

Evaluation of the Mandatory Alcohol Interlock Program: Phase 1

Summary Report – June 2024

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1 Executive summary & conclusions

This report provides a summary of evaluation findings for Phase 1 of the NSW Mandatory Alcohol Interlock Program (MAIP). It addresses four key evaluation questions:

- Did the program reach its target population?
- Did program participants comply with program requirements?
- What impact did the program have?
- How did program participants experience MAIP?

The report draws on several sources:

- Data analysis and reports undertaken by NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR) in partnership with Transport for NSW in 2022. This work focussed on assessing the impact on repeat drink-driving, driving while disqualified, traffic infringements, and crash outcomes¹
- A process evaluation conducted by Centre for Evidence and Implementation (CEI) on behalf of Transport for NSW in 2022-2023. This study was intended to complement and add detail to BOCSAR evaluation findings, and particularly focused on exploring participants' experiences of the program.

1.1 Summary of findings

Key findings from the report are as follows:

- MAIP Phase 1 achieved **broad reach** across eligible offenders in NSW. A Mandatory Alcohol Interlock Order (MAIO) was issued to around eight in ten eligible offenders. Of this group, two-thirds elected to install the interlock.
- There was a relatively high level of **compliance with program requirements** amongst MAIP participants. Nearly nine in ten completed the interlock period without early exit, with only 4% detected in breach of interlock licence conditions.
- Participation in MAIP was found to help participants **separate drinking and driving** and **reduce reoffending**.
 - Almost two-thirds of surveyed participants (66%) reported that the interlock made it a lot easier (55%) or somewhat easier (11%) to separate drinking and driving. A range of additional positive impacts of the program were also identified by participants, including learning how long alcohol can stay in their system, developing a heightened recognition of the severity of drinking and driving and the dangers posed not only to themselves but also to others.
 - There was a significant 86% reduction in the drink driving reoffending rate during the interlock period for first time high-range offenders taking part in MAIP Phase 1 whose blood alcohol concentration (BAC) was just above the 0.15 threshold for participation in the program when compared to a similar group of offenders also convicted of drink driving offenses during that period (but who were not eligible to participate in MAIP Phase 1).

¹ Crime and Justice Bulletin: [The effectiveness of alcohol interlocks in reducing repeat drink driving and improving road safety](#).

Bureau Brief: [Predictors of commencement and completion of the NSW Mandatory Alcohol Interlock Program](#)

- There was a reduction in drink driving re-offences among all eligible offenders in both shorter and longer term periods analysed. Specifically, a 43% reduction in the drink driving reoffence rate within 36 months of conviction, and a 43% reduction in the drink driving reoffence rate within 60 months of conviction.
- Other noteworthy outcomes were observed amongst **subgroups of offenders** who participated in MAIP. For instance:
 - Offenders convicted of repeat mid-range prescribed concentration of alcohol (PCA), first time high range or first time refuse breath test offences were significantly less likely to have a PCA offence during their initial disqualification period.
 - Offenders convicted of repeat high-range drink driving offences or repeat refusing to provide a breath test demonstrated a significant reduction in reoffending during the interlock period. To a lesser extent, there was also a significant reduction in offenders convicted of repeat mid-range PCA, first time high range or first time refuse breath test offences during the same period
 - Reoffending 24 months after the interlock period was significantly reduced for all age groups below 45 years old, all SEIFA quartiles except the least disadvantaged, for males, those with one or more prior court appearances and those with a prior infringement.
- Despite its clear benefits, surveyed participants reported mixed experiences of MAIP, with a number of challenges evident in this regard:
 - The **costs** involved in participating in MAIP emerged as a prominent concern for many, with the majority of surveyed participants indicating that covering the costs of the program was somewhat (46%) or very difficult (32%). Importantly, nearly half of those surveyed reported that they were unaware they could receive financial assistance (47%) while 44% believed they were not eligible.
 - **Perceptions of setting up, using and servicing the interlock device** were mixed – around half the sample reported positive experiences in applying for the interlock licence (49%), setting up (51%) and using the interlock device (48%), while around one in four (37%) were positive about the process of servicing a device. One of the concerns voiced by participants was that many service centres did not operate outside business hours, making it difficult to have their interlock serviced without taking time off work. The wide dispersal of interlock service centres in rural areas could also make servicing a time-consuming and expensive exercise for those living in such locations.
 - The majority of surveyed participants reported they received enough **information** to understand what they needed to do in the program (62%), with a further 28% reporting they received ‘somewhat’ enough information. The availability of **support** through the program was potentially more challenging. Only around one in five surveyed participants were positive about the availability of support services generally (22%),

1.2 Conclusions

Evaluation findings point to the broad success of the MAIP Phase 1 program both in its delivery and impacts. The program reached the target population of serious and repeat drink drive offenders across NSW and elicited a high degree of compliance, suggesting that requirements are largely manageable for participants. Further, the program supported participants to separate drinking and driving and was associated with a reduction in reoffence both during and after interlock periods – with this reduction particularly pronounced amongst more serious offenders.

