty Hand techniques are very often the most appropriate tactical option for the situation, but there may be an opportunity for further improvement to ensure that staff are enabled with the most appropriate tactics available that also minimise harm.

TASER and OC Spray were the two tactical options resulting in the fewest injuries, with one injury occurring for an average of 36 and 43 uses respectively (superficial TASER probe injuries are not included).

Both of these tactical options are subject to usage restrictions that do not apply to Empty Hand techniques. OC Spray may only be used if a person's behaviour is within or beyond active resistant, and it is not advisable to use in confined spaces due to the risk of cross-contamination. TASER may only be used when a person's behaviour has the potential to

escalate within or beyond assaultive. In short, these tactical options are less available than Empty Hand techniques. Typically Empty Hand techniques are perceived to be a less extreme use of force than TASER or OC Spray, but the injury data raises questions around this assumption. Reconsideration of the appropriate situations for the different tactics may be warranted.

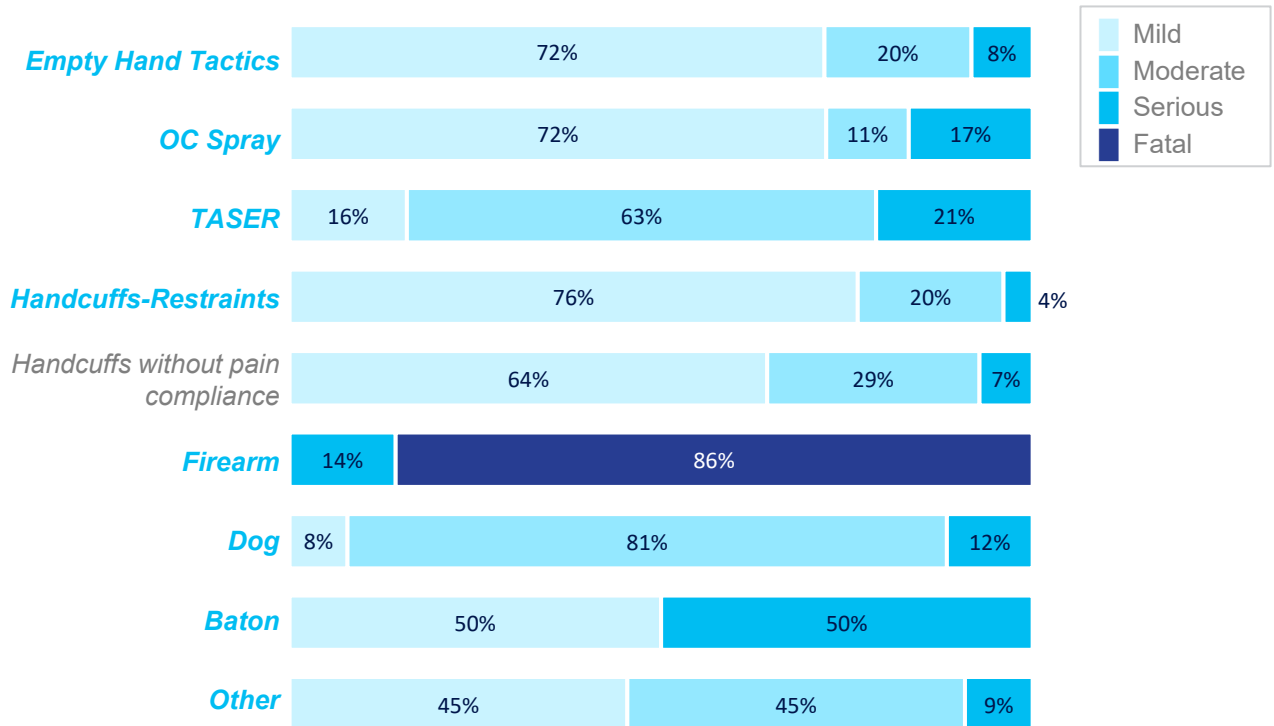
This data highlights some potential opportunities for further examination and future improvements. However, it is important to recognise that expectations must be tempered by the context of policing, with the many and varied elements that are essential to deliver the policing that New Zealanders expect and deserve. Identifying opportunities for improvement and the willingness to embrace change are not sufficient on their own; change is enabled through resourcing, capacity, and prioritisation. As such, improvements will be iterative, enabling NZ Police to adapt and grow over time, rather than through implementing an immediate and expansive change between one year and the next.

⁷ In the 2019 Annual TOR Report, the count of subject injuries included injuries with causes other than tactical options, such as injuries caused by self harm, or by an assault. Including these injuries in the total count obscures our understanding of the consequences of tactical option use and our ability to make meaningful comparisons across years. In this—and future—reports, we will still report how many of these injuries occurred (see Table 8), but they will not be included as part of the yearly total. The comparison to 2019 above has adjusted 2019 data to exclude these injuries from the total.

Table 9. Subject Injury Frequency and Causes by District

<i>District</i>	<i>Empty Hand Techniques</i>	<i>OC Spray</i>	<i>TASER</i>	<i>Handcuffs-Restraints</i>	<i>Handcuffs without pain compliance</i>	<i>Firearm</i>	<i>Dog</i>	<i>Baton</i>	<i>Other Tactic</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Other cause: Not tactic</i>
Northland	15	2	1	4	1	1	23		1	48	3
Waitematā	34	2	3		3		15			57	7
Auckland City	31		3	5	3		20			62	7
Counties Manukau	59	3	8	8	4	1	38			121	13
Waikato	33	2	3	3	2		22	1	4	70	7
Bay of Plenty	51	3	1	5	2	1	26	1	1	91	12
Eastern	32	4		1	1		18		1	57	7
Central	44	4	5	7	3	4	31	2		100	8
Wellington	44	3	5	6	2		43		2	105	3
Tasman	17	2		3	3		9		1	35	7
Canterbury	40	7	6	7	1		34		1	96	8
Southern	14	4	3	2	3		16			42	3
Total	414	36	38	51	28	7	295	4	11	884	85

Figure 6. Injury Severity for Each Tactical Option: Subjects



Tactical Option Injury Severity: Subjects

Figure 6 illustrates the severity of injuries caused by each tactical option. Minor injuries required no treatment or self treatment only; moderate injuries required medical treatment but not hospitalisation, and serious injuries required hospitalisation. Everyone who is subject to TASER discharge undergoes a medical check. TASER had one of the lowest injury rates, but when injuries did occur they were more likely to be moderate or severe, rather than minor. In contrast, Empty Hand techniques caused the most

injuries, but injuries were more likely to be minor. OC Spray balanced the best of both outcomes: OC Spray had a low injury rate, and when injuries occurred, they were most likely to be minor. These findings are consistent with 2019. Firearms caused injuries at seven TOR events (<1% of all injuries), but these injuries were by far the most severe, with one serious injury requiring hospital treatment and six fatal injuries. Note that because a TOR event is about the tactical options used by one officer against one individual—rather than the incident as a whole—in some cases a subject injury is

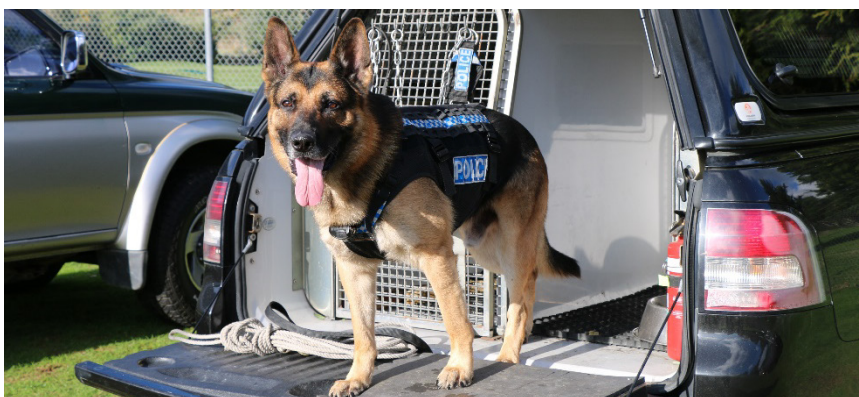
recorded multiple times across multiple TOR events: although there were six fatal injuries recorded at TOR events, four of these relate to one subject at one incident. Four police officers used a tactical option at the incident, meaning there were four TOR events, but in reality there was one fatality at this incident, not four. This data gives a deeper understanding of the risk from the different tactical options, emphasising that we cannot rely on injury frequency alone to inform decisions intended to reduce harm.

Staff Injury Frequency

Staff injuries are not easily comparable to subject injuries because of reporting differences. Each separate injury that a subject sustains is recorded, but staff are recorded as either being injured or not: it is not discernible from the data whether injured staff sustained one or multiple injuries.⁸

Staff were injured at 594 TOR events (11%), equivalent to one staff member injured for every nine TOR events; this rate is identical to 2019. The vast majority of staff injuries were caused by the subject (89%); a further 3% were ascribed to police—whether accidental, or due to the officer's own or another officer's actions; less than 1% were caused by equipment, and 8% were reported as being due to "other" causes.

