

# LIMITED SERVICE VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME



An assessment of  
how the programme  
addresses barriers  
to better  
employment and  
training outcomes  
for trainees



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## ABOUT TŪ AROMATAWAI INDEPENDENT REVIEW

Tū Aromatawai *Independent Review* is a division of the Ministry of Defence. Tū Aromatawai provides assurance to the Minister of Defence by reviewing performance of the Defence system and identifying opportunities for improvement. The reviews take the form of assessments or audits as set out in section 24(2)(e) of the Defence Act 1990.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**The New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) has a long history of delivering programmes that support unemployed young people. The Limited Service Volunteer (LSV) programme is one such programme. The LSV programme is funded by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) and delivered by the NZDF's Youth Development Unit.**

The LSV programme targets 18 to 24 year olds who are at risk of long-term unemployment. Programme participants ("trainees") stay in a military area for six weeks and undertake basic military training alongside learning skills for life and employment.

The LSV programme appears to be producing strong positive short-term outcomes (increased self-confidence, motivation, self-discipline, and initiative).<sup>1</sup> However, these positive short-term outcomes are leading to only a small increase in the number of young people in employment and training (the long-term outcome).

This review focused on the gap between the short-term and long-term outcomes and answers the question:

How does the Limited Service Volunteer programme address barriers to better employment and training outcomes for trainees?

The findings are as follows:

- Three components of the LSV programme are key to reducing trainees' barriers to employment: the military environment, a programme that provides life and employment skills, and practical and personal support for the trainees.
- Some trainees face significant barriers to work, such as substance abuse, poor mental health, or a dysfunctional home environment. Others face a personal barrier like low motivation, poverty of experience, and a lack of basic life and employment skills. In terms of practical barriers to gaining employment, the lack of a driver licence was a recurring theme.
- After the LSV programme, a majority of trainees gain work or enter training. For those who do not, the LSV programme still has a positive effect on their overall wellbeing, although further support is needed to enable them to move into training or employment.
- The common barriers or challenges that remain after the programme include: maintaining positive habits after returning to their home environment, a return to substance abuse, or a dysfunctional or unsupportive home environment. A small minority are unwilling to change.
- NZDF's "red flag" system identifies trainees who pose a threat to their own safety, the safety of others on the programme, or to NZDF's reputation. Records suggest that the number of red flags is growing, and there may be a need for more support for mental, physical, and dental health issues, and social work.

<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Defence (2018), Limited Service Volunteers: initial assessment [unpublished].

- Providing a greater level of post-programme support would be likely to improve outcomes. Good examples of post-programme support exist in New Zealand, but such support is not delivered evenly across New Zealand. Our analysis of five models of post-programme support suggest that it will be most effective if it is adaptable to trainees' needs, long-term, and connected into the trainee's whānau/family. Opportunities for peer-to-peer support (such as a regular regional LSV event or reunion) would complement other post-programme support. We note that MSD has undertaken a case study evaluation of the LSV programme that will, among other things, further inform the types of post-programme support that are likely to be most effective.
- A longer programme, such as the 20-week 1980s version of the LSV programme, might have better employment outcomes than the current LSV programme. However, improvements to post-programme support are likely to be at least as effective, and potentially better value for money. Any consideration of a longer programme should therefore be considered alongside options for improving post-programme support.
- We note that scheduling has an impact on outcomes: programmes that finish shortly before Christmas lead to a long lag before jobs or training courses begin.

MSD recently completed a case study evaluation of the LSV programme that aimed to complement and build on the findings of this review. In particular, the evaluation considered who the LSV programme is most effective for and what opportunities exist to enhance programme design to maximise positive outcomes.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations are likely to be of interest to both the Minister of Defence and the Minister for Social Development. We recommend the relevant Minister/s direct the relevant departments to:

1. Provide advice to Ministers on whether resourcing is adequate to address trainees' needs, noting the unique opportunity that the programme provides to engage with young people, some of whom have complex barriers to employment. This could include undertaking ongoing monitoring by NZDF of "red flag", health, and social work data to determine the requisite support during and after the programme.
2. Consider options for strengthening post-programme support. The options analysis should take account of existing post-programme support examples in Northland and Wellington, and the results of MSD's case study research.
3. Ensure post-programme support is:
  - 3.1. offered consistently across New Zealand
  - 3.2. adaptable to trainees' varied needs
  - 3.3. long-term
  - 3.4. connected into the trainee's whānau/family, and
  - 3.5. complemented by formalised opportunities for peer-to-peer support.
4. Ensure that any proposal for a longer LSV-style programme is compared with options for improving post-programme support.
5. Remove practical barriers to better employment outcomes for the LSV cohort including:
  - 5.1. supporting trainees to gain a driver licence to at least restricted level either before, during, or after the LSV programme, and
  - 5.2. scheduling LSV programmes so that they avoid finishing shortly before Christmas.

# CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGY





# CONTEXT FOR THIS REVIEW

The New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) has a long history of delivering programmes that support unemployed young people. The Limited Service Volunteer (LSV) programme is one such programme. The LSV programme is a residential motivational training programme funded by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) and delivered by NZDF. The LSV programme has been operating in its current form since 1993.

LSV is one of a number of employment and training related options that are available to young people engaging with MSD.<sup>2</sup> The LSV programme targets 18 to 24 year olds who are at risk of long-term unemployment. Programme participants (“trainees”) stay in a military area for six weeks and undertake basic military training (excluding weapons training) alongside learning skills for life and employment.

A detailed description of the LSV programme including contractual arrangements, location, staffing, referral arrangements, and the future expansion is in Appendix 1.

## WE UNDERTOOK AN INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF THE LSV PROGRAMME IN JANUARY 2018

In January 2018, Tū Aromatawai Independent Review completed an initial assessment of the LSV programme for the Minister of Defence.<sup>3</sup>

The initial assessment found that the LSV programme appears to be producing strong positive short-term outcomes (increased self-confidence, motivation, self-discipline, and initiative). However, these short-term outcomes only lead to a small increase in the number of young people in employment and training (the intended long-term outcome), compared to a control group.

The report found, among other things, that more up-to-date data would help to confirm the extent of the gap between the short-term and long-term outcomes.

## THIS REVIEW FOCUSES ON THE GAP BETWEEN SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM OUTCOMES OF THE LSV PROGRAMME

Following the initial assessment, the Minister of Defence requested a further review focusing on:

- the gap between positive short-term and desired long-term outcomes
- the outcomes of the programme beyond employment and training, eg, effects on drug use, criminal offending, and health.

This is that further review. The central question for this review is: How does the Limited Service Volunteer programme address barriers to better employment and training outcomes for trainees?

Within this question, the review seeks to understand what barriers LSV trainees have to gaining employment or entering training, how the LSV programme addresses those barriers, and what barriers remain for trainees after the programme.

The review also considers two further questions of interest to the Minister of Defence:

- What post-programme mentoring and support could enhance the success of the programme?
- What information is available to assess the effectiveness of the six month LSV programme in the 1980s compared to the current six week programme?

<sup>2</sup> LSV provides young people with basic skills that can be built on through other MSD programmes. Appendix 2 provides more information about other programmes and support that MSD provides for young people.

<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Defence (2018).

# HOW DID WE DO THIS REVIEW?

The review methodology used a combination of interviews, surveys, background research, and information gathering.

## Interviews

We surveyed and interviewed trainees from two LSV programmes to understand their perspectives on the programme.<sup>4</sup>

The complete findings from the trainee surveys and interviews are contained in a separate report.<sup>5</sup> Key findings and extracts are included in this report but are not referenced separately.

We also interviewed:

- personnel from NZDF National Office, the LSV programme headquarters, and LSV programme personnel (including programme social workers, nurses, and Work and Income representatives)
- employers and training organisations who attended either the Discovery Day at LSV (North) or Work Expo at LSV (South) to recruit LSV trainees into employment or study, and
- LSV patrons, some of whom were or had been employers.

A list of interview questions (excluding trainee interviews) is provided in Appendix 3. A list of the interviewees (excluding trainees) is included in Appendix 4.

## Other research

We undertook a range of other research to inform our findings:

- We reviewed relevant LSV programme documents to understand the content, inputs, and other context.
- We analysed available programme data from NZDF to verify qualitative findings.
- We researched New Zealand and overseas post-programme mentoring and support programmes.
- We reviewed historic documents and contemporary information to establish the likely effectiveness of the six month LSV programme in the 1980s compared to the current six week programme.

<sup>4</sup> We engaged a research firm, Malatest International, to interview and survey trainees at the Burnham and Motu Moana courses that commenced in June 2018. Trainee surveys and interviews were undertaken in the first and last week of the LSV programme. Follow up surveys and interviews were undertaken between 13 and 18 weeks after the completion of each LSV programme.

<sup>5</sup> Malatest International (2018) *Limited Service Volunteer Programme: Participant qualitative data collection and analysis* [unpublished report].

## Analysis

The trainee data collection and analysis was undertaken by Malatest International on contract.

We analysed the other interview transcripts (LSV personnel, support staff, headquarters, employers, and patrons) and secondary sources to identify common themes related to the central question and related sub-questions.

An independent quality assurance review by Allen+Clarke consultants found that the review methodology and analysis was fit-for-purpose and robust.

The trainee data analysis and the analysis from the other interview transcripts and secondary sources have been combined to produce the findings presented in this report.

## THIS REVIEW IS NOT A PROGRAMME EVALUATION

This review is not an evaluation of programme effectiveness and does not describe if the programme “works” or achieves its intended outcomes.

MSD undertakes regular quantitative studies of the effectiveness of employment programmes, including the LSV programme. The most recent report was published in 2019 and related to the 2016/17 financial year.<sup>6</sup>

MSD undertakes qualitative evaluations from time to time, and commissioned a case study evaluation of the LSV programme in September 2018 to identify who the programme is most effective for and identify opportunities to enhance programme design to maximise positive outcomes. That evaluation aimed to complement and build on the findings of this review.

## CONSULTATION

NZDF and MSD were consulted on this report.

<sup>6</sup> Ministry of Social Development (2019) *Effectiveness of MSD employment assistance: Summary report for 2016/2017 financial year*, <https://www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/research/employment-assistance-effectiveness/ea-effectiveness-report-07022019.docx>, accessed 7 February 2019.

# THE LSV TRAINEES





# THE LSV TRAINEES

Trainees from two LSV programmes (one at each of the two sites) were invited to participate in surveys and interviews in mid 2018. A total of 206 trainees started these programmes: 126 trainees at the Burnham site and 80 trainees at the Motu Moana site.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Approximately two-thirds (64%) of the trainees were male, although there were slightly more female trainees at Motu Moana than at Burnham.

The largest proportion of trainees were Māori (56%), followed by New Zealand European/Pakeha (44%), and Pasifika (17%).<sup>7</sup>

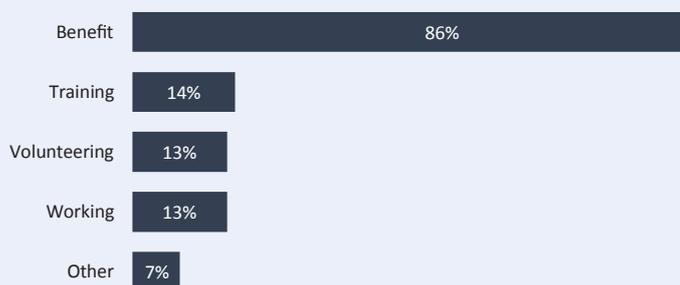
Most trainees came from Auckland, Wellington, or Christchurch, but all regions were represented.

## TRAINEES' BACKGROUNDS

At the start of the course, 86% of trainees said they were receiving a benefit from Work and Income (Figure 1).

*It is hard at home. Just trying to pay for my rent for my mum. Home is good. I dropped out of school two years ago. Got me a job, finished with the job and jumped on the benefit. (Motu Moana trainee, LSV start)*

Figure 1: Trainee circumstances before LSV<sup>8</sup>



<sup>7</sup> Trainees were able to select more than one ethnicity.

<sup>8</sup> Note that trainees were able to select more than one type of activity, meaning that the total frequency exceeds the total number of trainees who filled out the survey.

Of the trainees who were interviewed, a small proportion had previously attended university or completed other training courses.

*When I ended high school, I went straight to university for a year... I lost confidence in my ability to study and gain a university education, so I came back up here and bummed around with my family for a bit. I acquired a job seeker's benefit and I have been on that for over a year. (Motu Moana trainee)*

Thirteen percent of trainees had been employed prior to arriving at the course (usually in physical, labouring work like drain-laying, seasonal fruit-picking work, or roofing) but had either lost their jobs several months before the course or were employed in casual jobs with inconsistent work. Seven percent of trainees selected 'other' in the survey. Some of these trainees indicated in interviews that they had been employed "under the table" or in work that was not legitimate in other ways.

Most trainees signed up voluntarily after their Work and Income case managers or other people they knew mentioned the benefits of attending the course:

*I went into WINZ because I was signing up for jobseekers and then they were like, 'Do you want to do this?' And I was like yeah, and they showed me the videos because I did the seminar and I was like, 'Yeah I want to do that, looks cool as.' Heaps of fitness and stuff. (Burnham trainee, LSV start)*

Four trainees said they felt they did not have a choice about joining LSV. Two of these trainees were presented with the course as an alternative to going to jail. The other two had been told about the course by their Work and Income case managers and did not feel like they could say no.

## EXPECTATIONS OF THE LSV PROGRAMME

More than half of the trainees had come to the LSV programme with a clear idea about what they wanted to achieve. However, roughly the same proportion of trainees arrived with little clarity and wanted to see what the course could offer them.

Most of the trainees who were interviewed said they hoped to get a job after the LSV programme. Most were unemployed and had unsuccessfully looked for a job for several months. They expected the LSV programme to help them find employment by connecting them with employers and improving their employability and job-seeking skills.

*With the employment expo, when I was told about that and about how they get employers in and all that, I thought, that'll be good. Because they're coming here because they want to employ somebody. So, if I just slide them my CV, even though it hasn't got much on it, it should hopefully be enough for them to be a little bit interested. Enough to have a look at it and not just throw it straight in the bin.*  
**(Burnham trainee, LSV start)**

About one-fifth of interviewed trainees wanted to join the Defence Force.

*Hopefully after this, I should be going into the New Zealand Defence Force... I have done all the application... I am just waiting for a call from the New Zealand Defence Force.*  
**(Motu Moana trainee, LSV start)**

Trainees wanted to change old habits and form more structured and disciplined routines. They also wanted to develop their self-confidence by trying activities that they had never done before and pushing themselves both physically and mentally to prove how much they could achieve.

About one-third of trainees wanted to get a sense of independence out of the course by developing their life skills. Trainees also wanted to achieve a sense of independence simply by finishing the course, as they were not used to completing something for their own self-pride and gratification.

*I want to finish it for myself. I want to actually finish something for myself, because I've never really actually done anything for myself. This will be the first time.*  
**(Burnham trainee, LSV start)**

Around half of the trainees interviewed wanted to lose weight or get fit. Several trainees said they were unfit due to their sedentary lifestyles.

*I wanted to get fit and also putting myself in a situation different from what I am used to because I don't usually put myself in a social situation, so it was a bit of a social sort of thing for me. Mainly getting fit and the discipline as well.*  
**(Motu Moana trainee, LSV start)**

About one-third of trainees wanted to develop their social skills and ability to work in a team, as well as make new friends.

*Building up my teamwork and learning to know other people, because I know in the army, you're not going to know many people unless you know someone. So, like, building up the confidence to talk to someone and say, 'Hello. My name's [interviewee], what's yours?' Yesterday and the day before was the first time I'd done that with so many people.*  
**(Burnham trainee, LSV start)**

A few trainees also felt motivated to join the course because they wanted to improve their families' lives or help them have a better view of people in authority.

# REVIEW FINDINGS





# HOW DOES THE LSV PROGRAMME REDUCE TRAINEES' BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING?

## WHAT WE ASKED

Trainees were asked questions about what parts of the LSV programme had helped them to make changes to their lives and to help them find a job/enter training.

We asked LSV personnel, support staff, headquarters staff, employers/trainers, and patrons how the LSV programme helps trainees become more employable. We asked what parts of the programme contribute to the short-term outcomes (increased self-confidence, motivation, self-discipline, and initiative) and long-term outcomes (increase in the number of young people in employment and training), and what other support is provided.

In addition, we asked LSV personnel, support staff, and patrons to think of three trainees that they had met through the course: one who had excelled, one who had not done well, and one "somewhere in the middle". We asked them how the LSV programme addressed the barriers for the three trainees that they described.

## THE STRUCTURED MILITARY ENVIRONMENT TEACHES DISCIPLINE, PARTICIPATION, AND SUPPORTS POSITIVE PERSONAL HEALTH

Our first finding is that the structured military environment creates an environment that fosters learning and development. This finding is consistent with a 2011 study on the programme, that noted that the "most important aspect of the course was the environment or structure of the course".<sup>9</sup>

Early on in the programme, trainees identified that they wanted to change old habits and form more structured and disciplined routines.