The experience of the program for some participants may be challenging in a number of areas however. This particularly relates to reported difficulties using and servicing interlock devices,

disparities in provider practices, financial constraints to participate in the program, and limited support. Addressing these challenges, such as by exploring new interlock devices, auditing service providers practices, and enhancing knowledge of financial assistance and support services, is crucial to ensuring the program's effectiveness and equitable outcomes.

Despite these challenges, the MAIP program serves as a vital mechanism for reducing reoffending and potentially enhancing road safety in NSW. Overall, the evaluation findings are encouraging and support the continuing roll out of the MAIP program across NSW.

2 Introduction

Drink driving makes up approximately 6% of all proven charges in New South Wales criminal prosecutions (NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, 2021). The Centre for Road Safety estimates alcohol was involved in 17% of fatalities and 8% of serious injuries on NSW roads in 2021 (2023). The direct and indirect costs of these alcohol-related road crashes are large, to the people involved, and our health and justice systems.

A range of highly effective programs and policies have been implemented in NSW to reduce the incidence of road trauma arising from drink driving.

Licence disqualification for drink driving penalises offenders and reduces reoffending by prohibiting all driving during a disqualification period. Research supports lengthy licence disqualifications as a means of generally reducing drink driving and road crashes (Fell & Scherer, 2017; Wagenaar & Maldonado-Molina, 2007; Watson, 1998). However, there is concern around the impact of long licence disqualification periods on vulnerable groups.

Occasions of unlawful driving during prolonged licence disqualification periods are thought to occur where offenders act on a belief they are at minimal risk of detection or experiencing high-stakes personal circumstances. Unlawful unlicensed driving has been found to carry a heightened risk of motor vehicle crashes (DeYoung & Gebers, 2004).

Unlike prison sentences and long licence disqualifications, alcohol interlocks can work to prevent episodes of drink driving and encourage behaviour that separates driving from drinking. Interlock devices require drivers to supply a (negative) breath test sample before a vehicle can be started. They have tamper-resistant features, like cameras, to prevent circumvention by the driver. Interlocks allow offenders to drive lawfully when alcohol is not involved and stops the vehicle from starting, when it is.

NSW Mandatory Alcohol Interlock Program (MAIP) uses interlock technology in the staged reintroduction of offenders to lawful driving. MAIP features support for offenders at elevated risk, helping them engage with the program, interact with the health system, become aware of opportunities to separate driving and alcohol behaviours, and keep the benefits of being a lawful road user.

2.1 Phases of the program

MAIP commenced in NSW in February 2015. At this time, alcohol interlocks were introduced as a mandatory penalty for:

- first-time offenders convicted of high-range Prescribed Concentration of Alcohol (PCA).
- any offender convicted of drink driving with at least one prior drink driving conviction (PCA or alcohol DUI offences) within the last five years; and
- any offender who refused a breath test when requested by police.

This period of MAIP is known as Phase 1 of the program.

MAIP Phase 2 began in December 2018 when eligibility was expanded to include offenders convicted of first-time mid-range drink driving and first-time alcohol DUI offences. MAIP Phase 3 began in June 2021 when eligibility was further expanded to include offenders convicted of a combined offence (PCA with illicit drug presence).

2.2 Program participation

Under MAIP, the Court issues a Mandatory Alcohol Interlock Order (MAIO) to all persons convicted of an eligible offence. However, the court may grant an interlock exemption order if offenders can demonstrate that they lack access to a vehicle suitable for installing the device or if they have a medical condition that prevents them from utilising the device.

All offenders serve an initial disqualification period where they are not lawfully permitted to drive. In Phase 1 of MAIP, disqualification periods ranged from a minimum of 1 month to a maximum of 12 months, depending on the severity of the offence. On completion of that period, offenders choose between continuing the disqualification period for five year period or entering an interlock period to complete their penalty.

Interlock period

The interlock period covers the time a participant must have an alcohol interlock device installed in their vehicle. Interlock periods range from 12 months to 4 years which can be extended if participants break the conditions of the program. A MAIP participant can choose to leave an interlock period to resume a disqualification period.

There are medical prerequisites to enter an interlock period and become a MAIP participant. General Practitioners discuss drinking and driving behaviours and supply medical clearance for participants to operate an interlock device.

Interlock device instalment

A registered interlock provider is engaged to install the interlock device in a nominated vehicle. The MAIP participant bears the cost of \$2,200 to \$2,500 per year for interlock installation and servicing. Financial support is available to some participants to promote access to the program. Interlock service providers offer concession card holders discounts directly on the cost of interlock devices and their maintenance. These discounts apply for their entire interlock period.

