

Preparation for Military-Style Academy Pilot

To Hon Karen Chhour, Minister for Children			
Date	8 July 2024	Deadline	Not applicable
Reference number	B-0226	Priority	Medium
Key contact	Tusha Penny, Deputy Chief Executive, Residences and Homes	Contact number	9(2)(g)(ii) [REDACTED]
Security	In-confidence		

Purpose

- 1 This aide memoire provides information about preparation for the Military Style Academy pilot, which starts on 29 July 2024.

Background

- 2 This aide memoire responds to your request for an update on preparation for the pilot Military-Style Academy. **Appendix One** is a fact sheet about the pilot and Young Serious Offender Declaration (this is available on the Oranga Tamariki website [here](#)).
- 3 On 23 June 2024, the Prime Minister and you announced the Government's actions to address youth crime. This included the introduction of a new declaration for young offenders to ensure they face tougher consequences and are better supported to turn their lives around. The announcement also stated that the pilot Military-Style Academy was progressing, which would be based at a youth justice facility in Palmerston North and would operate under the current law.
- 4 This announcement followed an earlier announcement on 5 March 2024 which stated the intention for a Military-Style Academy to be operating from the middle of this year.
- 5 There is significant public and media interest in the pilot. We are working with your Office to respond to requests for information and proactively publish material of the Oranga Tamariki website.

Update on preparation for the pilot

Confirmation of the start date and location

- 6 The pilot will formally start on Monday 29 July 2024. The location of the pilot is Te Au rere a te Tonga Youth Justice Residence, Palmerston North. We are working with your office for a launch event for the pilot.
- 7 Te Au rere a te Tonga Youth Justice Residence can have up to 40 young people. One of the units has been set aside and adapted for the young people who will take part in the pilot. The other up to 30 young people will be managed as part of business-as-usual operating model. The two cohorts will not mix at night but there may be some deliberate and planned interaction during the day.

Outline of the approach, including programmes, duration, and wrap around support

- 8 The pilot has been designed in parallel with the work underway on the legislative changes for the Youth Serious Offender declaration and future Military-Style Academy order.
- 9 The pilot will involve up to 10 young males aged between 14 and 17 years at the time of the offending (some may turn 18 during the year) who are already in youth justice facilities. They will have been sentenced to a supervision with residence order and previously been in a youth justice residence. They will come from all over the country.
- 10 The pilot will run for 12 months, of which three months will be within the residence and the remainder will be focused on the transition back into community. During the intensive residential component, the pilot will involve a well-developed syllabus that is targeted at understanding and addressing criminal behaviours and establishing structure and routine. The programme will include military-style physical activities, personal discipline and teamwork, education, vocation, and employment pathways, as well as gaining life skills that the teenagers need to succeed and change their life path, and therapeutic and cultural components weaved throughout.
- 11 The residential component is followed by nine months of intensive transitional support in a community setting. The teenagers will have a structured and staged transition from the residential to the community component with an individualised, achievable plan. The intensive mentoring and whānau support will continue throughout this phase.
- 12 The pilot will operate within existing legislative settings, which means participants will be drawn from those sentenced to an existing Supervision with Residence order, with court-approved plans that include participating in the pilot.
- 13 The table attached as Appendix Two provides an update on the progress towards implementation of the pilot.
- 14 A process evaluation for the pilot will be completed in October 2025 and will report on the implementation and effectiveness of the pilot with lessons for future rollout. We are currently procuring a provider to do the process evaluation. The intention is to start evaluating the pilot from August 2024.

Involvement of other agencies and parties including the NZDF and iwi and hapū

- 15 We continue to work closely with officials from the Ministry of Justice, New Zealand Police, New Zealand Defence Force, and other key agencies to design and deliver the pilot. We are also consulting mana whenua and other community groups to design and deliver the pilot. Agencies are involved in the following forums as set out in the table below.

