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ACRO

Criminal Records Office

Information Sharing Agreement

Between

National Police Chiefs' Council
ACRO Criminal Records Office

And

Natural England



ACRO Criminal Records Office



ACRO Criminal Records Office

enquiries@acro.police.uk | acro.police.uk

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Summary Sheet

Freedom of Information Act Publication Scheme	
Security Classification (GSC)	OFFICIAL
Publication Scheme Y/N	Yes
Title	Information Sharing Agreement between ACRO Criminal Records Office (ACRO) and Natural England (NE)
Version	1.0
Summary	<p>This Information Sharing Agreement (hereafter referred to as the Agreement) formalises the arrangements for ACRO, acting on behalf of UK police forces that are subject to the ACRO section 22A Collaboration Agreement, to provide NE with access to relevant information held on the Police National Computer (PNC), specifically convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings for enforcement purposes in relation to prosecutions brought by NE for recordable and non-recordable offences.</p> <p>Furthermore, this Agreement also allows for the recording of details of individuals prosecuted by NE under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, and other recordable offences where NE act as the Prosecuting Agent on to the PNC for the purposes of investigations into offences outlines in Section Four.</p> <p>Under this Agreement, NE can request criminal conviction information held outside of the UK via ACRO when there is a lawful basis to do so.</p>
Author	****, Development Officer
Date Issued	19/09/2024
Review date	19/06/2025
Expiry date	19/09/2025
ISA Reference	ACRO/039
Location of Agreement	ACRO ISA Library
ACRO DPIA Reference	DPIA 228

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Version control

Version No.	Date	Amendments Made	Authorisation
0.1	02/08/2024	First Draft	JM, ACRO
0.2	08/08/2024	DPO Review	AAS, ACRO
0.3	12/08/2024	Agency Sign Off	CT, NE
0.4	22/08/2024	CEO Sign Off	JF, ACRO
1.0	23/09/2024	PNC Lead Sign Off and Finalisation	NM, NPCC

1. Parties to the Agreement

1.1. ACRO Criminal Records Office
PO Box 481
Fareham
PO14 9FS

1.2. Natural England (NE)
Foss House, Kings Pool
1-2 Peasholme Green
York
YO1 7PX
ICO Registration Number (Z9449730)

2. Agreed Terms

2.1. Interpretation

The following definitions and rules of interpretation apply in this Agreement.

2.1.1. Definitions:

ACRO: ACRO Criminal Records Office.

Agreed Purpose: has the meaning given to it in clause 3.2 of this Agreement.

ASN: Arrest Summons Number.

Business Day: a day other than a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday in England when banks in London are open for business.

Business Hours: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday to Friday on a day that is not a public holiday.

CEO: Chief Executive Officer.

CPS: Crown Prosecution Service.

Criminal Offence Data is personal data relating to criminal convictions and offences or related security measures and includes personal data relating to the alleged commission of offences by the data subject, or proceedings for an offence committed or alleged to have been committed by the data subject or the disposal of such proceedings, including sentencing. (DPA 2018, section 11(2)).

Data Protection Legislation: the General Data Protection Regulation as enacted into English law (**UK GDPR**) as revised and superseded from time to time; the Data Protection Act 2018 (**DPA 2018**); and any other laws and regulations relating to the processing of personal data and privacy which apply to a party and, if applicable, the guidance and codes of practice issued by the relevant data protection or supervisory authority.

DCC: Deputy Chief Constable.

EEA: European Economic Area.

EIR: Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

EU: European Union.

FOIA: Freedom of Information Act 2000. Freedom of Information (FOI).

Great Britain: geographic term referring to the island consisting of England, Scotland and Wales.

GSCP: Government Security Classification Policy.

HIOWC: Hampshire & Isle of Wight Constabulary.

MB: Megabyte (of data).

NE: Natural England

NFA: No Further Action.

NPA: Non-Police Agency.

NPCC: National Police Chiefs' Council.

NPPA: Non-Police Prosecuting Agency.

OCiP: Operational Communications in Policing.

OIC: Officer in charge of the case.

Offences: a breach of a law or rule; an illegal act.

PACE: Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984

Personal Data means any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person ('**data subject**'); an identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person (UK GDPR, Article 4).

Personal Data Breach: a breach of security leading to the accidental or unlawful destruction, loss, alteration, unauthorised disclosure of, or access to the Shared Personal Data.

PNC: Police National Computer.

PND: Police National Database.

Section 22A Agreement: An agreement made pursuant to section 22A of the Police Act 1996 (as amended) enables police forces, local policing bodies as defined in that Act and other parties as defined in that Act to make an agreement about the discharge of functions by officers and staff, where it is in the interests of the efficiency or effectiveness of their own and other police force areas. By entering into this Agreement, the Parties have taken account of the statutory guidance for police collaboration published by the Home Office in October 2012 in exercise of the Home Secretary's power under section 23F of the Police Act 1996, to provide guidance about collaboration agreements and related matters.

Shared Personal Data: the personal data to be shared between the parties under clauses 5.1.2 and 5.2.2 of this Agreement.

SIRO: Senior Information Risk Owner.

Special categories of personal data is data revealing racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, or trade union membership, and the processing of genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a natural person, data concerning health or data concerning a natural person's sex life or sexual orientation, processing of which shall be prohibited (UK GDPR, Article 9).

SPOC: Single Point of Contact.

Subject Information Rights: means the exercise by a data subject of his or her rights under Articles 13 to 22 of the UK GDPR or sections 45 to 49 of the DPA 2018.

Supervisory Authority: the Information Commissioner or country equivalent.

The Agency: Where this document refers to **The Agency**, this is interpreted as the Non-Police Agency who sign to the services under this Agreement, as detailed at section 1.2. of this Agreement.