Severe financial hardship assistance is provided by the NSW Government for eligible MAIP participants who apply for assistance. Applications for this support are administered through a community program partner organisation. If found eligible, the costs of installing and servicing the interlock is paid by TfNSW, however this requires regular reapplication to extend assistance.

Breath testing

Once an interlock device is installed, a MAIP participant must provide a breath sample to start the vehicle. One of the Interlock licence conditions is that participants must only drive with a zero BAC. If the MAIP participant records a blood alcohol concentration greater than zero, the vehicle will not start. Participants are also prompted, at random intervals while operating the vehicle, to navigate to a suitable, safe location en route and retest. Other users of the vehicle must follow the conditions of the interlock device.

Participants must have their interlocks serviced every two months at a maximum or three months for participants who live in a remote area. This is at their own expense, unless they are receiving severe financial hardship assistance. When the device is serviced, breath test results and camera data are downloaded. Failed tests or tampering with the device can trigger breach notices to be sent by Transport for NSW. Participants must pass all breath tests in the final six months of their interlock period to successfully complete the program. Failed test may require participants to undergo an Interlock Medical Examination (IME) with a doctor before the interlock condition can be removed. Furthermore, if they breach this condition of the program, their interlock period may be extended.

2.3 Prior evaluation

The NSW Alcohol Interlock Program has previously been subject to a [process evaluation](#). This evaluation covered the period from when the program commenced in February 2015 to September 2017 (Centre for Road Safety, 2019). The evaluation found that the program was largely being implemented well and was viewed positively by participants.

2.4 About this report

This report provides a snapshot of participation in Phase 1 of the MAIP and a summary of key outcomes in terms of drink driving related reoffences, other driving related infringements, and road crashes and injuries. It addresses four key evaluation questions as follows:

- Did the program reach its target population?
- Did program participants comply with program requirements?
- What impact did the program have?
- How did program participants experience MAIP?

The report draws on several sources:

- Data analysis and reports undertaken by NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR) in partnership with Transport for NSW in 2022. This work focussed on assessing the reach of MAIP Phase 1 and its impacts on repeat drink-driving, driving while disqualified, traffic infringements, and crash outcomes²
- A process evaluation conducted by Centre for Evidence and Implementation (CEI) on behalf of Transport for NSW in 2022-2023. This study was intended to complement and add detail to BOCSAR evaluation findings, and particularly focused on exploring participants' experiences of the program.

2.4.1 Methodology

- Program reach and compliance was assessed through an analysis of descriptive program level data from 13,454 offenders eligible for MAIP penalties in Phase 1.
- Program outcomes were drawn from two analysis approaches³.
 - Regression discontinuity (RD) approach: The first analysis involved a comparison of outcomes between two groups of first time offenders convicted during MAIP Phase 1. The first group were first time offenders who took up MAIP with a BAC just above the 0.15 threshold for participation in Phase 1 of the program. The second were a control group of offenders who were just below the BAC threshold for a high-range PCA offence (i.e., not eligible for MAIP in Phase 1).
- Difference-in-differences (DiD) analysis: the second analysis compared outcomes for eligible and ineligible offenders before and after the commencement of Phase 1 of MAIP. Here eligible offenders are those with a high range PCA offence, a prior PCA offence (of any type) or a refuse breath test offence. Ineligible offenders are first-time medium, low, special, and novice range PCA offenders.

² Crime and Justice Bulletin: [The effectiveness of alcohol interlocks in reducing repeat drink driving and improving road safety](#).

² Bureau Brief: [Predictors of commencement and completion of the NSW Mandatory Alcohol Interlock Program](#)

³ More detail on these analysis approaches can be found in the Crime and Justice Bulletin

- Participants' experiences were assessed through the CEI evaluation which involved quantitative and qualitative fieldwork with 405 Phase 1 MAIP participants.⁴

2.4.2 Glossary of terms

Mandatory Alcohol Interlock Order (MAIO)⁵: a Court order made to eligible offenders that includes a licence disqualification period followed by an interlock period. Minimum and maximum licence disqualification periods apply. MAIO are in addition to any further penalty imposed by the Court, such as imprisonment and fines.

Interlock Exemption Order (Exemption): an order made if the offender proves to the Court's satisfaction that, in all the circumstances, Exemption is more appropriate than a MAIO. In Phase 1 of the program, the Court could make an Exemption in circumstances where the offender:

- proves not to have access to a vehicle in which to install an interlock device.
- proves to have a diagnosed condition that prevents provision of a breath sample to operate the device.

Disqualification: A period of time where an offender is not permitted to lawfully drive a vehicle.

Found guilty, no penalty (Section 10): The Court has options under section 10 of the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999 to find an offender guilty of an offence but discharge them without recording a conviction or creating a criminal record for that offence. Note, negligent or dangerous driving within the next five-year period will overturn this condition.

