



Expert Working Group
Firearms / GSR

TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR) EWG Firearms/GSR
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1 Aims and Objectives

The ENFSI Expert Working Group Firearms/GSR (EWG) is an Expert Working Group of the European Network of Forensic Science Institutes (ENFSI) and supports the aims and objectives of ENFSI in the area of Forensic firearms/GSR examinations. The EWG consists of experts in the areas of Forensic Firearms Examination, Ballistic Reconstruction (scene of crime), and Gunshot Residue (GSR) (Firearms Chemistry) Examination.

1.1 The activities of EWG will be directed towards:

- Exchanging information and expertise through meetings.
- Promoting quality assurance (e.g. by collaborative testing) and developing professional standards leading to full accreditation following e.g. DIN ISO 17025 or DIN ISO 17020, respectively.
- Harmonising of methods.
- Combining research activities.
- Providing education and training within the particular area.
- Establishing international access to data collections.
- Producing best practice manuals according to the ENFSI template for those areas of work for which the EWG Firearms/GSR is responsible.

1.2 The EWG Firearms/GSR shall establish and maintain:

- Terms of reference including aims and objectives.
- Details of the organisational structure of the group and the organisation of its meetings.
- A strategic plan.
- Individual project plans for major tasks.
- A membership list (co-ordinating members).

The EWG shall nominate a representatives for membership in the Quality and Competence Liaison Group (QCLG), Education and Training Group and the Research and Development Liaison Group.

2 Memberships

There are three types of membership: Member, Associate Member and Guest.

2.1 Member

2.1.1 Membership of EWG is open to representatives from all ENFSI member institutes who are active in the area of forensic firearms/GSR examination. Members of EWG have voting rights (see section below). Members of the EWG receive access (username and password) to the restricted EWG Web pages.

2.1.2 Contact persons are responsible for information exchange within each institute. The director of each ENFSI Institute has to appoint Contact Persons, one for Forensic Firearms Examination/Ballistic Reconstruction and one for Gunshot Residue Examination. It is also possible to appoint only one Contact Person for both areas.

The EWG will communicate with the member institutes via the Contact Persons. The Contact Persons will inform all the experts within their area of responsibility about all matters of the EWG.

2.2 Associate Membership

2.2.1 Two categories of Associate Members are defined by the ENFSI Board: individual and institutional Associate Members. Both can apply for associate membership. The Steering Committee (SC) decides on the merit of the application and may decide by a simple majority vote amongst its members whether it wishes to admit as Associate Members other European or non-European forensic institutions, scientists, academics or other experts in its field according to the aims and objectives of the Group. Decisions of the Steering Committee regarding Associate Membership are ratified by the full Working Group at the Annual meeting.

2.2.2 Associate membership will be for a maximum duration term of four years. An Associate Member may withdraw from the EWG by giving a written notice to the chair of the EWG. Associate Members must renew their status through an application process after four years. The Secretary/Co-Chair will invite Associate Members to re-apply before the four year anniversary. Any Associate Members who do not reapply by their four-year anniversary date will have their membership terminated.

2.2.3 Applications for Associate Membership should be accompanied by supporting evidence and shall be dealt with within the steering committee and, if accepted by them, put forward for a vote at the next Business Meeting.

2.2.4 Associate members must be active within the working group, actively participating in meetings, QA trials and/or sub-groups. They must also assist the SC and other members in performing the EWG tasks at hand.

2.2.5 Associate members are entitled to attend EWG business meetings but have no voting rights.

2.2.6 There is no fee for Associate Members to join the Working Group. Associate members pay the same fees as guests and non-members to attend annual meetings and take part in other activities (e.g. Proficiency trials).

2.3 Guests

- 2.3.1 Guests may be admitted to EWG meetings at the discretion of the Steering Committee (by meeting basis).
- 2.3.2 The Steering Committee will decide on acceptance or rejection of Guests by simple majority (e.g. email voting).
- 2.3.3 Guests are entitled to attend EWG business meetings but have no voting rights.