*Some self-discipline. Waking up, making your bed, just doing stuff like that. I've gotten so much into a routine of just not doing anything, just getting up, going inside when I'm hungry, just lounging around watching movies, and then when I get bored, I don't go and do anything else. I just sit at home like a sack of potatoes. (Burnham trainee, LSV start)*

The structured military environment is new to most trainees and is a stark contrast to their normal home environment. LSV personnel, support staff, and patrons described that both the change in environment, and the nature of the new environment, provides the basis for achieving the short and long-term outcomes.

The military environment has a number of characteristics including conformity, structure, a drug-free environment, a high level of safety, and a focus on fitness and nutrition. These characteristics are discussed further below.

The **consistency of treatment and conformity** was noted by several LSV personnel, support staff, and patrons as helping to provide an even starting point for trainees:

*They all dress the same. We dress them the same. They all wear the same hat. They all wear the same boots. They sleep in the same beds, the same pillows. No one's above anyone else; they all get treated the same. (LSV personnel)*

*For trainees, it's being in a really good, controlled environment. Their day is controlled from 5.30 in the morning until 10 o'clock at night, before they go to bed... So we strip them right back, so everyone's the same. On day one you all get a haircut for the guys, and the girls, your hair has to be in a bun or tied back or plaited. Then they start gelling as a team: 'oh, we're all the same'. Then after day two or three, they get a uniform on. Then they all start to develop as one. Then they start working together as a team, which I think is something a lot of them don't have. (LSV personnel)*

<sup>9</sup> Maxwell, R (2011) "What do boot camps really achieve?": a means-end analysis of the Limited Service Volunteers programme', Social Policy Journal of New Zealand, 37, 1-15, Wellington, page 12.

Strict daily routines and detailed expectations for living standards were particular examples given (for example, three minute showers, dress standards, and room standards, separation from the outside world, and limited access to mobile phones). Other aspects of the military environment included support for positive health through regular balanced meals, physical training, and regular sleep patterns.

This environment provides an opportunity for a fresh start for some trainees:

*My top student at the moment, a massive red flag of self-harm, being depressed and all that... Have I seen it? Not an inch... I think a massive part is, the fact that they all start at square one... It's kind of a fresh start. How often in life do you get a fresh start? You never do – never. (LSV personnel)*

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One interviewee explicitly drew the link from military standards to employment:

*So, it might be the fact of making sure that they're correctly dressed and they learn to inspect themselves. And, rather than saying, "this is what we do in the military," linking it back to, okay, cool, if you're in an employment position that needs to wear safety kit all the time, you can now inspect yourself and get into that routine. (LSV personnel)*

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The command system is a key part of the environment: trainees follow orders and there is no option to sit things out. Trainees are expected to be self-disciplined to conform to the structure, and to maintain the high standards:

*We don't coax anyone through in our LSV. We'd rather graduate zero people than lower our standards. (LSV personnel)*

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The **drug free environment** was highlighted as an important aspect of the programme, especially for those trainees who had done well on the programme.

Nine of the 49 trainees who were interviewed at the end of LSV (18%) said they benefited from reduced drug use during the course. They realised how detrimental it was to use drugs and did not want to touch them again once they returned home.

One trainee also realised that drugs were a crutch for them and undermined their ability to find employment and get the best out of life.

*I've realised on this course that there's a lot more things that I can get high off without drugs. Not like sniffing glue or anything like that. Like... when we went out to the mountains, and just seeing some amazing views and also getting some pretty mean feelings from that. That was awesome. (Burnham trainee, LSV end)*

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Some trainees need support as they withdraw from drugs in the first part of the course, but once they have recovered, they can fully participate. For some, this can be transforming:

*He came here with such low confidence, not believing that he could do this. The first session I had with him he was withdrawing terribly off drugs and alcohol and so I got him treatment*

*... after the drug withdrawal cleared he... said, "I feel like I'm the real me." And I said, "What is the real you?" "I'm intelligent.... I can write really well." I said, "Well, start writing then."*

*And so he started writing .... His [end of course] speech was so powerful and he spoke about how he'd come from this place of darkness and not knowing who he was to just the veil kind of lifting and the drugs and the effects of his life lifting and he said he could see another life for himself.... He was absolutely transformed, not only physically, his face was glowing, but confidence wise and just mana, he just exuded it. And his speech was so good. The words in it, he was a very intelligent kid. He just needed to have that kind of brought out of him. (Social worker)*

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The military environment was also identified by LSV personnel, support staff, and LSV headquarters as being **safe and predictable**, which enabled them to build trust—an essential foundation for learning and growth.

*For a lot of them, it's the first time they've had a positive role model of the opposite sex. So, you get quite a few of the males that hate females and they've never had a really decent female figure in their life.... At first they turn up and they don't trust you at all, they don't want to listen to you, and then they realise, hang on, she's not that bad. Same thing goes for the female; no trust in the males, and don't want to talk to male instructors and don't feel safe around them or anything. Then they realise, actually these guys are here to protect us and not going to harm us. (LSV personnel)*

The physical safety of the environment was also noted in relation to the Burnham location:

*Telling them, and driving home that they're in a safe environment. The fence is there; going "there're boundaries and nobody that you don't want to come through that fence can get anywhere close to you." .... On graduation day.... [if] one gets through that they don't want, they can't get through the front gate. So, we contact them, "Do you want so-and-so to come in?" "No." Okay. "Sorry, you're not welcome." And they don't get in. (LSV personnel)*

The **focus on fitness and nutrition** as part of the structure means that some trainees lose weight, which leads to increased confidence. For others, regular nutritious meals means that they put on weight.

For example, on a recent LSV course trainees lost an average of 1.9kg over the duration of the course. The weight change ranged from gaining 4.7kg to losing 9.0kg.<sup>10</sup>

Data from the same course showed that the time taken to run 2.4km improved by an average of just over four minutes. The improvements ranged from five seconds to over 10 minutes.

## THE PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES BUILDS CONFIDENCE AND PROVIDES SKILLS USEFUL FOR LIFE AND THE WORKFORCE

The second way in which the LSV programme addresses barriers for trainees is through the specific content of the programme that provides opportunities for trainees to learn and achieve.

Through these activities, trainees are given the opportunity to understand their own strengths and potential, build self-awareness, learn a new way of life, and develop a changed mindset. One interviewee said:

*It's like a re-life packed into six weeks.... It's a live in, almost replacement of being brought up and it shows them another way. (Social worker)*

LSV personnel also noted that even programme elements that seem unrelated to employment are contributing to the short-term outcomes of increasing self-confidence, motivation, self-discipline, and initiative, and through those, to the long-term outcome of increased participation in employment and training:

*Even if you look at something like a knots and lashings lesson; the ... lesson is a vehicle to produce something else. Maybe it's the confidence to stand up and say "Yeah, I know how to do that," or the respect to listen to the lesson. Everything has more than one job... (LSV personnel)*

LSV personnel, support staff, and patrons identified the learning opportunities for trainees included employment and job-search skills, basic life skills, and activities designed to build confidence, leadership skills, and team work. These are discussed in greater detail below.

The **employment and job search skills** component of the programme includes putting together a CV, job interview practice, learning how to write a cover letter, presentation techniques, learning how to shake a hand, and having the opportunity to meet with potential employers and training providers at the Employment Expo/Discovery Day.

<sup>10</sup> Course data, N03/2017.

Trainees talked about the opportunities they had to develop their employability by improving their attitudes towards work and how they presented themselves to potential employers. They also discussed how they got to develop necessary skills to find work:

*They made new CVs for us and stuff like compared to our old CVs, so we have those out and it gave us more of an opportunity to get a job. (Motu Moana trainee, LSV end)*

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Trainees said they benefited from the Employment Expo/Discovery Day and presentations from employers. These events gave them the opportunity to learn about different career options available to them, meet potential employers, and understand any requirements that specific employers had.

Some trainees said they had job interviews or additional courses/training arranged after they left the programme.

*I actually have an interview when I get out... that's exciting. It's hotel work or desk work or pretty much everything. (Burnham trainee, LSV end)*

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Even if trainees did not have jobs to go to after the course or job interviews to attend, they said they now had a clearer idea of how to find a job and knew what requirements were necessary for them to pursue their goals.

Several LSV personnel and support staff noted that Work and Income staff at the programme try to match trainees to jobs they want, rather than any old job, in the hope of increasing the chances that they will stay in the job. This approach also encourages the trainees to see the potential for a first job to be a stepping stone to what they want to do.

The Employment Expo/Discovery Day also helps to address barriers or reservations that employers might have about engaging young people in work or study.

For those employers that attend the Employment Expo/Discovery Day, the programme provides a pool of candidates and a filter, described by one interviewee as “a six week interview process” (LSV headquarters). Employers and training providers are able to gain insights into trainees’ characters before offering them a job:

*I think it's great that on the day you can go up to the Defence people and just sort of say “Hey, what's this guy like?... So, you can ask those questions and get honest feedback. (Employer)*

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Having completed the programme, employers can also be confident that LSV graduates have proven they have commitment, stickability, and the ability to get up in the morning. They have improved their attitude, motivation, communication skills, and reliability, and they are ready to hit the ground running.

A significant part of the programme is teaching trainees **basic life skills** such as how to make a bed, buy a car, budget, wash clothes, rent a house, polish boots, and tidy up after yourself.

Around a fifth of trainees talked about learning these basic life skills. They felt a sense of pride about being able to complete these everyday tasks by themselves.

*Since I've been here, I actually learned how to save money and being in the budget lesson we had just helped me a lot to remember what you want is not what you need. (Burnham trainee, LSV end)*

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*If their life away from employment is squared away it probably gives them a better chance to be successful in employment 'cause they're not having to worry about those sort of things. (LSV personnel)*

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The programme also includes a range of health education classes on alcohol and drugs, hygiene, healthy eating and drinking, family planning/sex education, and dental hygiene. Interviewees commented:

*People say it's common sense, but it's not common sense for these kids because some of these kids don't know. (Police mentor)*

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*I had this trainee come to me in the first few weeks of this course, and he was complaining about his dental, his mouth and his teeth. So, I was like, “How often do you brush your teeth?” and then he was like “Three times a week”. ... some of them they don't really know how to take care of themselves. (Nurse)*

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As part of the life skills components, trainees are taught **social skills and values training**. Several LSV personnel and support staff referred to “prosocial skills”, which included etiquette and manners, positive relationships, communication, teamwork, positive reinforcement, anger and impulse management, learning how to process situations and make personal changes, and learning how to interact positively with the opposite sex. One interviewee described it as follows:

*...it could be part of the workforce, but it's actually just part of being a human being as well; you know, we all have our ups and downs, and then learning that they can come out the other side of that. (LSV personnel)*

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*If not employment figures, hopefully we can move them away from just doing dumb things to put it bluntly; but that's what it is. You know, just be a better person to society. (LSV personnel)*

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Another interviewee noted that developing prosocial skills is also valuable for a future workplace as trainees learn constructive ways to deal with conflict.

This theme was supported by the trainee interviews: around two-thirds of trainees talked about working as a team or learning to socialise with people with different personalities in constructive ways (such as by learning to handle constructive criticism), and additionally built strong relationships with other trainees on the course.

*Learning to take, handle constructive criticism. Before I would have been like, if someone had told me that my walking is crap, my marching is shit I would have been... but it's now like ok sweet, I'll fix it up. It's been for me that way because I don't lash out as much when I handle constructive criticism... (Burnham trainee, LSV end)*

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Around half of trainees who were interviewed said their relationships had improved after LSV. Specifically, trainees said their social anxieties had decreased. This was mainly due to the nature of LSV, where trainees were put together in situations where they were forced to communicate and get along.

Finally, interviewees (LSV personnel, headquarters, support staff, and patrons) highlighted the numerous **activities designed to build confidence**.

Although direct opportunities to improve employability are a focus of LSV, most trainees said that what they had valued the most was the improvement in their confidence, motivation, and discipline, and thought this was what had improved their employability the most.

Before starting the course, trainees had not believed they would be able to achieve their goals but taking part in LSV had changed their outlook. They now believed that they had the skills and ability to achieve their goals.

Almost two-thirds of trainees interviewed 13 to 18 weeks after the course talked about how LSV increased their confidence and motivation in everyday life.

*I'm probably a lot more confident and motivated than I was going into LSV. (Burnham trainee, follow-up)*

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Confidence and motivation helped trainees find employment, enrol in training, and achieve the other goals they had set out for themselves at the end of LSV. Trainees said they realised that it was up to them to change their lives and that LSV had shown them pathways to achieving their goals.

The opportunities to achieve in the LSV programme include field exercises and adventure-based physical challenges (eg, a 50km tramp). Trainees are given leadership opportunities, such as taking turns leading a group of peers. These challenges outside their comfort zone and the associated achievements build their confidence and self-belief.

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*Some of the trainees don't realise the potential they have. It's not until they actually come to this course and the potential is exposed. They leave this course with self-belief. Prior to coming to the course, there's no self-belief. They think they're just nothing to society. (LSV personnel)*

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The confidence building was highlighted as a particular theme for the trainees that LSV personnel, support staff, and patrons identified as being "in the middle" (neither excelling, nor performing poorly). Several of these interviewees described this type of trainee as the "grey man"—someone who doesn't stand out, does what is required, and neither excels nor performs badly.

For this type of person, confidence is built by pushing them out of their comfort zone, giving them opportunities they otherwise might not have had, giving praise, and providing new opportunities for friendship.

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*Reaffirming their achievements helps 'cause they're the type of people that haven't had a lot of praise in their life. (LSV personnel)*

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*... some of them have been brought up on the wrong side of struggle street and the course gives them some relief that they can actually do something, because from what I've seen, especially the ones I've spoken with, they've spent half their lives being told they're useless. ... that they are not fit for anything. So, I guess it's a belief in themselves and a belief in each other. (NZDF headquarters)*

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Interviewees said the course helps these trainees to restructure, gain motivation and enthusiasm, and get organised.

For this type of trainee, addressing barriers may not shift them out of the "grey man" group, but the programme does still have an impact:

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*...we talk about grey people and they still might be shy and not as confident as the really confident people at the end, but when you think about it they're probably like a recluse at the start and we've got them to that grey stage, so that's actually a massive improvement. (LSV personnel)*

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For about a quarter of the trainees interviewed 13 to 18 weeks after their LSV programme, they talked about the deep impact that the course had on their sense of value, self-worth, and maturity. Being in stable employment had a particularly positive impact on their sense of self-worth.

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*[I've gone] from a boy to a man really. My maturity has gone up big time. With LSV it made me do things I never expected I could achieve... I've brought a new energy. (Motu Moana trainee, follow-up)*

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*I'm in a really good place... working does a lot for your wellbeing. I used to just wake up at home and do nothing and look after my daughter... now I get up every morning, go to work... My wellbeing is just good at the moment mainly because I am working. I'm not sitting around doing nothing. (Burnham trainee, follow-up)*

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## THE PRACTICAL AND PERSONAL SUPPORT ENABLES TRAINEES TO ADDRESS ISSUES THAT THEY HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO TACKLE IN THE PAST

The third theme that emerged about how the programme addresses trainees' barriers and contributes to the desired outcomes, was the high level of personal support and encouragement provided during the programme. This support is set up primarily to enable trainees to stay on the programme, but also helps with personal or life issues.

This theme was the most frequently mentioned by LSV personnel, support staff, and patrons and tended to relate to trainees who they considered had done well on the programme.

General support for trainees was identified as coming from the military personnel, peers, the social worker, the police mentor, and patrons.

Several LSV personnel described a culture of whanaungatanga<sup>11</sup> on the programme. For trainees, whanaungatanga created sense of belonging and a new set of "good" peers:

*They've got a new family, new mates on a positive path. (LSV personnel)*

*People feel that sense of belonging, more than just, 'I am a member of this,' or, 'I have an affiliation.' It's that inclusion into something, which people might get when you join Mongrel Mob, when you join Killer Beez, whatever, to get that. That is something that everyone needs, and every youth needs - a sense of acceptance - if you are not there, it matters. That's whakawhanaungatanga, and if you don't have the strength of that, you'll be looking for that. You either look for that and find it in the Black Power, Highway 61, or you are isolated and drop, or you find it in church, you find it in military, and that's what gives that strength. (LSV headquarters)*

Peer support continued for many trainees after the programme. Most trainees said the support and encouragement from their peers was valuable and kept them motivated during and after the course.

*We've even got like a group chat and stuff, so we still make sure everyone's doing what they're supposed to do, like getting jobs. Most of them have jobs now. I think the rest of them are on courses. (Burnham trainee, follow-up)*

The support provided is described in more detail below.

**Personal support** was offered by personnel, the social worker, the police mentor, and patrons.

**Personnel** are often the first port of call for trainees who are having issues:

*They come to staff with their issues and problems, and our staff talk back to them. They don't talk down to them or kick them down, none of that whatsoever. They talk. So they do that parenting role. You have to be firm but fair on them. They need that; a lot of them have never had that. (LSV personnel)*

Several LSV personnel and support staff commented on the unique and specialised skillset of NZDF-trained personnel, and their belief in and commitment to the programme. Personnel were described as being experienced, patient, supportive, dedicated, persistent, and role-modelling positive behaviours:

*Staff really try... and put themselves out to help the trainees. (LSV personnel)*

*Because we're in the military we have many hats to put on, the drill instructor hat, the do as you're told hat, the social worker hat, the big brother and big uncle hat. (LSV personnel)*

*...we are I guess bringing them towards that contributing citizen stage as much as we possibly can with the time given. I think 95 percent of the staff must believe that as well, otherwise they wouldn't put so much in... (NZDF headquarters)*

<sup>11</sup> "A relationship through shared experiences and working together which provides people with a sense of belonging" (Moorfield, 2018, *Te Aka Online Māori Dictionary*, <http://maoridictionary.co.nz/word/10068>, accessed 1 August 2018).