Low, Mid and High Range PCA Offences: A Low range PCA (Prescribed Concentration of Alcohol) offence has a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of between 0.05 to 0.079. A mid-range PCA offence has a BAC of between 0.08 and 0.149 and high range PCA has a BAC of above 0.15.

Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) Quartiles: SEIFA are developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics to rank areas by socio-economic advantage and disadvantage. The index is based on Census data and postcode. Quartiles divide the ranked results into four equal groups. For the purposes of this report, the four Quartiles of Disadvantage are referred to as Least Disadvantage, Less Disadvantage, More Disadvantage and Most Disadvantage.

Roads and Maritime Services Regions: Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) (now known as Transport for NSW) described geographical regions dividing the state into six clusters of Local Government Areas: Northern, Hunter, Southern, Western, South West and Sydney.

Principal offence: Typically, the most serious offence, or that which attracts the most severe penalty.

Concurrent offence: Other offences on a finalised matter. In the context on this report, these are MAIP eligible offences that are not the principal offence.

⁴ The CEI evaluation also included participants from subsequent stages of MAIP. This report draws on findings relating to Phase 1 participants only.

⁵ These terms are detailed in [Alcohol Interlock Program Guide for Magistrates, Legal Practitioners and Police Prosecutors, Roads and Maritime Services, 2018](#).

3 Key Findings

3.1 Did the program reach its target population?

The Mandatory Alcohol Interlock Program (MAIP) Phase 1 achieved broad reach across eligible offenders in NSW. A Mandatory Alcohol Interlock Order (MAIO) was issued to around eight in ten eligible offenders. Of this group, two-thirds elected to install the interlock.

3.1.1 Characteristics of program participants

Eligible offenders

A total of 13,454 offenders in NSW were eligible to participate in MAIP Phase 1 (from February 2015 until the initiation of Phase 2 in December 2018). The cohort of eligible offenders included high proportions of males (81%), offenders living in areas of more/most disadvantage (53%), and those ever recorded as identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (12%). Most had a principal offence of high-range PCA (59%), with 29% a repeat PCA offence, and 4% a refuse breath test offence. A further 8% had a concurrent MAIP-eligible offence.

Issue of Mandatory Alcohol Interlock Orders (MAIO)

As seen in Figure 1, a MAIO was issued to 81% of eligible offenders overall, while around 6% were disqualified, 4% were given Interlock Exemption Orders and 2% were found guilty without penalty ('Section 10')⁶.

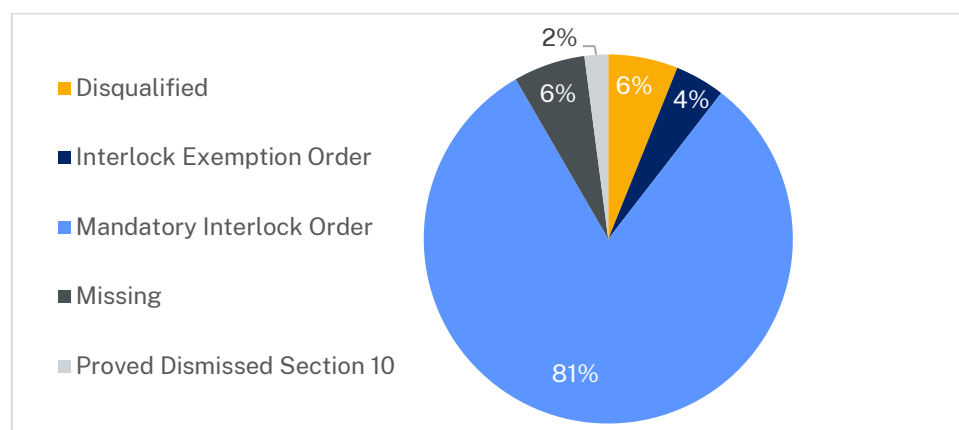


Figure 1: Outcomes of the total number of offenders with MAIP eligible offences (n= 13,454).

There were some notable differences in the issuing of MAIOs across offender cohorts by offence type (Figure 2). A relatively higher proportion of those offenders whose principal offence was a high range PCA were issued a MAIO (86%) compared with those whose principal offence was a repeat PCA (80%) or refusing a breath test (77%).

By contrast, those whose principal offence was repeat PCA were more often disqualified (9%) compared with the other principal offence groups (2% of the those with a high range PCA, 4% of

⁶ Note: data was missing for 6.3% of offenders.

those who refused a breath). A higher proportion of those whose principal offence was refusing a breath test were found guilty without penalty ('Section 10') (6% vs 3% repeat offenders, 1% of high range PCA offenders).

