

INTRODUCTION:

On 13 March 2015, at approximately 0400 hours, at 5555 W. Grand Avenue, Officer Linda Romano #9875 was assigned to the radio room at the 25th District. Part of her duties included issuing Tasers to officers at the start of their tours and receiving the Tasers at the end of the officers' tours to return them to the radio room. At approximately 0400 hours, an unknown officer returned a Taser to Officer Romano without a case. As Officer Romano began walking with the Taser to the radio room, she stumbled and juggled the Taser. She attempted to catch the Taser and accidentally pulled the trigger, deploying the probes and wires. The probes hit the floor and no one was injured. At the time of the incident, Officer Romano was not certified in the use of Tasers, nor had she ever been trained on Tasers.

ALLEGATIONS:

It is alleged that on 13 March 2015, at approximately 0400 hours, at the location of 5555 W. Grand Ave., **Officer Linda Romano #9875**:

1. Was inattentive to duty when she accidentally discharged a Taser, which resulted in the deployment of Taser probes and wires, in that she violated Rule 10 of the Chicago Police Department's Rules and Regulations Policy.

APPLICABLE RULES AND LAWS:

Rule 10: Inattention to duty

INVESTIGATION:

In her **statement to IPRA** on 09 September 2016, **Officer Linda Romano #9875** stated that her date of appointment to the Department was 04 November 1996 and she had been assigned to the 25th District since her appointment. She stated that she was normally assigned to the desk and, on occasion, she was assigned to the radio room where she handed out radios, cars and Tasers. She was also responsible for putting those items back at the end of the tours. On the date of the incident, an unknown officer was ending his tour and gave Officer Romano a Taser to return to the radio room. The Taser was not in a case¹. The officer gave it to Officer Romano as one would do with a firearm, with the Taser butt towards her. Officer Romano took the Taser with her fingers around the Taser grip and as she was walking back to the radio room, she stumbled and juggled the Taser. Officer Romano attempted to catch the Taser to prevent it from hitting the floor. As she caught the Taser, she inadvertently depressed the trigger and the Taser discharged its probes and wires, which struck the floor. No one was struck with the Taser or injured during the incident Officer Romano notified Lieutenant Zahn and completed a Tactical Response Report (TRR).

Officer Romano was not Taser trained at the time of the incident. She was subsequently trained on the use of Tasers and certified at the time of her interview. Prior to this incident, Officer Romano had never deployed a Taser. (Att. #11)

¹ Officer Romano stated that there were not enough Taser cases for all the officers and some officers provided their own personal Taser cases.

In her statement to IPRA on 09 September 2016, **Officer Linda Romano #9875** admitted that she was inattentive to duty on 13 March 2015 at approximately 0355 hours inside the 25th District station when she accidentally discharged a Taser. (Att. #12)

According to the **Tactical Response Report (TRR)**, completed by Officer Romano, the incident occurred on 13 March 2015 at approximately 0400 hours at 5555 W. Grand Ave. She was on duty and no member was injured in the incident. The incident happened indoors. Taser [REDACTED] was handed to Officer Romano to be exchanged for another Taser with a full charge. Officer Romano, who was not Taser trained, accidentally discharged Taser towards the floor. (Att. #4)

According to the **Taser Deployment Data Sheet**, the trigger on Taser [REDACTED] was deployed for three seconds on 13 March 2015 at approximately 0348 hours.

According to the **Watch Incident Log**, the on-duty station supervisor on 13 March 2015 at the 25th District for the 1st watch was Lieutenant David Zahn. This incident was not included as a Major/Noteworthy Incident.

Submitted:

[REDACTED]

Thomas Kalantzis #149
Investigator

Approved:

[REDACTED]

Supervising Investigator, Mark A. Javier #17
COPA

CONCLUSION:**Accused #1: Officer Linda Romano**

Allegation #1: Sustained – Officer Romano admitted that she acted with inattention to duty on 13 March 2015 when she handled a Taser and accidentally deployed its probes and wires. Although the incident was clearly accidental, Officer Romano’s duty was to be properly trained to handle Tasers. She knew that, on accession, she was assigned responsibilities requiring her to give and receive Tasers to other officers. Therefore, her contact with Tasers should have been with the requisite knowledge and training associated with its safe and proper handling and use. Therefore, the Civilian Office of Police Accountability recommends that **Allegation #1** be **SUSTAINED**.


Deputy Chief, Joshua Hunt #7
COPA

