

FRAMEWORK FOR THE EUROPEAN PAINT, GLASS & TAGGANTS EXPERT WORKING GROUP (EPGT EWG)

DOCUMENT TYPE:	REF. CODE:	ISSUE NO:	ISSUE DATE:
GUIDANCE	PGT-FWK-001	002	22.04.2024

1. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The European Paint, Glass & Taggants Expert Working Group (EPGT EWG) is an Expert Working Group of the European Network of Forensic Science Institutes (ENFSI), and it supports the aims and objectives of ENFSI in the area of forensic investigation of paints, glasses, adhesives, tapes and security inks.

EPGT EWG's activities offer a scientific platform to exchange experiences, to discuss analytical techniques, to plan collaborations and to generate a network of forensic experts of the specific field of expertise. Additionally, EPGT EWG provides a forum for introduction and validation of relevant methodology as well as case reporting.

EPGT EWG has a number of Aims and Objectives to support the European development of its particular area of forensic science, specifically:

- Provide assistance/guidance to the European forensic community and their quality management systems through the development of best practices laid down in Best Practice Manuals (BPMs) and guidelines and the organization of Quality Assurance (QA) trials.
- Disseminate forensic knowledge and experience by organizing training seminars, workshops on different topics and providing educational courses.
- Establish a scientific network to ensure and facilitate the exchange of forensic information.
- Encourage research activities by promoting the implementation of novel methods and the dissemination of the results.
- Aim to harmonize methods and best practice within the member laboratories.
- Explore the possibilities of homogenization and exchange analytical databases between members.
- Strengthen and maximize the evidential value of analytical data.

2. MEMBERSHIP (SEE BRD-TOR-003, § 5)

Membership of EPGT EWG is separated into two categories, namely Full and Associate Member.

2.1 Full Membership

Membership in the EPGT EWG is open to representatives from all ENFSI member institutes. Members have to be active in, at least one, area of forensic examination of paints, glasses, adhesives, tapes or security inks. Members assist the EPGT EWG by participating actively in the working group, e.g. meetings, QA trials and/or sub-groups. Each ENFSI Institute shall designate a lead contact person allowing for easier communication between the Steering Committee (SC) and the members. The contact details of the lead person must be provided to the EPGT EWG Secretary.

2.2 Associate Membership

Representatives from other forensic institutes, universities or other institutions which are not member institutes of ENFSI, but who are active in the field of forensic examination of paints, glasses, adhesives, tapes and security inks, may apply for Associate Membership using the standard application form. The form is available from the EPGT EWG Secretary.

Applications for Associate Membership shall be reviewed by the SC to determine eligibility of the application.

The acceptance of an Associate Member shall be decided by voting, where a simple majority of votes from EPGT EWG members suffices (see section 3.3). Associate members shall designate a lead contact person. The contact details of the lead person must be provided to the EPGT EWG Secretary.

Associate Members are encouraged to participate actively in the working group, meetings, QA trials and/or sub-groups. They shall also assist the SC and other members in performing the activities of the EPGT EWG.

3. BUSINESS MEETING

3.1 Attendance and frequency of business meetings

The EPGT EWG Business Meeting (BM) is open to both Full and Associate Members of EPGT EWG.

The BM are held annually, in conjunction with the EPGT EWG Annual Meeting (AM).

3.2 Agenda for the Business Meeting

The BMs will cover matters identified by the ENFSI, such as finances, Research & Development (R&D), Education & Training (E&T) and QA, when deemed relevant. The BMs will monitor the states of ongoing activities initiated within the framework of the EPGT EWG including the monitoring of activities of similar bodies, such as Trace Materials Subcommittee of the Organization of Scientific Area Committee for forensic science (OSAC) in the USA.

The SC will decide on place, date and time of the EPGT EWG BM and notify Full and Associate Members of EPGT EWG at least four months in advance of the meeting.

The Agenda for the BM shall be prepared by the EPGT EWG Chairperson, following discussion at one of the SC Meetings held close to the BM.

Specific Agenda proposals by Full and/or Associate Members of EPGT EWG shall be sent to the EPGT EWG Chairperson, preferably at least one month prior to the BM.

The final Agenda shall be distributed to all Full and Associate EPGT EWG Members no later than two weeks before the BM. However, relevant changes to the agenda can be made by the SC until the start of the BM.

3.3 Voting procedures

The following decisions must be ratified by a vote at an EPGT EWG BM:

- All the proposals for changes in the Framework document made by the SC or the EPGT EWG Members (either Full or Associate);
- Any changes to the organizational structure of the Working Group (e.g. Establishing a new subgroup) proposed either by the SC or the EPGT EWG Members (either Full or Associate). In this case, the proposals must have been sent to the SC Chairperson at least one month prior to the BM;
- The election of the SC members;
- The election of the Chairperson;
- Miscellaneous.

Both Full and Associate Members of EPGT EWG have the same voting rights, i.e., one vote per institute. In general voting will be done live (in person or virtually), optionally electronically voting is possible (e.g. via email or other relevant solutions).

All voting shall be decided by a simple majority of votes at the BM. In the event of a tie, the standing Chairperson shall have the casting vote.

Elections for the SC (including chairperson) are held whenever necessary and in accordance with the resignation plan of the SC Members. Vacancies in between election periods may be filled by a temporary replacement, appointed by the SC.

Members of the SC (including Chairperson) may hold their position for a maximum of two consecutive terms (one term being four years). At the end of the first term, they should be re-elected at the BM of EPGT EWG AM.

SC candidates shall be representatives of Full Members. Candidates from Associated Members are eligible for the SC after written permission by the ENFSI Board. Each candidate should provide a signed form, from the superior of the candidate, of the "Acceptance of EPGT EWG SC membership" document in order to be eligible for the SC, prior to the voting procedure.