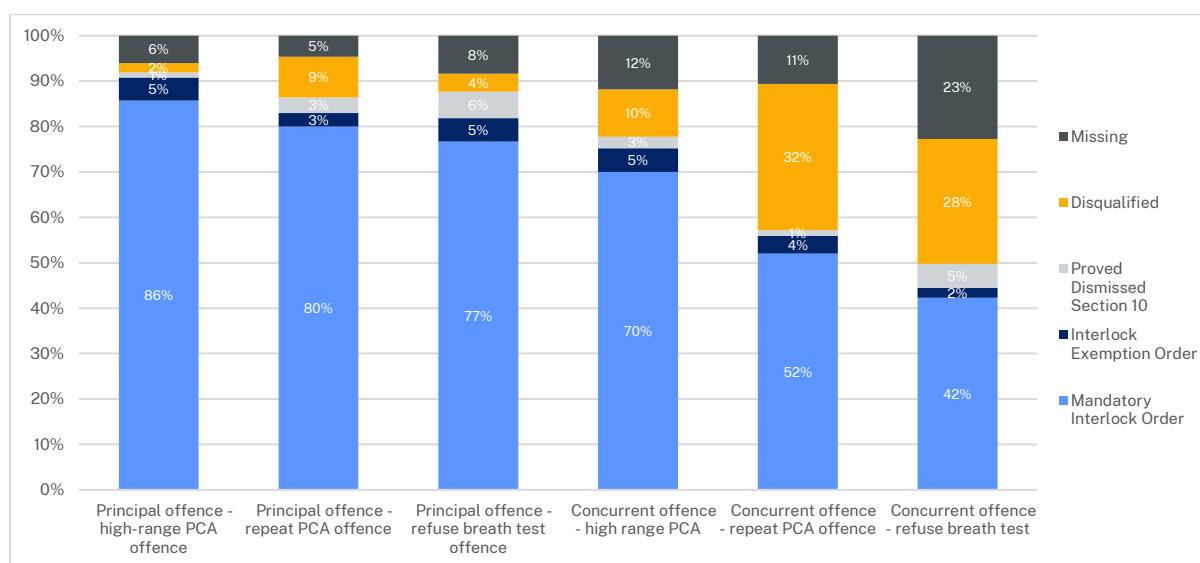


Figure 2: All MAIP Eligible Offenders: Offence Type by Outcomes (n= 13,454)

Further, a higher proportion of those without a prior driving offence received a MAIO (86% vs 76% of those with a prior offence), with those with prior offences over five times more likely than those without to receive a disqualification (11% vs 2%). Overall, MAIOs were issued relatively consistently to offenders across other factors such as gender, age-group, and socioeconomic status (based on Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas; SEIFA).

As seen in Figure 3, MAIOs were less frequently issued to those identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander compared to Non-indigenous people (69% vs 82%), with relatively higher proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people receiving exemptions (9% vs 6%) and disqualifications (12% vs 6%), compared to Non-indigenous people.

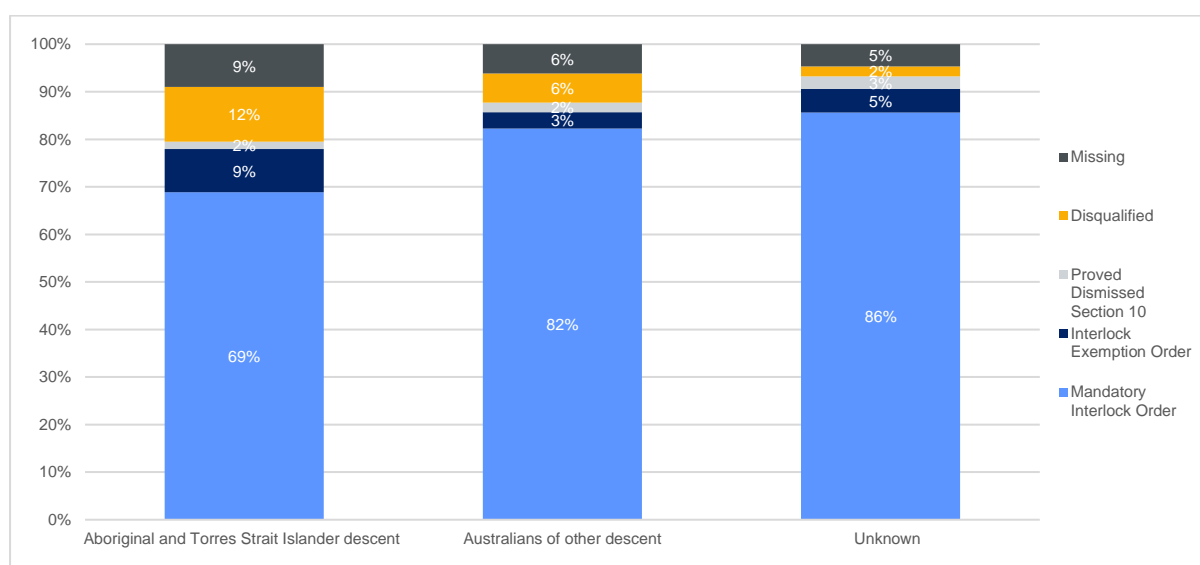


Figure 3: Offence type by whether offender identified as of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (n=1,633) or Australian of other descent (n=9,687); descent unknown (n=2,134).

