ORANGA TAMARIKI
Ministry for Children

Military-Style Academy Pilot 12-month outcomes

To	Hon Karen Chhour, Minister for Children		
Date	**7 September 2026**	**Deadline**	**Not applicable**
Reference number	OT-B-2026-08-11-00380	**Priority**	Low
Key contact	Dean Winter, DCE Youth Justice Services and Residential Care	**Contact number**	s9(2)(g)(ii)
Security	In-confidence		

Purpose

1 This aide memoire is to provide you with an overview of an analysis completed by Oranga Tamariki on the 12-month reoffending outcomes for Military-style Academy (MSA) Pilot participants. The findings are summarised in this document, while a full copy of the draft analysis is attached as **Appendix Two**.

Executive summary

2 The Pilot ran for 12 months, from July 2024 to July 2025, for a cohort of 10 rangatahi with serious and persistent offending behaviours.

3 The Pilot involved a 12-week in-residence phase when the young people were in a youth justice residence on Supervision with Residence (SwR) orders, followed by a 9 month in-community phase when they were on Supervision Orders.

4 The Pilot was evaluated throughout by an external, independent organisation, Tiria. A final evaluation report was completed in September 2025. This was a process evaluation, which also considered early outcomes for the participants for the duration of the Pilot.

5 Oranga Tamariki has conducted an internal analysis of the reoffending outcomes of the Pilot participants compared to two cohorts (All SwR orders and Matched SwR orders) in the 12 months following their release from residence (from October 2024 to October 2025).

6 In brief, the analysis reinforces evidence from the Pilot evaluation that on average, there was a significant reduction in the overall frequency and seriousness of offending by Pilot participants.

7 Significantly, violent offences by Pilot participants reduced by 72% (from 47 to 13). All other offence types also reduced.

8 The programme team considers it very positive that three of the nine young people in the Pilot cohort did not return to custody within 12 months, particularly when only one of the matched SwR cohort avoided a return to custody.

9 The analysis does tell us that all nine Pilot participants reoffended within 12 months of leaving residence, although for some this was following the end of the 9-month Supervision Order (and therefore after the Pilot had ended).

10 This analysis complements the Pilot evaluation by providing additional data for the programme team. It supports an evidence-led approach to programme design and delivery, supporting the Pilot programme team as they work to continuously improve programme content and outcomes. This is in addition to the lessons learned process between each stage of the programmes and any external evaluations.

11 The analysis compares nine Pilot participants (excluding the rangatahi who passed away during the community phase) with two other cohorts of rangatahi who received a SwR order within a year of the MSA Pilot commencing.

Context and considerations

12 As detailed in previous briefings, Oranga Tamariki is of the view that reoffending is not the only measure of success of MSA programmes. Given the history of persistent reoffending of the target cohort, it is unlikely that all young people will remain offending free immediately after completing the programme.

13 Success measures included how well the rangatahi were supported into a future where they move away from reoffending, for example through exhibiting improved pro-social behaviours, understanding their own behaviours, and improved connections to community and whānau. The external, independent evaluation used Te Whare Tapa Whā domains to assess improvements.

14 However, offending behaviour is an important consideration and allows for quantitative analysis of outcomes.

15 In this analysis, offending patterns were examined using Police *Recorded Crime Offender Statistics* (RCOS) data. RCOS data comprises all offences where Police have taken formal proceedings (e.g., formal warnings, Alternative Action, intention-to-charge family group conferences, or prosecution) against individuals they believe are the offenders responsible (but offences may not have been formally proven).

16 There was little variation between the three cohorts examined in time spent in custody in the 12 months after the residence phase ended, so in terms of the comparative statistics in the paper, the impact of time in custody may be small.

17 The outcomes from the Pilot are not being used as a predictor of offending behaviour for the second MSA programme. Following the evaluation and learnings process from the Pilot, the MSA programme team made several changes to the second MSA programme, for example extending the residential period from 12 weeks to 18 weeks, to allow more time for behavioural changes to embed and transition planning for the young people.