Third Country: means a country or territory outside the United Kingdom (UK GDPR, Article 4 and DPA 2018, section 33(7)).

UK: United Kingdom; means Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Interpretation Act 1978, Schedule 1).

WinZip: trialware file archiver and compressor for Microsoft Windows.

WM: Wanted Missing report.

- 2.1.2. **Controller, Processor, Data Subject and Personal Data, Special Categories of Personal Data, Processing** and "appropriate technical and organisational measures" shall have the meanings given to them in the Data Protection Legislation.
- 2.1.3. Clause and paragraph headings shall not affect the interpretation of this Agreement.
- 2.1.4. Unless the context otherwise requires, words in the singular shall include the plural and in the plural shall include the singular.
- 2.1.5. A reference to a statute or statutory provision shall include all subordinate legislation made from time to time under that statute or statutory provision.
- 2.1.6. Any words following the terms **including, include, in particular** or **for example** or any similar phrase shall be construed as illustrative and shall not limit the generality of the related general words.
- 2.1.7. A reference to **writing** or **written** includes e-mail.
- 2.1.8. Unless the context otherwise requires the reference to one gender shall include a reference to the other genders.

3. Purpose and background of the Agreement

3.1. Background

3.1.1. ACRO Criminal Records Office (ACRO) is a national police unit, hosted by Hampshire & Isle of Wight Constabulary (HIOWC), under the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) working for safer communities. ACRO is the national police unit responsible for exchanging criminal conviction information between the United Kingdom (UK) and other countries. ACRO provides access to information held on the PNC to support the criminal justice work of some Non-Police Prosecuting Agencies (NPPAs) and assists safeguarding processes conducted by relevant agencies.

3.1.2. NE are the Government's adviser for the natural environment in England, who helps to protect and restore the natural world. NE are an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs. Within England, NE are responsible for promoting nature conservation and protecting biodiversity, as well as conserving and enhancing the landscape. They promote access to the countryside and open spaces, encouraging open-air recreation. Furthermore NE secure the provision and improvement of facilities for the study, understanding and enjoyment of the natural environment and contribute to social and economic well-being through management of the natural environment, e.g. changes to wildlife licensing to improve flexibility for developers.

3.2. Purpose

3.2.1. This Agreement sets out the framework for the sharing of Personal Data when one Controller discloses Personal Data to another Controller. It defines the principles and procedures that the parties shall adhere to and the responsibilities the parties owe to each other.

3.2.2. The purpose of this Agreement is to formalise the arrangements for ACRO, acting on behalf of UK police forces that are subject to the ACRO section 22A Collaboration Agreement, to provide the NE with access to relevant information held on PNC, specifically convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings. It is necessary for The Agency to have access to such information for enforcement purposes in relation to prosecutions brought by NE. The nature of the information required by The Agency includes both recordable and non-recordable offences.

3.2.3. Under this Agreement, The Agency can request criminal conviction information held outside of the UK via ACRO when there is a lawful basis to do so.

3.2.4. Under this Agreement, The Agency can request that ACRO create records on PNC for the purpose of prosecuting individuals under Section 12 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, and other recordable

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offences where The Agency act as the Prosecuting Agent. These will be updated on to the PNC for the purposes of investigations into offences committed in connection with various offences as recorded in Section 4.1.3.

- 3.2.5. The aim of the data sharing initiative is to provide UK and International Criminal Convictions required by The Agency for recordable and non-recordable offences. It will serve to benefit society by ensuring that crimes against the natural world are prosecuted fully.
- 3.2.6. This Agreement will be used to assist in ensuring that:
- a) Personal Data is shared in a secure, confidential manner with designated points of contact;
 - b) Personal Data is shared only on a 'need to know' basis;
 - c) Shared Personal Data will not be irrelevant or excessive with regards to the Agreed Purpose;
 - d) There are clear procedures to be followed with regard to Shared Personal Data;
 - e) Personal Data will only be used for the reason(s) it has been obtained;
 - f) Data quality is maintained and errors are rectified without undue delay;
 - g) Lawful and necessary re-use of Personal Data is done in accordance with Data Protection Legislation; and
 - h) Subject information rights are observed without undue prejudice to the lawful purpose of either party.
- 3.2.7. The parties agree to only process Shared Personal Data, (i) in the case of The Agency to discharge its regulatory functions, and (ii) in the case of ACRO, for maintenance of centralised records on the PNC. The parties shall not process Shared Personal Data in a way that is incompatible with the purposes described in this clause ("**Agreed Purpose**").

4. Powers

4.1. NE Legal Basis

- 4.1.1. For the purposes of this part, “the law enforcement purposes” are the purposes of the prevention, investigation, detection or prosecution of criminal offences or the execution of criminal penalties, including the safeguarding against and the prevention of threats to public safety.
- 4.1.2. The NE is a Competent Authority with a statutory function for law enforcement purposes as per section 30(1)(b) of the DPA 2018 under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.
- 4.1.3. The Agency is therefore designated in law to investigate and prosecute the following offences:
- Environmental Damage under Section 34 of The Environmental Damage (Prevention and Remediation) (England) Regulations 2015
 - Contravening Section 28E(1) under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
 - Burning specified vegetation under Section 8 of The Heather and Grass etc. Burning (England) Regulations 2007
 - Carrying out a project without a decision under Section 22 of the Environmental Impact Assessment (Agriculture) (England) (No. 2) Regulations 2006.
 - Pesticide poisoning of animals under Section 19 of the Food and Environment Protection Act 1985
 - Complaints relating to injurious weeds under Section 1 of the Weeds Act 1959
 - Breaches of Licence under Section 16 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981; Regulation 60 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017; Section 6 of the Destructive Imported Animals Act 1932; Section 3 and 10 of the Protection of Badgers Act 1992; Section 8 of the Deer Act 1991 and Section 10 of the Conservation of Seals Act 1970
- 4.1.4. Processing of personal data for any of the law enforcement purposes is lawful in that the processing is necessary for the performance of a task.
- 4.1.5. Processing is necessary for a law enforcement purpose and the following conditions apply as per section 35(3) to 35(5) and Schedule 8 (conditions for sensitive processing) of the DPA 2018);
- Statutory etc. purposes;
 - Administration of justice;
 - Personal data already in the public domain;
 - Legal Claims.