Records of staff injuries are not directly attributed to specific tactical options. However, by comparing the tactical options used during TOR events where staff were injured (staff-injury TOR events) against those where staff



were not injured (non-injury TOR events), we can get an idea about the possible risks to staff. To make this comparison, the usage rate⁹ of each tactical option was calculated for both staff-injury and non-injury TOR events. Next the usage rate for non-injury TOR events was subtracted from the usage rate for staff-injury TOR events. Figure 7 illustrates the resulting difference for each tactical option. A difference of zero indicates that the tactic was used equally often during staff-injury and non-injury TOR events. More positive differences indicate that the tactic was used more during staff-injury TOR events than non-injury TOR events, and more negative differences show the opposite.

Over two-thirds of staff injuries occurred at TOR events where the staff member had used Empty Hand techniques ($n = 436$, 73%), and this was double the rate of Empty Hand techniques in TOR events where no staff injury occurred (35%). This finding is consistent with 2019. Although we

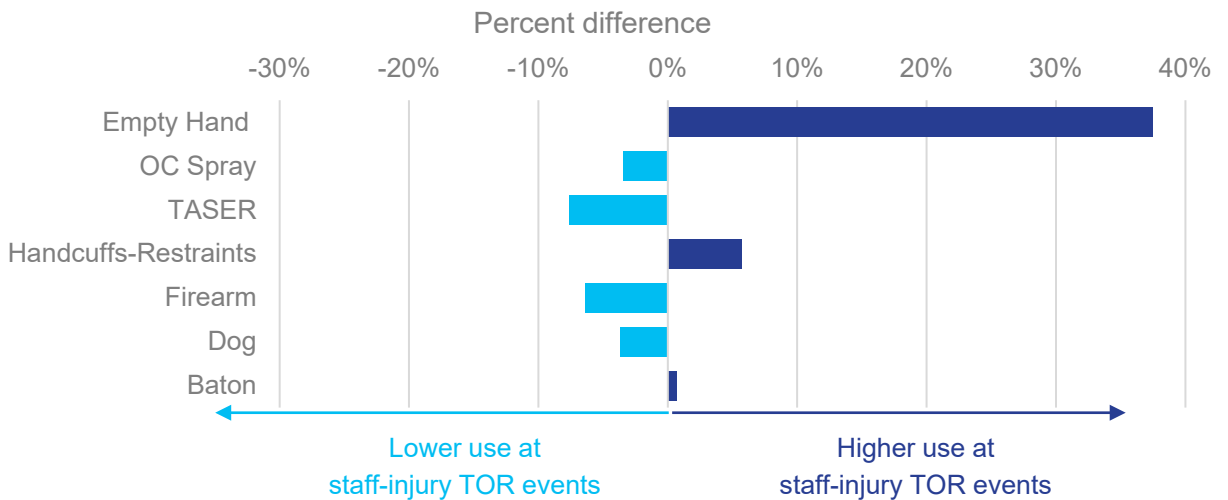
do not know whether Empty Hand techniques directly caused these injuries, these figures suggest that TOR events where Empty Hand techniques are used are a higher risk for staff injuries—either because of the tactic itself, or because of other features that are also likely to occur in these events (for example, staff being in close proximity to the subject). Handcuffs-Restraints were also used more often in staff-injury TOR events (21%) compared to non-injury TOR events (15%). In contrast, TASER, Firearm, and Dogs—which can all be deployed from a distance—were used less often in staff-injury TOR events compared to non-injury TOR events. OC Spray was used slightly less often in staff injury TOR events, although the difference was only small. There was no difference in use of Other tactics at staff-injury and non-injury TOR events.



⁸ The new TOR reporting system (live from late 2021) will capture multiple staff injuries.

⁹ The percentage of TOR events where a given tactic was used.

Figure 7. Differences in Tactical Option Usage Rates for TOR Events where Staff Were and Were Not Injured

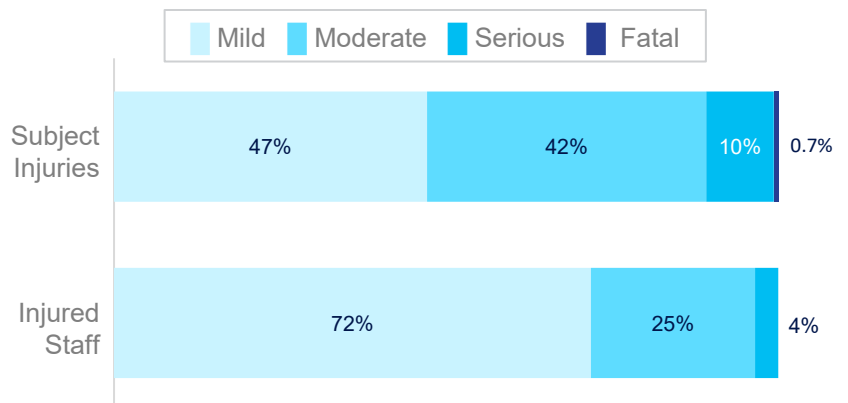


Injury Severity: Staff and Subjects

Figure 8 displays the proportion of injuries that occurred at each of four levels of severity. Minor injuries required no treatment or self treatment only; moderate injuries required medical treatment but not hospitalisation, and serious injuries required hospitalisation. Most injuries occurred at lower levels of severity, with proportionally fewer injuries occurring as injury severity increased. This pattern was most apparent for staff, with only a small proportion of staff injuries at the higher levels of injury severity. Subjects had an almost equivalent rate of moderate as mild injuries. These patterns are consistent with previous years.



Figure 8. Severity of Staff and Subject Injuries



Whether a TOR event results in injuries or other harm depends at least in part on the unique characteristics of the situation and people involved. One important factor is whether a subject is armed and the type of weapon. Officers must respond appropriately to this elevated risk, minimising harm by selecting the safest and most effective tactical option for the circumstances, and reducing the risk of injuries to both members of the public and themselves.

Table 10. Subject-Armed TOR Events by Weapon Type

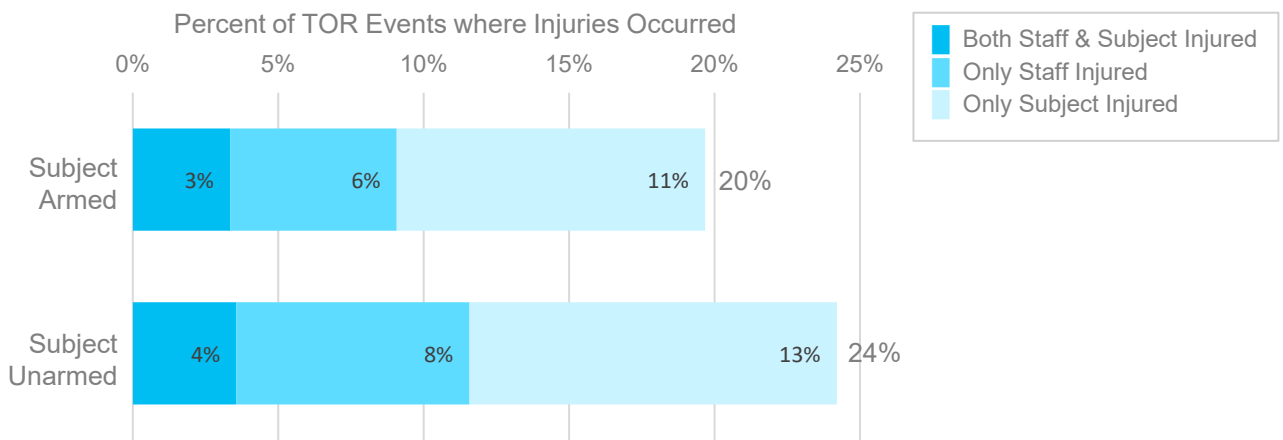
<i>Weapon Type</i>	<i>Number of TOR Events</i>	<i>Percent of Subject-Armed TOR Events</i>	<i>Percent of All TOR Events</i>
Cutting/stabbing weapon	466	45%	9%
Bludgeoning weapon	316	30%	6%
Firearm	121	12%	2%
Air/BB/Pellet gun	50	5%	1%
Vehicle	67	6%	1%
Other	26	2%	0.5%
TOTAL	1046	100%	19%



Subject Weapon Types

Table 10 shows that subjects were most likely to be armed with cutting/stabbing weapons, followed by bludgeoning weapons. However, as noted on page 30, subjects at 1X (threaten/attempt suicide) TOR events, were much more likely to be armed with cutting/stabbing weapons (24%) than subjects at other TOR events (8%), suggesting the weapons risk to Police depends at least in part on the type of incident attended.

Figure 9. Staff and Subject Injury Rates at Subject-Armed and Subject-Unarmed TOR Events



Injuries at Subject-Armed TOR events

Figure 9 shows that injuries occurred at proportionally fewer subject-armed TOR events (20%) than subject-unarmed TOR events (24%). Although the differences appear small—especially when considering staff and subjects separately—the rate is equivalent to someone being injured in 1 out of every 5 subject-armed TOR events, but 1 out of every 4 subject-unarmed TOR events.

Common sense suggests that weapons should increase the risk of harm. However, when subjects were armed, Police were substantially less likely to use Empty Hand techniques (see Table 11). Given the association between Empty Hand techniques and injuries, it is likely that the reduced use of this tactical option contributed to the reduced injuries

sustained when subjects were armed. In addition, other close-proximity tactics (such as Handcuffs-Restraints and OC Spray) were also used more often at subject-unarmed TOR events, whereas tactics that could be deployed from a distance (such as TASER and firearm) were used more often at subject-armed TOR

events. This pattern of results supports the idea that injuries occur less frequently when staff and subjects maintain distance from one another. However, the result may also be at least partly due to TOR events that occur in custody, where subject weapons have already been removed.