Key findings

18 As advised in previous briefings, the MSA programme team expected that there was a high likelihood of some level of reoffending by the Pilot participants, given their histories of serious and persistent offending. The information provided by this analysis supports previous evidence, including the external Pilot evaluation.

19 On average, there was a significant reduction in the overall frequency and seriousness of offending by Pilot participants.

20 Violent offences by Pilot participants reduced by over 70%.

21 A greater proportion of Pilot participants reduced the seriousness of their most serious offence, than was the case for the matched SwR cohort.

22 Nearly three-quarters of Pilot participants reoffended within 12 weeks. However, Pilot participants were slower to reoffend than others with SwR orders, but by 12 weeks after release, reoffending rates for the three cohorts had almost merged.

s9(2)(a) [redacted]

24 While not included in the report, Oranga Tamariki has also considered how much time the rangatahi spent in custody during the 12-month period after the residence phase and its impact on reoffending frequency. In summary:

- MSA Pilot participants (n=9): six (67%) spent some time in custody and three (33%) did not; the average proportion of the 12-month follow-up period spent in custody across the nine individuals was 36%.
- Matched SwR cohort (n=9): eight (89%) spent some time in custody and one (11%) did not; the average proportion of the 12-month follow-up period spent in custody across the nine individuals was 36%.
- All SwR orders cohort (n=57): 42 (74%) spent some time in custody and 15 (26%) did not; the average proportion of the 12-month follow-up period spent in custody across the 57 individuals was 32%.

25 The programme team considers it positive that three of the nine young people in the Pilot cohort did not return to custody within 12 months, particularly when only one of the matched SwR cohort avoided a return to custody.

Next steps

26 The 12-month outcomes analysis has been conducted internally by Oranga Tamariki as part of a commitment to be evidence-led in our design and delivery of programmes.

27 However, for reasons explained above and within the report methodology, this is not a ‘formal’ evaluation of the Pilot in the same way as the externally commissioned evaluation completed by the Tiria organisation.

28 While the report is anonymised as far as possible, Oranga Tamariki is conscious of the small sample size and reasonable privacy considerations of the rangatahi who are no longer participating in the MSA Pilot. Therefore, there is no plan to publish this analysis.

29 Officials are available to discuss the draft results with you at an Officials meeting, if requested. Potential talking points, if required, are provided as **Appendix One**.

30 Separately, the residence phase of the second MSA programme finished on 9 July 2026. Oranga Tamariki is preparing an overview of how the residential stage progressed and has received a report containing preliminary findings from Tiria that investigates how well changes made between the MSA Pilot and second programme worked in practice.

Sign-off
Oranga Tamariki



Dean Winter
Deputy Chief Executive, Youth Justice Services and Residential Care
Date signed: 4 September 2026

Minister comments

Satisfaction
Please select your level of satisfaction with this Aide Memoire

☐ Outstanding ☐ Good ☐ Acceptable ☐ Poor ☐ Unacceptable

APPENDIX ONE - Talking points

- Oranga Tamariki recently completed an internal analysis looking at the longer- term reoffending outcomes of the first Military-Style Academy programme pilot participants. This looked at outcomes 12 months on from the end of the community phase.
- This internal analysis complements the formal evaluation commissioned by Oranga Tamariki, which was published in November 2025.
- The findings of the internal analysis are consistent with those reported in the earlier evaluation. They provide further insight into reoffending outcomes for pilot participants over a longer follow-up period.
- The analysis found that, while all participants did reoffend to some level within 12 months:
    - there was a significant reduction in the overall frequency and seriousness of offending by pilot participants, and
    - more than three-quarters of pilot participants reduced the frequency or seriousness of their offending.
    - when compared with current supervision with residence orders, the pilot participants were slower to reoffend in the 12 months following release from a youth justice residence.
- The internal analysis supports Oranga Tamariki's commitment to an evidence-led approach to programme design and delivery and will play an important role in the ongoing development of the Military-Style Academy programme.
- The wellbeing of the young people remains a priority. Some did not offend until after the 12-month Pilot had concluded and they were therefore no longer active participants. Out of respect for their privacy, I will not be providing specific details about the status of the young people or their offending behaviours.