4.2. ACRO Legal Basis

- 4.2.1. Section 22A of the Police Act 1996 enables police forces to discharge functions of officers and staff where it is in the interests of efficiency or effectiveness of their own and other police force areas. Schedule 7, Paragraph 17 of the DPA 2018 establishes bodies created under section 22A of the Police Act 1996 as Competent Authorities.
- 4.2.2. ACRO, hosted by HIOWC, is established through the National Police Collaboration Agreement relating to ACRO under section 22A of the Police Act 1996. This Agreement gives ACRO the authority to act on behalf of the Chief Constables who are Joint Controllers of PNC to provide PNC enquiry, update and disclosure services to Non-Police Agencies (NPAs) and NPPAs.
- 4.2.3. ACRO is a Competent Authority, by virtue of the section 22A Agreement, processing data for a law enforcement purpose.
- 4.2.4. Under the first Data Protection Principle, processing of personal data for any of the law enforcement purposes is lawful only if and to the extent that it is based on law. Under section 35(2) of the DPA 2018 the following applies:
- The processing is necessary for the performance of a task.
- 4.2.5. Under section 35 (3) to (5) and Schedule 8 of the DPA 2018, ACRO meets the conditions for sensitive processing as follows:
- Administration of justice;
- 4.2.6. ACRO have been delegated responsibility for managing the UK Central Authority for the Exchange of Criminal Records (UKCA-ECR). As such, ACRO discharge the UK's responsibilities under the 1959 Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters and the Trade and Co-operation Agreement between the European Union and the United Kingdom, Part 3, Title IX on the exchange of information extracted from the criminal record.
- 4.2.7. ACRO also exchange conviction information with countries outside of the EU via Interpol channels, subject to Interpol Protocols.

4.3. Code of Practice for the Management of Police Information

- 4.3.1. This Agreement outlines the need for the Police and Partners to work together to share information in line with the Policing Purposes as set out in the Management of Police Information Code of Practice. In line with section 39A of the Police Act 1996, Chief Officers are required to give "due regard" to this statutory code. The Policing Purposes summarise the statutory and common law duties of the police service for which personal data may be processed and are described as:
- Protecting life and property;
 - Preserving order;
 - Preventing the commission of offences;

- Bringing offenders to justice; and
- Any duty or responsibility arising from common or statute law.

4.4. Human Rights Act 1998

4.4.1. Under Schedule 1, Article 8 of the Human Rights Act 1998, all data subjects have a right to respect for their private and family life, home and correspondence.

4.4.2. Interference with this right may be justified when lawful and necessary and in the interests of:

- Discharging the common law police duties;
- Preventing/detecting unlawful acts;
- Protecting the public against dishonesty, etc.;
- Preventing fraud;
- Terrorist finance/money laundering;
- Safeguarding children and adults at risk;
- Safeguarding the economic wellbeing of vulnerable adults.

4.5. Common Law Police Disclosure

4.5.1. Where legislation provides the organisation with a power to process Personal Data for a specific purpose, but there is no explicit legislative authority, Common Law Police Disclosure ensures that where there is a public protection risk, the police will pass information to the employer or regulatory body to allow them to act swiftly to mitigate any danger. This only applies where there is a pressing social need.

4.6. Crime and Disorder Act 1998

4.6.1 Under section 17 the Relevant Authority has the duty to consider crime and disorder implications and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent:

- Crime and disorder in its area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment); and
- The misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in its area; and
- Re-offending in its area.

4.6.2 Under section 115(1) any person who would not have power to disclose information to a Relevant Authority or to a person acting on behalf of such an Authority shall have power to do so in any case where the disclosure is necessary or expedient for the purposes of any provision of this Act.

4.7. The Policing Protocol Order 2011

4.7.1 The Chief Constable is responsible for maintaining the King's Peace and is accountable in law for the exercising of police powers and to the Police and

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Crime Commissioner (PCC) for delivering efficient and effective policing, management of resourcing and expenditure by the police force.

5. Process

5.1. Overview

- 5.1.1. ACRO, in response to requests made by The Agency, will create an Arrest Summons Number (ASN) on the PNC in relation to the impending prosecution and will conduct PNC searches and provide a PNC print to meet their information needs.
- 5.1.2. The PNC data will comprise of:
- a) A Disclosure PNC print. The personal data disclosed under this print includes (if available): name, date of birth, birth place, sex, address, occupation, aliases (including Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) name) and alias dates of birth. The home address that is printed in the ID part of the print is decided by the following rules:
 - If there is more than one home address on the record, the most recent address is used;
 - If there is no home address present, the most recent 'no fixed abode' address type will be used;
 - If neither of the above address types are present, the most recent 'Other' address is printed.
 - b) A Court/Defence/Probation PNC print. The personal data disclosed under this print includes (if available): name, date of birth, birth place, address, driver number, aliases (including DVLA name) and alias dates of birth. The home address that is printed in the ID part of the print is decided by the following rules:
 - If there is more than one home address on the record, the most recent address is used;
 - If there is no home address present, the most recent 'no fixed abode' address type will be used;
 - If neither of the above address types are present, the most recent 'Other' address is printed.
 - c) A Witness PNC print. The personal data disclosed under this print includes (if available): name and alias names.
- 5.1.3. If relevant, ACRO shall provide to The Agency for onward provision to the court a PNC Prosecutor's and Court Multiple Print showing the subject's previous convictions, warnings and reprimands, if any exist. This information shall only be provided as part of the ASN creation process in relation to a current prosecution.
- 5.1.4. The Agency caseworker will review all referred information and may ask for additional information to aid decision making.
- 5.1.5. Where an offence has been committed resulting in a conviction in court, ACRO will record this information on the PNC as required by The National Police Records (Recordable Offences) Regulations 2000 (SI 2000/1139), on behalf of The Agency.