3 **Sub-groups**

- 3.1 The Steering Committee of the EWG has two active sub-groups:
 - FIREARMS.
 - GSR.
- 3.2 The task of these committees is to take forward areas such as research and development, method validation, writing of Best-Practice-Manuals, QA-trials, exchange of information, collection of samples and information for database purposes, etc. Groups of individual members may be specifically convened for this purpose.
- 3.3 Sub-group members are expected to actively participate and should ensure the resources to be able to attend at meetings.

4 **Business Meeting**

4.1 Attendance and Frequency of Meetings

- 4.1.1 The EWG Business Meeting is open to both Members and Associate Members of EWG.
- 4.1.2 The Business Meetings are held annually, in conjunction (where possible) with the EWG Annual Meeting.
- 4.1.3 The maximum fee that can be charged for attendance at the Business meeting and accompanying scientific meeting is 250 Euro, as mandated by the ENFSI Board. Extra fees may be payable for accommodation, food and drink, workshops and travel costs.

4.2 Agenda for the Business Meeting

- 4.2.1 The Business Meetings will cover matters identified by ENFSI, such as quality assurance, proficiency testing, best practice, training and education and communication. They will monitor the activities of similar bodies, such as SWGGSR/GUN, SAG, AFTE OSAC-subgroups and ASTM and communicate significant findings to the Members.

- 4.2.2 All Members and Associate Members will be notified of the place, date and time of the EWG Business Meeting at least six months prior to the meeting.
- 4.2.3 The Agenda for the Business Meeting shall be prepared by the Steering Committee Secretary/Co-chair, following discussion at the preceding Steering Committee Meeting.
- 4.2.4 Specific Agenda proposals must be submitted to the Steering Committee Secretary/Co-chair at least four weeks prior to the Business Meeting.
- 4.2.5 The final Agenda shall be distributed to all EWG Members and Associate Members (for example by of posting on the website) no later than two weeks prior to the Business Meeting.

4.3 Voting procedures

- 4.3.1 The following decisions must be ratified by a vote at an EWG Business Meeting:
 - Proposals on the adoption of new aims and objectives.
 - Changes to the organisational structure of the Working Group (proposals must have been sent to the Steering Committee Chairperson generally within one month prior to the Business Meeting).
 - Election of the Steering Committee members.
 - Applications for associate membership.
 - Miscellaneous (such as the approval of new actions arising from the activities plan of EWG).
- 4.3.2 Only EWG Members have voting rights. Each member institute has got one single vote. For the election of the Steering Committee each Member Institute has one vote for each vacancy (this also implies for associate members from one organization).
- 4.3.3 A simple majority shall decide the all voting.
- 4.3.4 Elections for the Steering Committee are for a period of two years held annually. Each member after serving two years will then be up for re-election unless they wish to stand down. Vacancies in between election periods may be filled by a temporary replacement if decided necessary by the SC.
- 4.3.5 Nominations for the Steering Committee membership shall be made in writing to the Steering Committee Chairperson no less than three weeks prior to the commencement of the Business Meeting. EWG members are eligible for the Steering Committee. Associate members are eligible for the Steering Committee – however not as Chairperson – after written permission by the ENFSI Board. Current Steering Committee Members are nominated automatically unless they inform the Chairperson of their intention to resign. All candidates should have at least four years experience of firearms/GSR examinations and be currently active practitioner within either of those disciplines. New candidates should provide evidence that their institute supports their application and will provide the candidate with funds to attend meetings and time to contribute to the working group such as a letter of support from their laboratory director or line manager. All candidates should provide evidence that their Institute supports their application.

- 4.3.6 If there are more candidates for the Steering Committee that vacant positions, an election will be held by secret ballot. Those receiving the most votes will be elected to the Steering Committee, with the proviso that there must always be no more than five firearms members and five GSR members on the Steering Committee (plus members co-opted as past/future meeting hosts). The voting for the Steering Committee shall be conducted by two EWG Members who are not standing for election to the Steering Committee. In the event of a tie, the Chairman will have the casting vote.
- 4.3.7 Candidates for the position of Steering Committee member should present themselves during the Business Meeting.
- 4.3.8 The election of the Chair will be by secret vote by the members of the Steering Committee. Each Member of the Steering Committee (or their proxy) shall be allowed one vote. (See also 4.3.1).
- 4.3.9 The Chairperson of the EWG shall only serve two consecutive terms as Chairperson (one term being two years).