APPENDIX TWO
12-month reoffending outcomes for Military-Style Academy pilot participants report (DRAFT)

ORANGA TAMARIKI
Ministry for Children

STRATEGY, INSIGHTS, AND PERFORMANCE

DRAFT

12-month reoffending outcomes for Military-style Activity pilot participants

Introduction

This report focuses on 12-month reoffending outcomes for the nine rangatahi who participated in the Military-style Activity (MSA) pilot during their Supervision with Residence (SwR) orders that ended in October 2024.[1] These reoffending outcomes are contrasted to those for two cohorts of rangatahi who received a SwR order within a year of the MSA pilot commencing, but who did not participate in the pilot.

Analyses of reoffending outcomes for custodial populations typically examine reoffending in a set window (e.g., 6 or 12 months) after release from custody and compare this to offending patterns in the same window before entering custody.

The MSA pilot participants spent an average of three months remanded in custody in a youth justice residence directly before commencing their SwR orders (which also averaged three months duration). Therefore, in this analysis reoffending was examined in the 12 months after release from residence and was compared to offending patterns in the 12 months prior to entering residence on custodial remand.

Offending patterns were examined using Police *Recorded Crime Offender Statistics* (RCOS) data current to 30 April 2026 at the time of this analysis. RCOS data comprises all offences where Police have taken formal proceedings (e.g., formal warnings, Alternative Action, intention-to-charge family group conferences, or prosecution) against individuals they believe are the offenders responsible based on prima facie evidence. While these offences may not always have been formally proven, in many cases the individuals will have admitted to the offending.

Given the very small numbers in the MSA pilot and matched SwR cohorts, findings are limited to those where the privacy of individual rangatahi can be protected.[2]

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1 This analysis excludes one rangatahi who sadly passed away in the community phase of the pilot.

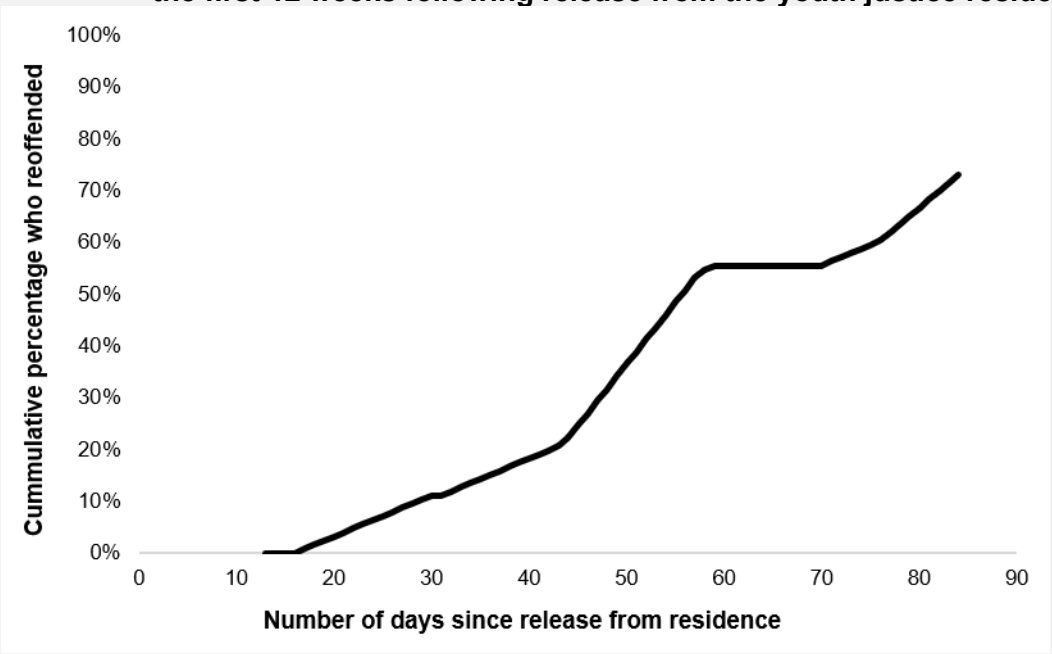
2 Police RCOS data is shared with Oranga Tamariki under Information Privacy Principle 10(1)(b)(ii) of the Privacy Act 2020. That is, the data is to be used for statistical or research purposes and will not be published in a form that could reasonably be expected to identify the individual[s] concerned.