5.2. PNC Searches

- 5.2.1. Requests for a PNC search are to be made by The Agency on a 'Names Enquiry' spreadsheet which will be supplied by ACRO separately.
- 5.2.2. The following Personal Data is to be provided in support of each request (where known):
- First name;
 - Any middle names;
 - Surname/family name;
 - Date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy);
 - Any alias details (names, dates of birth etc.);
 - Place of birth (where known);
 - Address;
 - The Agency case reference.
- 5.2.3. In the event that no convictions are found on the PNC or the subject of the enquiry is 'No Trace', a response stating 'no relevant information held on PNC in relation to the subject of your enquiry' will be sent to The Agency. In the absence of fingerprints the identity of the subject cannot be verified. Similar wording will apply to 'Trace' returns i.e. when a record is found and a PNC print provided.

5.3. Additional Information Requirements

- 5.3.1. Other personal data, which The Agency caseworker may be aware of e.g. National Insurance Number, Passport or Driving Licence Number etc. can be provided to aid identification. This additional information will be used to confirm identity and is of particular value where the name or other personal details are identical on the PNC.
- 5.3.2. It is not necessary to obtain the additional information as a matter of course particularly if it is not currently recorded as part of The Agency normal administrative procedures.
- 5.3.3. If required, ACRO will seek additional information from The Agency to verify the identity of the subject of the request via the following Agency mailbox: ****@naturalengland.org.uk
- 5.3.4. All e-mail communication containing personal and conviction data will be exchanged using password protected WinZip files if a secure e-mail is not available.
- 5.3.5. No other mailbox is to be used unless this Agreement is updated to reflect a change of 'nominated' point of contact for The Agency.

- 5.3.6. Where appropriate, The Agency will make contact with the subject of the enquiry to seek the additional information required by ACRO.

6. Submission

6.1. Names Enquiry Spreadsheets

- 6.1.1. Completed 'Names Enquiry' spreadsheets are to be sent via secure e-mail to the following e-mail address: ****@acro.police.uk
- 6.1.2. ACRO will receive requests from The Agency, via the following secure mailbox: ****@naturalengland.org.uk
- 6.1.3. Erroneous or incomplete 'Names Enquiry' spreadsheets will not be processed. They will be returned to The Agency as invalid and a reason provided.

6.2. Telephone Requests

- 6.2.1. Requests may be made by telephone in cases of emergency. A 'Names Enquiry' spreadsheet must be submitted in advance, and a call to expedite an existing check may then be made. This ensures ACRO have all the necessary details for accurate data processing.
- 6.2.2. Such requests can only be made by a limited number of the Agency's staff. As at the date of this Agreement, The Agency's staff who will have the ability to make telephone requests shall be *****.
- 6.2.3. The Agency may update this list by notice to ACRO from time to time.

7. Provision of Information

7.1. Response to a PNC Names Enquiry Search / Witness Search

- 7.1.1. In response to a formal written application, ACRO will provide a Disclosure Print to The Agency with the following information derived from the PNC in response to applications made in accordance with this Agreement:
- All convictions, cautions, warnings and reprimands.
 - Additional information as deemed relevant by ACRO where there is a pressing social need to do so (via a Force Disclosure Unit as appropriate).
- 7.1.2. The exception to this is if a witness check is conducted then a 'Witness Print' will be provided.
- 7.1.3. If The Agency require an additional copy of the 'Prosecutor's and Court Multiple Print' or a 'Witness Print' then this should be made clear in the correspondence submitted by The Agency. Such requests will be charged in accordance with the letter of charges provided separately to The Agency.
- 7.1.4. PNC Warning Signals will not be disclosed.
- 7.1.5. It should be noted that the service provided under this Agreement only covers the provision of certain PNC prints depending on the request submitted by The Agency.
- 7.1.6. If The Agency has a secondary query or wishes to follow-up on the PNC information provided, a formal request is to be made through the nominated ACRO mailbox: ****@acro.police.uk
- 7.1.7. The Agency will need to liaise directly with forces to obtain further explanation of specific information regarding the offending revealed in the prints provided under this Agreement or to gain access to statements, interviews under caution etc. relating to any previous offending. Forces may apply their own charges in respect of any information they disclose.