The presence of personnel also provided the opportunity for trainees to build positive relationships with adults. Personnel were identified as helping to explain the consequences of actions, building trainee's self-esteem, and celebrating achievements.

"Facilitation" was a method that several LSV personnel mentioned. In this context, facilitation is used to mean reflective discussion on events – to help the trainees process the experience of the programme.

Personnel were identified as being particularly skilled at getting to know the trainees and using the good things in their lives as a means to encourage them, and acting as mentors for the trainees:

*You're the mother, you're the father, for that whole period. So you're mentoring them through the basic things like getting up to have a shower. We teach them how to brush their teeth; we take them right back to the basics.*  
**(LSV personnel)**

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*Every staff member finds he has these one-on-one discussions every now and again. You're sitting down and, 'How long have you been in the Army, Staff? What did you do? How did that work?'. And you'll find there are opportunities to mentor, quite casual ones.*  
**(LSV personnel)**

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A key aspect of the personal support was encouraging trainees to ask for help:

*They just have to ask and they'll get it. We promote that. Changing the mindset that it's ok to ask for help.*  
**(LSV personnel)**

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Specific support was provided by the social worker, nurse, Work and Income staff member, and police mentor available on site. The social worker is available for "absolutely anything" for trainees who need support. The police mentor is an unexpected source of support for some trainees who may not have a positive view of the police:

*... they can get to know me as a person rather than just a robot in a blue uniform. (Police mentor)*

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For some trainees, this is a level of support that they don't have access to elsewhere. The Work and Income support was described as being more tailored than from a case manager at a branch and useful for sorting out benefit issues, lining up employment, and providing relocation assistance for trainees and whānau where needed.

Finally, patrons provide support where they can:

*There was another... girl who couldn't walk 1.2kms at the start of the course. On the second day they have the cross-country run to sort of measure their fitness, and it's around this track two times of 1.2kms. This girl refused. She said, "I can't even walk that far." So, I said, "I'm 64 and I can walk that far." I said, "I don't care if it takes us all day, I'll walk around with you, and if I have to I'll pull you." She basically had never been given any care by anybody in her life; she was basically just left along to sit on her arse and do nothing with her life. At the end of the programme she was jogging. (Patron)*

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**Health-related support** was identified as a significant aspect of the support provided, particularly mental health support.

Mental health support includes diagnosis and referrals (to a GP or counselling), mental health brief interventions, and duty of care follow up by the LSV social worker once a trainee has returned home.

Mental health treatment and intervention was accessed by both trainees who did and did not do well on the programme. In some cases, the LSV programme is a first point of diagnosis and treatment for a trainee:

*One, we found out he hears voices, and they tell him to be angry and that sort of stuff. That was not a red flag that we knew; the doctors didn't know about it. So, we've pulled it up here... (Police mentor)*

For those who did well, brief intervention counselling by the social worker to provide coping strategies for trainees was a common means of support. In cases where NZDF cannot provide sufficient care, the social worker refers trainees for treatment and then follows them up after they leave the course.

Other health support includes:

- physical health treatment from the nurse, and physio, dentist and GP visits
- physical health diagnosis and referral, including providing a first point of assessment, treatment of long-term conditions, and treatment for drug and alcohol withdrawal.

Much of the **practical support** on the programme is by the MSD representatives. During the course, MSD staff do “shop runs” with trainees to buy toiletries, help deal with banking issues (such as family members inappropriately accessing trainees’ bank accounts), or buy clothing for the end of programme formal dinner.

*You see a lot of trainees that turn up, and I shit you not, they've got a plastic bag with a pair of undies, a wet flannel, a wet towel and a toothbrush in it. (LSV personnel)*

Other assistance includes assisting with benefit issues, and post course assistance such as arranging emergency accommodation, paying for a mobile phone, relocation or travel assistance, work set up costs, or assistance to obtain a driver licence.

## WILLINGNESS AND ABILITY TO CHANGE IS KEY

LSV personnel and support staff said that the programme did not assist a small subset of trainees to reduce their barriers to employment/training. These trainees generally fell into two categories.

First, personnel and support staff suggested that some trainees are unwilling to change. In these cases, they described attitudinal issues:

*...we call them a resource thief...they suck everything they can possibly get in because we give it to them basically because we want to help them out, but they sort of reject it, it's not their time. (LSV personnel)*

The trainees themselves agreed. Most trainees thought succeeding and doing well on LSV depended on personal mindset. They said that unless trainees were committed and focused, they were unlikely to benefit from the lessons and opportunities offered during the course.

*Everything that's in place now is perfect to help people. It just depends on whether the person is willing to help themselves, because I've seen that a few of our platoon members who have left think that it's all about joy and fun, but really, it's about working hard and having your fun afterwards. (Motu Moana trainee, LSV end)*

Over one-third of trainees also said that there were a few trainees who let the larger group down, which prevented the course from being as good as it possibly could be. Most trainees who pointed out this issue were pragmatic about it and said that it was important to focus on making the most of the course.

*The only thing that might have annoyed me was the fact that the staff continued to put effort in and some trainees just they said they wanted help but at the end of the day, they weren't willing to help themselves. That was kind of annoying because the staff are just wasting their time at the end of the day. Just people complaining about real little stuff, people complaining about smokes all the time. That stuff just annoys me, when people complain about stuff that doesn't really actually matter. (Burnham trainee, LSV end)*

LSV personnel and support staff commented that removing a trainee who has been draining resources is also beneficial for the rest:

*The one bad person can be a massive detriment on the majority. We're putting 90% of our energy into this one person but we're ignoring the rest that want to be there. (LSV personnel)*

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Secondly, other trainees are a poor fit for the programme. Examples cited by LSV personnel included particular mental health conditions such as severe anxiety, or some referrals from the Courts, where the trainee was not willing to change their mindset.

The trainee research supported this perspective. Interviews with two trainees who had left the programme for mental health reasons suggest that the course may not be suited to trainees who need support for mental health issues.

However, non-completion of the programme was not necessarily negative. LSV personnel and support staff said that for some trainees, the benefits of attending could include receiving mental health diagnosis, treatment and referral for the first time, a taste of comradeship, a home, or an experience of what it is like to work hard.

*Some of these people don't last on the course, but you know what? They've seen me, I've made a referral to their GP, the GP's then made a counselling appointment or got that young person on medication and that person has received treatment merely because they applied for an LSV course. (Social worker)*

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Six trainees who had exited the programme were interviewed either shortly after leaving or in the follow up interviews. All were positive about their experiences of the course and valued the routine, discipline, and structure that was provided during the course. Trainees also appreciated how every activity and every moment of the day had a purpose to it. Two trainees who had left due to injury wanted to return to complete the course.

## SUMMARY

The LSV programme addresses trainees' barriers to employment or training by bringing them into a structured, safe, and supportive environment where they have the opportunity to learn basic life skills, as well as employment skills. The programme showcases a range of opportunities to trainees, and gives trainees the skills they need to pursue those opportunities.

The programme is valuable to employers as it teaches trainees attitudes and values that are desired by employers and provides a "six week interview process".

Alongside skill development, trainees are provided with practical and personal support to begin to deal with some of the personal barriers they may be facing, such as drug addiction, financial issues, family issues, physical/mental health issues, or a challenging family background.

The next section outlines the barriers that trainees have to better employment and training outcomes.

## WHAT BARRIERS DO TRAINEES HAVE THAT PREVENT THEM FROM GAINING EMPLOYMENT OR UNDERTAKING TRAINING?



## WHAT WE ASKED

Trainees were asked in a survey about their situation prior to the LSV programme. Trainees who were interviewed were also asked whether they had goals for the future, what skills they wanted or needed, and what support they needed to help them towards their goals. The trainee survey used a Hua Oranga (wellbeing) measure to assess physical, spiritual, family, and mental health.

LSV personnel, support staff, and LSV patrons were questioned about the barriers to employment/training faced by the three trainees that they had identified as excelling, not doing well, and “somewhere in the middle”.

We also asked employers and training providers, LSV patrons, and Work and Income staff about what vacancies they had or knew of, what sort of skills and attributes they were looking for in potential employees, and what they perceived to be “the gap”, in other words, why some young people are not employed or in training.

## WHAT JOBS ARE AVAILABLE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE?

A better employment outcome for trainees requires “matching” potential employees with existing vacancies. Employers have vacancies that they want to fill with particular requirements (eg, skills required, work hours, location). Potential employees need to be able to fulfil those various requirements (eg, possess the necessary skills, be able to commit to the required hours, have access to transport to get to the location) for a match to be viable.

The employers, Work and Income staff, training providers, and patrons that we interviewed all agreed that there are plenty of entry level job vacancies.

In some industries, there is the opportunity for specialisation and progression:

*A couple we've got now, they've got real possibilities of becoming civil engineers and we're looking at putting them on diplomas. (Employer)*

The employers and training providers we saw represented at the Expo/Discovery Day indicated that there are vacancies in a range of industries: construction, call centres, IT, factories, warehousing, retail, driving, fisheries, hospitality, and agriculture/horticulture/viticulture.

Vacancies were both seasonal and permanent, and some seasonal work could lead to permanent employment for employees who do well.

## WHAT ARE EMPLOYERS/TRAINING PROVIDERS LOOKING FOR?

Employers, Work and Income, training providers, and patrons primarily identified attributes rather than skills as being important in potential employees.

They said reliability and commitment was the number one attribute they wanted in potential employees.

One interviewee referred to the experience of an employer he knew:

*...they employ 30 percent more people than they need because that is the number of people that don't turn up. (Patron)*

A positive attitude was the second most commonly mentioned attribute that employers looked for.

For training providers, students need to have the ability to listen and learn.

Employers emphasised the importance of having a driver licence—either to enable the employee to get to work for an early start, or to/from an “out of the way” location, or as an essential requirement for the job itself.

Administrative data from the LSV programme at Burnham indicated that more than half of trainees between 2013 and 2018 did not have a driver licence (refer Figure 2).<sup>12</sup> One interviewee advised that, of those that do have a driver's licence, the vast majority are at learner licence level.

A range of other skills and attributes that were desirable for employers were mentioned including: presentation and good first impressions, some previous employment experience (in any field), fitness and/or strength, attention to detail, and resilience. This range indicates that there is no “one size fits all” for potential employees, beyond reliability, commitment, and a positive attitude.

**Figure 2: Driver licence details recorded at LSV Burnham 2013-2018**



<sup>12</sup> Data was not available for the North site.

## TRAINEES' LACK OF MOTIVATION, LOW KNOWLEDGE OF OPPORTUNITIES, SUBSTANCE ABUSE, AND HOME ENVIRONMENT ARE BARRIERS TO GAINING EMPLOYMENT

Trainees' barriers to gaining employment or entering training are quite variable: some trainees have significant barriers while others come from good backgrounds with only a few barriers.

Five themes emerged from our review about the types of barriers that prevented trainees from gaining employment:

- motivation, confidence, mindset, and attitude
- a 'poverty of experience' (a lack of knowledge and life skills)
- substance dependency
- family background or environment, and
- other barriers including a criminal history, and mental health issues.

These themes are discussed in the following paragraphs.

### Motivation, confidence, mindset, and attitude

Low motivation was the most significant barrier that trainees identified for themselves at the beginning of the programme. Many trainees said they were not doing very much with their lives before LSV and had spent their time staying at home. Some said lack of motivation prevented them from gaining employment/entering training, and achieving independence, and that they needed "a push":

*I was just a stay at home person, I just stayed home every day and I just never really had the motivation to actually pick up my life. So that's a big thing of why I wanted to come so bad, 'cause I need that independency in myself, 'cause I'm not really good at doing it by myself. (Motu Moana trainee, LSV start)*

Two trainees also commented that they were motivated to come on the course to learn to be better role models for their children.

The theme of low motivation or confidence was also raised by LSV personnel, support staff, headquarters, patrons, and employers/trainers.

For trainees who were identified as doing well on the programme, or were somewhere in the middle, a lack of confidence and motivation was identified as a key barrier to gaining employment or entering training:

*...look we've had six weeks with some of these people and some have done great, and some it was always quite an effort to get them to want to get up in the morning, sadly. (NZDF headquarters)*

Some employers also believed that young people are lacking in incentive, for example:

*They find out the benefit pays pretty good. So, if you take some guy that comes to work and offer him \$18 an hour, he's generally getting \$16 at home, so he's coming to work for \$2 an hour, and that just outweighs the whole thing....[A] lot of them will say "No thanks, I'll stay home." (Employer)*

For those trainees who LSV personnel and support staff identified as having not done well on the programme, mindset or attitude was a key issue. Some trainees were described as having a negative mindset or attitude, including a stated disbelief that the course would work for them, a refusal to participate, or a lack of empathy towards others.

## A “poverty of experience”

The second theme can be summarised by what an LSV social worker described as a “poverty of experience”. Many trainees lacked basic skills (including social skills) and knowledge and had low awareness of the opportunities available to them. A low level of education, age, and maturity were also contributing factors. One interviewee commented:

*... they just ask questions and you think, “Like, how do you not know that?” You just go Google that; like Google this, Google the Navy and you’ll have the information there. But, they just don’t know that... Like, they might like sport but they don’t know that you can go and work in something involving certain parts of the sports world besides just playing sports... (LSV personnel)*

Trainees themselves were aware of this. Several trainees who were interviewed said that while they knew what they wanted to achieve in life, they did not know how to accomplish their goals.

*I’m also stuck on, ‘cause the goals that I want to set, I know what I want to set, it’s just I don’t know the requirements I need, so the skills, so I’m still trying to build up to that part. I’ve been asking around for like people’s ideas and they just tell me, ‘oh take some courses or something’.*  
**(Motu Moana trainee, LSV start)**

Many trainees were described by LSV personnel and support staff as lacking “prosocial skills” and were either very shy or over confident. Some trainees had anger issues or negative attitudes towards authority and bureaucracy.

## Substance dependency

Several trainees who were interviewed struggled with substance dependencies, which was a barrier to employment. Being at the course – where they had no access to drugs for six weeks – was a helpful way to start addressing their drug use.

*Weed is my massive problem and I have been fighting it for a long time because I have given up so many times before, but I keep getting stuck in the rut. That has been like a maze for me... [LSV] is perfect for me to get away from where I am. I can say no to anyone, but it is myself that is doing the problem, it makes it harder.*  
**(Motu Moana trainee, LSV start)**

LSV personnel and support staff also identified drug and alcohol abuse, ranging from social use to self-medicating to addiction, as a barrier to employment for many trainees. Prior drug and alcohol abuse did not appear to have a bearing on how well a trainee performed on the programme; LSV personnel and support staff indicated that some of these trainees went on to do well, but others did not.

## Family background or environment

The theme of the family background or home environment, including social influences, was identified as a barrier to better employment or training outcomes by trainees, LSV personnel, support staff, and employers.

At the start of LSV, about a quarter of trainees said that they had friends who were not positive influences. These trainees recognised the need to change their lifestyles and believed they could do this by being away from these types of friends.

*Just the people I put myself with, they smoke marijuana, or they do this, always just fell into it, oh yeah why not. I have got nothing better going with my life. If this is the easiest way through life, then this is the easiest way. That is what I thought. The drugs were no good, still no good for me. This is kind of a rehabilitation, I am hoping.*  
**(Motu Moana trainee, LSV start)**

A few trainees also said the lack of encouragement and support in their everyday environments affected their perception of what they could achieve. Trainees felt that having more support would help with their motivation and self-confidence.

*I think my biggest barrier is myself, really, but if I had bros constantly telling me after the first couple of weeks, "You need to do this, you need to do that," and so on, after a while I should hopefully know all of that. (Burnham trainee, LSV start)*

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Employers identified the home environment, in particular intergenerational unemployment, as contributing to a lack of positive role models for young people or an expectation that they will work.

LSV personnel also identified a trainee's family background as being a barrier to employment and it was the most commonly cited barrier across all three types of trainee (that is, those who did well, didn't do well, or were "in the middle"). Some trainees had a high level of family-related responsibilities (eg, looking after siblings), which left them little time to look for work or undertake study. Others were from abusive, dysfunctional, or unsupportive families which led to barriers such as a lack of support, low expectations, and a lack of positive role models.

Other social influences, such as friendship groups, were a barrier for some trainees, and were particularly noted by LSV personnel and support staff in relation to trainees who went on to do well on the programme.

Gang backgrounds were a barrier for some trainees, either being patched themselves, or having strong gang influences.