3.1.2 Access to severe financial hardship assistance

Severe financial hardship assistance (SFHA) was accessed by 3% of those who received a MAIO in Phase 1, with some variation across demographic cohorts:

- SFHA was most commonly accessed by those living in disadvantaged areas, at 4% of those living in most disadvantaged SEIFA and 5% of those living in 'more disadvantaged' SEIFA, compared to 2% of those living in less disadvantaged SEIFA and 3% of those living in least disadvantaged SEIFA.
- Offenders who resided in Northern (7%) and Southern (5%) RMS regions were more likely to take up SFHA.
- Females were notably more likely than males to access SFHA, at 7% of all female offenders compared to only 3% of all male offenders.
- Older offenders were more likely to access SFHA, at 5% of those aged 45 years and over.
- Take-up of SFHA was higher amongst offenders identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent (7%), compared to Australians of other descent (3%).
- Those who received a MAIO for a high range PCA as a concurrent offence (i.e. not the principal offence), were more likely to access SFHA (6%).

The CEI survey demonstrated that the reasons for the low take-up of financial assistance largely related to limited awareness and perceived ineligibility. For instance, nearly half of those surveyed reported that they were unaware they could receive financial assistance (47%) while 44% believed they were not eligible.

3.1.3 Take-up of interlocks

The predictors of installation of an interlock device by those referred to the MAIP program were examined in an analysis of 10,209 interlock orders with an initial disqualification period ending on or before 20 April 2019. The results revealed that Interlock devices were installed by offenders in 69% of orders in this sample.

The CEI evaluation indicated that the primary reason for obtaining an interlock device was for drink driving control (71%). For around one in five participants, work commitments were also singled out as a driver to getting an interlock (17%). Indeed, the need to drive was identified as a significant factor making it easier to start the program, with nearly two-thirds of respondents stating this to be the case (65%). For around one in ten participants, information available on the program was reported to have made it easier to start.

Conversely, cost was seen as a key barrier to starting the program, with some four in ten respondents (39%) identifying cost as making it difficult to start the program. Around one in five respondents (21%) pointed to the inconvenient locations of interlock providers, while around 14% saw the administrative processes as an obstacle to commencing the program.

The analysis of interlock orders showed that offenders were less likely to start MAIP if they were:

- aged 55 years and above (20 percentage points less likely to start the program than 18-24 year olds)
- people identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (12 percentage points less likely than Australian offenders of other descent and 15 percentage points compared to those with unknown descent)
- sentenced to imprisonment at the index contact (15 percentage points less likely to start).
- already disqualified at the time of the offence (15 percentage points less likely to start).

3.2 Did program participants comply with program requirements?

There was a relatively high level of compliance with program requirements amongst MAIP participants. Nearly nine in ten completed the interlock period without early exit, with only 4% detected in breach of interlock licence conditions.

3.2.1 Interlock period completion

As seen in Figure 4, of the 7,207 offenders choosing to take up an interlock device⁷, 89% completed their interlock period without early exit. Others exited the interlock period earlier for reasons of breach (4%), or the combined reasons of disqualification, license expiry or enforcement (2%)⁸.