8. Recording Convictions on the PNC

8.1. Creating Records on the PNC

- 8.1.1. The process for creating records and assigning Arrest Summons Numbers (ASN) to prosecutions brought by Non-Police Prosecuting Agencies (NPPA) is contained in the 'National Standard for Recording NPPA Prosecutions on the Police National Computer' (the '**National Standard**').
- 8.1.2. The Agency undertakes to adhere to the requirements of the National Standard including the requirement to complete and submit the required NPPA form in the agreed format together with a copy of the relevant information to the court in order for a record to be created on the PNC. Court dates are to be provided if known at the time of submission.
- 8.1.3. The Agency will supply a duly completed NPPA form in respect of every person for whom a PNC record is to be created. An ASN will be provided by ACRO in return. A delay in the process is likely to occur if the information provided on the NPPA form by The Agency is incomplete or inaccurate.
- 8.1.4. As part of the record creation service provided by ACRO, The Agency will be sent a PNC Prosecutor's and Court Multiple print for each ASN created. The multi-prints consists of a Prosecutor's Print plus a Court/Defence/Probation Print. The content of each type of print is defined in the list of PNC Printer Transactions which will be supplied by ACRO separately.
- 8.1.5. When a prosecution by The Agency leads to a court appearance, ACRO will update the PNC with the required details of any adjournment or disposal. These details are provided to ACRO through automated processes when the prosecution occurs at a Magistrates' Court. However, these processes do not extend to prosecutions through the Crown Court and therefore The Agency is to advise ACRO of any adjournments or disposal handed down by the court using the form which will be supplied by ACRO separately.
- 8.1.6. If, once a PNC record has been created by ACRO and an ASN issued to The Agency, a decision is taken to deal with the offender by way of an 'Out of Court disposal' or proceedings are otherwise concluded by way of a discontinuance or 'No Further Action' (NFA) disposal, for instance on the advice of the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), The Agency will inform ACRO as soon as reasonably practical in order that the PNC record can be updated.

9. International Requests

9.1. Process

- 9.1.1. If the subject of an impending criminal prosecution to be conducted by The Agency is a foreign national, or there is evidence that a UK national has lived abroad, a request may be made via the International Services team at ACRO to obtain, if available, details of the subject's conviction history in his/her country of nationality or the country they were formally residing in.
- 9.1.2. The purpose of this process is to enable the subject's full criminal history to be made available to the relevant Judicial Authority e.g. the court at which the case is being heard. The Agency shall act as representatives of the Judicial Authority in this process.
- 9.1.3. ACRO can submit requests to EU and non-EU countries for criminal conviction information. The process of this is detailed in clauses 9.2 and 9.3.
- 9.1.4. Transfers for criminal proceedings may take place for Controllers statutory functions, and may rely on Adequacy, Appropriate Safeguards or Special Circumstances.
- 9.1.5. Requests should be made using the International Request form which will be supplied by ACRO separately; and sent, one request per e-mail, from the nominated Agency mailbox to the ACRO International Requests Mailbox: ****@acro.police.uk. Erroneous or incomplete forms may delay the processing of the request.
- 9.1.6. ACRO will receive requests from The Agency, via the following secure mailbox: *****@naturalengland.org.uk
- 9.1.7. ACRO will forward the request to the relevant national authority/ies for a response as per the instances set out in clauses 9.2 and 9.3.
- 9.1.8. Requests may be rejected if there is insufficient information to enable the receiving country to verify the identity of the subject, or if the mandatory nominal information is not supplied. Requests may not be sent if the destination country does not have a criminal register or is categorised as an extreme/severe risk country. Guidance on the required information will be sent to The Agency separately, and ACRO will send updated copies if this information changes.
- 9.1.9. Once a response has been received from the country of nationality, ACRO shall forward the conviction/non-conviction information, including any necessary translation, to the nominated Agency mailbox. If this mailbox is not .gsi or .cjsm secure, then additional security protections may be required.

- 9.1.10. Notifications of conviction to the country of nationality of foreign nationals convicted as a result of The Agency prosecutions will take place automatically and no request is required. Such notifications may be subject to a risk assessment depending on the destination country.

9.2. Exchange of Criminal Records with the EU

- 9.2.1. If the subject is an EU national, then ACRO shall deal with the request under the 1959 Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters and the EU-UK Trade Co-operation agreement between the European Union and the United Kingdom, Part 3, Title IX on the exchange of information extracted from the criminal record.
- 9.2.2. There is a mandated response time of 20 working days for the requested country to respond. This includes responses containing criminal convictions, responses specifying a subject is no trace or has no convictions in the requested country or a notification that the country cannot respond for the intended purpose of the check.
- 9.2.3. ACRO shall forward the information as soon as possible after it has been received from the requesting country and any necessary translation has taken place.

9.3. Exchange of Criminal Records with Non-EU Countries

- 9.3.1. If the subject is a non-EU national, a request shall be submitted through Interpol to the destination country.
- 9.3.2. Under Interpol protocols, countries are not mandated to respond to requests for criminal conviction information. Therefore, ACRO are unable to provide a turnaround time for responses or guarantee a response will be received.
- 9.3.3. ACRO shall forward the information as soon as possible after it has been received from the requesting country and any necessary translation has taken place.

9.4. Specific Data Handling

- 9.4.1. Any conviction information that is supplied by ACRO with regards to foreign convictions cannot be held on any system outside of ACRO/ The Agency's ownership (such as local information systems) and can only be used for the purposes (i.e. the specific case) for which it was requested.
- 9.4.2. Any data obtained from the European Economic Area (EEA) cannot be onward transferred either by ACRO or The Agency to a Third Country¹ without consent from the originator, except where the transfer is necessary for

¹ As defined in clause 2.1.1.

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Specific Circumstances, in which case the originator will be notified after the fact.

10. Information Security

10.1. Government Security Classification Policy

- 10.1.1. Parties to this Agreement are to ensure that personal data is handled, stored and processed at OFFICIAL level as defined by the Government Security Classification Policy (GSCP) and may carry the security marking OFFICIAL – SENSITIVE, in which case specific handling conditions will be provided.
- 10.1.2. Documents marked using GSCP will describe specific handling conditions to mitigate the risks necessitating such marking. These may include:
- a) Any specific limitations on dissemination, circulation or intended audience;
 - b) Any expectation to consult should re-use be anticipated;
 - c) Additional secure handling and disposal requirements.