Despite the challenges of trainees' families, the bonds were often strong and could work against, for example, a trainee being willing to relocate for a job:

*He was in line to be patched, but he didn't want to be. But he was a father with a very young family, and his whole family were up there [in the area], so he was really, really torn. (LSV personnel)*

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## Other barriers

Other barriers identified by trainees and other interviewees (LSV personnel, support staff, headquarters, employers/trainers and patrons) included:

- significant mental health issues (particularly for those who didn't do well on the programme). Senior LSV personnel suggested that as many as 50% of trainees had some form of mental health issue.
- a criminal history was also common among trainees who did not do well, though did not always determine the outcome, as others with a criminal history excelled at the programme.
- unexpected life events, such as pregnancy or being kicked out of home
- obesity
- intellectual or physical disability
- a history of abuse or trauma
- location (remote or poor public transport), and
- poverty (arriving to the programme with no shoes, no toiletries).

Interestingly, one employer suggested that a barrier for young people obtaining work may be that employers are not flexible enough:

*I also realise from an employer's perspective, we now have to be perhaps a lot more flexible. So, we realise that people might have issues around transport, they might have medical conditions, they might have mental health, they might have family obligations. So, from an employer's perspective those people might be unemployed because the employment arrangement can't be flexible enough to suit their needs. I think being able to tailor our offering to these young people is pretty important. (Employer)*

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**Figure 3: Number/proportion of red flags per course, LSV Auckland, 2013-2018**



**Figure 4: Number/proportion of red flags per course, LSV Burnham, 2013-2018**



## THE NUMBER OF TRAINEES WITH “RED FLAGS” APPEARS TO BE INCREASING

Administrative data from NZDF indicates that the number of trainees with “red flags” (trainees who pose a threat to their own safety, the safety of others on the programme, or to NZDF’s reputation) has been increasing over the past five years.

Examples of where a red flag is assigned include: self-harming behaviours, suicidal ideation, mental health diagnosis, grief or trauma, substance abuse, or intellectual disability.

This increase in red flags may indicate that, on average, trainees have an increasing number of barriers to employment.

Figures 3 and 4 show that the number of red flags recorded by NZDF has increased at both the North and South sites over the past five years. In Auckland, red flags have increased from 10-30% in 2013, to 50-80% in 2017-18. At Burnham, red flags have increased from 5-10% in 2013 to 25-50% in 2017-18.

## THE DEMAND FOR HEALTH SUPPORT MAY ALSO BE INCREASING

Several interviewees commented that they had observed increasing physical, mental, and dental health needs among trainees.

Administrative data over the past two years shows an increasing trend over the short term. NZDF administrative data shows:

- the number of GP visits at LSV (South) has almost doubled over the past two years (from 37 visits per 100 trainees in early 2016 to 71 visits per 100 trainees in the last course of 2017)<sup>13</sup>
- an increasing incidence of mental health red flags at both LSV (North) and (South) locations with a peak of 20% at North in 2017, and 29% at South in 2018.

Demand for and complexity of dental, physio, and general social work support was also reported to be increasing.

Health related data was less clear and showed:

- between three and 11 dental consultations at each LSV (South) programme in 2016-2017
- an average of 34 trainees referred for physio treatment at each LSV (South) programme in 2016-2017, with an average of 3.8 sessions per trainee
- between 30% and 50% of trainees access the social worker at least once at each LSV (South) programme in 2016-2017.

## FURTHER INVESTIGATION OF RED FLAG, HEALTH, AND SOCIAL WORK TRENDS WOULD BE WORTHWHILE

This review did not investigate the red flag, health, or social work trends further, but it is a significant insight. It would be worthwhile for NZDF to monitor or examine these trends in more detail, including comparing the incidence of poor mental and physical health in LSV trainees with young people in the general population.

Further examination of these issues and trends would provide decision-makers with clearer evidence about the type of support that is required for trainees during and after attending the LSV programme.

In addition, this increase in the number of trainees with complex needs may indicate the need for more specialised training for LSV personnel.<sup>14</sup>

## SUMMARY

Our interviews indicate that there is plenty of work for motivated young people, even if they have relatively low skills levels. Employers and training providers are looking for reliable people who have a positive attitude, and are willing to learn.

The trainees undertaking the LSV programme, however, face a number of barriers to gaining employment.

Trainees’ barriers range from relatively low level barriers such as a lack of motivation or knowledge of opportunities, to multiple and complex issues such as drug abuse and addiction, or a challenging family background. One common practical barrier is a lack of a driver licence.

Overall, the number of trainees who face complex barriers appears to be increasing, as well as the need for a wide range of health and social work support.

In the next section, we discuss what barriers remain for trainees at the end of the programme.

<sup>13</sup> No comparable data is available for the LSV (North) programme.

<sup>14</sup> For example, RNZAF undertakes mindfulness-based resilience training for its personnel, which could be leveraged for LSV personnel.

## **WHAT BARRIERS REMAIN AFTER LSV THAT PREVENT TRAINEES FROM GAINING WORK OR UNDERTAKING TRAINING?**



## WHAT WE ASKED

Trainees were asked near the end of the programme about what difference the LSV programme made for them, and what will make it difficult for them to get a job/enter training or make changes in their lives. Trainees were also followed up between 13 and 18 weeks after the programme to find out what difference the programme had made in their lives. A further set of surveys was also completed which asked if they were in work or training, and checked in on the Hua Oranga (wellbeing) self assessment.

We asked employers, trainers, patrons, LSV personnel, and Work and Income representatives what the LSV programme *does not* do for employers and what might prevent them from hiring an LSV graduate.

We also asked these interviewees to identify what barriers remained at the end of the programme for the trainees they had identified as excelling, not doing well, or being “in the middle”.

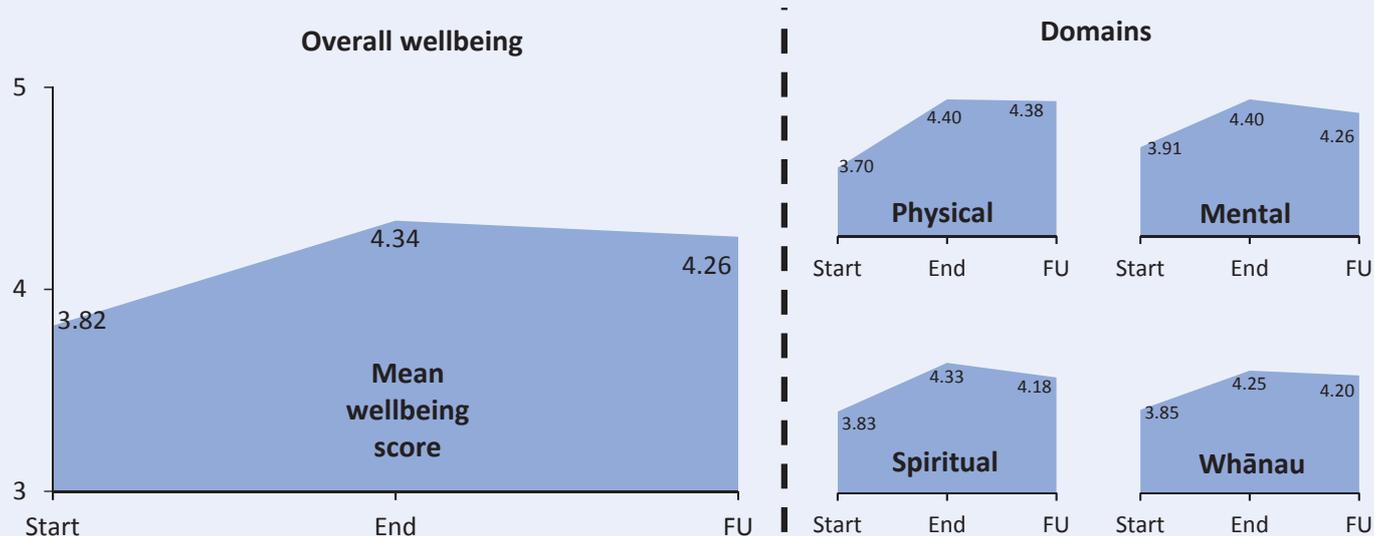
## A MAJORITY OF TRAINEES WERE IN EMPLOYMENT AND MOST HAD MAINTAINED THE INCREASE IN THEIR WELLBEING

A majority of trainees in our study gained employment or entered training after completing the LSV programme.

At the time of follow up (13 to 18 weeks post programme), 52% of trainees were working, and 16% were studying.<sup>15</sup> These figures are fairly consistent with MSD’s outcomes data, which recorded off-benefit outcomes of 56% at the 16 week point for all LSV programmes in 2016-17.

Overall, trainees had maintained their Hua Oranga wellbeing scores, indicating that the gains made at the programme were persisting (refer Figure 5). Although the mean scores decreased slightly between the end of LSV and follow-up, these decreases are not significant.

**Figure 5:** Change in mean Hua Oranga ratings by dimension



<sup>15</sup> Note that these figures are not cumulative: trainees may have been working and studying concurrently.

A few LSV personnel and one patron identified that some trainees left with no barriers. In these cases, the trainee had gained employment, were going back to a good environment, or were relocating away from negative influences.

Trainees who were interviewed at the end of LSV or 13-18 weeks later identified a wide range of benefits from the programme:

- improved health, fitness, and nutrition
- reduced dependency on substances
- an increased sense of value and self-worth
- increased confidence and motivation
- greater empathy
- improved communication and social skills
- increased leadership and teamwork skills
- improved goal-setting abilities
- increased ability to control negative feelings
- increased employability
- improved time management skills, and
- improved life skills.

## FOR SOME TRAINEES, MAINTAINING POSITIVE HABITS IS DIFFICULT ONCE THEY ARE BACK IN THEIR HOME ENVIRONMENT

Only a small number of trainees interviewed identified barriers to employment/training after completing the LSV programme. In contrast, most LSV personnel, support staff, and patrons readily identified several barriers that trainees faced post-programme. This contrast may in part have been due to a small bias in the final set of trainee interviews, with those who were doing well being more likely to complete an interview.

The LSV personnel, support staff, and patrons overwhelmingly described the greatest barrier to good outcomes at the end of the programme is maintaining what trainees have learned over the six weeks:

*I always say to our guys it's easy for them whilst they're here on course, it's hard when they leave. That's the hardest part of their journey is when they leave here and go back to their home environments. (LSV Personnel)*

From the trainee interviews and surveys, two groups of trainees were identified as having greater barriers than others: those who had exited the programme early, and those who remained not in employment, education, and training.

The trainee interviews, and the interviews with LSV personnel, support staff, and patrons found that the types of barriers that remained at the end of the programme included:

- a negative, dysfunctional, or unsupportive home environment
- a lack of support, both for personal issues and to find employment
- a lack of motivation to maintain good habits
- unwillingness to change, and
- other barriers such as injuries or unexpected life events.

In addition, LSV personnel and employers identified three barriers that remain for employers post-programme:

- low levels of driver licences
- employer "wariness", and
- location.

These findings are discussed further below.

### Trainees who exited early

Interviews shortly after the end of the programme with five trainees who had exited early found that none had yet found employment, but three were actively looking for a job. These trainees said although they had initially not found a job, they had experienced other positive outcomes from LSV.

However, follow up interviews 13 to 18 weeks later found that they were less pleased with their outcomes. Only one had found a job and had quickly been promoted to a managerial role. One trainee was still actively searching for a job. These exited trainees said they had become less motivated over time and did not feel like LSV had changed their lives significantly.

*Not much has changed in my situation, it hasn't gotten worse, I haven't found employment. (Motu Moana trainee, follow-up)*

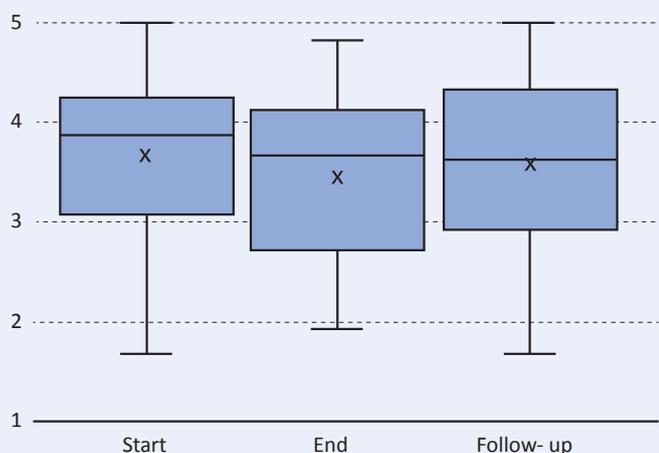
*[LSV] didn't really change much in my mental health, it actually got worse when I left. (Burnham trainee, follow-up)*

Despite this, one trainee who had exited early for medical reasons said that if they had not found work by next year, they would reapply for LSV.

Trainees who exited prior to the end of the course had lower overall Hua Oranga wellbeing mean scores than trainees who did not exit early (Figure 6).<sup>16</sup> Exited trainees had lower scores at the end of LSV and at follow-up, suggesting that this group of trainees need a higher level of support.

<sup>16</sup> The small size of this group prevented statistical significance testing.

**Figure 6:** Overall Hua Oranga mean scores for exited trainees<sup>17</sup>



The exited trainees who were interviewed had been unable to complete the programme because of physical/mental health reasons. They suggested the LSV course may not be best suited to those with a higher level of mental health needs.

### Trainees not in employment, education, or training

At the final survey a few months after LSV, 18 trainees out of 58 were not in employment, education, or training (NEET). These NEET trainees were on a Work and Income benefit. Four trainees from this group had exited the LSV course without graduating.

NEET trainees did not significantly differ from other trainees in gender, ethnicity, or location prior to starting LSV. However, NEET trainees were more likely to have experienced differences in their mental and physical health at the first and final data collection points compared to the other trainees:

- NEET trainees had lower mental health scores at the start of LSV
- NEET trainees had lower mental and physical health scores at follow-up.

Three NEET trainees were interviewed 13-18 weeks after the LSV courses finished. Two trainees said they were dealing with ongoing mental health needs (which may have been a result of ongoing unemployment). One trainee had experienced delays in accessing support to find a job after moving to a new city.

The NEET group may require further wrap-around support to address additional barriers they are facing.

*I'm not working at the moment because I get panic attacks - but this was because of the job itself (before doing LSV). I'm on the sickness benefit and focusing on getting well at the moment. (Burnham trainee, follow-up)*

### Negative or unsupportive home environments

A small number of trainees who were contacted for follow-up interviews said that returning to their home environment had a negative influence on them. One trainee was initially motivated to maintain her routine after LSV but returned to old habits almost immediately. Another trainee (who said at the end of LSV that his friends were a risk to him returning to drug use) had begun smoking marijuana again once he returned home.

*When I first got out of LSV, I was motivated to keep up the fitness but then being back in my environment, I went straight back to my old pattern. Started drinking again, then the physical side just completely gave up. (Burnham trainee, follow-up)*

*I didn't touch weed as soon as I got back, but three weeks later, yeah. Started smoking weed again, and the next week I had drug testing, failed the drug test. (Burnham trainee, follow-up)*

Other interviewees (LSV personnel, support staff, headquarters and patrons) confirmed that trainees who return to negative home environments are likely to struggle:

*Their home environment, the same barrier that they have coming in is the barrier that they have leaving... they thrive in our environment where it's safe, where it's consistent and they know what they have... in the final week ... of the course they'll start acting up again.... getting back into that I'm going home mode ..., they need to ready themselves for that. So, ... I think a massive barrier for them gaining employment is their home life post-course. (LSV personnel)*

The negative home environment may include family dysfunction, a lack of safety or security, high local unemployment levels, or gang connection:

*I know he got a couple of job offers out of it by the end of the course, but whether or not they followed through, yeah unsure. I hope he got out of where he was, out of the town, because otherwise I daresay he'd be a patched gang member by now. (LSV personnel)*

<sup>17</sup> Centre line indicates median score. Centre cross indicates mean score. Box bounds are the interquartile range. Whiskers indicate minimum and maximum scores excluding outliers. Dots (where present) represent outliers.

Interviewees (LSV personnel, support staff, headquarters, and patrons) also identified other types of home situations that can be a barrier to better employment and training outcomes for trainees.

Some trainees are from families who have low expectations of them, limited ability to see change as a possibility, or a general lack of support for change:

*I had a young guy [with] NCEA level 1, 2, and 3 with excellence. I said "what the hell are you doing here?!" He'd just fallen off the track with mates and got into drugs. He wanted to work and get out of it. He's a guy I offered a job in Hamilton with a possible NCEA diploma. He'll be up being in civil engineering in four years' time, which is great; the offer was there, he had it, he took it. ... He rang me up and said he wouldn't be doing it. I was flabbergasted. I said "Why not?". His parents wouldn't let him go because their dole dropped in the house if he left home. (Employer)*

Other LSV personnel and support staff identified care responsibilities, eg, for younger siblings, culturally-driven family responsibilities, or the simple pull of family as being barriers to better outcomes:

*[Family is] the binding factor in their life - if they've got kids, if they've got a girlfriend, whatever it might be... Even with the incentive of \$3,000 to relocate, they just turn their nose up and say, "No, this is more important to me." (LSV personnel)*

Location of the trainee's home was also identified as a barrier to employment. Trainees going back to a region with high unemployment or inadequate support from Work and Income were identified as likely to struggle to gain work unless they were willing to move:

*We know in the Bay of Plenty region there's high unemployment, it's up around about nine percent, so generally the kids we get from that area are very, very good kids, they just don't have the employment opportunities and then obviously the roll on effect is move away from home and you can go and do this and things like that. (LSV personnel)*

## A lack of post-programme support for personal issues and to find employment

When contacted for a follow-up interview 13-18 weeks after LSV, a small number of trainees said they received insufficient support to find employment. These trainees had expected LSV would help them find employment, but they had to find jobs through their own initiative and contacts.