4.4 Minutes

- 4.4.1 Minutes of each Business Meeting will be taken by the Secretary/Co-chair and approved by vote at the following Business meeting.
- 4.4.2 The minutes will be posted on the EWG Website once approved.

5 **EWG Steering Committee**

5.1 Attendance and Frequency of Meetings

- 5.1.1 The EWG Steering Committee Meeting is open to members of the EWG Steering Committee and other individuals invited on a meeting by meeting basis, and whose presence is for a specific purpose. If a Working Group member wishes to attend a Steering Committee meeting for a specific purpose she/he must make a request to the Chairperson at least one month in advance.
- 5.1.2 The Steering Committee Meetings are held at least twice a year, with one Meeting in conjunction (where possible) with the EWG Business Meeting and Annual Meeting.
- 5.1.3 It is the intention of the Steering Committee to have different member laboratories host their meetings. This allows the host to participate in the SC-meeting and will hence create a greater awareness of the activities of EWG amongst its members.
- 5.1.4 The Steering Committee should consist of no more than ten elected members (up to 5 FIREARMS and up to 5 GSR) persons.

5.2 Agenda for the Steering Committee Meeting

- 5.2.1 The Steering Committee Meetings will cover all aspects of the work of EWG, including the management of specific projects or work areas, such as quality assurance, proficiency testing, best practice, training and education and communication. Standing items on the Agenda to include:

- General EWG items
- Progress against objectives -Quality Assurance (including proficiency testing)
- Best practice and Methods and Procedures
- Training and Education -Communication
- Research and Development
- Funding
- Future Conferences and Meetings
- Any Other Business

5.2.2 The Steering Committee has responsibility for organising the content of the EWG Business Meetings and the scientific aspect of the EWG Annual Meetings, and will help with the organisational aspects of the EWG Business Meetings and EWG Annual Meetings.

5.2.3 If the organiser of an EWG Annual Meeting is not already a member of the SC, they shall be invited to attend the SC meetings in the year before and the year after their Annual Meeting.

5.2.4 The Steering Committee Secretary/Co-chair, following discussion with both the members of the Steering Committee shall prepare the Agenda for the Steering Committee Meeting.

5.2.5 The Agenda shall be distributed to all EWG Steering Committee members no later than one week prior to the Steering Committee Meeting.

5.2.6 Specific Agenda items proposed by Working Group Members of EWG must be sent to the EWG Chairperson or Secretary/Co-chair four weeks prior to the Steering Committee Meeting.

5.3 Voting Procedures

5.3.1 Following the election of the Steering Committee, the holders of the following roles will be selected, from the elected members of the Steering Committee:

- Chair
- Secretary/Co-chair
- Treasurer
- Quality and Competence Representative
- R&D Representative
- Website editor

If more than one persons wishes to be considered for a particular post, there will be an election, with each elected member of the Steering Committee having one vote. Election is by secret ballot, with votes being counted by somebody not standing for election to that particular post. Each election will take place consequently in the order listed above (so that an unsuccessful candidate for a particular post can stand for another role). In the event of a tie in an election for Chairman, the incumbent Chairman will have the casting vote (unless no longer on the Steering Committee, in which case it will be the incumbent Secretary/Co-chair, then the incumbent Treasurer). In the event of a tie in the elections for other positions, the newly elected Chairman will have the casting vote.

5.3.2 In all other issues the consensus of opinion will be sought from the Steering Committee without a vote, if possible. If the issue is considered by the Chairperson to be of importance to the Aims and Objectives of EWG, then the Chairperson may decide to put the decision to the Business Meeting. Otherwise, where a vote is necessary then each ENFSI Institute represented in the Steering Committee present will have a single vote and the decision will be by simple majority.

5.4 Minutes

5.4.1 Minutes of each Steering Committee Meeting will be taken by the Secretary/Co-chair and agreed on by the Steering Committee within one month of the close of the Steering Committee Meeting.