10.2. Security Standards

- 10.2.1. It is expected that parties to this Agreement will have in place baseline security measures compliant with or equivalent to BS17799: 2005 and ISO/IEC 27001:2013 and HMG standards in relation to information security. Parties are at liberty to request copies of each other's:
- a) Information Security Policy;
 - b) Records Management Policy;
 - c) Data Protection Policy.
- 10.2.2. Each partner will implement and maintain appropriate technical and organisational measures to:
- Prevent:
 - i. unauthorised or unlawful processing of the Personal Data; and
 - ii. the accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, the Shared Personal Data; and
 - ensure a level of security appropriate to:
 - i. the harm that might result from such unauthorised or unlawful processing or accidental loss, destruction or damage; and
 - ii. the nature of the Shared Personal Data to be protected.
- 10.2.3. Any further specific security measures sought by one party shall be notified to the other party from time to time, which shall implement them where reasonably practicable. The parties shall keep such security measures under review and shall carry out updates as they agree are appropriate throughout the Term.
- 10.2.4. It is the responsibility of each party to ensure that its staff members are appropriately trained to handle and process the Shared Personal Data in accordance with the technical and organisational security measures, together with any other applicable data protection laws and guidance, and have

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entered into confidentiality agreements relating to the processing of personal data.

- 10.2.5. Each partner will ensure that employees or agents who have access to personal data have undergone appropriate data protection training to be competent to comply with the terms of this Agreement.

10.3. Volumes

- 10.3.1. It is estimated that for the year 2024/25, The Agency will request up to 10 PNC Checks, require up to 5 PNC records to be created and up to 5 International Requests.
- 10.3.2. The Agency will advise ACRO if the number of PNC Checks/International Requests/PNC Updates is likely to be exceeded.
- 10.3.3. ACRO will audit requests against the lawful basis and these volumes to ensure that personal data is not being disclosed contrary to the lawful basis and that the agreement is fit to meet any increase in lawful demand.

10.4. Transmission

- 10.4.1. With the exception of telephone requests in cases of emergency, contact between ACRO and The Agency should only be made over a secure communication network (.org email address, confirmed secure) on the part of The Agency and an equivalent method on the part of ACRO, and care must be taken where personal information is shared or discussed.
- 10.4.2. E-mails must not otherwise be password protected, contain personal data or the descriptor 'Private and Confidential' in the subject field, or be over 6MB in file size.
- 10.4.3. The Agency reference number must be included in the subject field of every e-mail sent to ACRO.
- 10.4.4. Where e-mail transmission is unavailable, records may be transferred by post via encrypted media only, where encryption meets current industry standards.

10.5. Retention and disposal

- 10.5.1. Information shared under this Agreement will be securely stored and disposed of by secure means when no longer required for the purpose for which it is provided as per each parties' Information Security Policy, unless otherwise agreed in a specific case, and legally permitted. Each party will determine and maintain their own retention schedule.

11. Information Management

11.1. Accuracy of Personal Data

- 11.1.1. The parties will take every reasonable step to ensure that personal data that is inaccurate, having regard to the purpose for which it is processed, is erased or rectified without delay and will notify the parties to this Agreement of the erasure or rectification.
- 11.1.2. Where a partner rectifies personal data, it must notify any Competent Authority from which the inaccurate personal data originated, and should notify any other Data Controller of the correction, unless a compelling reason for not doing so exists.
- 11.1.3. It is the responsibility of all parties to ensure that the information is of sufficient quality for its intended purpose, bearing in mind accuracy, validity, reliability, timeliness, relevance and completeness.

11.2. Accuracy Disputes

- 11.2.1. Should the validity of the information disclosed be disputed by The Agency or a third party, The Agency will contact ACRO to determine a suitable method to resolve the dispute.

11.3. Turnaround

- 11.3.1. This Agreement requires a 7 working day turnaround (not including day of receipt or response) on all requests submitted to ACRO for PNC data, except where ACRO requires further information from The Agency to make a positive match. In these circumstances, ACRO will process the enquiry when the required information has been supplied by The Agency.
- 11.3.2. For turnaround times for International Requests please see clause 9 of this Agreement.
- 11.3.3. Responses to requests for additional information must be made by The Agency within 10 working days (not including day of receipt or response). If ACRO do not receive the information, the request will be closed.
- 11.3.4. Information will be exchanged without undue delay. In the event of a delay outside of either party's control, this will be informed to the other party as soon as practical.
- 11.3.5. An exception to the 7 working day turnaround are those occasions where the conviction data is held on microfiche in the national police microfiche library at Hendon. In these cases, ACRO will provide a response when the required information has been supplied by the custodians of the microfiche.

11.3.6. In some circumstances, The Agency may require information urgently, for example, due to ongoing court proceedings. In these circumstances ACRO will endeavour to complete the check more quickly as agreed with The Agency. Such requests will be treated as an exception, and will be considered on a case by case basis.

11.3.7. ACRO will complete/update a record on the PNC within 10 working days (not including day of receipt or response) of the receipt of a completed NPA form from The Agency in respect of every person for whom a PNC record is to be created.

11.4. Quality Assurance and Control

11.4.1. ACRO employ strict quality control procedures and staff undertaking this work are all appropriately trained.

11.4.2. On a monthly basis ACRO can, if required, provide regular management information to The Agency including:

- Number of PNC 'Names Enquiry' forms received
- Number of PNC Disclosure Prints, Court/Defence/Probation Prints and Witness Prints provided
- Number of International Requests
- Details of any cases that fall outside agreed 'Service Levels'
- Number of issues and/or disputes

12. Complaints and Breaches

12.1. Complaints

12.1.1. Complaints from data subjects, or their representatives, regarding information held by any of the parties to this Agreement will be investigated first by the organisation receiving the complaint. Each Data Controller will consult with other parties where appropriate.