Table 11. Tactical Option Usage Rates at Subject-Armed and Subject-Unarmed TOR Events

Tactical Option	Subject-Unarmed TOR Events	Subject-Armed TOR Events
Empty Hand	43%	25%
OC Spray	30%	20%
TASER	20%	45%
Handcuffs-Restraints	18%	6%
Firearm	5%	17%

Our Business

Policing by Consent - To Have the Trust and Confidence of All

Complaints about NZ Police provide an indicator of public trust and confidence, and of whether NZ Police is delivering the services that New Zealanders expect and deserve. The more that the public trust Police to treat them and others with fairness and respect, and the more that the service received meets people's expectations, the less they should feel the need to complain about their interactions with NZ Police. Conversely, a breakdown in trust or disparities between people's expectations and experiences should lead to complaints.¹⁰

Table 12. Complaint Frequency and Rate for Each Tactical Option

Tactic	Total Complaints	Percent of all Force Complaints	Tactic Uses per 1 Complaint (on average)
Empty Hand	338	75%	7 to 1
OC Spray	31	7%	50 to 1
TASER	13	3%	104 to 1
Handcuffs-Restraints	46	10%	19 to 1
Firearm	10	2%	40 to 1
Dog	9	2%	39 to 1
Baton	2	0.4%	11 to 1
Overall	449	100%	16 to 1

Tactical Option Complaint Rates

The total number of complaints increased slightly from 433 complaints in 2019, to 449 in 2020; however the rate of complaints decreased from 1 for every 15 TOR events in 2019, to 1 for every 16 TOR events in 2020.

Consistent with previous years, Empty Hand techniques accounted for the vast majority of force complaints (75%). Empty

Hand techniques also had the highest complaint rate, with one complaint received for every 7 usages (on average). At the other end of the scale, TASER had the lowest complaint rate, with only one complaint for every 104 uses; OC Spray fell partway between these two extremes. Table 14 provides a breakdown of complaint frequency for each tactical option by District.

These findings are consistent with

2019, and provide further support for a review of tactical options and the situations in which they can be used, to ensure that staff are equipped and enabled with tactical options that minimise harm while meeting public expectations.

The IPCA is notified of all firearms discharges that cause an injury or fatality, regardless of whether there is a complaint.

¹⁰ Note that having a robust complaints process where people trust that their complaints will be taken seriously and addressed may also encourage a higher level of complaint reporting.

Complaints upheld provide a clear indicator of whether police are doing all they can to earn the trust and confidence of all, and to deliver the services that New Zealanders expect and deserve. To the extent that complaints are upheld, NZ Police is falling short.

Table 13. Complaint Outcomes for Each Tactical Option

<i>Tactic</i>	<i>Upheld</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>	<i>Not Upheld</i>	<i>Total</i>
Empty Hand	5	57	276	338
OC Spray	3	1	27	31
TASER		5	8	13
Handcuffs-Restraints	1	4	41	46
Firearm		2	8	10
Dog	1	2	6	9
Baton		1	1	2
Overall	10	72	367	449

Complaint Outcomes

Table 13 shows the outcomes of complaint investigations for each tactical option. At the time of data extraction, 84% of complaints investigations were complete, with 3% of these complaints upheld. Investigations for the remaining 16% were still ongoing. Upheld refers to any finding that has some form of disciplinary or corrective action taken, or a change to NZ Police policy and procedure. Not Upheld refers to all other findings such as complaints that were not upheld, conciliated, or withdrawn.



Table 14. Complaint Frequency of Each Tactical Option by District

<i>District</i>	<i>Empty Hand Techniques</i>	<i>OC Spray</i>	<i>TASER</i>	<i>Handcuffs- Restraints</i>	<i>Firearm</i>	<i>Dog</i>	<i>Baton</i>	<i>Total</i>
Northland	13	1				2		16
Waitematā	18	1	1	4				24
Auckland City	38			6		1		45
Counties Manukau	31	1	3	4	1	1	1	42
Waikato	35	1		2		1		39
Bay of Plenty	38	7		1	1	1		48
Eastern	22	2		5	1			30
Central	46	1		5	1	1	1	55
Wellington	37	4	5	10	1	1		58
Tasman	6	1		2				9
Canterbury	50	10	4	5	5			74
Southern	4	2		2		1		9
National	338	31	13	46	10	9	2	449

Focus on Personal Factors

Complex interactions between systemic, social, cultural, and behavioural factors drive the overrepresentation of particular groups in the criminal justice system and the associated overrepresentation of these groups in use of force events. This section examines some of the specific subject factors associated with higher rates of use of force, and where possible identifies opportunities for further consideration and potential improvements.

When taking the Constables' Oath, every police officer swears to "...faithfully and diligently serve... without favour or affection..." in doing so committing to treat all people fairly, without prejudice or discrimination.

The primary determining factor in an officer's decision to use force should always be the subject's behaviour: force should only be used only in response to behaviour that is resistant, assaultive, or that is intended or likely to cause serious harm. There is no place for any Police use of force in any other circumstances in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Yet, some groups have a

disproportionately high level of contact with the criminal justice system, and are involved in a disproportionately high proportion of TOR events. Recent international discourse highlights that some groups experience disproportionately more interactions with Police (see for example [Minhas & Walsh, 2021](#)); as a result, these people also have more opportunities for an interaction to result in a use of force. If people believe they are being unfairly targeted by Police, the associated frustration may inflame any interactions they have with the police, potentially increasing the chance of behaviour that will lead to use of force. To fully understand any biases in use of force, we must

consider not only the specific interaction where force has occurred, but also what happened before that interaction and what led to the interaction occurring.

NZ Police is undertaking a major piece of work to examine how Police can ensure we deliver policing that is fair and equitable for all our communities. 'Understanding Policing Delivery' is a research programme focussed on identifying whether, where, and to what extent, bias exists at a system level in Police's operating environment. The programme will specifically examine who Police stop and speak to and how we engage with them, as well as decision making around use of force.



Focus on Personal Factors: Gender

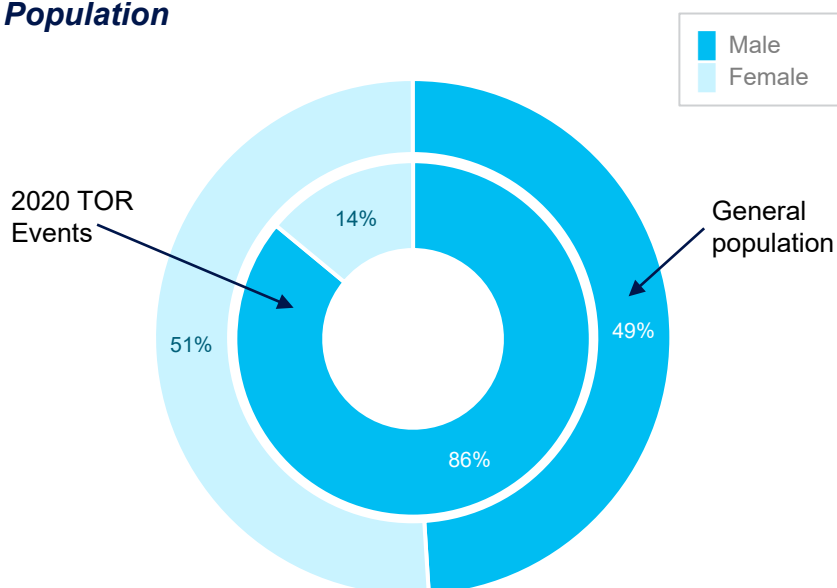


TOR Events: Gender

Males were the most highly represented group in TOR events: males accounted for 86% of TOR events in 2020, yet make up only 49% of the general population¹¹ (see Figure 10). In other words, males were subjects of TOR events 37% more often than we would expect based only on population numbers. This overrepresentation is consistent with other crime statistics. For instance, other Police data shows that males are also overrepresented at firearms events, making up 83% of subjects at firearms events, an overrepresentation of 34% compared to population numbers.

Males also account for 76% of all offender proceedings, including 78% of proceedings for violence offences, consistent with the point that police use of force is primarily a response to violent behaviour. Finally, according to the Department of Corrections¹², on 31 December 2020, 94% of the prison population were male—a 45% higher representation of males than in the general population. Although the rates across these measures vary, taken together the measures consistently show that males are over-represented in the criminal justice system.

Figure 10. TOR Subject Gender compared to NZ Population



¹¹ Population data (here and throughout this report) is from *Stats NZ Tātauranga Aotearoa*; see p.59 for full details.

¹² Prison data from *Ara Poutama Aotearoa Department of Corrections*; see p.59 for full details.

Focus on Personal Factors: Age

Three out of every four TOR Events involved a subject aged between 17 and 40 years old.

TOR Events: Age

As shown in Figure 11, subjects aged 21 – 30 years accounted for the largest proportion of TOR events (39%). In total, 75% of TOR events involved subjects aged 17 – 40 years old. This number mirrors offender proceedings; people aged 17 – 40 years old accounted for 71% of all offender proceedings in 2020.