5.4.2 The minutes will be posted on the EWG website within two months of the close of the Steering Committee Meeting.

5.5 Reimbursement

5.5.1 A reimbursement of expenses for hosting the SC meeting is possible. An application must be sent to the SC Treasurer. A decision on the level of reimbursement will be taken by the SC.

5.5.2 It is possible for holders of the different positions to claim re-imburement from the ENFSI of up to 300 Euro per meeting for attending up to two Steering Committee meetings per year.

6 **EWG Annual Meeting**

6.1 Organisation of the Annual Meeting

The EWG Annual Meeting will be hosted by one of the EWG Member or Associate member Institutes. The host organisation will organise the Annual Meeting in co-operation with the Steering Committee. Normally all members will be notified of the place, date and time of the EWG Annual Meeting at least 10 months prior to the meeting. The Chairman will invite applications to host the meeting two years in advance (e.g. the Chairman will ask for volunteers to host the 2018 meeting during the 2016 meeting). Applications should be received by the end of the calendar year. The decision will be made at the following Steering Committee meeting.

6.2 Attendance and Frequency of EWG Annual Meetings

The EWG Annual Meetings are open to EWG Members and Associate Members as well as invited Guests, and are held every year. Proposals for new guests to attend the Annual Meeting must be accompanied by a reference from an EWG member, associate member or a recognized forensic firearms/GSR expert. The final approval is left up to the Steering Committee.

6.3 Agenda for the EWG Annual Meeting

The EWG Annual Meeting is intended to promote the exchange of case related information and the flow of scientific information, including the results of research and development projects, new technologies and significant relevant material, as well as to ensure the exchange of information from other related research organisations and meetings world-wide. Furthermore, quality assurance, proficiency testing and validation of methods and techniques are an ever-developing issue that may be on the agenda of each Annual Meeting. Contributions are encouraged from ENFSI member institutes, associates members and other specialists (such as university researchers and scientists outside ENFSI).

An invitation to submit abstracts will be sent out at least four months prior to the meeting. If more abstracts are received than can be accommodated, the Steering Committee will decide on those to be included. Oral and poster presentations can be accepted.

The steering committee may decide to invite guest speakers to give talks of particular interest to the EWG, and may decide to contribute to the costs of their attendance up to a maximum of 400 Euro per guest speaker. In exceptional circumstances, similar funding may be offered to the ENFSI members or associated members.

6.4 Proceedings

Papers presented at the Annual Meeting will be posted on the secure part of EWG website and/or circulated on CD-ROM as they become available.

6.5 Exhibitors

Companies marketing products of interest to attendees are encouraged to exhibit.

7 **Finances**

7.1 General

Expenses for specific EWG activities can be reimbursed from the EWG account on approval by the SC.

7.2 EWG Income

The income of the Working Group could come from:

- Surplus from Working Group meetings (this will be up to the organising laboratory).
- Surplus from proficiency tests and collaborative exercises.

- Donations from the (general) ENFSI budget (EWG must take the initiative to apply for this type of financial support).
- Funding from the European Union or similar institutions.

7.3 EWG expenditure

The expenses of the EWG Firearms/GSR could be:

- Co-participation of projects or workshops
- Co-funding of EWG Firearms/GSR annual meetings. The EWG cannot be held accountable for deficits in the budget for organisation of business meetings and/or Annual Meetings.
- Costs of SC-meetings.
- Expenses for invited speakers.

7.4 Financial Statement

An annual financial statement will be sent to the SC by the EWG Treasurer. A copy shall be sent to the ENFSI Secretary.

The EWG shall present to the ENFSI Board, no later than end of February of each year:

- An income and expenditure account regarding the past year.
- A balance sheet as of 31st December of the past calendar year.
- An itemised estimate of revenues and expenditures for the on-going calendar year.

The ENFSI Board shall evaluate the financial report. In case of incorrect financial acts, the Board has the right to intervene.

Note: This document replaces the previous version of the Terms of Reference (Ref: FAGSR-TOR-007). The changes pertain to Associate membership.