12.2. Breaches

12.2.1. Each party shall comply with its obligation to report a Personal Data Breach to the appropriate Supervisory Authority and (where applicable) data subjects under Articles 33 and 34 of the UK GDPR, and sections 67 and 68 of the DPA 2018. Each party shall inform the other party of any Personal Data Breach irrespective of whether there is any requirement to notify any Supervisory Authority or data subject(s).

12.2.2. The parties agree to provide reasonable assistance as is necessary to each other to facilitate the handling of any Personal Data Breach in an expeditious and compliant manner.

12.2.3. In the event of a dispute or claim brought by a data subject or the Supervisory Authority concerning the processing of Shared Personal Data against either or both parties, the parties will inform each other about any such disputes or claims, and will cooperate with a view to settling them amicably in a timely fashion.

12.2.4. The parties agree to respond to any generally available non-binding mediation procedure initiated by a data subject or by the Supervisory Authority. If they do participate in the proceedings, the parties may elect to do so remotely (such as by telephone or other electronic means). The parties also agree to consider participating in any other arbitration, mediation or other dispute resolution proceedings developed for data protection disputes.

12.2.5. All security incidents and breaches involving police data shared under this Agreement must be reported immediately to the single points of contact (SPOCs) designated in this document.

13. Information Rights

13.1. Freedom of Information Act 2000

- 13.1.1. Where a party to this Agreement is subject to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR) all parties shall assist and co-operate with the other to enable the other party to comply with its obligations under FOIA and the EIR. This is in line with the requirements laid out in the Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice issued under section 45 of FOIA.
- 13.1.2. Where a party receives a request for information in relation to information which it received from the other party, it shall (and will ensure that any sub-contractors it procures shall also):
- Contact the other party within two working days after receipt and in any event within two working days of receiving a request for information;
 - The originating authority will provide all necessary assistance as reasonably requested by the party to enable the other party to respond to a request for information within the time for compliance set out in section 10 of the FOIA or Regulation 5 of the EIR.
- 13.1.3. On receipt of a request made under the provisions of the FOIA in respect of information provided by or relating to the information provided by ACRO, The Agency representative is to ascertain whether the NPCC wishes to propose the engagement of any exemptions via the NPCC FOI mailbox: npcc.foi.request@npfdu.police.uk
- 13.1.4. The decision as to whether to disclose the information remains with The Agency, but will be made with reference to any proposals made by the NPCC.

13.2. Data Subject Information Rights

- 13.2.1. For the purpose of either party handling information rights under Chapter III of the UK GDPR or Part 3, Chapter 3 of the DPA 2018, it is necessary to ensure neither party causes prejudice to the lawful activity of the other by releasing personal data disclosed by one party to the other, or indicating by the method or content of their response that such data exists. The parties agree that consultation between the parties is necessary to identify relevant prejudice and ensure it is both substantial and proportionate to the exemption which is to be applied.
- 13.2.2. A relevant request requiring consultation includes those requests exercised under the rights to access, erasure, rectification, restriction or objection which requires consideration of data provided to one party by the other.
- 13.2.3. Consultation will occur without undue delay and no later than 72 hours after identification of the relevant request.

- 13.2.4. Where The Agency receives a relevant request, The Agency representative is to contact the ACRO Data Protection Officer at: dataprotectionofficer@acro.police.uk to ascertain whether ACRO wishes to propose to The Agency that they apply any relevant exemptions when responding to the applicant.
- 13.2.5. Where ACRO receives a relevant request, the ACRO Data Protection Officer is to contact The Agency representatives to ascertain whether The Agency wishes to propose to ACRO that they apply any relevant exemptions prior to responding to the applicant.
- 13.2.6. Both parties will otherwise handle such requests in accordance with the Data Protection Legislation.

13.3. Fair processing and privacy notices

- 13.3.1. Each party will take all reasonable steps to comply with the obligation to notify the data subject of the processing activity, unless an exemption applies.
- 13.3.2. ACRO will maintain a general notice, describing the mandatory privacy information at Articles 13 and 14 of UK GDPR and section 44(1) and (2) of the DPA 2018. ACRO will not contact the data subjects directly with this privacy information on the basis that The Agency has already taken steps to inform the individual, or has exercised an appropriate exemption to Article 13 or 14, or exercised an exemption at section 44(4) of the DPA 2018.
- 13.3.3. The Agency will take all reasonable steps to inform the data subject that checks will be conducted through ACRO, except where doing so would prejudice the purpose of the check in a way which would allow use of an exemption to this obligation. Where The Agency does not provide this information to the data subject, ACRO agrees to rely upon the correct use of an exemption by The Agency and will not contact the data subject to avoid the same prejudice.

14. Re-use of Personal Data Disclosed under this Agreement

- 14.1. Personal data shall be collected for the specified, explicit and legitimate purposes stated in this document and cannot be further processed in a manner that is incompatible with those purposes without the written consent of the data subject that provided the information in the first instance, unless required to by law.

15. Roles and responsibilities

15.1. Single Point of Contact

15.1.1. ACRO and The Agency will designate SPOCs who will be responsible for ensuring the Information Sharing Agreement (ISA) is up to date and jointly solving problems relating to the sharing of information under this Agreement and act as point of first contact in the event of a suspected breach by either party.

- ACRO (UK PNC enquiries and updates):
ACRO PNC Services Head of Section
****@acro.police.uk

- ACRO (International requests):
ACRO International Services Head of Section
****@acro.police.uk

- NE:
Principal Officer, Enforcement and Appeals
****@naturalengland.org.uk

15.1.2. Initial contact should be made by e-mail with the subject heading:
FAO ACRO/The Agency ISA SPOC Ref no: XXXX

15.1.3. The above designated SPOCs will have joint responsibility of resolving all day to day operating issues and initiating the escalation process set out if/when necessary.

