

MEMORANDUM

To Board of Regents  
 From: Board Office  
 Subject: Revisions – University Public Safety Departments  
 Date: January 7, 2002

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**Recommended  
Actions:**

1. Authorize public safety departments at the University of Iowa, Iowa State University, and the University of Northern Iowa to include air taser stun guns (tasers) among the equipment that can be assigned to certified police officers;
  2. Authorize the University of Iowa and Iowa State University to change the name of appropriate divisions within their public safety departments to Police Division; and
  3. Authorize the University of Iowa and Iowa State University to change the working title of officers in the proposed Police Division to Police Officers.
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**Executive  
Summary:**

Security staff  
seek greater  
protection

- Staff in the universities' public safety departments have expressed concern for many years about their ability to address safely certain critical campus situations involving public safety based upon the equipment they are issued to perform their duties.
- Certain staff in the public safety departments are trained and certified by the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy pursuant to rules and regulations in the Iowa Administrative Code, Law Enforcement Academy [501].
- Certified police officers are allowed to carry firearms.
- The law enforcement units of city and county governments have encouraged the universities to increase the defensive equipment carried by the universities certified police officers. Specifically, tasers have been recommended.

Air taser stun gun  
provides non-  
lethal protection

- Tasers shoot two small probes that deliver a non-lethal electrical shock to a targeted individual which disables the targeted individual from a few seconds to a few minutes.
- The university presidents have consulted with campus and community constituents and recommend that the Board authorize the issuance of tasers to the certified police officers in the public safety departments.

Police officers given new titles at 2 universities

- In order to better describe the responsibilities of the certified police officers at the two research universities, their presidents are recommending a change in the working title of the certified police officers from "public safety officer" to "police officer" with corresponding changes in the title of their work units.
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**Background:**

Certified staff need additional protection

- Over the past decade and a half the universities' public safety staff have expressed concern about their security and their ability to act to protect the university community in certain risky situations because of the lack of what they consider appropriate equipment.
- This concern is expressed by the public safety staff who have attended the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy and are recognized by the State as "certified police officers".
- The universities' communities have recognized concerns about the safety of these officers as they encounter high-risk campus situations that are similar to those encountered by police officers in the community at large.
- The Board, upon the recommendation of the university presidents, has previously rejected requests by the certified police officers to carry firearms, most recently in June, 1989.

Broad community recommends increased security

- University presidents have asked a wide range of campus constituents (faculty, professional & scientific staff, merit system staff, students, and local and county law enforcement officers) to consider the delivery of security services to the campus by the public safety officers.
- Based on recommendations of the campus constituents and their analysis of alternatives to the status quo, the presidents of the three universities recommend that the university public safety officers who are certified law enforcement officers be provided tasers as a part of their regulation equipment.

Officers trained

- Officers receiving tasers would undergo training in the appropriate use of the tasers with refresher courses required every six months.

"Police officers" instead of "public safety officers"

- At the two research universities, the presidents of SUI and ISU recommend that the working title of their certified police officers be changed from "public safety officer" to "police officer".
  - To reflect the change in working titles, the presidents of SUI and ISU further recommend that the units in which these officers serve within the Department of Public Safety be changed to "Police Division".
  - President Koob does not recommend for UNI a change in either the title for officers or the name of the unit in which these officers serve.
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**Analysis:**

Officers at risk

- There are indications that public safety officers are asked to respond to a variety of situations where the officers are legitimately concerned about their safety and their ability to maintain a safe and secure environment for students and staff at the institution.

Officers certified by Law Enforcement Academy

- Certain of the public safety officers are graduates of the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy and thereby authorized by the State to carry firearms, and are designated "certified police officers".

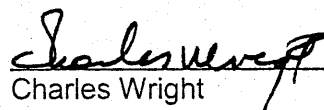
Tasers recommended

- The recommendation by the university presidents to provide certified police officers with tasers gives protection to the officers and enhances their ability to provide a safe and secure campus for faculty, staff, students, and the public, without providing lethal weapons.
- The universities have indicated they will provide appropriate training to officers before issuing tasers to them and will provide refresher courses for the officers every six months.

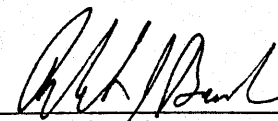
SUI & ISU include "police" in titles after consultation

- The presidents of SUI and ISU recommend that the working title of the certified police officers at the research universities be changed from "public safety officer" to "police officer" consistent with their responsibilities, and that the units in which the officers serve at the research universities be changed to "Police Division".
- The three university presidents engaged a broad cross section of the university and local/county law enforcement community in consultation on the issue of providing tasers to certified police officers and received almost unanimous support for the proposed changes.
- Because of the growing concern for safety and security of both certified police officers and of students, faculty, staff, and the public on the university campuses, and because the non-lethal tasers represent a safe alternative to firearms, the Board Office finds the recommendation of the university presidents to be reasonable.

Because there is an apparent need to provide better protection both for certified police officers and the university community at large, the Board Office recommends the changes identified above.

  
Charles Wright

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

  
Robert J. Barak