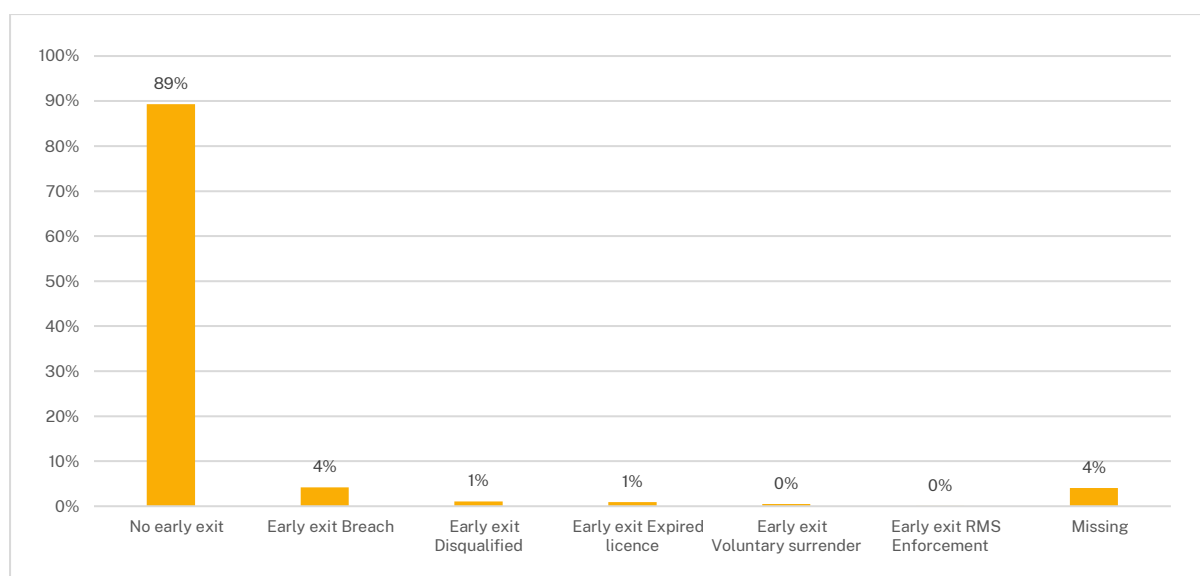


Figure 4: Reasons for early exit among those who commenced MAIP Phase 1

Predictors of non-completion

An analysis of offenders with interlock orders with an initial disqualification period ending on or before 20 April 2019 also showed that around nine in ten (91%) offenders who started MAIP completed the program. However, having an existing disqualification or suspension, a longer interlock period, and having an order extended all predicted non-completion of the program. Demographic factors, particularly age and identifying as of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent, were also significant predictors of non-completion.

The CEI evaluation revealed a number of challenges for participants in staying on the interlock program, largely aligning with the barriers to obtaining an interlock. Cost emerged as the most prominent barrier to completion, identified by a quarter of participants (26%). Smaller proportions pointed to technical difficulties with the interlock device while using the vehicle (16%), inconveniently located interlock providers (15%), issues related to device servicing (14%) and fear of stigma associated with participating in the program (13%).

⁷ Persons who committed a principal or concurrent offence MAIP-eligible offence in the Phase 1 period before 1 May 2018 (n=13,454).

⁸ Note: data was missing for 4% of data was missing.

3.2.2 Failed breath tests and interlock breaches

Some 92% of participants had failed their breath test at least once. The mean number of failed tests was 24.54, though there was a high level of variation in the number of failed tests across program participants (Standard Deviation = 39.12). Participants receive advisory letters and/or health referrals from Transport for NSW when failed tests are registered during regular servicing.

A small proportion of MAIP participants (4%) were detected in breaches of interlock license conditions. Most of these breaches were for driving without an approved interlock device installed (65%). However, breaches also included, to a lesser extent, driving with the interlock not functioning or circumvented (10%) and provision of a breath sample by another person (3%). Around 20% of breach types were unspecified which included device not maintained as required, drive with dangerous goods load and did not undergo medical consultations. Less than 1% of these breaches resulted in disqualification as a penalty.

3.3 What impact did the program have?

Participation in MAIP was found to help participants separate drinking and driving and reduce reoffending, particularly amongst high-risk drivers.

3.3.1 Separation of drinking and driving

The survey of program participants in the CEI evaluation revealed that almost two-thirds of MAIP Phase 1 participants (66%) reported that the interlock made it a lot easier (55%) or somewhat easier (11%) to separate drinking and driving. Furthermore, when survey respondents who took up MAIP were asked about positive impacts of the program, many indicated favourable responses regarding its effectiveness in separating drinking from driving. This involved:

- Learning how long alcohol can stay in their system for – especially how BAC levels could still be over the legal limit the morning after drinking at night.
- Developing a heightened recognition of the severity of drinking and driving, and the dangers posed not only to themselves but also to others.
- Physically being unable start their vehicle if they drink and drive. For some, this formed a habit that led to a complete separation of drinking from driving.

This suggests MAIP's ability to separate drinking and driving is a likely mechanism for change underlying the program's impact on reducing re-offending,

3.3.2 Drink driving related reoffences

The BOCSAR analysis of participant outcomes revealed that participation in MAIP Phase 1 was associated with lower drink driving related offences.

- There was a significant 86% reduction in the drink driving reoffence rate during the interlock period for first time high-range offenders taking part in MAIP Phase 1 whose BAC was just above the 0.15 threshold for participation in the program when compared to a similar group of offenders also convicted of drink driving offenses during that period (but who were not eligible to participate in MAIP Phase 1).
- A second analysis approach investigated the whole of program effect after 36 and 60 months. It compared all MAIP Phase 1 offenders with a control group of similar offenders

drawn from the time before the MAIP program was introduced (June 2012 – February 2015). These findings highlight a reduction in re-offence associated with the program in both shorter and longer term periods analysed. Specifically:

- a 43% reduction in the drink driving reoffence rate within 36 months of conviction, was observed.
- a 43% reduction in the drink driving reoffence rate within 60 months of conviction, was observed.