15.2. Escalation

15.2.1. In the event that the nominated SPOC cannot agree on a course of action or either party appears not to have met the terms and conditions of this Agreement, the matter should initially be referred jointly to the following:

- ACRO (UK PNC enquiries and updates):
ACRO National Services Deputy Manager
****@acro.police.uk

- ACRO (International requests):
ACRO International Services Deputy Manager

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****@acro.police.uk

- ACRO (Information Sharing Agreement):

ACRO Information Management Team

****@acro.police.uk

- NE:

Principal Officer, Security and Information, Legal & Governance

****@naturalengland.org.uk

15.2.2. Both ACRO and The Agency SPOCs have a responsibility to create a file in which relevant information and decisions can be recorded. The file should include details of the data accessed and notes of any correspondence, meetings attended, or phone calls made or received relating to this Agreement.

16. Charges

16.1. Price and Rates

16.1.1. The Agency shall pay ACRO for the provision of services set out in this Agreement and in line with the “Letter of Charges” provided to The Agency separately, which is reviewed annually.

16.2. Invoices

16.2.1. Invoices shall contain the following information:

- Purchase Order Number;
- The Agreement Reference Number;
- The period the service charge refers to;
- All applicable service charges;
- The name and address of both Parties (ACRO and The Agency).

16.2.2. The Purchase Order Number is to be provided by The Agency for the appropriate financial year to ensure payment of invoices can be made. If a Purchase Order Number is not in hand prior to receiving enquiries ACRO reserves the right to suspend the processing of services covered under this Agreement until one has been provided.

16.2.3. The Agency shall pay all monies owed to ACRO within a period of 30 days from receipt of the original invoice unless the amount shown on the invoice is disputed by The Agency.

16.2.4. If The Agency is in default of this condition, ACRO reserves the right to withdraw the service by advising in writing.

17. Review

17.1. Frequency

17.1.1. This ISA will be reviewed annually.

17.1.2. This Agreement is for 2024/25.

18. Variation

- 18.1.** No variation of this Agreement shall be effective unless it is in writing and signed by the parties (or their authorised representatives).

19. Waiver

- 19.1.** No failure or delay by a party to exercise any right or remedy provided under this Agreement or by law shall constitute a waiver of that or any other right or remedy, nor shall it prevent or restrict the further exercise of that or any other right or remedy. No single or partial exercise of such right or remedy shall prevent or restrict the further exercise of that or any other right or remedy.

20. Severance

- 20.1.** If any provision or part-provision of this Agreement is or becomes invalid, illegal or unenforceable, it shall be deemed deleted, but that shall not affect the validity and enforceability of the rest of this Agreement.
- 20.2.** If any provision or part-provision of this Agreement is deemed deleted under clause 20.1, the parties shall negotiate in good faith to agree a replacement provision that, to the greatest extent possible, achieves the intended commercial result of the original provision.

21. Changes to the applicable law

- 21.1.** If during the Term the Data Protection Legislation changes in a way that the Agreement is no longer adequate for the purpose of governing lawful data sharing exercises, the Parties agree that the SPOCs will negotiate in good faith to review the Agreement in the light of the new legislation.

22. No partnership or agency

- 22.1.** Nothing in this Agreement is intended to, or shall be deemed to, establish any partnership or joint venture between any of the parties, make any party the agent of the other party, or authorise any party to make or enter into any commitments for or on behalf of any other party. Each party confirms it is acting on its own behalf and not for the benefit of any other person.

23. Notice

- 23.1.** Any notice given to a party under or in connection with this Agreement shall be in writing, addressed to the SPOC and shall be:
- Delivered by hand or by pre-paid first-class post or other next working day delivery service at its principal place of business; or
 - Sent by e-mail to the SPOC.
- 23.2.** Notice of a cessation of services, or end to the requirement of services, will be given by either party with a period of 3 months' notice for a specified date of cessation.
- 23.3.** ACRO reserves the right to give Notice of cessation with immediate affect where The Agency is found to no longer have a lawful basis for requesting conviction data, is under investigation for the misuse of conviction data, or found to be in other serious breach of the Terms of this Agreement.
- 23.4.** Any notice shall be deemed to have been received:
- If delivered by hand, on signature of a delivery receipt; and
 - If sent by pre-paid first-class post or other next working day delivery service, at 9.00 am on the second business day after posting or at the time recorded by the delivery service; and
 - If sent by e-mail, at the time of transmission, or if this time falls outside business hours in the place of receipt, when business hours resume.
- 23.4.1.** In this clause, business hours means 9:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday to Friday on a day that is not a public holiday in the place of receipt, and 'business day' shall be construed accordingly.
- 23.5.** This clause does not apply to the service of any proceedings or other documents in any legal action or, where applicable, any arbitration or other method of dispute resolution.

24. Signature

24.1. Undertaking

24.1.1. By signing this Agreement, all signatories accept responsibility for its execution and agree to ensure that staff for whom they are responsible are trained so that requests for information and the process of sharing is sufficient to meet the purpose of this Agreement.

24.1.2. Signatories must ensure compliance with all relevant legislation.

Signed on behalf of ACRO Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO)	Signed on behalf of Natural England
Signature: ****	Signature: ****
Full Name: ****	Full Name:****
Position Held: CEO of ACRO	Position Held: Deputy Director Complex Cases Unit Natural England
Date: 22 nd August 2024	Date: 12 August 2024

24.1.3. The signatory agrees the terms of this Agreement provides justified use of the Police National Computer (PNC).

Signed as NPCC Lead Controller for PNC	
Signature: ****	Full Name: *****
	Position Held: Deputy Chief Constable, Operational Communications in Policing (OCiP)
	Date: 19/09/2024