Figure 11 illustrates the asymmetrical distribution of subjects' ages at TOR events, with a sharp increase from adolescence and peaking during the twenties before gradually declining across the older age groups. The pattern is more symmetrical when examining TOR events relative to offender proceedings and relative to population numbers, still peaking in the 21 – 30 year age group, and decreasing gradually on either side towards the youngest and oldest groups. Examination of TASER shows and discharges, and firearm presentations and

discharges by age-group shows the same asymmetric pattern as TOR events, peaking during the twenties, then gradually declining in older age groups (Figure 12).

Of interest, the asymmetric pattern of TOR events also parallels the age-crime curve—a widely observed criminological phenomenon in which crime prevalence typically increases sharply during adolescence and the early 20s, and then gradually declines during older ages (see [De Apodaca, Csik, Odell, O'Brien, Morris & Thorne, 2014](#); [Loeber & Farrington, 2014](#)). The broad pattern of the age-crime curve is widely consistent, although the specific peak and shape of the curve vary based on offender and offence characteristics. The increase and subsequent decrease in crime are likely to be driven by both biological factors (e.g. brain maturation, physical capability) and social factors, such as the weakening and the re-emergence of social bonds as

people progress through adolescence to adulthood and form meaningful social connections to work and family (for a detailed review, see [Ulmer & Steffensmeier, 2014](#)).

Why would TOR events be distributed in the same pattern as the age-crime curve? There are at least two reasons. First, the same factors associated with increases and decreases in deviant behaviour over the life-span may also be associated with increases and decreases in the types of behaviour that leads to Police using force (e.g. resistant or assaultive behaviour). Second, police work focuses on preventing crime and apprehending offenders; given that crime is more concentrated in younger age groups (as illustrated by the age-crime curve), these people may be involved in more interactions with the police, increasing the opportunities to be involved in a TOR event.

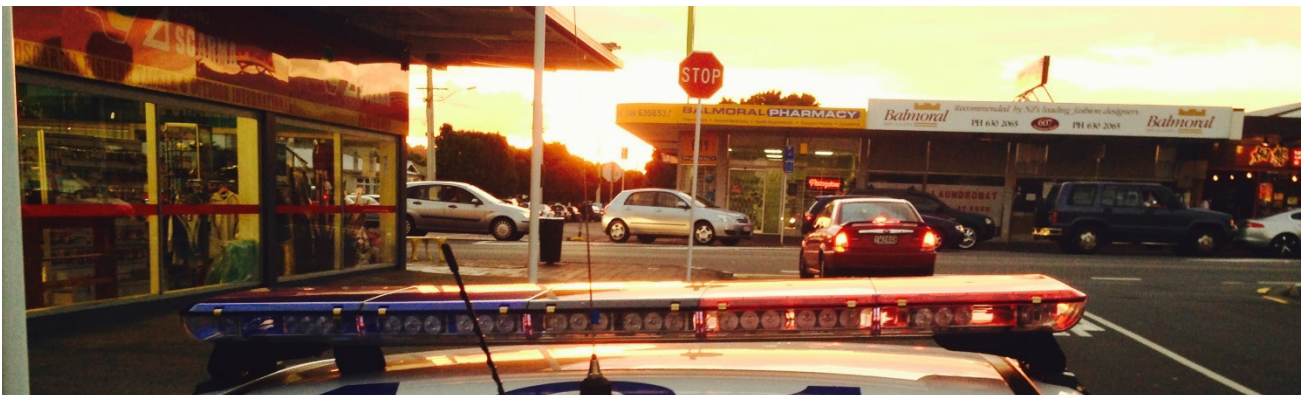
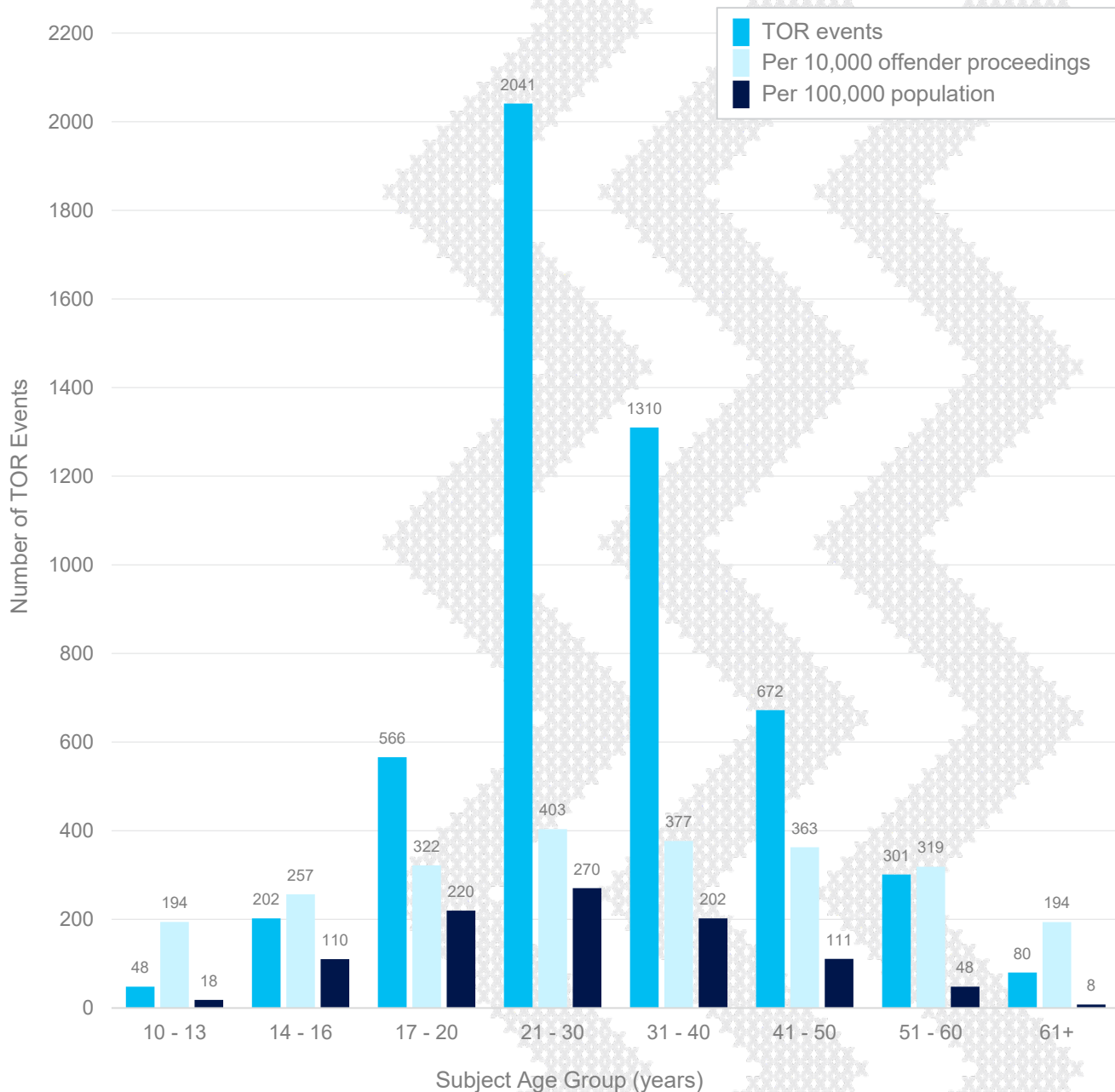
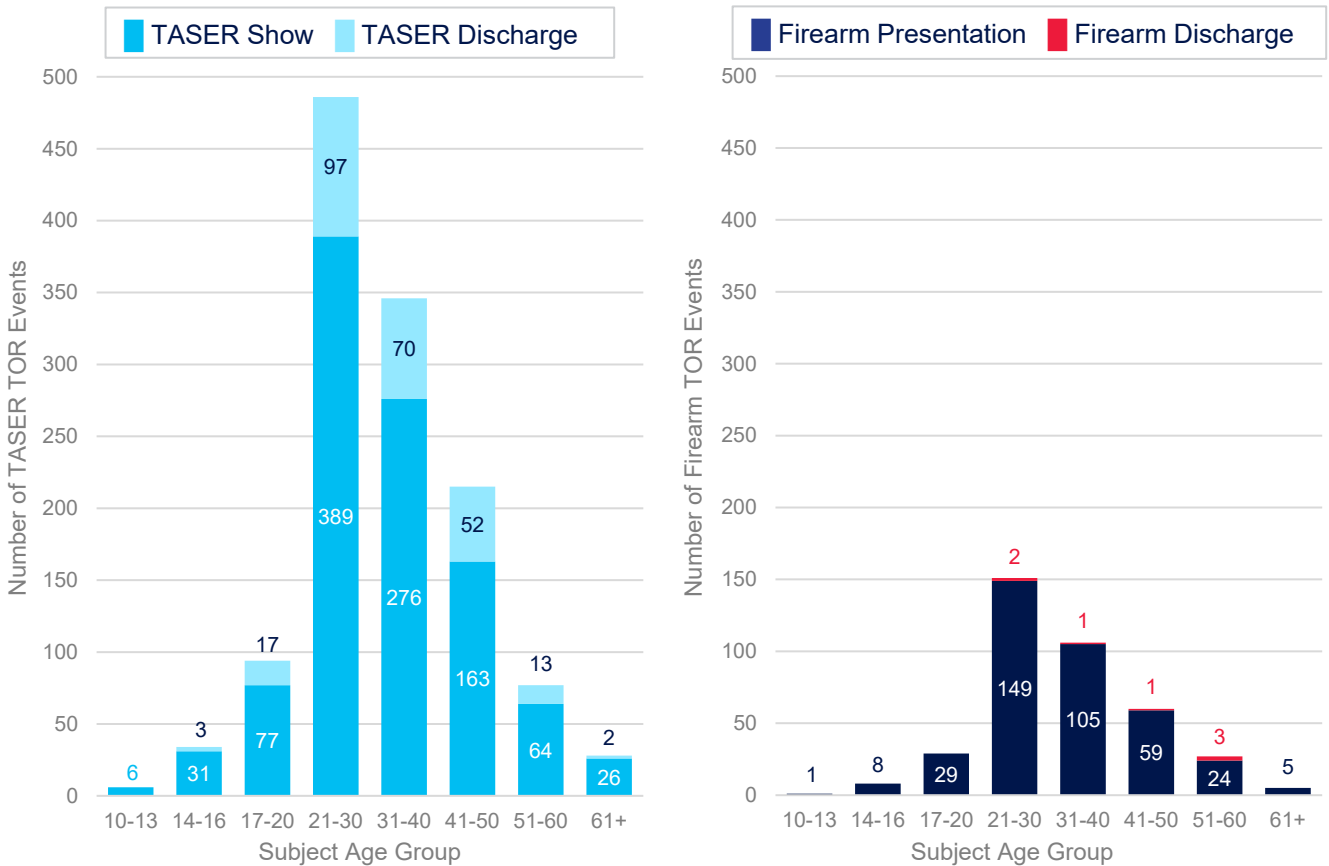


