Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC) for Forensic Science

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE LEGAL RESOURCE COMMITTEE (LRC)

This document sets out the framework from which the Legal Resource Committee (LRC) shall operate and outlines the organizational authority, composition, terms of office, tasks and practical rules regarding the LRC. In addition to these Terms of Reference, the LRC shall adhere to the *OSAC Charter and Bylaws.*

1. Purpose

The Legal Resource Committee (LRC) shall serve as a resource to OSAC Members on legal issues related to forensic science standards.

The aim of the LRC is to provide guidance about the legal ramifications of forensic science standards including the meaningful presentation of forensic science results to the legal system.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The LRC is responsible for:

- Participating and consulting with SACs or Subcommittees as needed to address legal issues
- Observing standards development work in progress to identify areas with possible legal ramifications
- Providing feedback and recommendations on legal perspective to be addressed in draft standards
- Prepare internal guidance documents that will support OSAC standards development work
- Liaising with the legal community and related professional organizations.

2.1 Task Groups

As needed, Task Groups of the LRC shall be established by the LRC Chair and their activities administered by the LRC Vice-Chair. LRC Task Groups must be chaired by a LRC Member. LRC Task Group Members may include OSAC Members and Affiliates.

3. Membership

The Legal Resource Committee will consist of eleven (11) members representing the legal community, i.e., judges, lawyers (prosecution and defense) and other experts. Additional members may be appointed with the approval of a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the FSSB.

4. Organizational Authority

The Legal Resource Committee oversees:

- Task Groups of the LRC.

5. Operation

5.1 Executive Officers

The Executive Officers of the LRC shall consist of the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Executive Secretary. With the exception of the LRC Chair, officer positions shall be elected by LRC's Membership prior to the end of the existing term.

The LRC Chair shall manage the activities of Legal Resource Committee. These duties include, but are not limited to, approval of meeting agendas, presiding over meetings, inviting guests to LRC meetings, acting as a spokesperson for the LRC, preparing and presenting LRC activities to the OSAC Forensic Science Standards Board (FSSB), and coordinating communication between the LRC and other OSAC units.

- The LRC Vice-Chair shall execute the LRC Chair's role in the absence of the LRC Chair. The LRC Vice-Chair shall manage all of its LRC Task Group activities.
- The LRC Executive Secretary shall be responsible for recording meeting participation of Members, assist with agenda development and distribution, meeting planning and facilitation, meeting minutes and document distribution.

5.2 Terms of Office

5.2.1 LRC Members

- LRC Members are appointed by the FSSB, as positions become available. (Refer to the *OSAC Charter and Bylaws* for more details on the nomination and selection process.)
- After initial staggered 2, 3 and 4 year appointments, the terms of the LRC Members shall be 3 years and shall commence at the beginning of the Federal fiscal year. Exceptions to this occur for new and vacated positions. If the position is new and increases the membership of the OSAC Unit, the appointment will be made to ensure that staggered term limits are maintained throughout the Unit. Vacated positions shall be filled by the FSSB. Replacement appointees will serve the balance of that term.
- A LRC Member may be terminated for insufficient participation or for cause specified in the *OSAC Charter and Bylaws*. Such termination requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the FSSB.

5.2.2 LRC Officers

- The LRC Chair is appointed by the FSSB.
- The LRC Vice-Chair and Executive Secretary are elected by a majority vote of the LRC's total Membership.
- The terms of LRC officers shall be a fixed term of three (3) years.
- An elected officer serving a two year term (as defined in 5.2.1) can be considered for reappointment for another three (3) year term and if appointed, can be eligible for reelection.
- The LRC Chair shall be appointed by the FSSB and the LRC Vice-Chair and Executive Secretary shall be elected by the LRC Membership prior to the end of the existing term.
- In the event of disengagement or withdrawal of the LRC Chair, the title and all duties and obligations shall be assumed by the LRC Vice-Chair until the FSSB appoints a new Chair.

5.3 LRC Meetings

5.3.1 Frequency

- There shall be a minimum of four (4) meetings of the LRC per year.

5.3.2 Venue

- The LRC may meet in person or virtually using teleconference and webconference technology.
- NIST shall approve the venue for any in-person meetings.

5.3.3 Participation

- Two-thirds (2/3) of the LRC's Membership shall represent a quorum. A quorum is required to conduct business in which a vote a required.
- All LRC Members shall attend as many meetings as possible.
- Active healthy debate is encouraged; once a decision is made, the LRC speaks with one voice.
- Up to five (5) guests may be invited to participate in the LRC meetings. Invitations will be extended by the LRC Chair or designee for in-person meetings, invitations may only be extended after travel authorization is approved by NIST.

5.3.4 Manner of Acting

- When deemed necessary by the LRC Chair, the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall be followed.

5.3.5 Agendas

- Topics may come from the FSSB Chair, SAC Chairs, SAC Subcommittee Chairs, Chairs of the Resource Committees and LRC Members.
- The agenda shall be distributed prior to the start of each LRC meeting by the LRC Executive Secretary.

5.3.6 Minutes

- The LRC Executive Secretary (or designee) shall take the minutes of LRC meetings which are to be distributed to the LRC Membership prior to, and approved by, the LRC at its next meeting.
- The minutes of each LRC meeting shall be distributed to the FSSB and the Chairs of the Resource Committees.

6. Voting
   - Each Member shall have one (1) vote. LRC Members who will not be present for an in-person or virtual meeting may notify the LRC Executive Secretary of his/her vote in advance of the meeting.
   - Proxy voting is permitted and contributes to the voting quorum.
   - Two-thirds (2/3) of the LRC Membership shall represent a voting quorum. A majority vote of the quorum is required unless otherwise specified.
   - Votes may take place during LRC meetings or via an electronic poll.

7. Representation and Communication
   - The LRC Chair, or designee, shall be invited to represent the LRC at the request of NIST.
   - A LRC Member shall provide public statements representing OSAC policies or positions only upon approval of NIST.

8. Amendment, Modification or Variation

These Terms of Reference may be amended, varied, or modified in writing upon a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the full FSSB.