*Sadly [getting my new job] was on my own and not through LSV. It was my initiative, my will to find work. (Motu Moana trainee, follow-up)*

*Not because of LSV but I did find a job. (Burnham trainee, follow-up)*

A few trainees also said they had not received support from MSD – particularly their Work and Income case managers – to find employment.

*Pretty much the job that I have now is no thanks to MSD whatsoever and I had to do that on my own using my own contacts. (Motu Moana trainee, follow-up)*

A lack of post-programme support was also highlighted by LSV programme personnel as an ongoing barrier to employment. These comments were most often used to describe trainees who were identified as being "somewhere in the middle" (the "grey man"). LSV personnel and support staff highlighted the sharp drop off in support after the programme, and considered this to be a barrier to better outcomes.

This drop off in support, combined with the negative or unsupportive home environment was identified by LSV personnel, support staff, and headquarters as leading to trainees' motivation falling away quite quickly after completing the programme.

For many LSV programme personnel this was a source of frustration:

*The course is magic, but either side is out of our control. (LSV personnel)*

*It's a gun without a bullet: do all this work in creating the weapon and then you just don't provide it with the next thing to fire it to the target. The target is employed young people who are productive and happy and go on to quality lives. (NZDF headquarters)*

Another interviewee suggested that, in the cases where trainees have mental health conditions that are newly diagnosed, the trainee is likely to need support to follow through with the care that they need. In these cases, the social worker makes referrals to health professionals for the trainee. However, some onus remains on the trainee for their own care.

The types of post-programme support that interviewees identified as lacking included:

- someone to support trainees and help them maintain what they have learned
- counselling to work through issues that have become evident on the programme
- continued reinforcement of positive skills that trainees have learned, including continuing to give them tools to better respond to situations, and helping them to stay positive
- practical support help with CVs, applications eg for University
- support to further improve self-confidence, image, and recognise their own skills and strengths
- follow up if a trainee has not got a job, and
- support to enable some trainees to reach an employable standard.

## THE RISK OF LOSING MOTIVATION AND SLIPPING BACK INTO OLD HABITS

At the end of the course, some trainees were worried the motivation they had gained during LSV would fade once they were back in their old environments.

One patron we interviewed noted that many trainees worried about returning to their home environment:

*...a lot of the kids who came on the programme were ex P addicts. You could see there was an ongoing worry there the minute they got depressed, or they lost their job, or whatever in the future and that they could revert back. (Patron)*

During the final data collection phase several months after LSV, four trainees said that a lack of motivation had initially been a barrier for them. However, all but one of these trainees had successfully found either casual or part-time employment since leaving LSV. Only one trainee – who had exited the course early due to medical reasons – continued to struggle with motivation to find employment. She said this lack of motivation was because she did not know what she was skilled at doing.

*My motivation [to find a job] is very lacklustre, very fluctuating... Part of what they want you to do is define what you're capable of, but if you don't know what you're capable of, how do you define it? (Motu Moana trainee, follow-up)*

Other positive habits were also hard to maintain for a few trainees: a few trainees had stopped exercising and returned to their old habits. For some of these trainees, the reason for stopping their physical fitness routine was due to injury.

*Slowly, you get back to waking up a little bit later than six o'clock, or five o'clock, and I haven't really been finding that much time to go for a run or whatever. (Burnham trainee, follow-up)*

LSV personnel and support staff commented that trainees have learned lots of positive things, such as anger management and prosocial skills, but it is hard to make it stick. As one interviewee said:

*...it's so easy to fall back into those bad things. Yeah, and hard to stick with your goals. (LSV nurse)*

Some LSV personnel thought that the window of time for maintaining the positive gains from the programme is very limited if a trainee hasn't gained employment or entered training:

*I think we work on somewhere like within two weeks if they haven't found something that's when routines start falling away. (LSV personnel)*

*The thing is, they haven't seen their family and friends for six weeks and Saturday comes around and "Boom! Yeah, got my money, let's get on the piss." .... They get off their trolley. It's like whatever, come Monday morning, "Oh shit, got a drug test," fail, job's gone. So, I mean, yeah, we can only do so much. We give them so much, but come that Monday they're not ours anymore to do anything with. It's all up to them. (LSV personnel)*

## Unwillingness to change

For the majority of the trainees who LSV personnel, support staff, and patrons identified as not succeeding on the programme, they said the main barrier was their poor attitude and unwillingness to change.

A couple of these interviewees noted that a few trainees choose to return to prison rather than complete the LSV programme:

*I found out later that he had asked to leave and chose jail, over completing a six week course. So, LSV didn't obviously work for him. He was set in his ways. I think he wanted to go to jail. (LSV personnel)*

For others, a lack of commitment to change means they do not benefit from the course:

*Some trainees leave here and they feel like, 'Gimme, gimme, gimme. You were supposed to do this and supposed to do that and supposed to fix me up.' And we tried our best, but they wouldn't meet us half way; they wouldn't leave the course in the same mind-set as everyone else. (LSV personnel)*

## Other post-programme barriers

Other post-programme barriers to better outcomes for trainees that were identified by trainees or other interviewees included:

- injuries
- unexpected life events
- employers' or societal attitudes
- poor mental health
- a loss of identity or status after the LSV programme
- the ability to persist with a job that is not in the trainee's area of interest.

## THE LSV PROGRAMME DOES NOT ADDRESS ALL BARRIERS FOR EMPLOYERS

Interviewees (LSV personnel and employers/trainers) identified three barriers that remained for employers after the conclusion of the programme.

First, as mentioned earlier, many employers want trainees with a driver licence. Several interviewees noted that the lack of a licence stops employers offering jobs to LSV trainees:

*Licences are huge unfortunately. If they've got a full licence it's not a problem. Restricted is okay, we don't mind; but a learners is no good to us because they can't drive, which is a shame. But, there's got to be a line there somewhere. If we've got four vehicles and four people we can't shift one, and it becomes a bit of an issue. (Employer)*

*[The employer has] found it hard to try and get LSV candidates to be reliable; because they don't have a licence they can't get to work. Like they're saying in the interviews, "I can catch the bus, my aunty can drop me off, I've got a bike." But, then he's finding the reliability, because they don't have a driver's licence, it's quite hard. So, that's one that I've heard that is stopping employers from hiring them. (LSV personnel)*

MSD currently funds driver licensing programmes in some parts of New Zealand. Recent research from MSD found a positive correlation (although not causation) between driver licensing programmes and employment and income.<sup>18</sup>

Government administrative requirements can make gaining a licence challenging for trainees. One interviewee noted that the New Zealand Transport Agency (who issues licences) requires applicants to supply original identification to apply for a licence, and suggested that a verified copy from another agency, such as MSD, should be sufficient.

Driver licence preparation has been piloted on individual LSV courses. During consultation on a draft of this report, NZDF noted that there is a limit to how far through the licence system trainees can progress during a six week programme, however trainees could study for and sit their learner licence.

<sup>18</sup> Ministry of Social Development (2018), *Effectiveness of driver licensing programmes funded by the Ministry of Social Development in 2014 and 2015 – Evaluation report*, Ministry of Social Development, Wellington.

Another interviewee noted, that even a full driver licence will not enable a trainee to gain employment if they can not afford a car or petrol once they gain the licence. During consultation on this draft report, MSD noted that having a driver licence is only one part of a wider transport issue.

A second barrier that remains for employers is what we have described as “employer wariness”.

LSV personnel, headquarters, and employers/trainers described LSV trainees as not all being “sure bets” or, in some cases, needing some level of ongoing support, which puts employers off offering a job to trainees.

A couple of interviewees thought that other employers find the idea of a “boot camp” unpalatable as a way of encouraging young people into work. However, these interviewees thought that this was largely a branding issue, and when employers visited the programme, they changed their view.

The criminal backgrounds of some trainees also prevents some employers from hiring them.

The third barrier relates to location. Two interviewees noted that some employers are not willing to travel to an LSV site to attend the Employment Expo/Discovery Day. This barrier works both ways. One employer said:

*At the moment we're looking for 20 New Zealanders in Marlborough, and probably six down in North Canterbury; so, we'd happily offer 20 LSV graduates a role if anyone wanted to come up to Marlborough and wanted to do vineyard work. (Employer)*

## ADJUSTING THE TIMING OF INTAKES COULD BE A QUICK WIN

Two interviewees noted that the timing of programmes affects the success of getting trainees into work or training. Programmes that end just before Christmas tend not to do as well, due to the gap before training courses and jobs begin in the new year.

A potential “quick win” could be to schedule programmes so they finish earlier in the year and/or shortly before a new semester begins.

## SUMMARY

A majority of trainees gain employment or enter training following the LSV programme and, on average, trainees maintain the increases in wellbeing gained through the programme.

However, staying motivated and continuing with positive habits and routines is challenging for some trainees once they return home. This is particularly so for trainees who remain unemployed and not in education or training after the programme, or who return to an unsupportive or dysfunctional home environment with limited ongoing support.

For a minority, unwillingness to change means that they do not benefit significantly from the programme, and therefore are unlikely to have positive short-term or long-term outcomes.

Two practical barriers were identified that, if dealt with, could improve outcomes. First, the lack of a driver licence can prevent some employers offering jobs to LSV trainees. Second, programmes that end just before Christmas tend not to do as well, due to the gap before training courses and jobs begin in the new year.

## WHAT MODELS OF POST-PROGRAMME MENTORING AND SUPPORT COULD ENHANCE OUTCOMES?



The Minister of Defence asked us to consider as part of this review what models of post-programme mentoring and support could enhance outcomes.

This review has already identified that the drop off in current level of post-programme support may be a contributor to the gap between the short and long-term outcomes. LSV personnel and support staff identified the drop off in support once trainees complete the LSV programme as being a key barrier for trainees to achieving better employment and training outcomes.

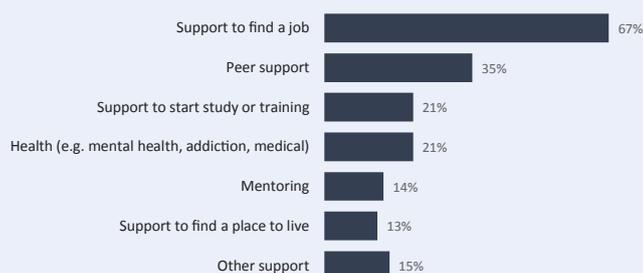
## WHAT WE ASKED

LSV trainees were asked what post-programme support they had received, what was most helpful, and what other support would have been helpful.

We asked LSV personnel, support staff, LSV and NZDF headquarters, and patrons what mentoring and support is currently provided during and after the LSV programme. We also asked them, and employers/trainers, what kinds of post-programme support they thought would be most beneficial for the trainees, and whether they could think of particular people or groups who would make good mentors for LSV graduates.

We also reviewed five models of post-programme support. Two of these models are examples of current post-programme support provided to LSV trainees, which provide insight into what works well in a New Zealand context. The other three are similar overseas programmes. A description of the five models that we reviewed is provided in Appendix 5.

**Figure 7:** Types of support trainees said they received after the LSV course<sup>19</sup>



<sup>19</sup> Trainees were able to select more than one option.

## WHAT IS THE CURRENT LEVEL OF POST-PROGRAMME MENTORING AND SUPPORT?

### Follow up by Work and Income

At present, post-programme support is provided primarily by Work and Income (a service of MSD) as part of ongoing case management practice. Work and Income advised us that they undertake post-programme follow up for as long as it is needed and until the person is in work or other training. Each region has a different model for post-programme follow up depending on the availability of work and opportunities in the region.

The Work and Income staff attached to the LSV programme also have occasional informal contact, for example, to help with interview tips.

The follow up survey of trainees asked what kind of support they had received after the LSV programme (Figure 7). Trainees identified support to find a job as the most commonly provided type of support, followed by peer support, support to start study or training, and health support.

Some interviewees (LSV support staff and headquarters) thought that the quality and intensity of follow up by Work and Income varied between local Work and Income offices.

Another felt that the lack of consistent follow up was a systemic gap that jeopardised the success of the programme:

*I think the lack of a measurably effective spread of [post programme support] across the country and measurable to the same standard by a lead agency, surely it's the delta between LSV [being a] blasting success...  
(NZDF headquarters)*

A small number of LSV personnel wondered if a limitation on the effectiveness of the Work and Income follow up may be trainees' ongoing negative perceptions of MSD.

### Other post-programme follow up

NZDF personnel are prohibited from having contact with trainees after the programme, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Most NZDF personnel supported this prohibition because they felt that the burden would be too great for NZDF staff:

*... this might sound callous, but it's not our job, and that's not what we get paid for. It's a huge thing to expect us to do. (LSV personnel)*

Some employers and training providers undertake mentoring or post-programme support at their own cost. One large employer has a dedicated staff member who looks after employees selected through the LSV programme:

*If there's any issues, the region rings me, and I go up and I sort it out, good or bad. Generally I've only had one case where we've had an incident and they wanted to finish him up. I said "hang on a minute" and I went up and had a talk to him for a couple of days, and I said "change his foreman for three weeks, and if it's no good I'll come back and I'll finish him up." They rang me two weeks later to say it was the wrong foreman for him—an old fulla. They put him into another gang and a different foreman. I think he's a foreman now. (Employer)*

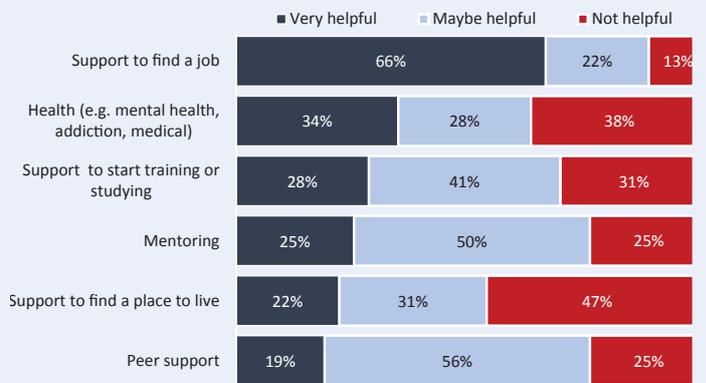
Other post-programme follow up includes:

- police mentors, who select one or two trainees to follow up
- patrons, some of whom have follow-up contact with a small number of trainees, and
- due diligence mental health follow up by the Social Worker.

### WHAT WOULD TRAINEES FIND HELPFUL?

Trainees who were still on a benefit at the time were asked what support they would find helpful (Figure 8). Support to find a job was the most common response, followed by health support, and support to start training or study.

**Figure 8:** Types of support trainees (on a benefit at 13-18 weeks) said they would find helpful<sup>20</sup>



<sup>20</sup> The first set of bars on the graph do not total to 100% due to a rounding error.

## **POST PROGRAMME SUPPORT NEEDS TO BE WELL TARGETED, PRACTICAL, AND BASED ON A LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIP**

We have identified several features that should inform the design of a post-programme support model to enhance outcomes for LSV trainees. These features have been derived from an analysis of five existing models of post-programme support, trainees' views on post-programme support, and our information on trainees' post-programme barriers to employment.

We found that post-programme support should be well targeted, wide-ranging, based on a long-term relationship, and accessible. Post-programme support also needs to include opportunities for peer-to-peer support and encouragement. These features are discussed in greater detail below.

### **Support should be targeted to graduates without a clear pathway ahead or a peer support network**

Our findings indicate that post-programme support should be targeted in two ways.

First, trainees who leave the programme without a job or a clear pathway to a job or further training should be provided with greater support than others. This is likely to include mental health support: the trainee follow up survey found that trainees who were not in employment, education, or training (NEET) self-assessed their mental health wellbeing at lower levels than other trainees, both before and after the programme.

Second, trainees who are less likely to have a peer support network (eg, live away from other trainees, or in areas of higher unemployment) are likely to need greater support than others. Trainee interviews highlighted that some trainees found returning to their home environment and social circles led them to return to old habits, particularly drug and alcohol abuse.

### **Support should be adaptable to trainees' needs**

The information from trainees suggests that the type of support provided needs to be adaptable to trainees' varied needs. The types of support that should be provided include:

- maintaining what the trainees have learned at the LSV programme: LSV personnel and support staff identified that slipping back into old habits is a real risk for trainees who were not well supported after the programme. For this reason, one of the New Zealand programmes we investigated incorporates several of the elements of the LSV programme, such as drill and discipline standards as a way of maintaining a link to the discipline learned through the LSV programme.
- continued assistance to find a job or training: assistance with finding a job was the most commonly identified type of support that trainees who were unemployed after the programme said they would find useful.
- health support (including mental health): for some trainees, ongoing health support is needed to ensure they are well enough to work or study.
- providing practical support with everyday issues: some of the post-programme support examples we investigated also provide practical support, such as teaching the young people how to use public transport, providing assistance to find accommodation, and support dealing with family/whānau.