Figure 11. TOR Events by Subject Age Group



The data in Figure 11 is based on the 5224 TOR events where the subject's age was known. The remaining 178 TOR where the subject's age was not known are not included in the figure or analysis.

Figure 12. Highest Mode of TASER and Firearm Deployment by Subject Age Group



TASER Deployment

TASER usage followed a similar pattern to overall number of TOR events, with the largest proportion occurring for subjects aged 21 – 30 years (38%; see Figure 12).

TASER Shows

The youngest person to be the subject of a TASER show was 11 years old. Neighbours called Police about a possible night-time burglary, reporting three hooded people attempting to climb through

a window. On arrival, one officer went to the rear of the house; the other then heard yelling and believed his partner was being assaulted; he drew his TASER and ran towards the noise. He turned a corner to see one of the subjects running towards him. He reacted instantly, laser painting the person, but quickly realised she was only a child, and immediately turned the TASER off and put it away. The situation was resolved and the three children

involved were returned to their caregivers.

Three 72-year olds were the oldest people to be subjects of a TASER show, at three separate incidents. All three had physically attacked other people and were threatening to cause further harm. One subject was in mental distress, and was left in the care of a mental health Crisis and Assessment Treatment Team (CATT). The other two were charged with violence offences.

TASER Discharges

Three 16-year olds were the youngest subjects of a TASER discharge, at three separate incidents. Two received contact stuns while assaulting police; in both cases the contact stun was effective and the situation was resolved. Both subjects were charged with violence offences. The third subject was holding a sharp kitchen knife to his wrist and threatening to kill himself; the officer discharged TASER probes at the subject. The TASER discharge was effective and resolved the situation. The subject was taken to hospital for assessment.

The oldest subject of a TASER discharge was 63 years old, at a family harm incident. The subject

had assaulted a child, was threatening further harm against members of the household, and he attempted to run down police officers with his vehicle. Despite the TASER discharge with probes, the subject continued to resist until crashing his vehicle into a fence and becoming stuck. Multiple charges were laid, including violence offences and reckless driving.

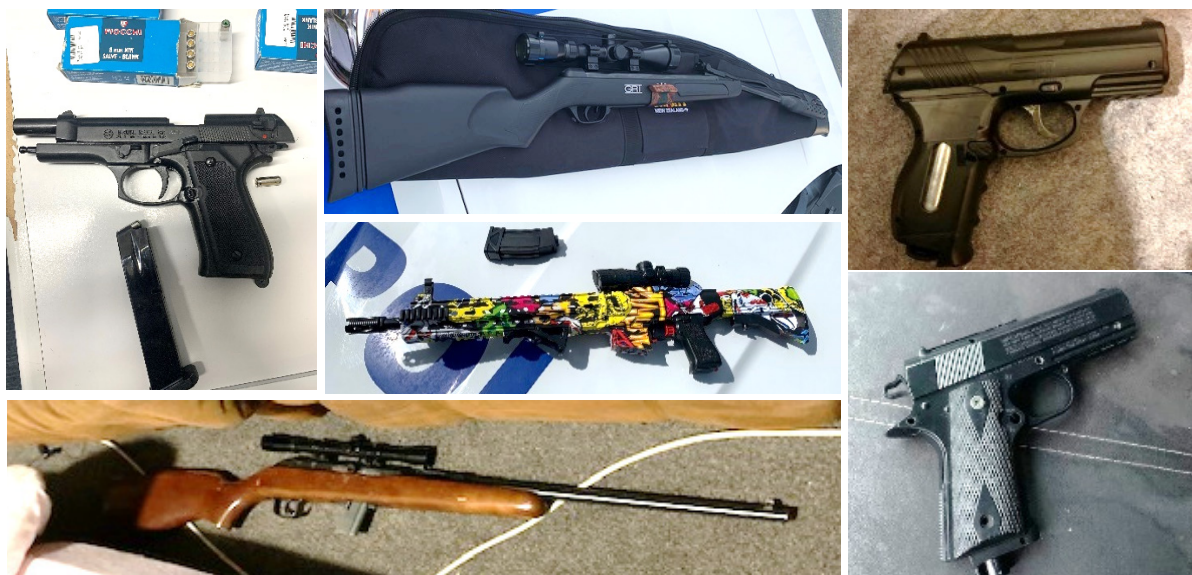
Firearm Presentations

The youngest subject of a firearm presentation was 13 years old. A member of the public reported that a group of young males was pointing a pistol at people. The officer approached the subject while presenting an M4 rifle and told him to drop his gun; the subject continued holding the

weapon directed towards the officer and pulled the trigger. After further communication the subject dropped the weapon and situation was resolved without harm. The weapon turned out to be a toy cap gun, and the subject was referred to youth aid. Figure 13 shows some examples of imitation firearms and air guns that Police encountered in 2020 TOR events.

The oldest subject of a firearm presentation was 67 years old. Police responded to reports of an armed robbery at a petrol station. The officer approached the subject while presenting an M4 rifle. The firearm presentation was effective, and the subject was arrested and charged with a violence offence. However, no firearm was located.

Figure 13. Examples of Imitation and Air Guns that Police Encountered During 2020 TOR events



Focus on Personal Factors: Ethnicity

Māori were overrepresented in use of force events, especially in relation to population numbers, with Māori subjects accounting for just over half of all TOR events. NZ Police needs to continue working with Māori communities—through strategies such as *Te Huringa o Te Tai*—to improve criminal justice outcomes for Māori. The following pages examine ethnicity in isolation—separate from other relevant personal factors. However later pages show that the observed differences in ethnicity are closely associated with differences in age and gender; explanations and solutions that focus on only ethnicity may not be effective in accounting for the observed disparities or in changing outcomes for Māori or other overrepresented groups.

Table 15. TOR Events by Subject Ethnicity

<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>TOR Events</i>	<i>Per 10, 000 Offender Proceedings</i>	<i>Per 100, 000 Population</i>
Māori	2830	444	356
Pacific peoples	591	492	145
Asian	84	183	10
MELAA	77	487	89
European	1766	345	50
Other/Unknown	47	38	-
TOTAL	5395	370	108

TOR Events: Ethnicity

TOR subjects were more likely to be Māori than any other ethnicity (Table 15). Māori subjects accounted for just over half of all TOR events (52%). Of note, nearly two-thirds of these TOR events (64%; 1808 of 2830) involved males aged 17 – 40.

Offender proceedings give some context to the high proportion of TOR events: Māori accounted for a high proportion (44%) of all offender proceedings in 2020, including 48% of violence offences. However, TOR events with Māori subjects were still

disproportionately high in relation to offender proceedings. Only 16% of the general population identify as Māori, meaning TOR events are especially disproportionate relative to population numbers.

TOR events with Pacific peoples were also disproportionately high in relation to offender proceedings and population, although the latter was less extreme than for Māori.

People who identified as Asian showed the lowest rate of TORs relative to both offender proceedings and population. Further investigation to better

understand why this rate is so much lower may be beneficial. Of note, this group makes up 16% of the general population, the same proportion as Māori. This group may provide the best ideal and baseline for comparisons across ethnicity groups, especially as the Asian population grows in the future: Stats NZ population projections predict that by 2040, nearly a quarter of NZ's population will identify as Asian. Any learnings from this group might also be generalised to other groups.