Findings

Nearly three-quarters of the MSA pilot participants reoffended within 12 weeks

It was over two weeks after release from residence before the first of the pilot participants reoffended. Six weeks after release, 20% of participants had reoffended, and by 12 weeks, 73% had reoffended (based on the 'smoothed' percentages shown in Figure 1).

Figure 1: Cumulative percentage of MSA pilot participants who reoffended over the first 12 weeks following release from the youth justice residence



Note: Given the small numbers, to protect the privacy of the individuals, the cumulative reoffending rate is only shown for the first 12 weeks after release from residence and is shown as a 'smoothed' 14-day moving average to make it less obvious when individuals reoffended.

On average, there was a significant reduction in the frequency and seriousness of offending by MSA pilot participants

The nine pilot participants had committed an average of 20.1 offences per person (181 offences in total) in the 12 months before entering residence (Figure 2).[3] Over the 12 months after release, the average number of offences per participant was much lower at 9.1 (82 offences in total).

[3] Some of the numbers in Figures 2 and 3 have changed slightly from those presented in the final MSA pilot evaluation report. This likely occurred where, for example, it took several months for an offence to be reported to, or discovered by, police that occurred in an earlier six-month period in the graphs.

Figure 2: Average frequency of offences by MSA pilot participants in each six-monthly period before entering, and after exiting, the residence

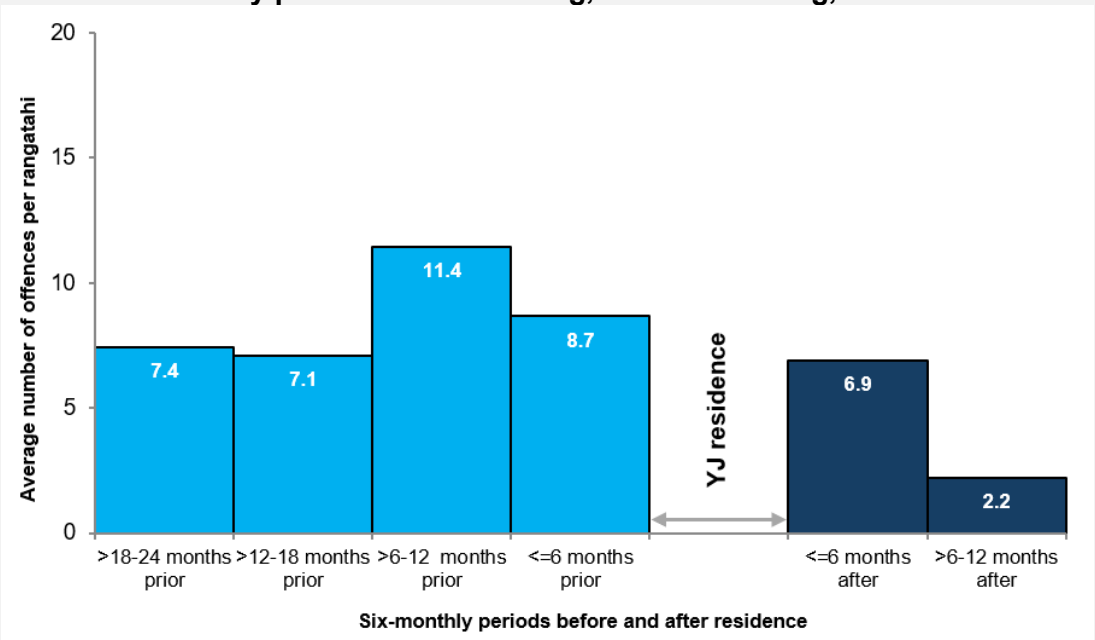
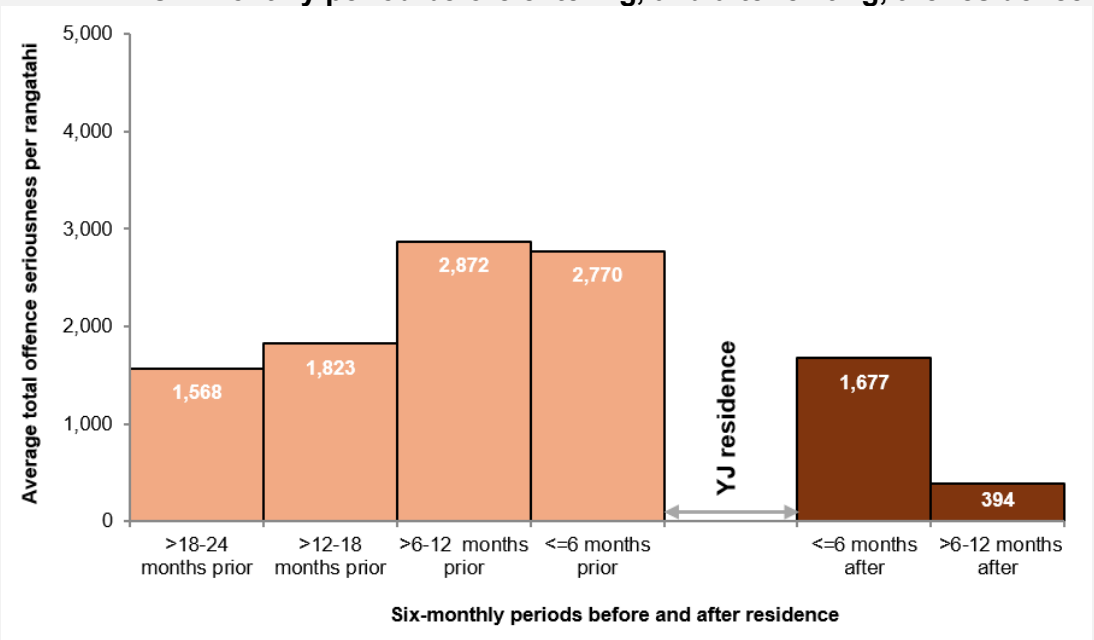


