

## **More Competition in Stun Gun Marketplace May Improve the Accuracy of Debate over these Weapons' Safety**

(BOSTON, Mass. – Oct. 24, 2005 – StunGun.com) As one stun gun company weathers questions about possible connections to accidental deaths, a rising player has announced production of a rival weapon that features safety-minded technology. Robert Siciliano, security expert and president of StunGun.com, believes any stun gun company that can gain the public's trust will eventually rule this market space. He also says more competition may improve the accuracy of debate over stun guns' safety.

"Use of stun guns in place of firearms can save lives," said Siciliano. "But proper engineering and training are keys to the promise of safety, the very market force that precipitated the invention of this technology in the first place. When it comes to the issue of safety, some stun gun companies seem to be doing a better job than are others." An expert in personal security and identity theft, Siciliano delivers presentations to Fortune 500 companies across the nation and is author of "The Safety Minute: 01."

On Oct. 10, Stinger Systems, Inc., a Tampa, Fla.-based company, announced volume production of its own stun gun. As quoted in Stinger's press release, Robert Gruder, CEO, claimed his company's weapon "allows an officer to maintain control during the entire arrest process by having a manual trigger," a feature that apparently sets Stinger's weapon apart from other stun gun manufacturers' products. Also according to Stinger's release, "a nationwide network of trainers is already in place."

"A well-designed weapon wins only half the battle," said Siciliano. "A robust, safety-minded training program for officials who use stun guns is the missing link."

"It remains to be seen how Stinger's network of trainers will fare in imparting the respect that use of these weapons demands," Siciliano continued. "Stun guns are 'less-lethal' weapons, not 'non-lethal.' The risk of death is always present, albeit greatly minimized in comparison to a firearm's."

Highly publicized events this past year have thrown the safety of a leading manufacturer's stun guns into question. A number of states bar the weapons: Hawaii, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island and Wisconsin.

On Oct. 11, *The Associated Press* ran widely reported news that the online auctioneer eBay Inc. "will block the sale and shipment of stun guns and other illegal weapons to New York residents." According to the article, out-of-state "eBay sellers are believed to have sold" a number of TASER products to New York State-based buyers. The New York attorney general led an investigation last year.

Recently, a television news broadcast reported that police in Nashville, Tenn., had used a stun gun to subdue a man trying to slit his own wrists. TASER International, Inc. issued a news release about the Nashville event on Oct. 13.

"It is telling when a large, established corporation that enjoys daily media coverage across the country resorts to publicizing reported news about the kind of technology it manufactures," Siciliano said. "Presumably, the hope may be to promote further coverage

of a positive event to offset a barrage of negative news coverage about the company's products. But the obvious question is why would any well-known company do this? To some, the move can look like desperation."

"It's understandable why human rights organization such as Amnesty International would question the use of stun guns," Siciliano said. "At every turn, some companies in this market space seem to argue against further safety precautions for these weapons."

"Large forces seem to be at play," Siciliano concluded. "News reports fuel the perception that stun gun safety is a polarizing issue. Many stories seem to portray two diametrically opposed camps: those that endorse unbridled stun gun use and those that would call for complete abandonment of the technology. The reality is more complex. Dissolution of a monopoly in the industry might change dynamics considerably."

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Certified as an instructor of safety and security by dozens of state governing boards, Siciliano teaches people how to avoid and escape assaults. Numerous industry associations have certified his programs to provide their members with security training. In addition to CNN, MSNBC, Fox News, and CNBC, he has been featured on "ABC News with Sam Donaldson," "The Montel Williams Show," "Maury Povich," "Sally Jesse Raphael," "The Howard Stern Show," and other programs.

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### **Safe Harbor Disclosure**

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