

Advice provided by Oranga Tamariki - 23 February 2024

### **Military Academies**

- Initial advice has been provided and the Minister has directed officials to progress enhanced measures to respond to our most serious and persistent young offenders. These include the establishment of military academies and the creation of a new Young Serious Offender designation.
- Legislation changes are required to enable stronger consequences for young people who are committing crimes.
- Research shows that therapeutic and rehabilitative support are also required to reduce risk of reoffending.
- A cross-agency response to youth crime is vital.
- It is important that youth are engaged in school, training or meaningful employment and that they are receiving the appropriate supports, including mental health services.
- Families of young offenders may also require support to address underlying issues which may be driving their children's offending.
- Legislative changes are being worked through. Progressing these at pace is a coalition priority.
- In the meantime, a pilot for a military-style academy is being developed and is intended to be operating from the middle of this year.
- Officials from Oranga Tamariki, Justice, Police, Defence, Social Development and Health are working together to develop the approach for the military-style academy pilot. Other experts, such as the Chief Science Advisor for the Justice Sector and advocates for care-experienced youth have also been invited to participate.
- The development of the pilot will draw on lessons from previous forms of military academies, requirements, actions and options to operationalise military-style academies within existing legislative settings, and operational readiness. Research shows the importance of programmes that include counselling, and have a primary focus on rehabilitation will be more effective in reducing re-offending. The pilot will also focus on transitioning young people from a military-style academy to ensure that they are well-supported and have options to enable them to reach their full potential.
- The pilot will have a military-style component as well as a rehabilitative and trauma-informed care approach to help these young people turn their lives around and reduce their risk of reoffending.

Dates for co-design workshops:

The co-design workshops are scheduled for the following dates, the Minister would be welcome to attend any of the following workshops in part or full:

- 23 February – 9:00am – 3:00pm
  - 1 March – 9:00am – 3:00pm
  - 6 March 9:00 – 3:00pm
  - 15 March 9:00am – 3:00pm
- The below diagram shows the approach to each session.

## Cross-agency co-design approach

*Over the next four weeks we will be working together to design and identify operational readiness requirements for a Military-style Academy pilot. A pilot is expected to commence by July 2024.*