Figure 3 shows there was an escalation in the average total seriousness of the offences committed by pilot participants over the 24 months before entering residence.[4] However, the average total seriousness in the 12 months after release (2,071) was less than half that in the 12 months before entering custody (5,642).

Figure 3: Average total seriousness of offences by MSA pilot participants in each six-monthly period before entering, and after exiting, the residence

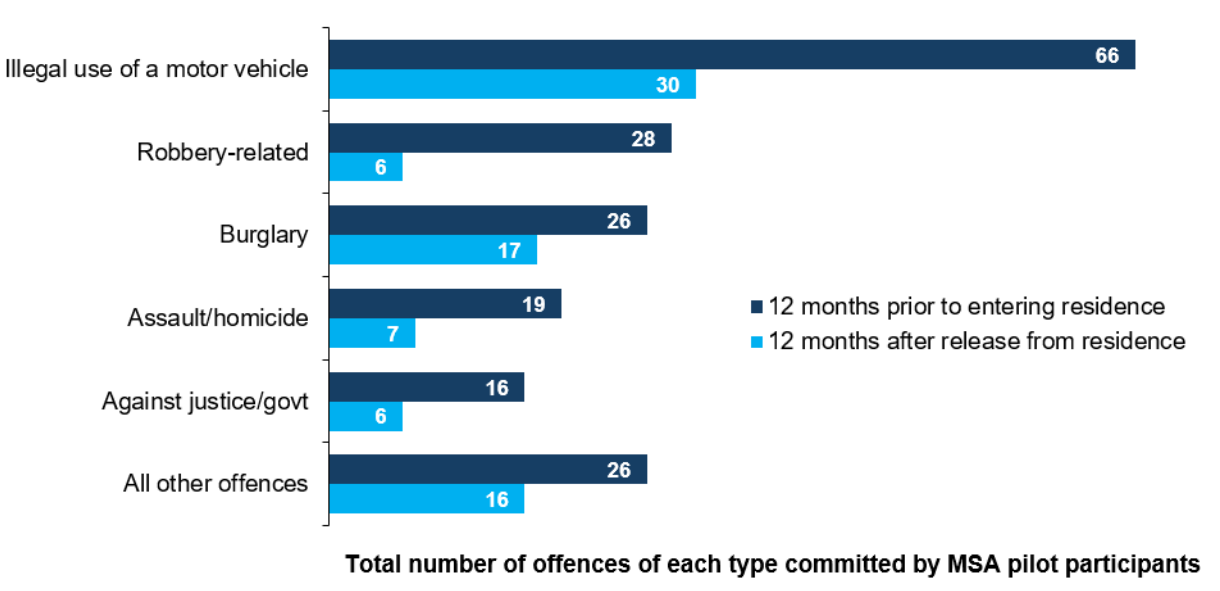


[4] Offence seriousness was measured using the *Justice Sector Seriousness Scale*. Seriousness scores are a statistical representation of the average severity of penalties imposed by adult courts for every offence type. As seriousness scores are averages, they have statistical error, but the magnitude of this error is difficult to quantify given the way scores are calculated. As a rule of thumb, differences of at least 10% in seriousness between two periods are considered a significant change.

Violent offences by MSA pilot participants reduced by over 70%

The total number of offences by pilot participants involving the use or threat of violence (i.e., robbery-related and assault/homicide offences) dropped by 72% (from 47 to 13) in the 12 months after release compared to the 12 months prior to entering residence (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Total number of offences of each type by MSA pilot participants in the 12 months before entering, and after exiting, the residence



Illegal use of a motor vehicle[5] continued to be the most frequent offence committed by pilot participants, but the number of such offences more than halved (from 66 to 30) in the 12 months after release compared to the 12 months before entering residence.

All other offence types also reduced in number in the 12 months after release compared to the 12 months before entering residence.

While all nine MSA pilot participants reoffended within 12 months, more than three-quarters reduced the frequency or seriousness of their offending

Table 1 presents four reoffending outcomes for pilot participants. Each outcome is assessed for each rangatahi separately and then are summarized as percentages who had a reduction in each measure. As such, these outcomes are not affected by outliers e.g., if a rangatahi committed a very large number of offences in the 12 months after release, this only affects how their own frequency or seriousness changed.

All nine of the rangatahi reoffended within 12 months of their release from residence.

Over three-quarters (78% or 7) of the pilot participants reduced the frequency, total seriousness, and/or maximum seriousness of their offending in the 12 months after release compared to the 12 months before. This includes two-thirds (6) of the nine rangatahi who had reductions in all three reoffending measures.

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5 Unlawfully taking or getting into a motor vehicle; or attempted unlawful taking of a motor vehicle.

Table 1: Reoffending outcomes for MSA pilot participants in the 12 months after release from residence

Outcome	Percentage of rangatahi (n=9)
Did not reoffend	0%
Reduced frequency of offending	78%
Reduced total seriousness of offending	78%
Reduced seriousness of most serious offence	78%

Two (22%) of the nine rangatahi showed improvement in none or only one of the frequency or seriousness change measures in the 12 months after exiting residence compared to the 12 months prior to entering residence.

Placing the MSA pilot reoffending outcomes in context

This section places the reoffending outcomes for MSA pilot participants in context by contrasting them to outcomes for two cohorts of rangatahi who also served SwR orders but were not pilot participants. The two comparator cohorts are:

- "All SwR orders" which comprises all rangatahi aged at least 15 years who commenced a SwR order between 1 July 2023 and 31 August 2024 and who did not participate in the MSA pilot.
- "Matched SwR" which comprises nine rangatahi from the cohort above who had the closest frequency and seriousness of offending histories to each of the pilot participants in the 24 months prior to residence. Given the small numbers, data was manually matched without replacement on prior offending histories.

