

# **14 February 2022: The Day the Narrative Locked**

## **A Public Briefing Based on the Documented Record**

### **Purpose of this Briefing**

This briefing is published in the public interest. It draws only on documented correspondence, disclosures and official records to explain how, on 14 February 2022, a decisive convergence occurred between policing bodies, a statutory regulator and a media fact-checking organisation in relation to Covid-era allegations and the public narrative surrounding them.

No allegation of collusion is made. No motive is imputed.

The purpose is to set out the chronology, identify the institutional actors involved and explain why this date is constitutionally significant.

### **The Parties in Scope**

This briefing links, on the documentary record, the following parties:

#### **Institutional bodies**

- Full Fact
- National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC)
- Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)
- Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA)

### **Individuals (complainants)**

- Philip Hyland
- Lois Bayliss
- Mark Sexton
- Sam White

The four individuals above were present at the Metropolitan Police Service on 20 December 2021 when a report was submitted raising allegations associated with Crime Reference Number 6029679/21.

### **Part 1 - The Anchor Event: 20 December 2021**

On 20 December 2021, material was submitted at a Metropolitan Police Service station by the above-named complainants.

A crime reference number was generated in relation to that submission. From that point onward, questions concerning:

- whether an investigation was live,
- whether offences were being recorded,
- and how allegations were being characterised

became matters of public, legal and institutional sensitivity.

This date forms the factual anchor for what follows.

## **Part 2 - 14 February 2022: Convergence**

### **1. Full Fact - NPCC - MPS**

On 14 February 2022, Full Fact contacted the NPCC seeking clarification regarding what it described as *false claims* circulating online about a live police investigation linked to the Covid-19 vaccine programme and the associated crime reference number.

The disclosed email artefact:

- contains a Metropolitan Police Service system disclaimer, indicating that the Full Fact enquiry passed through, or was handled within, an MPS email environment;
- prompted internal NPCC correspondence involving senior officers linked to Operation Talla;
- triggered discussion focused on the recording status of allegations rather than their substance.

Within that same internal chain, it was stated that:

“We have not been formally recording numbers... the guidance to not record has been a success.”

This sentence is documented, contemporaneous and central.

It demonstrates that the Full Fact enquiry was not treated merely as a media correction exercise, but intersected directly with national policing guidance and assessment.

## 2. SRA - Full Fact (Same Day, Same Issue)

Separately, but beginning on the same date (14 February 2022), the Solicitors Regulation Authority entered into correspondence with Full Fact.

That correspondence:

- related to complaints against named law firms;
- explicitly referenced the same Metropolitan Police crime reference number;
- involved confirmation of complaint numbers;
- and included discussion of publishability and data-protection considerations.

Thus, on the same day:

- policing bodies were addressing how the matter should be described publicly;
- the professional regulator was assisting a fact-checking outlet with contextual and regulatory framing;
- and Full Fact sat at the centre of both streams.

## **Part 3 - Why 14 February 2022 Matters**

What makes this date constitutionally significant is not that institutions communicated - that is routine.

It is that:

1. The communications converged temporally - the same day, the same underlying issue.
2. The focus was narrative and classification, not investigation or evidence testing.
3. The effect was asymmetric - complainants and regulated professionals bore reputational consequences, while institutional decision-making remained opaque.
4. National policing guidance (linked to Operation Talla) was being internally assessed for effectiveness at the very moment public reassurance was being shaped.

From that point onward, the public narrative regarding whether there was “a live investigation” became effectively fixed.

#### **Part 4 - What the Record Does *Not* Show**

This briefing does not assert:

- that any party acted unlawfully;
- that Full Fact acted with improper motive;
- or that institutions acted in concert pursuant to an agreement.

Those claims are not made because they are not required.

The documentary record is sufficient to show structural convergence and that alone raises serious questions

about governance, separation of functions and accountability.

## **Part 5 - The Structural Concern**

In a constitutional democracy:

- policing determines whether allegations are recorded and investigated;
- regulators assess professional conduct;
- media organisations scrutinise claims and inform the public.

When those functions intersect in real time around a contested matter, without transparent explanation of authority, decision-making, or safeguards, public confidence is put at risk.

14 February 2022 is the date on which that intersection became visible on the record.

## **Closing Summary**

This briefing records a moment, not a conclusion.

It fixes who was involved, when they were involved and how the narrative surrounding serious allegations became settled.

From that point forward, silence, procedural deflection, or refusal to explain does not erase the record, but completes it.

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***20 January 2026***

*Published in the public interest.*