



Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC) for Forensic Science

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE FORENSIC SCIENCE STANDARDS BOARD

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

1. Purpose

The FSSB shall be the mechanism by which the Administrator (NIST) gains forensic science community input into the management and administration of the Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC) for Forensic Science.

The aims of the FSSB are to:

- Facilitate the promulgation of standards that will support the development of quality benchmarks and enhance consistency across the forensic science industry
- Discuss and address issues related to the OSAC standards development process
- Coordinate the activities of the OSAC Scientific Area Committees (SACs), SAC Subcommittees, and Interdisciplinary Committees.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The FSSB shall be responsible for:

- Determining the overall direction of the OSAC
- Developing OSAC policies and procedures
- Documenting and communicating priorities and topics for SACs, SAC Subcommittees, and Interdisciplinary Committees
- Identifying gaps in the existing body of standards
- Reviewing and approving all standards listed on the *OSAC Registry*
- Ensuring that standards, identified by a SAC that may affect another SAC or SAC Subcommittee, are evaluated by that other subcommittee and to determine conflicts created by that overlapping component and managing any conflicting requirements
- Supporting the work of SACs, SAC Subcommittees, and Interdisciplinary Committees by providing advice and assistance
- Ensuring communication flow among SACs, the FSSB, the Interdisciplinary Committees, and the forensic science community
- Reporting FSSB activity and decisions to the forensic science community and interested individuals and organizations.

2.1 FSSB Task Groups

FSSB Task Groups:

- are established by the FSSB Chair, and their activities are administered by the FSSB Vice-Chair
- may be chaired by an FSSB Member or an OSAC member appointed by the FSSB

- will include an FSSB liaison.

3. Membership

The FSSB shall consist of the Chairs of each Scientific Area Committee (SAC), six representatives from forensic science professional organizations (American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS), American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors (ASCLD), Association of Firearm and Toolmark Examiners (AFTE), International Association for Identification (IAI), National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME), Society of Forensic Toxicologists, Inc. (SOFT), eight Members-at-large, and one NIST representative (Ex-Officio Member). In accordance with the *OSAC Charter and Bylaws*, additional Members-at-large or professional organizations may be appointed with the approval of a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the full FSSB.

3.1 FSSB Forensic Science Professional Organization Representatives

FSSB members appointed to represent a forensic science professional organization shall be responsible for:

- communication of non-confidential information regarding OSAC to the professional organization
- providing input and feedback to the FSSB on activities of the professional organization related to OSAC
- serving as the primary point of contact for dissemination of information, as needed, between OSAC and the professional organization.

4. Organizational Authority

The FSSB oversees and coordinates the following OSAC units:

- Scientific Area Committees (SACs)
- SAC Subcommittees
- Interdisciplinary Committees
- FSSB Task Groups.

5. Operation

5.1 Executive Board

- The Executive Board of the FSSB shall consist of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Executive Secretary, and the Ex-Officio. The Ex-Officio shall represent NIST. This individual may participate in debate and make formal motions.
- The FSSB Chair is the first among equals on the Board and shall be responsible for managing the activities of the Board. These duties include, but are not limited to, approval of Board meeting agendas, preside over Board meetings, invite guests to FSSB meetings, and coordinate communication between FSSB and other OSAC units.
- The FSSB Vice-Chair shall execute the FSSB Chair's role in the absence of the Chair. The FSSB Vice-Chair shall manage all FSSB Task Group activities.
- The Executive Secretary of the FSSB shall conduct FSSB meeting roll call, track FSSB member participation, and manage a compilation of all FSSB formal decisions.

5.2 Terms of Office

5.2.1 FSSB Members

- FSSB Members are appointed by the FSSB Nominations Task Group as positions become available. (Refer to the *OSAC Charter and Bylaws* for nomination and selection process.)
- The terms of the FSSB Members shall be 3 years and shall commence at the beginning of the Federal fiscal year.
- The term of a member appointed to a vacancy of a departed or moving member shall be 3 years. Any time remaining on the previous member's term to the end of the Federal fiscal year shall be counted as a partial year. The second year of the term appointment shall commence at the beginning of the Federal fiscal year.
- In the event of a vacancy of any Member position on the FSSB, the vacancy shall be filled in accordance with the procedure outlined in the *OSAC Charter and Bylaws*.
- A FSSB Member may be terminated for insufficient participation or for cause as specified in the *OSAC Charter and Bylaws*. Such termination requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the FSSB.

5.2.2 FSSB Officers

- SAC Chairs may not hold an officer position on the FSSB.
- The terms of FSSB Executive Board officers shall be a fixed term of one (1) year. Officers shall be elected by the FSSB Membership prior to the end of the existing term. Officers are eligible for reelection.
- FSSB Members may only hold/fill one Executive Board position at a time.
- In the event of disengagement or withdrawal of the FSSB Chair, the title and all duties and obligations shall be assumed by the FSSB Vice-Chair until the FSSB elects a new Chair.

5.2.3 FSSB Liaisons

- FSSB Liaisons are appointed to FSSB Task Groups.
- FSSB Liaisons are appointed to Interdisciplinary Committees.
- FSSB Liaisons shall provide direction and feedback to the FSSB Task Group or Interdisciplinary Committee and shall provide regular updates to the FSSB, including reporting any significant issues or concerns to the FSSB for discussion and resolution.

5.3 FSSB Meetings

FSSB meetings shall be closed to the public.

5.3.1 Participation

- A quorum is required to conduct business in which a vote is required.
- FSSB Members participation is critical. FSSB Members shall attend as many of the meetings as possible.
- Active, healthy debate is encouraged; once a decision is made, the FSSB speaks with one voice.
- Guest invitations for in-person meetings require approval from the OSAC Program Office. After approval, guest invitations will be extended by FSSB Chair or designee.

5.3.2 Frequency

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

- Additional meetings may be arranged, as needed, to address issues as they arise or to provide status updates.
- Special meetings may be called by the Chair with at least 48 hours' notice.

5.3.3 Venue

- The FSSB may meet in person or virtually using teleconference and web-conferencing technology.
- NIST shall determine the venue for any in-person meetings.

5.3.4 Manner of Acting

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

5.3.5 Agendas

- Topics may come from NIST or FSSB Members.
- The agenda shall be distributed prior to the start of each FSSB meeting by the FSSB Executive Secretary (or designee).

5.3.6 Minutes

- The FSSB Executive Secretary (or designee) shall take the minutes from the FSSB meeting, which are subject to the approval of the FSSB Members.
- The minutes of the FSSB meeting shall be distributed to the FSSB within thirty (30) days of approval.

6. Voting

- Each Member shall have one vote.
- Proxy voting is permitted. FSSB Members who will not be present for an in-person or virtual meeting may notify the FSSB Executive Secretary of their votes in advance of the meeting, or they may designate a proxy.
- Unless otherwise specified in the *OSAC Charter and Bylaws* or these Terms of Reference, a simple majority vote of the full membership is required to pass a motion.
- A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the full membership is required to approve a standard for inclusion on the OSAC Registry or for an OSAC Preferred Term.
- Voting may take place during FSSB meetings or via an electronic poll.

7. Representation and Communication

- The FSSB Chair, or designee, shall be invited to represent OSAC at the request of NIST.
- A FSSB 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 membership of the FSSB.