Table 2 shows that pilot participants had some differences to all other rangatahi who received SwR orders within a year of the pilot ('All SwR orders' cohort). Pilot participants were all Māori, but 21% of other rangatahi with SwR orders were non-Māori. Also, in the 24 months prior to entering the youth justice residence, pilot participants had committed fewer offences but had higher offence seriousness. The 'Matched SwR' cohort has much more similar characteristics to the pilot participants.

Table 2: Demographic and prior 24 months offending history summary, by cohort

Characteristic	MSA pilot (n=9)	All SwR orders[1] (n=57)	Matched SwR[2] (n=9)
Male	100%	98%	100%
Māori	100%	79%	100%
Average age at SwR start (years)	16.1	16.0	16.1
Average frequency of offences (24m prior)	35	46	35
Average total offence seriousness (24m prior)	9,033	8,566	9,249
Average maximum offence seriousness (24m prior)	949	747	938

Notes:

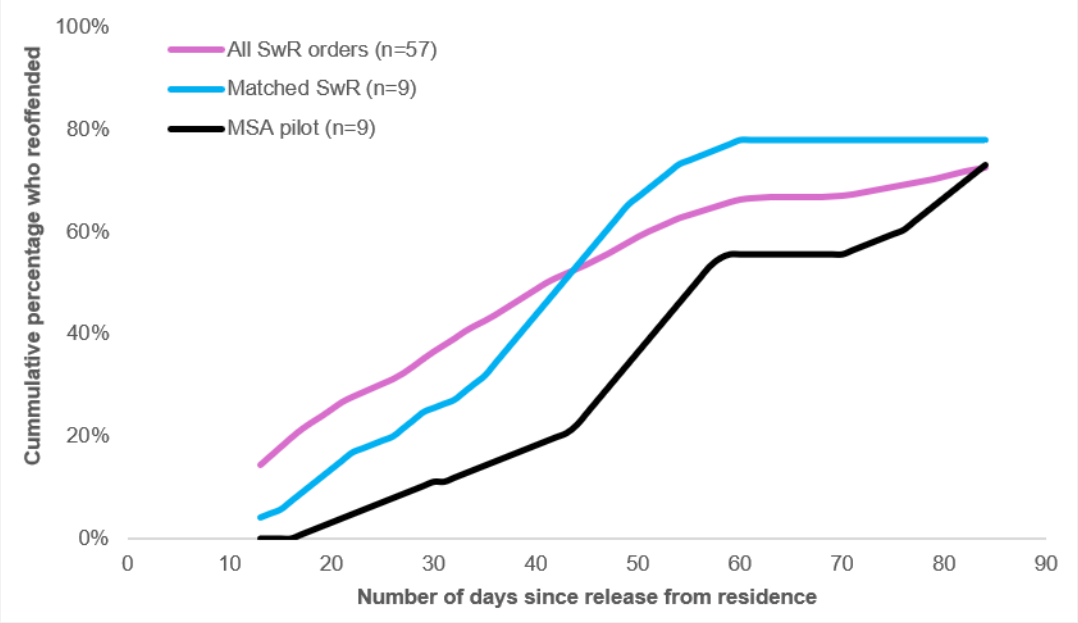
1. All rangatahi aged at least 15 who received a SwR order between July 2023 and August 2024, and who did not participate in the MSA pilot. The total number of rangatahi with SwR orders in this analysis (57) is greater than the number in the final MSA pilot evaluation report (51) as six more of the cohort had both offences in the 12 months prior to entering residence and a complete 12-month follow-up period to examine reoffending.
2. A subset of nine rangatahi from the All SwR orders cohort whose frequency and seriousness of offending in the prior 24 months was the closest match to each of the nine pilot participants.

The pilot participants spent an average of 93 days remanded in custody in residence directly before commencing their SwR orders, longer than the All SwR orders cohort (78 days on average) and Matched SwR cohort (83 days on average). For all cohorts, reoffending in the 12 months after release from residence was compared to offending patterns in the 12 months prior to entering residence on custodial remand.