Forum and purpose	Membership
<i>Cross Agency Steering Group</i> Ensures there is integration across the various agencies that are connected to improving outcomes for the teenagers involved in the pilot.	Oranga Tamariki (Chair), New Zealand Police, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Social Development, Health New Zealand, New Zealand Defence Force, Te Puni Kōkiri
<i>National Interagency Assessment Panel</i> Provides a comprehensive integrated approach to assessment, unified agency	Oranga Tamariki (Chair), New Zealand Police, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Social Development, Health New Zealand, Kāinga Ora, VOYCE Whakarongo Mai


Forum and purpose	Membership
response and rapid support for the teenagers involved in the pilot. Supports local Multi-Disciplinary Teams.	
<i>Local Multi-Disciplinary Teams</i> Supports assessment, planning, delivery and transition. Coordinates and sequence relationships, services, intensified support and resources to give effect to the plan for the young person, and whānau support for sustainable success.	As above for the National Interagency Assessment Panel plus local providers, iwi and community partners

16 Oranga Tamariki has established an External Reference Group to provide independent advice, support, critical thinking, and challenge to the implementation of the Military-Style Academies pilot. This is an advisory rather than decision-making forum. The Members of the External Reference Group are:

- Linda Clark
- Alf Filipaina MNZM
- Dr Ian Lambie ONZM
- Dr Paul Wood
- Dr Moses Faleolo
- Aaron Hendry
- Marie Dhyrberg
- Gregory Fortuin
- Nicola Atwool
- Willie Apiata VC
- Tracie Shipton

Next steps

17 We will work with your Office to plan the launch of the pilot. We will also continue to work closely with your Office on the media and public requests for information.

Sign-off Oranga Tamariki	Sign-off Minister for Children
 Tusha Penny Deputy Chief Executive Youth Justice Services & Residential Care Date signed: 8 July 2024	Hon Karen Chhour Minister for Children Date signed:

Minister comments

Satisfaction

Please select your level of satisfaction with this Aide Memoire

- Outstanding Good Acceptable Poor Unacceptable

Appendix One: Fact Sheet

Appendix One is a fact sheet about the pilot and Young Serious Offender Declaration - this is available on the Oranga Tamariki website at the following linke - <https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/about-us/news/addressing-serious-youth-offending/>

Appendix Two: Progress towards implementation of Military-Style Academy Pilot

Phase	Progress update as at 5 July 2024
Assessment and preparation	<p>We are in this phase now.</p> <p>All 10 young people are in youth justice residences, and all have attended Family Group Conferences where agreement has been reached to recommend to the Court that they participate in the pilot as part of their sentencing. Two of the 10 have received their sentence and will participate in the pilot. We have met with the Principal Family Court Judge and sentencing bench about the pilot and the upcoming hearings for the remaining eight young people.</p> <p>Clinical assessment to confirm suitability for the pilot has been completed for the 10 young people. A further full clinical assessment for each young person is underway, which will support development of individual plans.</p> <p>A National Interagency Assessment Panel has been established to ensure cross government information sharing and integrated support over the period of the pilot. The National Inter Agency Panel comprises Police, the Ministries of Health, Education and Social Development, Corrections, Kāinga Ora, and Te Puni Kōkiri, and will meet within the week. The National Multi Agency Panel will also support work of local multi-disciplinary teams to ensure provision of timely integrated support.</p>
Intensive residential	<p>The military component runs for three months, starting on Monday 29 July 2024 and ending late October 2024. The following preparatory work has been completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff recruited, onboarded and trained. They will be on site from 24 July 2024. The 30 staff will be rostered to work 24/7. Staff are a mix of youth justice workers, therapeutic professionals (e.g. clinical psychologist and social workers), programme coordinators and leadership. • Site readiness – the dedicated unit will be ready by Friday 12 July 2024. The site has increased security, enhanced controls, and outdoor developments, e.g. obstacle course. • Military-inspired uniforms have been selected for staff and young people and will arrive on site 12 July. • Procurement has commenced for mentors to work intensively with the young people during the period, and also for suppliers to provide programmes (e.g. high ropes, tramping) during the residential phase. • Programme development – a detailed 12-week schedule of programming has been developed.
Transition	<p>The Transition phase starts in late October 2024.</p> <p>Planning for this phase is advanced and includes intensive mentoring and active work with whānau to address identified needs in preparation for young period returning to the community.</p> <p>The local multi-disciplinary teams will continue to meet during this period to provide integrated support for the young people.</p> <p>A big part of the transition phase is developing a career pathway for the young person, which picks up from the residential programme. We have working relationships with Tertiary Education Commission and Industry Training Organisations.</p> <p>The pilot ends in July 2025. At this point, and assuming no further offending, the young people will be living in their community, having completed the phases of the pilot.</p>