

A NEW stun gun has been used for the first time by Northamptonshire Police as officers arrested a man armed with a samurai sword.

Armed officers challenged the man, who was wanted for robbery, after he was seen walking in Market Road, Thrapston, at about 9am yesterday.

When the offender failed to surrender, the Taser gun, on trial in Northamptonshire as part of a year-long pilot scheme involving five forces up and down the country, was used to incapacitate the man, who was then arrested.

Assistant Chief Constable Derek Talbot has now taken overall command of the investigation, which will be referred to the Police Complaints Authority (PCA) as part of the terms of the trial scheme.

PCA spokeswoman, Deborah Glass, said: "We will supervise the investigation as part of the year-long trial of the Taser by five police forces. This is the

second successful deployment by the police service. The

inquiry will contribute towards the decision as to whether the M26

Stun gun fired

■ From page 1

Taser should be deployed, as a means of using less lethal force, by all police forces in England and Wales."

The unnamed 29-year-old man, from Kettering, was arrested on suspicion of a number of robberies, and was taken to Corby Police Station where he has seen by a police surgeon.

A knife and a Samurai sword were recovered from the scene of the arrest and police confirmed that a number of other houses in the Thrapston area were searched throughout the afternoon in connection with the arrest.

It is only the second time the M26 Advanced Taser gun has been used on a human in the UK.

Officers from the Metropolitan Police deployed the weapon, designed to be a less lethal option to traditional firearms, for the first time last week.

The stun gun works by firing two darts that release a 50,000-volt electric charge which temporarily paralyses the target, forcing them to collapse on the floor for a few seconds and allowing officers to move in to make the arrest.

If the trials prove successful, then Tasers could be issued to all police forces in the UK



■ Turn to
page 3