## Support should be long-term and relationship-based

A further key feature of a successful support model is to provide long-term support, and to enable trainees to form an enduring relationship with their mentors/ supporters.

Most of the programmes that we investigated work to develop a relationship with the young people over a period of time. For example, the Work and Income team from Northland meet the LSV trainees before they leave for their programme and then also visit them during the programme. The mentors for young people on the USA-based Challenge are selected by the young people themselves, and are then trained by Challenge as mentors.

Long-term “as long as they need it” support was also a common theme for some of the support models.

The connection with family/whānau was unique to the New Zealand models, but is an important aspect of those models. This connection was also noted by a small number of LSV support staff, particularly in relation to supporting trainees with mental health needs.

## Support needs to be consistently available and include peer-to-peer support

Finally, post-programme support needs to be available consistently across New Zealand, and should include opportunities for peer-to-peer support.

As noted earlier, some LSV support staff and LSV/NZDF headquarters staff commented that post-programme support was not consistently provided across New Zealand. Some trainees also said they had not received support from MSD after the LSV programme to find a job.

Some LSV trainees noted the importance of maintaining contact with their peers from the programme:

*...when I leave here... I'm not gonna hang out with [bad people] as much and try and put myself around the people from this course, because they're all good people. We've all made a pact saying that if we're ever feeling down, we're gonna make a group chat on Facebook. If we're ever feeling down, we'll be able to talk to each other and keep each other's moral up. Keep each other going, it's great. (Burnham trainee, LSV end)*

We consider that an opportunity exists for more organised peer-to-peer support, given that trainees themselves identified this as important. This type of opportunity would enable them to reconnect with each other and provide mutual support. For example, a regular regional LSV event or reunion could provide an opportunity for trainees to gather together.

Several interviewees (LSV personnel, support staff, headquarters, employers, and patrons) also proposed a follow up event or week of training at some point after the programme. This type of event would be something for trainees to look forward to, and an opportunity to refresh some of the lessons from the programme.

## These findings are complemented by MSD's case study evaluation

As part of consultation on a draft of this report, MSD advised that they support strengthening post-programme support and consider this to be important to ensure trainees are well set up for transitioning to employment or study after the LSV programme.

MSD is undertaking more detailed investigation into what opportunities there are to enhance this support to improve trainee outcomes.

MSD recently completed a case study evaluation to identify the factors that determine who the LSV programme is most effective for and the wider social benefits of the programme. The MSD evaluation includes a more detailed investigation into trainees' post-programme experience, and opportunities to enhance this support to improve trainee outcomes. The evaluation will supplement the findings of the MSD employment assistance effectiveness reporting.

MSD have advised that as part of preparing to expand the programme, they are reviewing their “end-to-end service design”, which includes how they target and promote the programme, application processes, and post-programme follow up. The MSD review is considering the LSV programme in the context of the wide range of other support and services available to LSV graduates who do not go directly into work or other education.

As part of their review MSD met with LSV trainees and graduates to understand their experience, what they thought could be done differently, and how they like to be communicated with.

Further work is likely to be required to determine the potential effectiveness of these models, and to understand the cost of the options.

As the lead agency for the LSV programme and other employment programmes, MSD are likely to be best placed to undertake this work, and to be the lead implementing agency.

However, if a regular regional reunion or event was implemented, NZDF could have a role in providing personnel or sites for such an event, given the military environment was such a key feature of the programme.

## SUMMARY

We were asked to consider what models of post-programme mentoring and support could enhance the success of the LSV programme.

MSD is the lead agency for post-programme support at present, and has a regional model for follow up. MSD is also undertaking a detailed review of how they support LSV trainees before and after the programme, with a view to improving the effectiveness of the programme outcomes.

Our findings suggest several features that should be central to any post-programme support model. These are: careful targeting to those who most need it, practical support, assistance to maintain what trainees have learned, and a long-term, relationship-based focus. Support should be consistently available across New Zealand.

In addition, more formalised peer-to-peer support opportunities would provide a regular opportunity for trainees to renew the bonds built during the programme, to support each other, and refresh aspects of their training.

As the lead for employment programmes, MSD are likely to be best placed to take this work forward, and to be the lead agency in implementing any of these models.

## WOULD A LONGER PROGRAMME BE MORE EFFECTIVE?



As part of this review, the Minister of Defence asked us to investigate what information exists that could help to assess if the original six month LSV programme (in the 1980s) was more effective than the current six week LSV programme, in terms of creating firm attitudinal change and developing better skill sets.

We undertook an online review, visited the NZDF archives, searched the Defence library database, and reviewed files held by Archives New Zealand to locate information about the 1980s version of the LSV programme.

We also completed an online search for similar contemporary military-based youth development programmes in Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

## THE LSV (1980s) PROGRAMME

The LSV (1980s) programme was targeted at young unemployed people, aged between 17 and 19 years old. The programme’s aim was to “provide work preparation and basic vocational training in a work skill to enhance prospects of young unemployed job seekers”.<sup>21</sup> The programme accepted up to 450 trainees per year, with the majority of trainees attending Army LSV programmes.

The programme was a 20 week residential course, and included practical skills training elements as well as basic military training alongside regular recruits. The final three weeks included training from the Department of Labour in skills such as interview techniques and writing a curriculum vitae.

The data we found on the 1980s programme was limited, and contradictory in places. However, we can make some comparisons with the current LSV programme.

## THE NATIONAL GUARD YOUTH CHALLENGE PROGRAMME (UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)

We found only one other contemporary programme for comparison: the National Guard Youth Challenge programme (Challenge) which operates in the United States of America. Challenge is relatively similar to the 1980s LSV programme in terms of length and age cohort.

Challenge is a 17 month programme which aims “to intervene and reclaim the lives of 16-18 year old at risk youth, producing program graduates with the values, life skills, education, and self-discipline necessary to succeed as productive citizens.”<sup>22</sup> The Challenge programme is split into three phases: Pre-Challenge (a two week orientation), Residential (20 weeks on core activities), and Post-Residential (one year of structured mentoring while on placement in employment, education, or military service).

Figure 9 compares the current LSV programme, LSV (1980s), and the Challenge programme. The LSV (1980s) and the Challenge programmes are similar in age targeting, and have tighter entry requirements than the current LSV programme.

Figure 9: Features of LSV, LSV (1980s), and the National Guard Youth Challenge programme

|                              | LSV (current)  | LSV (1980s)  | ChalleNGe   |
|------------------------------|--|--|---|
| <b>Age</b>                   | 17-25  | 17-19  | 16-18   |
| <b>Entry criteria</b>        | At-risk of long term benefit receipt<br>Medical test                                   | Unemployed<br>Able to meet entry requirements for Navy, Army, or Air Force. <sup>23</sup>  | Have not completed school<br>Unemployed<br>Drug free<br>Not heavily involved in criminal justice system                   |
| <b>Length</b>                | 6 weeks  | 20 weeks   | 17 months   |
| <b>Participants</b>          | 80-120 per course<br>800 per year  | Total: 450 per year<br>Navy: 25-100 per course<br>Army: 200-300 per course<br>Air: 15-100 per course   | 100 per programme<br>200 per year<br>(typically in each of 34 sites)  |
| <b>Structure and content</b> | 6 weeks training in a military area, alongside learning skills for life and employment | Navy: 12.5 weeks’ basic common training, 7.5 weeks’ skills training.<br>Army: 4 weeks’ basic recruit training, 16 weeks’ skills training.<br>Air: 4 weeks’ basic recruit training, 16 weeks’ basic engineering course. | Pre-ChalleNGe assessment and orientation: 2 weeks<br>Residential phase: 20 weeks<br>Post-residential placement: 12 months |

21 Taylor, S.J. (LTCDR) (1986) “Commandant’s paper: the Limited Service Volunteer Training scheme in the New Zealand Armed Forces” NZDF [unpublished paper], p2.

22 State of Hawaii (2018) “Youth Challenge Academy” <http://dod.hawaii.gov/yca/>, accessed 26 November 2018.

23 Army waived the minimum educational requirement and prioritised candidates who had “impediments to their employment prospects” (Taylor (1986), p3).

## ALL THE PROGRAMMES ARE EFFECTIVE IN CREATING ATTITUDINAL CHANGE

Studies on the current LSV programme have found that most participants have increased self-discipline, self-confidence, motivation, and initiative at the end of the programme, and in the months following.<sup>24</sup>

A ministerial briefing from the mid 1980s indicates that the LSV (1980s) programme was also successful at creating attitudinal change for trainees:

*...trainees are noted to have significantly improved confidence, motivation, and assertiveness as a result of the training....<sup>25</sup>*

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*...most [trainees] have gained more self-esteem and self-respect and have shown that they are able to submit to such disciplines as personal cleanliness, punctuality, physical fitness, carrying out orders and communal tidiness.<sup>26</sup>*

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*I've got a lot of pride in myself now—when I was unemployed I felt like a loser. But now I know if any challenge comes along I can handle it.<sup>27</sup>*

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NZDF personnel also commented on the “excellent” levels of motivation displayed by trainees.<sup>28</sup>

Similarly, a three year study of the Challenge programme also found that attitudes had changed for the better:

*...their participation had resulted in profound, positive changes in their attitudes, expectations, and self-confidence.<sup>29</sup>*

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It is not possible, however, to assess if the LSV (1980s) programme and Challenge are more effective at creating attitudinal change than the current LSV programme as they are not directly comparable.

In addition, maintaining the benefits of an intensive programme after completion remains a challenge for longer programmes:

*Nevertheless, many of them struggled to maintain this momentum during the years after they completed the program. Most of the young people did not have strong family support, and few spoke much about the ChalleNGe mentoring component. Most had moved through a succession of low-wage jobs; several had started college but had difficulty gaining traction. Such experiences are not unusual for young people in their early 20s, but they point to the challenge of building on the initial success of an intensive program...<sup>30</sup>*

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24 Ministry of Defence (2018), Limited Service Volunteers: initial assessment [unpublished].

25 Department of Labour (1984) “Young persons training programme: training in military establishments”, [unpublished briefing to the Minister of Employment], p1.

26 Taylor (1986, p6).

27 Taylor (1986, p6).

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28 Royal New Zealand Navy (1984) “Limited Service Volunteers Training Scheme course completion report [unpublished report], p4.

29 Millenky, M, Bloom, D, Muller-Ravett S, Broadus, J (2011) *Staying on course: three-year results of the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Evaluation, MDRC*, <http://www.ngvf.org/wp-content/uploads/cmdrc.pdf>, accessed 20 November 2018, p7.

30 Millenky, M, et al, p7-8

## A LONGER PROGRAMME PROVIDES MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP SPECIFIC SKILLS AND MAY LEAD TO HIGHER EMPLOYMENT

### Skills training

The LSV (1980s) programme offered several weeks of skills training that followed a period of 12 (Navy) or four (Army and Air Force) weeks of basic training:

- Navy provided seven and a half weeks of trade skills training, with similar options to Army as well as a less popular 'seamanship' option.
- Army provided 16 weeks of on-the-job training, with 20 trade options including driver, building assistant, mechanical duties, and electrician.
- Air Force provided 16 weeks of training in character development, personal development, physical development, and basic engineering.

Data from a 1985 LSV programme shows that 35% of the LSV trainees were placed in jobs related to their skills training within three months of completion.<sup>31</sup> Trainees who learned driving, cooking, stewarding, welding, and storekeeping skills were the most likely to be placed in employment related to those skills.

Reported benefits from the skills training included: "a realistic work record that showed that each [trainee] had the ability to work, to learn and to be punctual", "a good insight into their [own] aptitude for that skill/trade", and "confidence in their own abilities to perform practical skills".<sup>32</sup>

In comparison, the residential phase of the Challenge programme is focused on education rather than skills training. Cadets participate in activities related to the eight pillars of the programme: leadership/followership, responsible citizenship, service to community, life-coping skills, physical fitness, health and hygiene, and academic excellence. Cadets spend most of their time working towards gaining a General Educational Development certificate (a qualification that is equivalent to a high school diploma).<sup>33</sup>

The final phase of the Challenge programme is placement-based. Immediately following the programme, around 47% join the workforce, 39% continue their education, and 5% join the military.<sup>34</sup>

### Employment outcomes

If employment and/or off-benefit figures are considered a proxy for effectiveness, then longer programmes might be more effective than the current six week programme (Figure 10). We can not confirm this definitively, however, as the LSV (1980s) programme and Challenge had a younger cohort and had higher entry standards than the current LSV programme, so this is likely to contribute to the better outcomes. In addition, the data is not directly comparable, as some is off-benefit data, and some is employment data.

Over the past five years, the current LSV programme achieved between 47% and 56% off-benefit outcomes at 16 weeks post-programme.

In comparison, the LSV (1980s) programme had between 43% and 87% employment rates for graduates, and a three-year study of the Challenge programme found that, on average 57.8% are in employment a year after completing the programme, and 63.6% were involved in "any productive activity".<sup>35</sup>

Reports comment that many LSV (1980s) graduates went on to serve in NZDF. One Navy course completion report from 1984 notes that 22 of the 83 LSV graduates (27%) had already joined the Navy, and that a further 10 (12%) were planning to join later that year.<sup>36</sup>

The use of military placements in the 1980s would be unlikely to be able to be replicated with current LSV cohort due to NZDF's higher entry requirements, for example the need to have a level two National Certificate of Educational Achievement, and to be able to gain and maintain a security clearance.

There is no control group for 1980s data, so it is not possible to say whether the outcomes for the young people who participated in the programme were any better than for those who did not.

A control group was, however, used for the three-year study of the Challenge programme. The study compared Challenge cadets to young people who had not done the programme, and found that Challenge cadets were more likely to be in work (57.8% compared with 50.7%), involved in productive activity (63.6% compared with 59.0%), and to have obtained a high school diploma or General Educational Development certificate (71.8% compared with 55.5%).<sup>37</sup>

A further study on the Challenge programme in 2012 found that the social return on investment was 166%.

The study measured the cost of the programme against the benefits, such as change in lifetime earnings, reduced criminal activity, and service to the community.<sup>38</sup>

31 Taylor, S.J. (LTCDR) (1986), p7

32 Taylor, S.J. (LTCDR) (1986), p7; Royal New Zealand Navy (1984), p5.

33 Clearinghouse for Labor Evaluation and Research (undated) "Research Synthesis: Evidence on the Effectiveness of the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program", <http://www.ngyf.org/wp-content/uploads/clear-report.pdf>, accessed 26 November 2018.

34 National Guard Youth Foundation (undated) "What does a Challenge graduate look like?" <http://www.ngyf.org/wp-content/uploads/graduate.pdf>, accessed 26 November 2018.

35 Millenky, M, et al, p6.

36 Royal New Zealand Navy (1984), p6.

37 Millenky, M, et al, p6.

38 Rand Corporation (2012) "Meeting the challenge: the social return on investment in the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program".

**Figure 10:** Course completion and employment data - LSV, LSV (1980s), and the National Guard Youth Challenge programme

|                               | LSV (current)  | LSV (1980s)   | ChalleNGe  |
|-------------------------------|--|---|--|
| <b>Course completion rate</b> | 80%  | 53-78%  | 78% (of the cohort that began the residential phase) |
| <b>Employment data</b>        | 47-56% in employment or education (at 16 weeks post-programme) | Navy: 78%-87% in employment<br>Army: 43%-58%<br>Air Force: 58%-72%<br>(all data 3 or 6 months post-programme) | 57.8% (12 months post-programme)                     |

## SOME LSV PERSONNEL, SUPPORT STAFF, AND PATRONS BELIEVE A LONGER PROGRAMME WOULD INCREASE EFFECTIVENESS...

In our interviews, some LSV personnel, support staff and patrons suggested that making the programme longer would improve its effectiveness:

*I'd make it longer if I had the resource.... I think it's quite a big ask to expect everybody to change their habits... in six weeks. (NZDF headquarters)*

These interviewees generally thought that around two weeks longer would provide an opportunity to, for example:

- enable greater independence and/or leadership development
- provide specific skills training, such as literacy and numeracy assistance, driver licence training, or other highly valued skills (eg, barista training)
- provide more employment-focused training

A further reason for extending the course related to drug-addicted trainees. For these trainees, the first two weeks of the programme is lost as they experience withdrawal:

*You see these kids, when they're coming off synthetics and Meth, you can't do anything with them. They are absolutely rooted. So, it's like the first week and a half to two weeks is totally wasted because you're then having to take them to the doctors and get them on other drugs to help them come off the drugs they're on; if not there, you take them in to Christchurch Hospital to the psych evaluation team. The amount of times we've had to call ambulances for them 'cause they're on the ground having a seizure. They're throwing up, vomiting, they're going absolutely nuts outside head-butting trees. This is what we're having to deal with. (LSV personnel)*

A small number of interviewees proposed a “clip-on” option, such as a work placement.

During consultation on a draft of this report, NZDF noted that any change to the syllabus will have a range of resource and coordination impacts. They noted that several agencies would need to collaborate to determine, for example, the most effective use of additional time on the LSV programme (eg for a work placement, education, or other activities), and the range of options available.

## ... BUT OTHERS THOUGHT SIX WEEKS IS ENOUGH

Two interviewees thought the length of the course was appropriate for delivering the contracted outcomes, as long as post-programme support is strengthened.

