



An introduction to the Danish pilot trial using GPS monitoring as a condition for release on probation of gang members

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Who are we?

Mona Jensen

Noncustodial sentences, probation, community service,
Project manager on an ongoing project reg. the reorganizing of
the processes and work flows of the probation service

Sarah Ekknud

Electronic monitoring (front door, prison sentences up to six
months)

Project manager on the pilot trial regarding GPS monitoring of
gang members on leave from prison and on probational release.

GPS pilot trial - background

2017 - tougher approach to gang crime

Several initiatives against gangs, e.g.:

- Longer prison sentences for illegal use of firearms
- Longer prison sentences when crime is gang related
- Much harder for gang members to be granted release on probation
- Pilot trial with GPS-monitoring when on leave and when released on probation

GPS Pilot trial - drawing up the pilot

- Who to monitor?

Registered gang members, who are not allowed to affiliate with other gang members, while on leave from prison or when released on probation.

From three closed prisons (Enner Mark Prison, Nyborg Prison and Storstrøm Prison)

GPS Pilot trial - drawing up the pilot

- What to monitor?

We only monitor for breaches of the conditions for leave or release that regulate the free movement of the offender.

Example:

- Breach of the condition of having no affiliation with other gang members while on leave/after being released on probation.

(The National Police keeps us updated on addresses of gang hang outs and club houses)

- Breach of the condition of not going to the scene of the crime.

GPS pilot trial - drawing the pilot

- What to monitor?

No monitoring of breach of the condition not to seek out the victims of the crime.

- For security reasons we do not want to bring personal data about the victim (address) in to the offenders case.
- Risk of exposing the victims address to the offender
- Prison and Probation Service cannot guarantee an immediate response from the police

GPS pilot trial - drawing up the pilot

- How to monitor?

No live tracking of whereabouts

Immediate reaction from the prisons when risk of out of surveillance

Check of exclusion zones after the leave has ended/once a week if released on probation

Technical solution

- Supercom in consortium with Netcompany won the tender for supplying the technical solution for the front door electronic monitoring in 2017.
- Also supplies equipment for the GPS pilot trial.
- Two piece solution.
- GPS pilot trial started at the same time as the Supercom solution was applied to the front door electronic monitoring in the entire country - caused complications.



Duration

The pilot trial started on 5 April 2018, and was set to end one year later.

In 2019 the pilot trial was extended until the end of 2019 in order to gather more data.

Extension due to

- Need to gather data on monitoring offenders on release on probation
- Need to see the system in stable operation for a longer period of time

Expectations

- Stable technical solution
- A few conditional releases within the pilot
- Some cases of the offender being present in exclusion zones
- The opportunity to gather experience about the cooperation of the prisons and the probation service offices

Reality (both leave from prison and release on probation)

Technical difficulties - many alarms from the monitoring system to the prisons indicating that the offender may be out of surveillance.

Technical difficulties cause the pilot trial to be quite staff intensive - and the Danish prisons are already in serious need of more trained prison staff. (Surveillance handled by the prisons)

The National Police is not able to provide information on the addresses of hang outs and club houses of all gangs.

Reality (leave from prison and release on probation)

More than 40 different prisoners have been on leave with GPS monitoring from the three prisons participating in the pilot trial. In total more than 500 leaves from prison.

Three prisoners on leave from prison cut the ankle bracelet, and did not return to prison.

One within the first week of the trial. All had only a short time left to serve.

No prisoners on leave have been present in exclusion zones - they apparently know where not to go.

Reality (release on probation)

- Tough on gang crime - means almost no releases on probation of gang members.
- First possible release with GPS monitoring in January 2019 - prisoner turned down being released on probation because of the GPS monitoring. He would rather stay in prison for the remaining 3 months.
- First release on probation with GPS monitoring in May 2019

Reality (release on probation)

- The offender released with GPS monitoring passed near by the club house of another gang during transport.
- The National Police changed the registration of the released offender in early June 2019.
- The offender is no longer considered a gang member
- must be let go from GPS monitoring.

Future

- Evaluation 2020
- GPS monitoring put in to broader operation?

