



## **TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR EXPERT WORKING GROUPS**

DOCUMENT TYPE :	REF. CODE:	ISSUE NO:	ISSUE DATE:
<b>STATUTORY</b>	<b>BRD-TOR-003</b>	<b>011</b>	07.04.2021

### **1. Introduction**

The current background of rapid technological innovation creates the need to continually improve and develop the methods, techniques and procedures of forensic science. Given the complexity and scope of this science, the need to exchange information and to ensure cooperation among experts is essential.

The following Terms of Reference for Expert Working Groups (EWG) defines their roles and operations.

### **2. Definition**

A EWG consists of experts in a particular scientific area.

### **3. Aim**

A EWG shall support the European development of its particular area of forensic science by any, or all, of the following activities:

- Exchanging information and expertise through meetings;
- Promoting quality assurance (e.g. by Proficiency Testing and Inter-Laboratory Testing) and the development of professional standards;
- Harmonising methods;
- Promoting and Combining research activities;
- Providing relevant education and training;
- Establishing international access to data collections;
- Producing relevant best practice manuals and guidelines according to the ENFSI template.

### **4. Operation**

The Expert Working Group shall establish and maintain:

- A Framework including aims and objectives, with respect to this Terms of Reference;

- Details of the organisational structure of the EWG and the organisation of its meetings;
- Individual project plans for major tasks;
- A membership list.

The ENFSI Secretariat (Secretariat) shall be informed about all changes of above mentioned data to ensure up-to-date EWG information.

The Expert Working Group shall nominate a representative for membership in the Quality and Competence Liaison Group (QCLG) and Research and Development Liaison Group (RDLG).

## 5. Membership

Two types of membership are distinguished within Expert Working Groups: Member and Associate Member.

### 5.1 Member:

- A EWG shall be open to representatives from all member-institutes that are active in the area of the EWG.
- The institute may nominate one representative of the institute to participate in the EWG and to any relevant votes (one vote per institute).

### 5.2 Associate Member:

- A EWG may appoint Associate Members as representatives from other forensic institutes, universities or other institutions which are not member institutes of ENFSI.
- The acceptance of an Associate Member shall be voted on by the EWG members with a simple majority.
- Associate Members have the same voting rights as members (one vote per institute).
- The number of EWG Associate Members shall not exceed 50 percent of the membership, without prior approval of the ENFSI Board (following explanation by the EWG Chair).

## 6. Meetings

- EWGs should have an Annual Meeting (AM) devoted to its business and/or scientific issues.
- All meetings shall be open to the EWG Members and Associate Members. Additionally, the EWG Steering Committee may invite Guests whose attendance might be beneficial.
- The results of each meeting shall be documented in a written report to be sent to the participants, ENFSI Members and to the ENFSI Board.
- The venue shall be changed on a voluntary basis within Europe, with different institutes acting as hosts.
- EWGs shall prepare preliminary agendas for their meetings and distribute them well in advance to the Secretariat. The Secretariat shall forward the relevant documents to the member institutes through email, publish the event on the open website and add the event to the ENFSI Event Calendar on EPE.

## 7. Organisation of Expert Working Groups

- Each Expert Working Group shall elect a Steering Committee from the members, responsible for strategic planning and monitoring of progress. An Associate Member is eligible for the Steering Committee after written permission by the ENFSI Board.

- The Steering Committee shall meet at least once per year, preferably during the EWG Annual Meeting AM, and shall consist of at least
  - A chairperson
  - A deputy chairperson
  - A treasurer
  - A liaison person for the Quality and Competence Committee
  - A liaison person for the Standing Committee of Research and Development
  - A website editor

Specific permanent, or project based tasks, should be organized by Subcommittees.

## **8. Annual Report and Plan**

- An Annual Report and Plan from each EWG shall be provided to the ENFSI Board no later than four weeks before the Joint Meeting (ENFSI Board and EWG Chairs).
- The EWG Chair, or his/her nominated substitute, may be invited to attend the ENFSI Annual Meeting to take part in the discussion on his/her expert area.

The Annual Report shall cover all activities of the Group, including the following information:

- Membership (changes, composition, meetings);
- Steering Committee (contact details);
- Subcommittees (contact details);
- Changes in the Framework;
- Achievements against Annual Plan (issues solved/outstanding, progress);
- Summary of the Annual Plan for next year;
- Changes in aims and organization.

Abstracts of the scientific papers presented at the meetings could be part of the report, at the discretion of the authors and may be published at the ENFSI public website.

The Annual Plan shall be based on the ENFSI Strategic Plan and shall be covering the forthcoming year of the P&R cycle.

## **9. Establishment and Annulment**

The decision on the establishment of an Expert Working Group shall be made by the ENFSI Board, who may seek all Members' views either in writing or at the next full meeting of the Membership.

An application shall be addressed to the ENFSI Board and shall include:

- The Framework of the proposed Expert Working Group with a clear statement of its objectives.
- A list of founding members, together with signed letters of support from each individual's ENFSI Member.
- Internal rules on Membership and election of a Chairperson.
- Any other issues considered to be important to the internal organisation of the Group.

If an ENFSI Member has any concerns about the work or management of an Expert Working Group, the matter should be raised in writing with the Chair of the Group. The Chair should seek to resolve the issue by reference to the ENFSI Constitution and supporting documents. If this does not resolve the issue, the advice of the ENFSI Board should be sought on the matter.

A EWG, which shows no useful outcome, may be annulled at an ENFSI Annual Meeting.

EWGs with related fields of expertise may be merged for practical reasons. Such action shall be voted on by the membership during an Annual Meeting. However, the EWGs concerned shall be consulted about a planned merger prior to this.

A EWG may be split by a reasoned request of the Steering Committee sent to the ENFSI Board. The request would be evaluated by the ENFSI Board, prior to a decision being taken with the ENFSI members at the ENFSI Annual Meeting.

## **10. Finances**

All procedures concerning financial operations are dealt with in the Framework for Finances (BRD-FWK-008).

## **11. Amendments against previous version**

- General layout changes according to new version of Framework for Format and Approval BRD-FWK-004, Issue No. 6.
- The classification of the document has been changed from “Policy” to “Statutory” according to new version of Framework for Format and Approval BRD-FWK-004, Issue No. 6.
- The document was renamed from “Framework” to “Terms of Reference” according to new version of Framework for Format and Approval BRD-FWK-004, Issue No. 6.
- The EWG internal document has been renamed from “Terms of Reference” to “Framework”.

###