## SUMMARY

A direct comparison is not possible between the LSV (1980s) programme and contemporary programmes due to the differences in the cohorts and entry requirements. However, there is some evidence that extending the LSV programme to include skills training or an educational focus could be more effective in terms of employment outcomes.

All the programmes achieve attitudinal change, but a common theme between the current LSV programme and Challenge is the difficulty that the young people have maintaining changes once the residential component is complete.

If a longer programme is proposed, it should therefore be assessed alongside and in comparison to options for improving post-programme support.

# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



# CONCLUSIONS

The LSV programme exists to transform the lives of young New Zealanders who are at risk of long-term unemployment. Trainees come from a range of backgrounds, and face barriers to employment/training that range from a simple lack of motivation, to multiple and complex needs.

Trainees attend the programme primarily because they hope it will enable them to get a job. However, they also hope that the programme will have other benefits, including improving their fitness, developing social skills, and improving their families' lives.

The programme is a live-in experience, with a combination of military-style training and discipline, skills development, and wrap-around support.

The wrap-around support is in high demand. Our review has identified that the number of trainees with complex issues, including poor mental health, appears to be increasing. In addition, the demand for health support and social work for trainees may also be increasing.

Despite this increasing need, 16 weeks after the programme over half of trainees are no longer receiving a benefit from Work and Income (compared with, in our trainee surveys, 86% receiving a benefit prior to the programme).

However for some trainees, barriers to employment still remain. Two groups of trainees have been identified for particular attention:

- Trainees who exit the programme early
- Trainees who remain not in employment, education, or training (NEET) for three to four months after the programme.

Poor mental health is a common theme for these trainees.

Other trainees struggle to maintain motivation once they return to their home environments. This is further compounded if their home or social influences are negative or unsupportive.

For many trainees who do not gain employment after the programme, a greater level of post-programme support is likely to improve outcomes. We consider that greater consistency in post-programme support is required across New Zealand. This support will be most effective if it is adaptable to trainees' varied needs, is long-term, and connected into the trainee's whānau/family.

We also believe opportunities for peer-to-peer support (such as a regular regional LSV event or reunion) would be valuable and complement other post-programme support.

We note that MSD is currently undertaking a case study evaluation that will build on the findings of this review, including further informing the types of post-programme support that are likely to be most effective.

We acknowledge that there will always be a small number of trainees that are unwilling to change and for these trainees, there is little that can be done within the scope of the programme.

We considered whether a longer programme may be more effective, such as a model more similar to the original LSV programme in the 1980s. While it seems that a longer programme might have better employment outcomes, improvements to post-programme support are likely to be at least as effective. If the Minister of Defence wishes to pursue the idea of a longer programme, we consider that it should be assessed alongside options for improving post-programme support.

Two practical barriers were identified that, if dealt with, are likely to improve outcomes. First, the lack of a driver licence stops employers offering jobs to LSV trainees. Second, programmes that end just before Christmas tend not to do as well, due to the gap before training courses and jobs begin in the new year. Therefore, two further conclusions are that:

- trainees (and other unemployed young people) should be supported to gain a driver licence to at least restricted level either before, after or during the LSV programme, and
- LSV programmes should be scheduled to avoid finishing shortly before Christmas.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations are likely to be of interest to both the Minister of Defence and the Minister for Social Development. We recommend the relevant Minister/s direct the relevant departments to:

1. Provide advice to Ministers on whether resourcing is adequate to address trainees' needs, noting the unique opportunity that the programme provides to engage with young people, some of whom have complex barriers to employment. This could include undertaking ongoing monitoring by NZDF of "red flag", health, and social work data to determine the requisite support during and after the programme.
2. Consider options for strengthening post-programme support. The options analysis should take account of existing post-programme support examples in Northland and Wellington, and the results of MSD's case study research.
3. Ensure post-programme support is:
  - 3.1. offered consistently across New Zealand
  - 3.2. adaptable to trainees' varied needs
  - 3.3. long-term
  - 3.4. connected into the trainee's whānau/family, and
  - 3.5. complemented by formalised opportunities for peer-to-peer support.
4. Ensure that any proposal for a longer LSV-style programme is compared with options for improving post-programme support.
5. Remove practical barriers to better employment outcomes for the LSV cohort including:
  - 5.1. supporting trainees to gain a driver licence to at least restricted level either before, during, or after the LSV programme, and
  - 5.2. scheduling LSV programmes so that they avoid finishing shortly before Christmas.

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# APPENDIX 1:

## WHAT IS THE LSV PROGRAMME?

In this appendix, we outline:

- the contractual arrangements between NZDF and MSD for the LSV programme
- location and staffing
- trainee referral arrangements, and
- the future expansion of the programme.

### NZDF IS CONTRACTED BY MSD TO DELIVER THE LSV PROGRAMME

The LSV programme is an employment programme funded primarily by MSD and delivered by NZDF. MSD are the outcomes owner for the programme.

#### Throughput and funding

There were 800 places on LSV programmes in 2018. These places are divided across eight LSV courses—three at Motu Moana Scout Camp and five at Burnham Military Camp.

The numbers on the programme have varied over time, from 1,000 per year at its inception in its current form in 1993, to a peak of 2,000 in 2010-11. It was reduced to its current intake of 800 per year in the 2015-16 financial year.

In 2017/18, the LSV programme expenditure was \$9.7 million. MSD contributed \$5.3 million of this total, the Ministry of Education contributed \$0.7 million, and the Blue Light Trust contributed \$0.1 million. NZDF funded the remainder.

#### Programme outputs and content

The contract between MSD and NZDF describes the LSV programme as “intensive, outdoor education-based, motivational and delivered in a military setting” (MSD c.2015).

There are three outputs in the contract:

- increased self-discipline, self-confidence, motivation, and initiative
- completion of all activities, and
- recognition for completing the programme.

Three measures are attached to the outputs:

- 80% of trainees identify that they have increased self-discipline, self-confidence, motivation, and initiative based on MSD surveys
- 80% of participants who start the course successfully complete it, and
- 60% of MSD clients who have completed the LSV programme will move into employment or further training within 16 weeks of completing training.

The contract specifies that activities will include:

- outdoor and physical fitness
- group dynamics/leadership
- communication skills
- general health instruction
- safety and hygiene instruction
- basic financial and budgeting skills
- job search skills, and
- personal presentation skills.

Operational guidelines support the contract, although the contract outlines the broad roles of MSD and NZDF.

For example, the contract states that “NZDF will make every effort to deliver a programme that will best achieve the course outputs and maximise the likelihood of achieving the long-term outcomes”.

NZDF has a comprehensive and detailed syllabus to deliver on the contract. Topics in the syllabus cover:

- personal skills including maintaining personal and dental hygiene, maintaining a clean living environment, physical training, and team sports
- military drill and parade
- outdoor education and reflection
- personal lifestyle choices including managing personal finances, legal rights and responsibilities, planning future directions, and identifying education and employment opportunities, and
- First Aid.

Other support provided by NZDF that is outlined in the operational guidelines includes psychological support and medical treatment for trainees while on the programme.

The operational guidelines also explicitly state that MSD is responsible for post-programme follow up. This follow up appears to be limited to identifying and promoting employment and training opportunities.

NZDF staff are guided by a code of ethics developed specifically for the Youth Development Unit.

## LOCATION AND STAFFING

Within NZDF, the LSV programme is located within the Youth Development Unit, which is part of Defence Reserves, Youth and Sport, which reports through the Chief People Officer to the Chief of Defence Force.

The Youth Development Unit also delivers two other youth programmes for NZDF.<sup>39</sup>

The LSV programme is delivered in two locations: Burnham Military Camp (south of Christchurch), and Motu Moana Scout Camp in Blockhouse Bay, Auckland. Motu Moana is a temporary location while a new facility is built at Whenuapai RNZAF Base. The facility is expected to be completed in March 2019.

The Youth Development Unit has about 100 personnel across the three programmes it delivers. These personnel include headquarters staff, officers commanding, warrant officers, section and platoon commanders, personal training instructors, training unit managers, and a psychologist.

In addition, at each LSV location, the Youth Development Unit contracts a social worker and a nurse to support the LSV programme, Work and Income provide a representative, and the New Zealand Police provide a mentor for the duration of the programme.

## MSD REFERS PEOPLE TO THE PROGRAMME, BUT NZDF MAKES THE FINAL DECISION WHETHER TO ACCEPT AN APPLICATION

MSD is responsible for referring people to the LSV programme.

MSD primarily sources trainees from their clients. A small number of trainees are referred through the Department of Corrections or the Courts.

NZDF makes the final decision whether to accept a trainee onto the programme. Once a trainee has applied through MSD, NZDF assesses each application for criminal, medical, and mental health history. NZDF uses a 'red flag' process to determine whether or not to accept each application.

NZDF has a process by which they assign a "red flag" to trainees who pose a serious threat to:

- their own safety
- the safety of staff, other trainees, or external providers, or
- NZDF's reputation.

Examples of issues that would be considered a "red flag" include:

- self-harming behaviours
- suicidal ideation and behaviours
- mental health diagnoses and/or undiagnosed symptoms
- grief and/or trauma
- substance abuse, or
- intellectual disability.

When an applicant has a red flag, the Officer Commanding of the relevant Youth Development Unit receives advice from the psychologist and social worker about the applicant's likely ability to complete the course safely, and makes a decision whether to accept the applicant based on that advice.

## FUTURE EXPANSION OF THE PROGRAMME

The Government has committed to doubling the number of LSV places to 1600 by 2020. This includes re-opening Youth Development Unit (Central) in Wellington near Trentham Military Camp from 2019.

### Funding

In Budget 2018, the Government committed an additional \$26.8 million operating funding (\$22.6 million to NZDF, and \$4.2 million to MSD) over four years for the expansion of the Limited Service Volunteer Programme. A further \$1 million capital funding was provided in 2018/19 to support the expansion.

<sup>39</sup> As well as the LSV programme, the Youth Development Unit delivers NZDF's Youth Life Skills and Blue Light Life Skills programmes. Blue Light Life Skills camps are residential life skills and leadership courses for 14 to 17 year olds, run by NZDF and the New Zealand Police. Youth Life Skills provides support to Service Academies around New Zealand by running leadership development and adventure-based training.

## APPENDIX 2:

# MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMMES

The LSV programme is one of a suite of employment programmes that MSD offers to unemployed young people. The following list outlines the other training, employment, and support that MSD provides for young people, if appropriate for their circumstances.

- Job search seminars and work-focused case management and vocational services to provide support to help them into employment and to consider their options.
- Services to assist young people with the training and additional skill development to secure jobs, for example driver licence programmes or work experience.
- Skills for Industry which provides short-term job-focused training for people to up-skill for specific industry needs. Programmes are short to medium term and tailored to particular vacancies. Training can be offered as pre-employment or on-the-job training, and programmes can be delivered by providers or employers.
- Direct wage subsidies that are paid to employers. The subsidy can be paid for up to one year and is up to \$22,000 for that year. The level and duration of the subsidy varies according to the investment needed to increase participant's skills for the position.
- Mana in Mahi supports people, particularly 18-24 year olds, to achieve sustainable employment outcomes. A wage subsidy is paid to employers who hire someone who is on a benefit and offers that person industry training qualification opportunities. The subsidy is equivalent to one year of the Jobseeker Support benefit. Wrap-around services and in-work supports are also provided to the participants to help them to stay in employment.
- Assistance with costs to attend courses that may build on the skills the young person has developed while participating in LSV. For example, a non-recoverable grant of up to \$1,000 in a 52-week period, for actual and reasonable costs of participating in short-term (generally less than 12 weeks) employment-related training courses or programmes.
- Financial assistance is available to cover the additional costs associated with moving into work once they get a job and where these costs are not covered elsewhere. For example the Transition to Work Grant helps with costs of relocation, clothing, and other work related items.

MSD also provides a Youth Service which has three streams:

- The "Youth Service for NEET" is a voluntary contracted case-management service for people between 15 and 17 years who are at risk of being not in education, employment, or training (NEET). Providers give a targeted wrap-around service to the young person. This can include encouraging education, training or employment opportunities for young people, or helping them to find accommodation.
- The "Youth Service YPP" is compulsory for young people receiving the Young Parent Payment. Providers manage income support entitlements, financial assistance, and wrap-around support for the young people.
- The "Youth Service YP" is compulsory for people receiving the Youth Payment (YP). Providers manage income support entitlements, financial assistance, and wrap-around support. The overall objective of the Youth Service YP is to reduce long-term benefit receipt, assist participants to achieve NCEA level 2 or higher qualifications, and improve their life skills.

## FUTHER INFORMATION

MSD's Employment and Social Outcomes Strategy 2018-2021's first priority is to increase the effectiveness of support to enhance the employment potential of young people. The Strategy outlines the effectiveness of key services and programmes available from MSD and identifies other key initiatives across government that support young people into employment.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>40</sup> The strategy is available at: <https://www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/evaluation/investment-approach/2018-21-employment-and-social-outcomes-investment-strategy.pdf>

## APPENDIX 3:

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

|  | LSV programme staff | LSV headquarters;<br>NZDF headquarters<br>(Defence Reserves,<br>Youth, Sport) | PT Instructor, Social<br>Worker, Police Mentor | LSV Nurse | LSV Work and Income<br>representative | Employers | Patrons |
|--|---------------------|---|--|-----------|---------------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| <b>Introductory questions to establish rapport, and gain insight into level of contact with participants</b>                   |                     |   |  |           |                                       |           |         |
| What is your role in relation to the LSV programme? How long have you been in this role?                                       | ✓                   | ✓   | ✓  | ✓         | ✓                                     |           |         |
| [NZDF only] What is your rank and background in NZDF?  | ✓                   | ✓   | ✓  |           |                                       |           |         |
| How did you come to be a patron of the LSV programme? Have you had any other connection with the programme previously?         |                     |   |  |           |                                       |           | ✓       |
| Are you currently an employer? (current/past employment, number of employees, industry)?                                       |                     |   |  |           |                                       |           | ✓       |
| Over the six weeks of the course, how much time do you spend with participants? One on one? In groups? With the whole course?  | ✓                   | ✓   | ✓  | ✓         | ✓                                     |           | ✓       |
| Do you have any contact with the participants before or after the course? If so, what is the nature of that contact?           | ✓                   | ✓   | ✓  | ✓         | ✓                                     |           | ✓       |
| Can you tell us a bit about your company (number of employees, industry etc)? What is your role?                               |                     |   |  |           |                                       | ✓         |         |
| How did you come to be connected with the LSV programme? How long have you been attending the Employment Expos/Discovery Days? |                     |   |  |           |                                       | ✓         |         |

|   | LSV programme staff | LSV headquarters;<br>NZDF headquarters<br>(Defence Reserves,<br>Youth, Sport) | PT Instructor, Social<br>Worker, Police Mentor | LSV Nurse | LSV Work and Income<br>representative | Employers | Patrons |
|---|---------------------|---|--|-----------|---------------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| <b>Questions about the job market, what employers want, and if/how LSV helps employers</b>  |                     |   |  |           |                                       |           |         |
| What are the most common types of vacancies that employers/you want to fill? (occupation, permanent/ temp/ part-time/ full-time/ location)  |                     |   |  |           | ✓                                     | ✓         |         |
| What are the most common kinds of jobs that you think employers want to fill? (occupation, permanent/ temp/ part-time/ full-time/ location)   |                     |   |  |           |                                       |           | ✓       |
| What are the skills and attributes that employers/you look for in a potential employee for these vacancies?   |                     |   |  |           | ✓                                     | ✓         |         |
| What are the skills and attributes that you think employers are looking for in potential employees for those jobs?  |                     |   |  |           |                                       |           | ✓       |
| There are about 20-30,000 young people across NZ who are unemployed at any one time. What's your view on why they are not employed/ employable?   |                     |   |  |           | ✓                                     | ✓         | ✓       |
| How does the LSV programme help employers/you as an employer? Why do they/you show up at the Employment Expo/Discovery Day? What makes connection with the LSV programme worth it for them/you? | ✓                   | ✓   |  |           | ✓                                     | ✓         |         |
| What's your perspective on how the LSV programme helps employers?   |                     |   |  |           |                                       |           | ✓       |
| Do the LSV graduates differ from other unemployed young people? If so, how? (How does the LSV programme help young people become more employable?)  |                     |   |  |           |                                       | ✓         | ✓       |
| Is hiring LSV graduates an attractive proposition for your business? Why/why not? Have you ever hired an LSV graduate?  |                     |   |  |           |                                       | ✓         |         |
| What doesn't the LSV programme do for employers/you? What might stop them/you or prevent them/you from hiring an LSV graduate?  | ✓                   | ✓   |  |           | ✓                                     | ✓         | ✓       |