Other noteworthy outcomes were observed amongst subgroups of offenders who participated in MAIP. For instance:

- Offenders convicted of repeat mid-range PCA, first time high range or first time refuse breath test were significantly less likely to have a PCA offence during their initial disqualification period.
- Offenders convicted of repeat high-range drink driving offences or repeat refusing to provide a breath offences demonstrated a significant reduction in reoffending during the interlock period. To a lesser extent, there was also a significant reduction in offenders convicted of repeat mid-range PCA, first time high range or first time refuse breath test offences during the same period
- Reoffending 24 months after the interlock period was significantly reduced for all age groups below 45 years old, all SEIFA quartiles except the least disadvantaged, for males, those with 1 or more prior court appearances and those with a prior infringement.

3.3.3 Other driving-related infringements

MAIP was associated with reduced traffic infringements among repeat low range PCA offenders, 36 months following finalisation, but increased traffic infringements for repeat high range PCA and refuse breath test offenders. Whilst this may be because the program enables higher risk drivers to return to driving sooner, it suggests that the program may have a broader deterrent effect on less serious offenders than more serious offenders.

There was, however, no strong evidence that MAIP Phase 1 had a meaningful impact on driving while disqualified offences.

3.3.4 Road crashes and injuries

The study did not have a large enough sample size to detect a reduction in road crashes with precision. There was no evidence that Phase 1 of the MAIP program produced significant change in crashes involving offenders either during or after Phase 1. This was true for any group or subgroup of crashes including whole group, those involving alcohol, or those with an injury or fatality.

3.4 How did program participants experience MAIP?

Overall, despite the positive impacts of the program, participating in MAIP came with its challenges for some program participants, particularly in regard to managing costs, using and servicing the interlock, and accessing support.

3.4.1 Experience of the program

The CEI evaluation revealed that the experience of MAIP varied for participants, with some aspects considered more challenging than others:

- **Managing the costs of participation:** The costs of participation emerged as the most prominent challenge for surveyed participants. The majority of respondents indicated that covering the costs of the program was somewhat difficult (46%) or very difficult (32%). Managing costs such as paying for the interlock installation and accessing service centres (including servicing fees and the fuel cost to travel to interlock service providers) was difficult for many. As reported above, despite the financial burden, very few participants were receiving financial hardship assistance, with awareness and perceived eligibility identified as key barriers to accessing this.
- **Setting up and using the interlock:** Perceptions of setting up and using the interlock device were mixed. Around half the sample reported positive experiences in applying for the interlock licence (49%), setting up (51%) and using the interlock device (48%). The challenges experienced by some participants in this regard largely focussed on the inconvenience and difficulty using the interlock. A small number of respondents reported that the device was faulty and/or gave false positive readings or suggested that it was dangerous to use while driving. Perceptions of training in how to use the interlock were notably more positive, with nearly six in ten participants (58%) viewing this positively.
- **Servicing the interlock device** was a challenge for many, with only around one in four (37%) survey respondents seeing this as an efficient process. One of the concerns voiced by participants was that many service centres did not operate outside business hours, making it difficult to have their interlock serviced without taking time off work. The wide dispersal of interlock service centres in rural areas could also make servicing a time-consuming and expensive exercise for those living in such locations.
- **Exiting the program:** The steps involved in exiting the program were generally viewed more positively – around two-thirds of surveyed participants found removing the interlock device (68%), exiting the program (64%) and applying for an unconditional licence (65%) to be an efficient process.

3.4.2 Access to information and support

The majority of MAIP survey respondents reported they received enough information to understand what they needed to do in the program (62%), with a further 28% reporting they received 'somewhat' enough information. Participants showed interest in gaining more information around managing the interlock devices (23%), learning about the services from interlock providers (16%), and finding access to support resources (15%).

The availability of support through the program was potentially more challenging for participants. Only around one in five surveyed participants were positive about the availability of support services generally (22%). Views of the helpfulness of the support for those who had received it were mixed, tending to be more positive for those who had received support from a GP (42% considered this support helpful vs 25% considered this support poor), compared with those who had received support from an interlock provider (36% helpful vs 37% poor) or Service NSW (30% helpful vs 39% poor).

3.4.3 Experience of MAIP for different population cohorts

The CEI evaluation demonstrated that population subgroups experience MAIP differently from others. While patterns of experience differ across the various components of MAIP, a number of specific cohorts reported less positive experiences overall:

- Aboriginal participants – for whom the communal use of cars in some communities meant that the challenges of participation were felt more widely, in some cases impacting access to critical services for many community members. Some Aboriginal participants also reported a lack of culturally appropriate information and support. These participants were also more likely to report difficulties in covering the costs of MAIP.
- Those from non-English speaking backgrounds also reported poorer experiences, potentially as a result of language barriers when communicating with interlock providers and support services.
- Full-time workers reported challenges taking time off work to access service centres. This was attributed to interlock service centres not operating outside of business hours.
- Rural participants reported challenges related to the lack of interlock service centres located near them.
- Younger participants aged between 26 to 39 years expressed less positive experiences of MAIP. It is not clear why this group reported challenges, but it may be related to family and work commitments and difficulties accessing interlock service centers.

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