Tactic Usage Rates

Although tactic usage rates were broadly similar across the three largest ethnic groups—Māori, Pacific peoples, and European—there were several clear differences (Figure 14). Consistent with previous years, TOR events with Māori and Pacific subjects had a lower rate of Empty Hand techniques, and a slightly lower rate of Handcuffs-Restraints use than TOR events with European subjects. In contrast, there was a higher rate of OC Spray use at TOR events with Māori and Pacific subjects. It is not readily apparent what might be driving these differences. Factors such as the

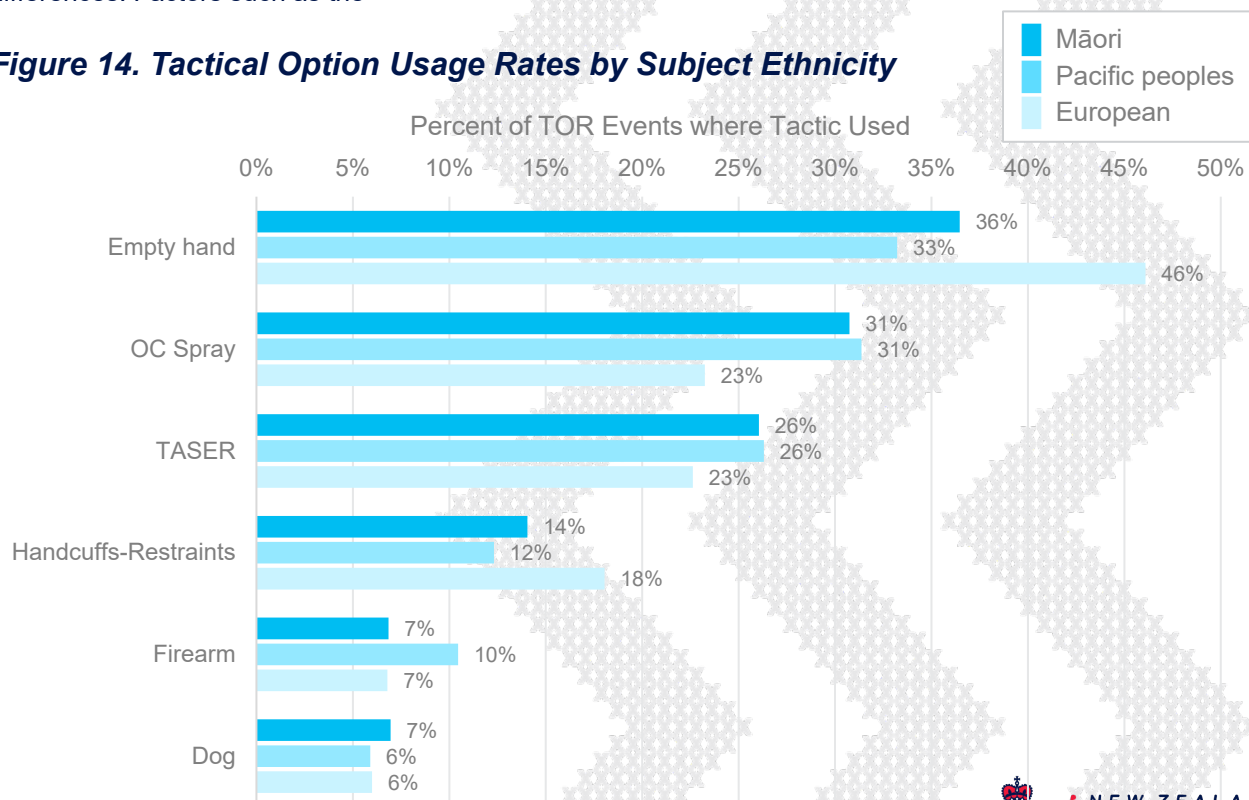
subjects' build and behaviour, apparent alcohol and drug intoxication, as well as the environmental conditions may contribute. Some evidence suggests that TOR events with Māori and Pacific subjects are more likely to occur in open spaces (which are more appropriate for OC Spray use). Specifically, 52% of TOR events with European subjects, in comparison to 59% of TOR events with Māori subjects and 67% of TOR events with Pacific subjects occurred outdoors and/or in spacious areas.

Consistent with 2019, injury rates were lower for Māori and Pacific

subjects compared to European: European subjects sustained injuries at 20% of TOR events, Māori at 14%, and Pacific people at 12%, perhaps as a result of lower use of Empty Hand techniques. Further examination of these differences may help to identify underlying causes and contributing factors, including any factors that may be affecting tactical option deployment decisions.

Baton and Other tactic usage rates were consistently low across groups (1% or less) so are not included in the figure.

Figure 14. Tactical Option Usage Rates by Subject Ethnicity



Handcuffs-Restraints: Pain Compliance

Pain compliance techniques are used in association with handcuffs or other restraints to gain compliance of an actively resisting subject to effect an arrest or in situations such as where the person's behaviour puts their own or others' safety at risk. One situation in which pain compliance might be used is when police encounter assaultive behaviour partway through applying handcuffs; it would be unsafe to let go to use another tactical option (e.g. OC Spray, Empty Hand techniques) leaving the subject with one loose cuff that could then be used as a weapon. Instead, Police can use pain compliance to gain control of the subject and ensure the handcuffs are fully secured, preventing harm.

As with all tactical options, police

use of pain compliance occurs in response to the subject's behaviour, and requires staff to evaluate the situation and behaviour using the Threat-Exposure-Necessity-Response (TENR) model, to ensure that any force used is necessary, proportionate and justified.

As displayed in Table 16 below, the use of pain compliance is rare, with pain compliance used at only 7% of TOR events in 2020 and only 0.01% of events that police attended (2,793,981 attended events total).

As Table 16 illustrates, the rate of pain compliance at TOR events with Māori, Pacific and European subjects is very similar with 6% of Māori and Pacific subjects and 7% of European subjects having pain compliance used against them in 2020. Examining the rate of pain compliance as a proportion of all

handcuffs and restraints uses shows similar rates across the two largest ethnicity groups, with pain compliance used for 39% of Handcuffs-Restraints uses for European TOR subjects and 43% for Māori TOR subjects. Pacific peoples had pain compliance used in 49% of Handcuffs-Restraints uses at TOR events, possibly suggesting a higher level of resistant behaviour in response to restraints. However, given the relatively lower Handcuffs-Restraints usage for Pacific peoples, these percentages may be neither comparable nor informative.

Table 16. Handcuff-Restraints with Pain Compliance by Subject Ethnicity

<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>Handcuff-Restraint TOR Events with Pain Compliance (Total Uses if higher)</i>	<i>Handcuffs-Restraints Total Usages</i>	<i>Percent of Handcuffs-Restraints Usages</i>	<i>Total TORs</i>	<i>Percent of TOR Events</i>
Māori	183 (185)	428	43%	2830	6%
Pacific peoples	37 (38)	78	49%	591	6%
Asian	8	17	47%	84	10%
MELAA	7	27	26%	77	9%
European	132	341	39%	1766	7%
Other/Unknown	3	5	60%	47	6%
TOTAL	370 (373)	896	42%	5395	7%

Table 17. TOR Events with TASER Use by Highest Mode of Deployment and Subject Ethnicity

<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>Show</i>	<i>Discharge</i>	<i>Total TASER TOR events</i>	<i>Per 10 000 Offender Proceedings</i>	<i>Per 100 000 Population</i>	<i>Shows per Discharge</i>
Māori	593	145	738	116	93	4
Pacific peoples	124	32	156	130	38	4
Asian	17	3	20	44	2	6
MELAA	11	1	12	76	14	11
European	321	79	400	78	11	4
Other/Unknown	4	1	5	4	-	4
TOTAL	1070	261	1331	91	24	4



TASER Deployment

Over half of all TASER deployments were directed at Māori subjects (Table 17): the majority of these (66%) were males aged between 17 – 40 years. Māori subjects also had a disproportionately high number of TASER TOR events in relation to

offender proceedings and especially in relation to population. Pacific peoples were also overrepresented in TASER TORs relative to population numbers, but to a lesser extent than Māori. These patterns closely parallel patterns observed for TOR events overall (see page 48).

Of interest, the TASER show-to-discharge ratio was consistent across Māori, Pacific and European subjects (the three largest ethnicity groups) with the ratio of 4 TASER shows to 1 discharge. In addition, the TASER usage rate was only slightly higher for Māori and Pacific subjects than for European subjects (3%; Figure 14). Taken together, these results suggest that the disproportionately high number of TASER TOR events for Māori and Pacific subjects is due to the overall high numbers of TOR events for these subjects, not due to Police using TASER differently for subjects of different ethnicities.

Firearm Deployment

As shown in Table 18, firearm use at TOR events shows a similar pattern to all TOR events, and TASER TOR events. Relative to population numbers, both Māori and Pacific people had higher rates of Police firearm use than European subjects. In 66% of TOR firearms events with Māori subjects, 85% of TOR firearms events with Pacific subjects, and 53% of TORs with European subjects, the subjects were males aged 17 – 40 years old.

Of note, the differences in firearms use by subject ethnicity were less evident when examining firearms TOR events relative to offender proceedings. In other words, firearms TORs were more likely to have subjects who were from ethnicity groups with higher rates

of offending. As shown on Figure 14 (page 49), the proportion of TOR events where Police used firearms was identical for Māori and European subjects (7%), highlighting that the observed differences (in Table 18) are likely to be due to overall higher numbers of TOR events for Māori subjects, rather than higher use of firearms by Police.

Overall, subjects were armed at 45% of firearm TOR events, but this rate differed slightly by ethnicity, with the lowest rate for Māori subjects and highest for European (see Table 19). Of those who were unarmed, more Māori and Pacific subjects had a history of carrying weapons than European subjects (57%, 61% and 44% respectively).