## APPENDIX 3:

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS CONTINUED >

|  | LSV programme staff | LSV headquarters;<br>NZDF headquarters<br>(Defence Reserves,<br>Youth, Sport) | PT Instructor, Social<br>Worker, Police Mentor | LSV Nurse | LSV Work and Income<br>representative | Employers | Patrons |
|--|---------------------|---|--|-----------|---------------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| <b>Questions about LSV course components</b>   |                     |   |  |           |                                       |           |         |
| <i>The aim of the LSV course is to increase participants' self-confidence, motivation, self-discipline, and initiative.</i>  |                     |   |  |           |                                       |           |         |
| What do you think are the parts of the LSV course that contribute to this aim?   | ✓                   | ✓   | ✓  | ✓         | ✓                                     |           |         |
| From your observation of the programme, what do you think are the parts of the LSV course that contribute to this aim?   |                     |   |  |           |                                       |           | ✓       |
| <i>The longer term goal of the course is to increase participants' chances of gaining work or entering training.</i>   |                     |   |  |           |                                       |           |         |
| What do you think are the parts of the LSV course that contribute to this longer-term goal?  | ✓                   | ✓   | ✓  | ✓         | ✓                                     |           |         |
| From your observations, what do you think are the parts of the LSV course that contribute to this longer-term goal?  |                     |   |  |           |                                       |           | ✓       |
| What else does the course provide for participants that may not directly relate to the aims or goal? (eg. support)   | ✓                   | ✓   | ✓  | ✓         | ✓                                     |           | ✓       |
| <b>Questions about the impact on participants</b>  |                     |   |  |           |                                       |           |         |
| <i>For the next couple of questions, I'd like you to think about up to three participants that you have met through this course – one who has done really well (A), one who has not done well at all (B), and one somewhere in the middle (C). [Repeat the following questions for person A, B, C]</i> |                     |   |  |           |                                       |           |         |
| For person A, what barriers or lack of opportunities would you say they faced prior to coming on this course, related to gaining employment or training? (What might have made it hard for them to get a job or do training?)  | ✓                   |   | ✓  | ✓         | ✓                                     |           | ✓       |
| How did the LSV course help them with those barriers?  | ✓                   |   | ✓  | ✓         | ✓                                     |           | ✓       |
| What other help or support did they receive from the programme?  | ✓                   |   | ✓  | ✓         | ✓                                     |           | ✓       |
| What barriers or lack of opportunities remain at the end of the programme for participants?  | ✓                   |   | ✓  | ✓         | ✓                                     |           | ✓       |

|  | LSV programme staff | LSV headquarters;<br>NZDF headquarters<br>(Defence Reserves,<br>Youth, Sport) | PT Instructor, Social<br>Worker, Police Mentor | LSV Nurse | LSV Work and Income<br>representative | Employers | Patrons |
|--|---------------------|---|--|-----------|---------------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| <b>Questions about post-programme mentoring</b>  |                     |   |  |           |                                       |           |         |
| For the LSV graduates that you have employed, what kind of mentoring or assistance do you provide to them?   |                     |   |  |           |                                       | ✓         |         |
| [If yes] Is this different to what other new employees receive?  |                     |   |  |           |                                       | ✓         |         |
| <i>Some overseas programmes similar to LSV include a mentoring programme after the course finishes.</i>  |                     |   |  |           |                                       |           |         |
| How much mentoring does the LSV programme currently include?   | ✓                   | ✓   | ✓  |           | ✓                                     |           |         |
| What mentoring have you observed that is part of the current LSV programme?  |                     |   |  |           |                                       |           | ✓       |
| What kind of mentoring do you think would be most valuable for LSV graduates?  | ✓                   | ✓   | ✓  |           | ✓                                     | ✓         | ✓       |
| Are there particular people / groups you can think of who would make good mentors?   | ✓                   | ✓   | ✓  |           | ✓                                     | ✓         | ✓       |
| If the mentoring was provided as a follow up to the program, would you be likely to continue your own mentoring/assistance?  |                     |   |  |           |                                       | ✓         |         |
| <b>Closing questions</b>   |                     |   |  |           |                                       |           |         |
| We know that after LSV, some participants go on to do well, and others not so well. If there was one thing you could change about the LSV programme to better help those who don't do so well, what would it be? | ✓                   | ✓   | ✓  | ✓         | ✓                                     | ✓         | ✓       |
| Are there any other comments you'd like to make?   | ✓                   | ✓   | ✓  | ✓         | ✓                                     | ✓         | ✓       |

## APPENDIX 4:

### LIST OF INTERVIEWEES (EXCLUDING TRAINEES)

We extend our thanks to everyone interviewed for their time and comments.

We conducted 39 interviews, with 51 interviewees in total. Interviews ranged from 30 minutes to two hours.

Interviewees' opinions are their own and may not represent the views of the organisation that they work for.

In order to allow interviewees to talk to us freely and frankly, we have not identified them by name in this report. Where quotes may be attributable to an individual, we have sought that individual's permission to include the quote.

### LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

- Two staff from the Defence Reserves, Youth and Sport
- Five staff from the LSV headquarters
- Nineteen staff from LSV (South) over nine interviews
- Thirteen staff from LSV (North) over nine interviews
- Four past patrons of the LSV programme
- Six employers who had attended an LSV Work Expo or Discovery Day
- Two training organisations

## APPENDIX 5:

### POST-PROGRAMME MENTORING AND SUPPORT MODELS FOR COMPARISON

As part of this review, we investigated five models of post-programme mentoring and support that follow the LSV or a similar programme. This appendix briefly describes each model, and where relevant the course it follows.

To gather information about the New Zealand-based models, we visited the Future Leaders programme in Wellington and conducted a phone interview with the Service Centre Manager from Northland's Work and Income branch. Information on three international models was gathered from their websites and other digital sources:<sup>41</sup>

- Tumbelin GO (Australia)
- The Princes Trust (United Kingdom)
- National Youth Guard ChalleNGe Programme (United States).

41 Baptist Care SA (2018) [www.baptistcaresa.org.au/service/adventure-services/adventure-therapy#tumbelin-go-empowering-youth](http://www.baptistcaresa.org.au/service/adventure-services/adventure-therapy#tumbelin-go-empowering-youth), accessed 5 December 2018; Baptist Care SA (2018) *Annual Report 2017/18*, [www.baptistcaresa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/BaptistCareSA-2017-2018-AnnualReport.pdf](http://www.baptistcaresa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/BaptistCareSA-2017-2018-AnnualReport.pdf), accessed 5 December 2018; Baptist Care SA, 'Tumbelin GO "Begin your career adventure"' brochure, [www.baptistcaresa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Tumbelin-GO-brochure-UPDATED-digital.pdf](http://www.baptistcaresa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Tumbelin-GO-brochure-UPDATED-digital.pdf), accessed 5 December 2018. The Prince's Trust (2018) "Princes Trust: Youth can do it" [www.princes-trust.org.uk](http://www.princes-trust.org.uk), accessed 5 December 2018; The Prince's Trust (2018) 'Annual Report for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018', [www.princes-trust.org.uk/Document\\_Annual-Report\\_17/18.pdf](http://www.princes-trust.org.uk/Document_Annual-Report_17/18.pdf), accessed 5 December 2018; The Prince's Trust (2018) 'Fairbridge programme Sample 'Follow On' Programme Calendar', [www.princes-trust.org.uk/Document\\_Fairbridge\\_Sample\\_Calendar.pdf](http://www.princes-trust.org.uk/Document_Fairbridge_Sample_Calendar.pdf), accessed 5 December 2018. National Guard Youth Foundation (2018) 'About ChalleNGe', [www.ngyf.org/about-challenge/](http://www.ngyf.org/about-challenge/), accessed 5 December 2018; Millenky et al (2011).

## 1. LSV FOLLOW UP: NORTHLAND WORK AND INCOME (NEW ZEALAND)

In the Northland region, Work and Income has a dedicated team which focuses on supporting 18 to 24 year olds, as well as an internal dedicated case manager who works alongside LSV graduates as a group to assist them into work or training. We were advised by MSD that the Northland Work and Income region produces some of the best outcomes for LSV graduates when compared to other regions.

### SUPPORT BEFORE AND DURING LSV

The Northland Work and Income model has a strong whānau focus.

Northland Work and Income holds 'LSV roadshows' on local marae to help engage communities with the concept of the LSV programme, as trainees are more likely to succeed when they have support and encouragement from their extended family.

During the course, the Northland case manager provides practical support, such as helping trainees with family situations that arise while they are away, and helping the family prepare for the trainee's return. This can include making changes to the home environment to help the young person succeed.

The Northland Work and Income staff have a close relationship with the Youth Development Unit based in Auckland. This relationship enables them to attend the Longest Day and other important LSV events, and maintain visibility for Northland trainees during the course. Work and Income staff are also able to proactively start helping trainees while they are still on the course (working alongside NZDF personnel and within the LSV programme protocols).

Work and Income conducts three assessments of a trainee: one on the LSV discovery day, one in the final week of LSV, and one when they have completed the course. These assessments set out the trainee's abilities and goals, and help Work and Income identify appropriate opportunities and support for them.

### POST-PROGRAMME SUPPORT

After a Northland-based trainee graduates from LSV, they have a meeting with their case manager during their first week home. At this time they are placed in 'partial care' for a period of 12 months. This involves case managers remaining engaged in the young peoples' lives, even if they have a job, and usually takes the form of letters, texts, or phone calls to the young person to see how they are doing.

Trainees are also offered practical support for things such as moving to another region of New Zealand or moving out of home. If a trainee plans to study, but has to wait until their course starts, Work and Income will find them seasonal work to do until that time.

Northland Work and Income also offers voluntary drug testing for LSV graduates. This helps trainees to stay clean, as well as identifying when their home environment might affect their ability to pass an employment-related drug test.

## 2. FUTURE LEADERS (NEW ZEALAND)

The Future Leaders programme is a Wellington-based mentoring programme that provides support to LSV graduates after LSV. It aims to support graduates into the employment or study option that best suits them.

Future Leaders is delivered by a small team who have direct experience of both LSV and NZDF. It has been running since 2014, and is a Wellington Region Work and Income Service Provider.

Future Leaders focuses on delivering holistic and long-term mentoring. Its work can be divided into three parts.

### PRE-PROGRAMME SUPPORT

Future Leaders' pre-programme support includes:

- Conducting Work and Income Seminars to help attract trainees to LSV.
- Engaging with trainees during the LSV course to assess how best to support them post-programme.

### POST-LSV INTENSIVE SUPPORT

After an LSV course ends, Future Leaders provides three weeks of intensive support. This support can include:

- Transitioning graduates back into home life while maintaining the discipline, routines, and motivation they learnt at LSV.
- Offering job search, CV, and application guidance. This includes sourcing and facilitating study and employment opportunities.
- Addressing personal barriers to success, such as substance abuse and family issues.
- Teaching basic life skills such as budgeting, nutrition and cooking, and how to use public transport.
- Developing work skills, for example driver licences, Site Safe qualifications, and Certificates of Approval for private security work.
- Helping graduates engage with Government agencies, for example making sure they are on the correct benefit and using the correct tax code.

### POST-LSV MENTORING

After the intensive period ends, Future Leaders continues to support LSV graduates with long-term mentoring. This mentoring is usually over the course of six months, and can include:

- Follow ups with employers and their graduate employees.
- Developing 'self-leadership' and independence.
- Continuing to address personal issues.
- Supporting graduates to sustain their employment or study.

### 3. TUMBELIN GO (AUSTRALIA)

Tumbelin GO is an ‘adventure therapy’ programme based in South Australia, targeted at 15 to 24 year olds who:

- have been unemployed for four weeks or more, or
- have left school prior to completing Year 12 or an equivalent qualification level<sup>42</sup>, or
- have been exposed to risk factors associated with long-term unemployment, such as: homelessness or housing instability, disability or illness that reduces their capacity to participate in education or employment, being in or leaving out of home care, being a young parent, having a history of family joblessness, and/or having a history of criminal offending.

Tumbelin GO is run by Baptist Care SA, a charity with a wide-ranging purpose of ‘finding ways to make people’s lives better’. Baptist Care SA receives funding from a wide range of bodies, including Federal, State, and Local Government agencies.

The programme’s ethos is that “young people who can discover and experience connection with themselves and others, and develop and maintain their capacity to build positive, healthy relationships, are more likely to secure training and/or employment” .

The programme has two ‘streams’: Group Adventure Therapy (GAT), for 15–17 year olds, and Career Coaching, for 18-24 year olds.

#### CAREER COACHING

The Career Coaching stream provides a small (up to ten person) peer-support group for young people on the journey towards education, training, or employment.

The 10-week programme includes adventure activities, help to find work experience, follow-up reviews of the young person’s journey to employment or education, a celebration event, and one-on-one sessions with Tumbelin GO’s career coaches. The career coaches have backgrounds in areas such as outdoor education, youth work, and psychology.

#### POST-COURSE SUPPORT

Once the 10-week intensive support ends, Tumbelin GO’s career coaches continue to check in with the participants. This can be a weekly or fortnightly catch-up, or less frequently if the participant prefers. These check-ins can continue for as long as the participant would like—for instance one current participant has maintained contact for over a year. The programme is also initiating ‘catch-up group sessions’ for each cohort of young people. These will be run about three times over the three months following the course.

<sup>42</sup> Note that the Australian school system’s Year 12 is equivalent to New Zealand’s Year 13.

### 4. THE PRINCE’S TRUST (UNITED KINGDOM)

The Prince’s Trust is a British charity that “helps 11 to 30 year-olds who are unemployed or struggling at school to transform their lives”. The Trust runs many initiatives towards this goal, including a programme called Team and a programme called Fairbridge.

The Trust has a system of ongoing support. Many young people begin by attending one Trust programme, and complete multiple programmes before moving on into work or further education. Trust mentors can help young people navigate the opportunities provided by the Trust including: scholarships, work experience placements, personal development programmes, mentorship opportunities, an online support forum, and an Enterprise Investment branch that invests in start-ups run by young people.

We investigated two of the Trust’s programmes: Team, which bears the closest resemblance to the LSV programme; and Fairbridge, which can be either a first-port-of-call service or used as for post-programme support.

#### TEAM PROGRAMME

Team is a 12-week personal development programme for unemployed young people between the ages of 16 and 25. The programme runs all over the United Kingdom, and is offered to groups of up to 12 young people at a time.

The programme includes an adventure-based residential trip, training in interview and CV-writing skills, two weeks’ work experience in something the young person is interested in, training in English and Maths skills, and a group project designed to give back to the community.

#### FAIRBRIDGE PROGRAMME

The Fairbridge programme is for 16 to 25 year-olds, designed to equip young people with new skills and provide ongoing support.

Each successful applicant to Fairbridge begins by completing a five-day Access course. The Access course involves outdoor adventure activities and a residential component. Once a young person has completed the Access course, they can have access to the Fairbridge “calendar of events”.

These events are regular free activities in regions across the United Kingdom, and young people can choose which events they would like to attend. Events cover areas such as maths and English classes, cooking and food hygiene, money management, adventure activities, art and photography, CV-writing and interview techniques, sexual health and drug awareness, customer service training (with an associated national qualification), emotional and physical health, and personal grooming and presentation.

Fairbridge has connections with influential brands such as L’Oreal Paris and Tottenham Hotspur Football Club. These brands help to deliver relevant Fairbridge activities and increase young people’s interest in the events.

Young people can continue attending Fairbridge events indefinitely. However, if they want further support, or want help to take the next step into employment or training, the Trust’s staff also provide advice and one-on-one mentorship.

## 5. NATIONAL YOUTH GUARD CHALLENGE PROGRAMME (UNITED STATES)

The ChalleNGe programme (Challenge) is a voluntary American programme run by the National Guard. It is designed to support at-risk 16 to 18 year olds to earn their General Educational Development certificate (a qualification that is equivalent to a high school diploma), and then go on to further study, work, or military service.

Potential cadets must:

- have dropped out or been expelled from school
- be unemployed
- be drug-free
- not be heavily involved in the justice system, and
- be a citizen or resident of the United States.

### PRE-CHALLENGE PHASE

The first phase of Challenge is a two week orientation period. During this time, applicants move into barracks-style housing (sometimes on military bases), are taught the high military discipline standards expected of them while on Challenge, and begin their physical training.

If they successfully complete the Pre-Challenge phase, applicants are awarded the rank of 'cadet' and move into the Residential phase of the programme.

### RESIDENTIAL PHASE

The residential phase is 20 weeks long, and is designed around eight 'pillars': leadership/ followership, responsible citizenship, service to community, life-coping skills, physical fitness, health and hygiene, job skills, and academic excellence.

The residential phase is strongly military-influenced. Cadets are divided into platoons and squads, wear uniforms, and comply with military-style discipline. Daily routines are highly structured, with almost no 'down-time', and cadets are always closely supervised by staff.

Most of the cadets' time is spent working on academics, with the ultimate goal of receiving their General Educational Development certificate. However, cadets also learn military drill and complete physical training.

In the final weeks of the residential phase, cadets work with Challenge staff to arrange their post-residential 'placement'. These are usually employment, education, or military service. If cadets successfully complete the residential phase, they move into the post-residential phase.

### POST-RESIDENTIAL PHASE

The post-residential phase lasts for one year and includes a structured mentoring programme as well as the placement mentioned above.

The cadets nominate their own mentor, usually someone from their own community who they already know. For instance, mentors might be extended family members, local business owners, or past teachers.

The formal mentoring relationship begins about half-way through the residential phase, after Challenge has screened and trained the mentors. During the post-residential phase, Challenge staff maintain regular contact with both graduate cadets and their mentors. Staff work with and through mentors to monitor the graduate cadet's progress and help to solve any problems that arise.