New candidacies for the SC vacancies should be made in writing to the EPGT EWG Chairperson three weeks prior to the commencement of the BM. Current SC Members are nominated automatically unless they inform the Chairperson of their intention to resign. The SC can approach possible candidates if necessary.

New candidates for the position of SC member shall present themselves before the start of the election of that role.

The Chairperson must be part of the SC for at least two years prior to becoming the Chairperson.

3.4 Minutes

Minutes of each BM will be taken and agreed on by the SC.

A copy of the minutes will be posted on the EPGT EWG website (EPE website) following the acceptance by the SC.

4. THE EPGT EWG STEERING COMMITTEE

4.1 Attendance and frequency of Meetings

The EPGT EWG SC Meeting is open to members of the EPGT EWG SC and other individuals invited on a meeting by meeting basis, and whose presence is for a specific purpose. If a member wishes to attend a SC meeting for a specific purpose, he/she must submit a request to the Chairperson.

The SC Meetings are held virtually or in person upon the consent of the SC members. One SC Meeting is held in conjunction (where possible) with the EPGT EWG BM and AM.

The SC should consist of no more than ten persons, and have nominated the following positions:

- A Chairperson
- A Secretary
- A Deputy Chairperson (usually Secretary acts as Deputy Chairperson)
- A Treasurer
- A liaison person for the Quality and Competence Committee (QCC)
- A liaison person for the Standing Committee of Research and Development (RDSC)
- A website editor

Members of the SC should have experience in EPGT relevant examinations and a reasonable understanding of English (the working language of ENFSI).

4.2 Agenda for the Steering Committee Meeting

The SC Meetings will cover all aspects of the work of EPGT EWG. The agenda should include (but not limited to) whenever relevant:

- General EPGT EWG topics
- Issues related to the EUCAP database
- Progress against objectives
- Quality Assurance (including QA trials)
- Best Practice Manuals and Methods and Procedures
- Training and Education
- Communication
- Research and Development
- Funding
- Future Conferences and Meetings
- Any Other Business

The SC has the responsibility for organizing the content of EPGT EWG BMs and the scientific aspect of EPGT EWG Conferences and will assist the organization and functioning of the EPGT EWG BMs and EPGT EWG AMs.

The SC Chairperson, following discussion with both the members of the SC and other EPGT EWG Members shall prepare the Agenda for the SC Meeting.

The agenda shall be distributed to all EPGT EWG SC members no later than three working days before the SC Meeting. However, unforeseen last-minute changes may still be made.

Specific Agenda items proposed by Members of EPGT EWG must be submitted to the EPGT EWG Chairperson prior to the SC Meeting.

The SC is responsible for the accomplishment of QA trials and workshops.

The SC is responsible for updating the BPMs and initiating periodic revisions.

4.3 Voting procedures

As concerns all issues the consensus of opinion will be sought from the SC without a vote, if possible. If the issue is considered by the Chairperson to be of importance to the Framework of EPGT EWG then the Chairperson may decide to put the decision to the BM. Otherwise, when a vote is deemed necessary, each SC member will have one vote and the decision will be made by a simple majority. Voting can be done live - at a SC Meeting (in person, virtual or mixed) or electronically (e.g. via email or online form). In the case of live voting, only SC Members present may cast a vote. In case of a tie, the Chairperson will have the casting vote.

4.4 Minutes

Minutes of each SC Meeting will be taken and agreed on by the SC at the next SC Meeting. Therefore, each SC member will be given sufficient time to read the draft version of the minutes before the next SC meeting.

A copy of the minutes will be posted on the EPGT EWG website on EPE after the approval of the SC.

5. EPGT EWG ANNUAL MEETING

5.1 Organization of EPGT EWG Annual Meeting

The EPGT EWG AM is hosted by one of the Full or Associate member organizations. The host organization will organize the AM in cooperation with the SC. All members shall be notified of the place, date and time of AM no later than four (4) months before the meeting.

5.2 Attendance of EPGT EWG Annual Meeting

The EPGT EWG AM is open to both Full and Associate Members of EPGT EWG. Additionally, EPGT EWG SC may invite Guests whose attendance might be beneficial.

5.3 Guests

EPGT EWG Experts who are neither Full nor Associate Members of EPGT EWG will either be invited or can apply to attend the EPGT EWG AM as Guests.

Applications for the attendance of Guests at the AM shall be submitted to the Chairperson at least three months prior to the Conference. Their acceptance will be decided by the SC.

Guests of EPGT EWG have no voting rights.

5.4 Agenda of EPGT EWG Annual Meeting

The EPGT EWG AM is intended to promote the exchange of case related information and dissemination of scientific information, including the results of research and development projects, new technologies and significant relevant material, as well as ensuring the exchange of information from other organizations and meetings world-wide discussing EPGT relevant examinations.

The AM should also strive to increase knowledge about the production of paint, glass, security inks, tapes and adhesives by inviting speakers from the industry/companies.

Furthermore, QA (including e.g. outcome of trials and validation of methods and techniques) is an ever-developing issue that will be on the agenda for each AM whenever possible.

5.5 Proceedings

All the relevant documents of the AM, including the program, presentations and abstracts, will be made available soon after the end of the AM. These documents will be published on the EPGT EWG website on EPE.

6. AMENDMENTS TO PREVIOUS EDITION

- Paragraph 3.3.6 text added: Each candidate should provide a signed form of the “Acceptance of EPGT EWG SC membership” document in order to be eligible for the SC.
- Paragraph 3.3.7 text deleted: New candidacies for the SC vacancies should be made in writing to the EPGT EWG Chairperson three weeks prior to the commencement of the BM.