There was a consistent difference within ethnicity groups in which TOR subjects had a 20-30% higher rate of having a history of carrying weapons in firearm TOR events than in non-firearm TOR events (see Table 20).

As noted earlier, the seven TOR events with a firearm discharge relate to only five incidents. One of these incidents involved multiple officers discharging firearms, resulting in multiple TOR events. Note that because firearm discharge numbers were so small, calculations of the presentation to discharge ratio would not be a fair representation of the data, so this comparison has not been included.



Table 18. TOR Events with Firearm Use by Highest Mode of Deployment and Subject Ethnicity

<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>Presentation</i>	<i>Discharge</i>	<i>Total Firearm TOR events</i>	<i>Per 10 000 Offender Proceedings</i>	<i>Per 100 000 Population</i>
Māori	191	2	193	30	24
Pacific peoples	62		62	52	15
Asian	11	1	12	26	1
MELAA	2		2	13	2
European	116	4	120	23	3
Other/Unknown	6		6	5	-
TOTAL	388	7	395	27	7

Table 19. Percent of Subjects who were Armed at TOR Firearm Events by Subject Ethnicity

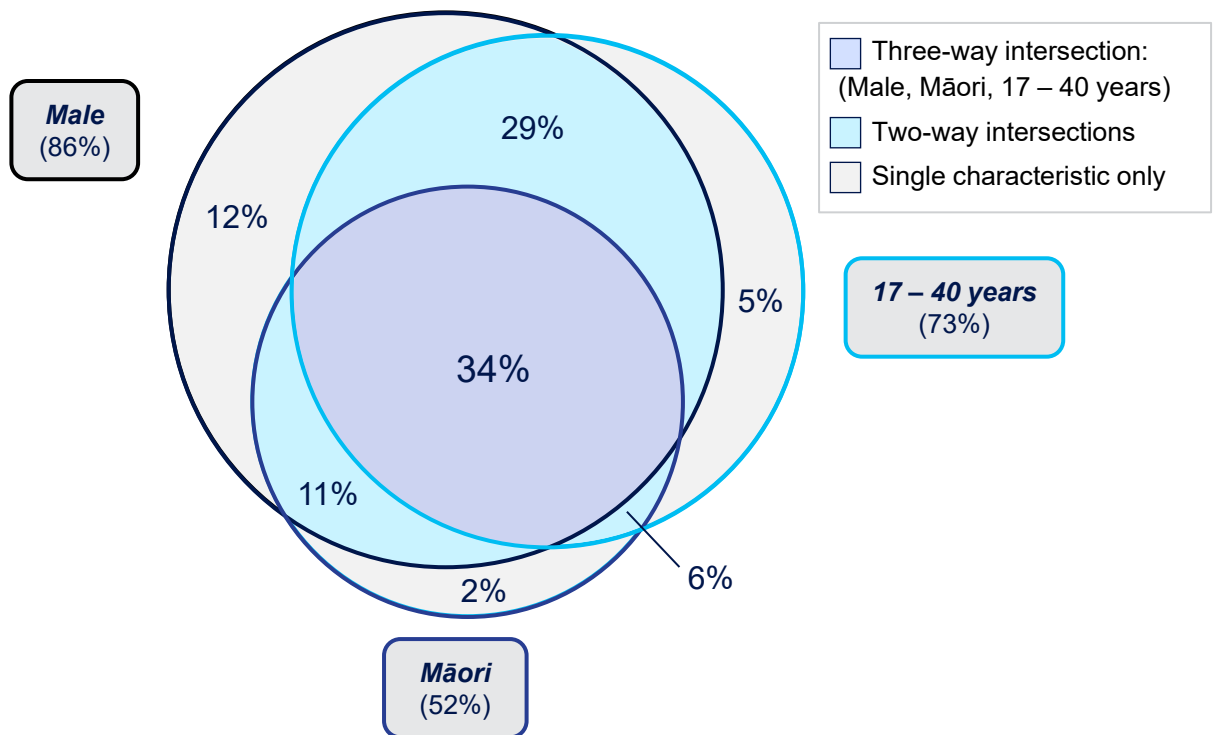
<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>Percentage Armed</i>
Māori	41%
Pacific peoples	47%
European	48%

Table 20. History of Carrying Weapons at TOR Firearm and Non-Firearm Events by Subject Ethnicity

<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>Firearm TOR events</i>	<i>Non-firearm TOR events</i>
Māori	56%	26%
Pacific peoples	58%	22%
European	43%	21%

Focus on Personal Factors: Common Characteristics

Figure 15. Overlap in TOR Subjects' Personal Characteristics



Common Personal Characteristics

As detailed in the previous pages, people who are male, who are aged 17 – 40 years, or who are Māori, are over-represented in TOR events. In fact, these three characteristics are not independent. Figure 15 displays the overlap between these three characteristics, showing how often they co-occur in subjects of TOR events.

In Figure 15, each of the three circles represents one of the three characteristics. The circle sizes

represent the percentage of TOR subjects with that characteristic; these percentages are also shown in the box labelling each characteristic around the edge of the figure. Each circle is separated into four sections. The overlap between all three circles illustrates the percentage of TOR subjects with all three characteristics, and the overlap between each pair of circles shows the percentage of subjects who have both characteristics (but not the third characteristic). Finally, the non-overlapping segments show the percentage of subjects who have

that single characteristic, but neither of the other two.

As shown by the three-way intersection in the centre of the overlapping circles, 34% of all TOR subjects were male, aged between 17 – 40 years, and Māori. A full 80% of TOR events had subjects with at least two of these three characteristics, as shown by the four blue-toned segments. In total, in 98% of TOR events, subjects had at least one of these three characteristics (note that the figure values sum to 99% due to rounding).



Of interest, being male and being aged 17 – 40 years accounted for the largest proportion of TOR subjects, 63%. Yet these two characteristics have been largely overlooked in public discourse about police use of force.

The single-characteristic segments in Figure 15 are not to scale (a downside of using this graphical approach) but the percentages themselves are informative. When examining each characteristic independent of the others, none accounted for a high proportion of TOR subjects, emphasising that these characteristics tend to co-occur in subjects of TOR events. Of note, although 52% of TOR subjects were Māori, only 2% of TOR subjects were Māori but neither male nor aged 17 – 40 years. Interventions to help address Māori overrepresentation might do well to also incorporate age and gender given the high level of co-occurrence of these characteristics. Likewise, prevention work focused on males and people aged between 17 – 40 years may have spill over effects contributing to a reduction in Māori overrepresentation.

Further investigation of this overlap using more sophisticated statistical techniques is likely to be informative. This initial analysis suggests that overrepresentation of Māori in TOR events is linked with the overrepresentation of males and people aged between

17 – 40 years. As such, it is unlikely that the observed disproportionality can be fully understood or remedied without consideration of these factors alongside ethnicity.

Consistent with the large proportion of TOR events involving Māori males aged 17 – 40 years, this cohort is also responsible for a large proportion of offending relative to population numbers: Māori males aged 17 – 40 years make up less than 3% of the general population, but account for 23% of all offender proceedings. In addition, this group accounts for 35% of TOR events that result in a charge being laid for violence offence/s.

It is likely there are a multitude of factors that contribute to the overrepresentation of this cohort in use of force events, and it will take substantial research and investigation to disentangle the underlying causes and fully understand the interactions between them. As noted previously (see page 42), NZ Police is undertaking a major piece of work to examine how Police can ensure we deliver policing that is fair and equitable for all our communities. We hope that this research programme will identify some of the drivers of these effects as well as potential solutions.

The current analysis suggests that any research, policies, or strategies, which focus on

ethnicity as a standalone factor, independent of other influences, may oversimplify the factors at play and miss crucial information, explanations, and importantly opportunities to remedy the disproportionate representation of this group in TOR events as well as in the broader criminal justice system. These results suggest that ethnicity should not be assumed to be the sole factor driving disproportionate outcomes; deeper thinking is required. Examining ethnicity in isolation, and especially attributing outcomes solely to ethnicity misses the complexity of the underlying causes. In addition, focusing on ethnicity to the exclusion of other relevant factors is a disservice to the cohort most likely to be on the receiving end of a Police use of force. Resolving disproportionate representation of Māori in TOR events is unlikely to be achieved without also addressing and resolving the disproportionate representation of males aged 17 – 40. The challenge for NZ Police and the public is to expand and deepen current debate and investigations to ensure that strategies and resolutions are comprehensive and will help improve the future for the people they are intended to help.

Focus on Personal Factors: Improving Outcomes



Police use force to keep people safe and prevent harm, yet every use of force also comes with a risk of harm, both to the subjects and the officers involved. The ideal future would see a reduction in the need for Police to use force. At many of the incidents where force is used, Police are called to help (see Table 1, page 15); New Zealanders rightly expect that in these circumstances Police will respond and intervene if required. Reducing the frequency of use of force is at least partly dependent on changing the way people respond to Police in these intense and often complex interactions.

At the most basic level, police use force in response to a subject's behaviour. However, NZ Police can also look for opportunities to help change the behaviour that leads to use of force, such as through promoting continuous

improvement in officers' interactions with members of the public, and in strategies for successfully de-escalating volatile situations to reduce or avoid the need to use force. It may be that NZ Police tactical communication strategies are less successful in de-escalation for Māori males aged 17 – 40 years old. If so, de-escalation strategies could be adapted and more effectively targeted to better avoid officers needing to use force. However, as noted earlier (p. 32), researching potential opportunities and implementing transformation is dependent on NZ Police resourcing, capacity, and prioritisation. As such progress is likely to be iterative, with processes evolving gradually over time, rather than through the immediate implementation of an expansive change between one

year and the next.