MSA pilot participants were slower to reoffend than others with SwR orders

The pilot participants were slower to reoffend than both SwR comparator cohorts. For example, within six weeks of release from residence, 51% of the All SwR orders cohort and 48% of the Matched SwR cohort had reoffended compared to 20% of the pilot participants (based on the 'smoothed' percentages shown in Figure 5). However, by 12 weeks after release, reoffending rates for the three cohorts had almost merged.

Figure 5: Cumulative percentage who reoffended over the 12 weeks following release from residence, by cohort



Note: Given the small numbers in the MSA pilot and Matched SwR cohorts, to protect the privacy of the individuals, cumulative reoffending rates are only shown for the first 12 weeks after release from residence and are shown as 'smoothed' 14-day moving averages to make it less obvious when individuals reoffended.

A greater proportion of MSA pilot participants reduced the seriousness of their most serious offence than was the case for the matched SwR cohort

Noting the small numbers, Table 3 shows reoffending outcomes for the MSA pilot cohort and matched SwR cohort were largely similar, but over three-quarters (7) of the pilot participants reduced the seriousness of their most serious offence compared to only 33% (3) of the matched SwR cohort.

Six (67%) of the nine pilot participants reduced all three of the frequency, total seriousness, and maximum seriousness reoffending measures in the 12 months after release compared to the 12 months before. Only three (33%) of the nine matched SwR cohort had reductions in all three frequency/seriousness change measures.

Two of the nine rangatahi in both the MSA pilot and matched SwR cohorts showed improvement in none or only one of the frequency/seriousness change measures.

Table 3: Reoffending outcomes in the 12 months after release from residence, by cohort

Outcome[1]	MSA pilot (n=9)	All SwR orders (n=57)	Matched SwR (n=9)
Did not reoffend	0%	9%	11%
Reduced frequency of offending	78%	86%	89%
Reduced total seriousness of offending	78%	79%	78%
Reduced seriousness of most serious offence	78%	46%	33%

Note:
1. Reduced frequency or seriousness of offending includes rangatahi who did not reoffend as their frequency and seriousness went from a number greater than zero prior to residence to zero afterwards.

Summary

Offending patterns for nine MSA pilot participants were examined using Police *Recorded Crime Offender Statistics* data. To put the pilot cohorts' reoffending outcomes in context, they were contrasted to outcomes for two other cohorts. This includes a cohort of all other rangatahi with SwR orders imposed between July 2023 and August 2024, and a matched sub-cohort from this group comprising the nine rangatahi with characteristics that were most like those of the pilot cohort.

Given the very small numbers in the MSA pilot and matched SwR cohorts, findings are limited to those where the privacy of individual rangatahi can be protected.

Violent offences by pilot participants decreased by over 70% in the 12 months after exiting residence compared to the 12 months before entering residence. This includes robbery-related and assault/homicide offences.

Illegal use of a motor vehicle continued to be the most frequent offence committed by MSA pilot participants, but the number of such offences more than halved after release. All other offence types also decreased in number after release from residence.

All nine pilot participants reoffended within 12 months of release. However, over the first 12 weeks after release, pilot participants were slower to reoffend than both SwR cohorts. After 12 weeks, the reoffending rates for the three cohorts had almost merged.

Over three-quarters (7) of the pilot participants reduced the frequency or seriousness of their offending in the 12 months after exiting residence compared to the 12 months before entering residence.

Reoffending outcomes for the pilot cohort and matched SwR cohort were largely similar. However, over three-quarters (7) of the pilot participants reduced the seriousness of their most serious offence compared to only 33% (3) of the matched SwR cohort.

Six (67%) of the nine rangatahi on the MSA pilot had reductions in all three of the frequency, total seriousness, and maximum reoffending measures, compared to only three (33%) of the nine matched SwR cohort.

Only two of the nine rangatahi in the MSA pilot cohort showed improvement in none or only one of the frequency/seriousness change measures, the same figure as for the matched SwR cohort.

This report was prepared by Strategy, Insights and Performance, Oranga Tamariki. For more information, please email the team: research@ot.govt.nz