

# Supporting the police response to Covid-19

In 2020, public health legislation was introduced to prevent the spread of Covid-19.

In a matter of weeks, ACRO established a service to administer fixed penalty notices (FPNs) issued under the legislation on behalf of police forces across England and Wales.

Having now administered thousands of FPNs, processed millions of pounds in FPN payments, and handled thousands of FPN enquiries, we reflect on ACRO's role in the police response to Covid-19.



**Our work cemented ACRO as a key enabler for the national Covid-19 response.**

Graeme Wallace, Deputy Manager in ACRO's Development Team, was set a huge challenge:

*"I worked with central government leads in England and Wales, and the NPCC's Op Talla team to set up a centralised function for FPNs.*

*"Our work cemented ACRO as a key enabler for the national Covid-19 response.*

*"Although fast-paced, and at times extremely demanding, I am immensely proud to have played a key role in assisting the country to tackle an unprecedented situation."*

Ben Weir, Deputy Manager within ACRO's National Disclosures Unit, was charged with managing the public-facing FPN enquiries team:

*"At the height of the pandemic we were receiving around 8,000 FPNs from forces each week.*

*"As a result, the team managing our enquiries was under huge pressure to respond and assist members of the public.*

*"We introduced a triage system to refer enquirers to our online guidance, which meant we could efficiently identify enquiries that required a specific response.*

*"As a result, the team successfully dealt with thousands of enquiries."*

Temporary Assistant Chief Constable Stuart Murray from Hampshire Constabulary liaised with ACRO to ensure co-ordination between the administration process, front line enforcement, and the criminal justice system:

*"ACRO worked tirelessly to assist police forces in playing their part in delivering the government strategy of reducing the spread of the infection.*

*"The back office functions rarely get the spotlight but without them, front line staff cannot be as effective as we want them to be.*

*"The team at ACRO should be very proud of the role they played in the face of long days, the arduous tasks and moving goalposts.*

*"They carried out their tasks with great humour, and I and the other leaders working with them will always remember how they adapted, innovated and smiled during the crisis."*

Part of ACRO's responsibility was to collate and distribute data to the NPCC, the Home Office and other government departments, which Charlotte Page, Intelligence Deputy Manager oversaw:

*"This period has presented challenging times. The pace of reporting was imperative to inform government in a live time capacity, showing the amazing work police were doing to control the virus.*

*"ACRO soon became subject matter experts on FPNs, at times directly informing government departments on behalf of police forces and providing data to support police enforcement throughout the pandemic."*

All of ACRO's FPN administration processes were verified during an independent audit, which resulted in the top 'Substantial' grading. ACRO Chief Executive Officer Rob Price said:

*"This is testament to everyone at ACRO who has worked tirelessly on FPNs to such a high standard."*



**122,346** FPNs received at ACRO

**90,922** FPNs issued to members of the public

(as at 31 March 2021)