There is increasing widespread belief that some groups experience disproportionately more interactions with police (see p. 42). NZ Police should examine whether this belief is accurate, and if so, whether the underlying drivers are within NZ Police control. More specifically, can any biases be addressed by changing the way Police initiate activities and interactions, or are the drivers due to differences in demand and calls for service? Regardless, if people believe they are being unfairly targeted by Police, the associated frustration may inflame any interactions they have with the Police, potentially decreasing the chance of successful de-escalation and increasing the chance of behaviour that will lead to use of force. (cont. next page)

To fully understand any biases in use of force, we must consider not only the specific interaction where force has occurred, but also what happened before that interaction and what led to the interaction occurring. It is crucial for NZ Police to continue to build strong community relationships. Doing so should lead to improvements in the way members of the public respond to police, contributing to improved interactions between police and members of the public.

The most striking differences in TOR events appear to be associated with general overrepresentation of some groups in the criminal justice system. This overrepresentation is especially apparent for one specific cohort: Māori males aged between 17 – 40 years old. However, the dominant focus on ethnicity as a driving factor of disproportionate outcomes may be

masking the underlying causes that lead to the disproportionate representation of Māori in use of force events. To address and remedy the disproportional representation of Māori in TOR events, it is essential to also acknowledge and address the disproportional representation of males and people aged 17 – 40 years, as these three factors are more likely to occur in combination than in isolation. A broader focus that encompasses all these—and potentially other—factors is likely to contribute to improved outcomes for Māori as well as for non-Māori. The overrepresentation of males and 17 – 40 year olds in both TOR events and offender proceedings highlights a key opportunity for change.

Another potential opportunity is to examine groups with disproportionately lower uses of

force (e.g. Asian ethnicity) to understand how these interactions may be different and whether any of the factors are within police control and generalisable to other populations.

NZ Police must also continue to invest in high-level strategies—such as *Te Huringa o Te Tai*—to reduce the overrepresentation of this cohort especially, and of all overrepresented groups. In addition, the new *Te Tārai Hou—Reframe Strategy* focuses on utilising interventions that reduce harm and reoffending, and ensuring people who have offended are supported to work towards a different future. More broadly, *Te Tārai Hou* emphasises continued strengthening of community partnerships as well as improvements to frontline practice for better resolution outcomes and a safer New Zealand.

As we work towards improved police-public interactions, we should see reductions in the overrepresentation of any groups in use of force events, as well as improved trust and confidence in NZ Police.



Notes

Response and Operations: Research and Evaluation

This report was compiled by Response and Operations: Research and Evaluation which sits within the Frontline Capability Group at NZ Police National Headquarters. A key role of this team is to undertake research, analysis, monitoring, and evaluation of police use of force, to provide accountability and assist evidence-based decision making, in support of police and public safety.

Tactical Options Reporting (TOR)

A TOR 'event' is the reportable use of one or more tactical options by one officer, against one individual. Multiple TOR events can occur at one incident.

The following deployments of tactical options are reportable: handcuffs with pain compliance, or without pain compliance when used with another reportable tactical option (but note that these uses do not form part of the analyses reported here; see page 20); other restraints; OC spray bursts; empty hand techniques; baton strikes; dog bites or other dog-related deployment injuries; "other" tactics (e.g. weapons of opportunity); shows and discharges of a TASER and/or firearm (noting the exemptions below).

The Armed Offenders Squads (AOS) and Special Tactics Group (STG) are exempt from reporting shows (but not discharges) of TASER and firearms.

Tactical Options Reporting data

Percentages are rounded.

TOR data presents a quantitative overview of the deployment of tactical options. However, it does not provide a nuanced understanding of factors that influence the deployment of tactical options. Further, where the numbers in these reports are small, slight increases or decreases may result in large percentage differences. For these reasons, caution should be exercised when interpreting TOR data, including when comparing TOR data across reporting years or districts.

2020 year TOR data was extracted on 3 May 2021. In total, 78 TOR reports (1.4%) had not completed the two-stage review process at the time of data extraction and were excluded from the analyses.

Disclaimer

The data reported in this publication is drawn from a dynamic operational database and is subject to change as new information is recorded or updated. The data provided is the most accurate available at the time of data extraction. Data entry errors were corrected where identified. While some data inaccuracies may remain (as with all large administrative databases), New Zealand Police is confident that the data is more than sufficiently accurate to monitor and describe the reported deployment of tactical options by police.

2020 TOR data extracted prior to 3 May 2021 and provided through the OIA process may not be consistent with the values reported here. TOR reports that completed the two-stage review process after the OIA data was extracted but before 3 May 2021 are included in this dataset but would not have been included in the earlier OIA dataset.

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Data Sources

Most data in this report comes from the Tactical Options database. It also includes data from other NZ Police data holdings including the Armed Offender Squad deployment database, Police Professional Conduct database (complaints), Communication and Resource Deployment data (attended events), the Gun Safe database, and Recorded Crime Offender Statistics (offender proceedings).

External data was sourced from:

[Stats NZ Tatauranga Aotearoa](#) (population data). See National ethnic population projections, by age and sex, 2013(base)-2038 update, available at <http://nzdotstat.stats.govt.nz/wbos/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=TABLECODE7994>.

Ara Poutama Aotearoa Department of Corrections (prison population). See *Prison Facts and Statistics – December 2020*, available at https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/statistics/quarterly_prison_statistics/prison_stats_december_2020

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Appendix



Additional Tables

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Table A1. Where Do TOR Events Occur? Equivalent Comparison Data (Relative to Attended Events) for 2019

<i>Incident Type</i>	<i>Total TOR events</i>	<i>Percent of all TOR events</i>	<i>Number of Attended Events per 1 TOR event (on average)</i>
Family harm episode (5F)	768	16%	157 to 1
Breach of peace (1R)	756	16%	70 to 1
Traffic incident (1U, 1V)	491	10%	201 to 1
Suspicious car/person (1C)	393	8%	136 to 1
Arrest warrant (2T,2W)	355	7%	104 to 1
Mental health (1M)	212	4%	60 to 1
Bail check/breach (3A, 5K, 6D, 6E)	235	5%	399 to 1
Turnover (3T)	251	5%	2663 to 1
Suicide attempt (1X)	283	6%	73 to 1
Drunk/detoxification (1K)	239	5%	36 to 1
Other	877	18%	1371 to 1
Overall	4860	100%	488 to 1

Table A2. TOR Events where each Tactical Option was used by District

<i>District</i>	<i>Empty Hand Techniques</i>	<i>OC Spray</i>	<i>TASER</i>	<i>Handcuffs- Restraints</i>	<i>Firearm</i>	<i>Dog</i>	<i>Baton</i>	<i>Other Tactic</i>	<i>Overall Total TOR Events</i>
Northland	75	93	50	34	19	28		1	233
Waitematā	219	64	107	90	39	19	1	3	438
Auckland City	162	101	128	76	41	24	1	1	446
Counties Manukau	347	138	149	135	81	49	3	1	739
Waikato	145	139	116	52	23	23	3	10	413
Bay of Plenty	203	157	181	65	66	28	2	7	583
Eastern	154	151	79	57	12	22	1	2	390
Central	250	190	101	70	45	34	3	5	568
Wellington	217	165	129	106	28	55	3	8	575
Tasman	90	99	58	23	8	9		1	247
Canterbury	177	141	145	94	13	39	2	2	506
Southern	91	70	88	29	20	18	2	3	257
TOR Events	2130	1508	1331	831	395	348	21	44	5395
Percent of TOR Events	39%	28%	25%	15%	7%	6%	0.4%	1%	-
Total Uses	2406	1541	1356	896	396	351	21	45	7011

Because officers may use multiple tactical options or the same tactical option multiple times at the same TOR event, the number of TOR events for each tactical option and for each District sums to more than the overall total number of TOR events, and total uses of each tactical option is higher than the total number of TOR events where a given tactical option was used.

Table A3. TASER TOR Events by Highest Level of Deployment and District

<i>District</i>	<i>Presentation only</i>	<i>Laser Paint</i>	<i>Arc</i>	<i>Contact Stun</i>	<i>Discharge with Probes</i>	<i>Total TASER TOR Events</i>	<i>Unintentional Discharge¹²</i>
Northland	8	29			13	50	
Waitematā	10	74	2	1	20	107	
Auckland City	16	84	5	1	22	128	
Counties Manukau	16	94	6	2	31	149	
Waikato	16	76	5	2	17	116	
Bay of Plenty	25	112	11	1	32	181	
Eastern	5	54	1	4	15	79	1
Central	20	57	3	1	20	101	
Wellington	14	87	2	6	20	129	
Tasman	7	42	1		8	58	
Canterbury	14	100	2	1	28	145	1
Southern	12	57	2	2	15	88	
TOR Events	163	866	40	21	241	1331	
Percent of TASER TOR Events	12%	65%	3%	2%	18%	100%	

¹² Operational unintentional discharges (UD) only; these values do not include UD during training or pre- and post-operational checks. Note that UD are not counted in the total TASER deployments or percentage calculations.