

main: The unconventional shape of the C2 fits the hand well.

inset: Taser with safety cover open and ready to fire.

TASER TOOLS:

C2 ELECTRIFIES CIVILIAN MARKET

[BY DUANE A. DAIKER]

Law abiding citizens have long searched for an effective non-lethal weapon.

CS “tear” gas or OC “pepper” spray are common choices, but have significant drawbacks, including a lack of effectiveness on some individuals, and the possibility of “spray back” on the user, depending on which way the wind is blowing. Hand held electric “stun guns” have also been popular devices, but require sustained close physical contact to apply the electrical charge. For quite some time the most effective non-lethal weapon has been the Taser—an electrical stun gun capable of operating over a distance, and delivering multiple charges to the target. Such weapons were almost exclusively used by law enforcement agencies until Taser International introduced its civil-

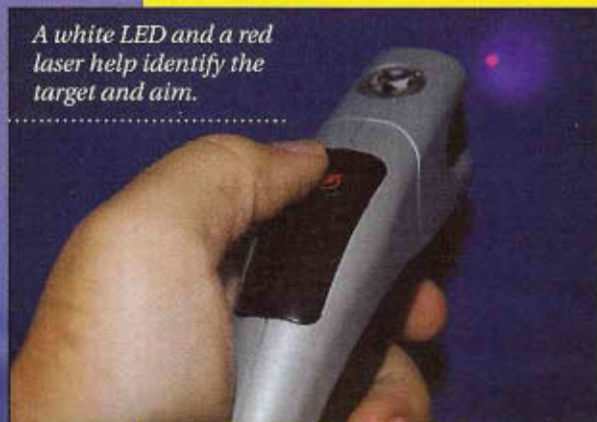
ian model—the Taser C2.

The C2 operates in largely the same manner as the law enforcement models that everyone has seen on TV. When fired, the C2 propels twin electrical probe darts up to 15 feet. The probes are propelled by a high pressure compressed nitrogen charge. When these probes imbed in a human target, a circuit is completed, and allows the unit to deliver a pulsing electrical current to the body. The Taser charge results in neuromuscular incapacitation—temporarily impairing muscle control. Unlike other non-lethal weapons that rely on pain to coerce compliance, the Taser actually works directly to incapacitate the neuromuscular system.

The Taser C2 looks amazingly like a futuristic stun gun. The appearance is more akin to an electric razor than a gun or other recognizable weapon. The shape, however, is very ergonomic and fits the hand well. The controls are very simple—just a single button with a sliding cover. Sliding open the button cover arms the unit, and makes it ready for use. It also activates a small, white LED light to help identify the target, and a red laser sighting device (if so equipped). A small, green LED indicates the Taser is ready to fire. A simple press of the trigger button fires the Taser, deploying the barbed probes. If you decide not to fire, simply closing the button cover returns the C2 to a safe condition.



left: Without the cartridge in place, the electrical arc can be seen.



A white LED and a red laser help identify the target and aim.

right: A fired Taser cartridge showing leads and barbed probes.



Unlike the law enforcement units, the C2 is not designed to deliver short bursts of electrical charges. High voltages are utilized in the initial charge followed by a lower, steady charge to induce the full neuro muscular effect over a full thirty seconds. The C2 is designed to deliver a full thirty second cycle to the target. Taser suggests that once you have a hit, you drop the unit and use the time to escape while the attacker is incapacitated. In fact, Taser is so adamant about this tactic, they will replace your Taser C2 for free if you lose it as a result.

The Taser is a single shot device, but can be reloaded with a new cartridge. Extra cartridges are available for the C2 and can be swapped out pretty quickly. The lithium battery pack is also replaceable—but is good for about fifty firing cycles.

To some, civilian availability of the Taser technology is controversial. Taser International, however, appears to have taken this responsibility very seriously. While you can purchase a C2 from various sources, the unit cannot be activated or used by the consumer without completing a criminal background check. After purchase, the user must obtain an activation code for the C2, which can be done by phone or online. The process is simple, but sophisticated. You are required to answer questions about yourself obtained from

public records—to ensure you are who you say you are. There is a \$9.95 fee required to obtain the activation code.

As a further deterrent to unlawful use, each Taser cartridge employs an Anti-Pelon ID System. When the Taser is fired, it discharges a large number of serialized and bar coded confetti-like ID tags to allow authorities to identify the particular C2 unit used.

The C2 is small, measuring only six inches in length and weighing seven ounces. The unit is easily carried on a belt or in a purse. Pocket carry would be possible, but is not recommended by the manufacturer. There are a few belt holsters available from Taser International, and I am sure we will see more as the C2 gains popularity.

Please keep in mind that while the Taser is a non-lethal weapon, it is still a dangerous weapon. While some maintain the Taser's electrical charge can be dangerous to certain individuals, there does not appear to be significant evidence of such danger. However, a target can easily be injured in a fall following the neuro muscular incapacitation. Also realize that the electrical probes are barbed like a fishing hook. Minor skin injuries are common, and a probe impact on the face or eyes could inflict serious injury. You should always treat the C2 with the same care and safety practices as a handgun. Tasers are se-

rious weapons. Using a Taser without adequate provocation could bring criminal charges. However, when used responsibly, Tasers are legal for open or concealed carry in 43 states. You should check the law in your jurisdiction before purchasing a C2.

The C2 comes in two configurations: with, and without an integrated laser aiming device. Retail is \$350 and \$300, respectively. Without a doubt the C2 is pricey, but the Taser technology does not come cheap. You can read much more about the C2 and Taser technology at www.taser.com. ■

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