

## **British Columbia Police Association supports national position on Taser use**

Vancouver, February 24, 2009 - The British Columbia Police Association, (BCPA), supports the joint position on Taser use announced today by the Canadian Police Association, (CPA), and the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, (CACCP).

Describing the Taser as a "vital tool that protects the lives of police and the public" BCPA President Tom Stamatakis notes that the 2,500 members of the 12 police services across B.C. that he represents "support the use of the Taser within clear guidelines".

"The Taser is an effective intermediate compliance tool that reduces the need for police to rely on higher levels of force, and we believe most members of the public would agree with that," adds Stamatakis.

"The BCPA also joins with the CPA and the Chiefs in stressing the need for greater public awareness about the use of force options that police have, and the factors that we take into account when deciding which one to use," he adds.

"The vast majority of incidents that our members are dispatched to are resolved without having to use force to gain compliance but when any level of force becomes necessary, there is risk", he noted.

The Taser, known generically as a "Conducted Energy Weapon" , (CEW), fires darts and electrically 'shocks' subjects into submission. Its use was recommended by a coroner's inquest and it has been in use by the Vancouver Police since September, 2000.

It is currently authorized for use by all police services in British Columbia as well as sheriffs and corrections staff and has been used effectively and safely in the vast majority of cases.