



Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC) for Forensic Science

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SUBCOMMITTEES

This document describes the framework for Subcommittees (SCs) and outlines the authority, composition, terms of office, tasks, and practical rules regarding all subcommittees. In addition to these *Terms of Reference* (ToR), the subcommittees shall adhere to the *OSAC Charter and Bylaws* and the *OSAC Code of Responsibility*.

1. Purpose

Subcommittees adopt, coordinate, and develop draft standards that have sound technical merit and conform to a reasonable standards development process. Subcommittees shall bring together subject matter experts for specific disciplines to review, catalyze, and propose discipline-specific standards. Subcommittees may recommend documents for the OSAC Registry.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

SC responsibilities include:

- drafting proposed discipline-specific standards that have sound technical merit and meet a reasonable standards development process,
- reviewing and revising existing standards,
- identifying gaps in existing standards and best practices in the subcommittee's discipline,
- communicating activities, accomplishments, issues, and progress to its SAC,
- managing subcommittee task groups to accomplish objectives of the subcommittee,
- supporting the work of other subcommittees by providing advice and assistance in the development of their standards,
- providing advice on the creation, merger or abolishment of subcommittees to the FSSB; and,
- other tasks such as writing standardization roadmaps, definitions of terms, statements of research needs, and process maps.

2.1 Task Groups

The chair of a subcommittee may establish task groups for the subcommittee. Such task groups shall be chaired by a subcommittee member, shall include OSAC members, and may include affiliates.

3. Membership

Members shall be appointed with the approval of a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the SAC in accordance with the *OSAC Charter and Bylaws* and the *OSAC Nominations Procedure*.

Each subcommittee shall have members with expertise in:

- human factors,
- law,
- quality assurance; and,
- statistics.

The target distribution of membership is as follows:

- Maximum 70 percent practitioners
 - 20 percent federal practitioners
 - 30 percent state and local practitioners
 - 20 percent civil and other practitioners
- Minimum 30 percent researchers, research and development technology partners, educators, accreditation and certification specialists, quality specialists, human factors professionals, members of the legal community, and non-practitioner scientists (including statisticians and measurement scientists).

4. Organizational Authority

A subcommittee shall oversee and coordinate its task groups.

5. Operation

5.1 Executive Officers

The Executive Officers of a subcommittee are the chair, vice chair, and executive secretary.

- The chair shall manage the activities of the subcommittee. This duty includes approving meeting agendas, presiding over meetings, inviting guests to meetings, acting as a spokesperson for the subcommittee, preparing and presenting subcommittee activities at OSAC meetings, and disseminating draft documents and other work products within the OSAC.
- The vice chair shall assume the chair's role in the absence of the chair and manage all of its task group activities.
- The executive secretary shall be responsible for recording meeting participation, assisting with the development and distribution of meeting agendas, preparing minutes, and distributing documents.

5.2 Terms of Office

5.2.1 Subcommittee Members

- Members serve terms that last no more than three years commencing at the beginning of the federal fiscal year.
- SC members who resign or are unable to complete their terms may be replaced in accordance with the *OSAC Charter and Bylaws* and *OSAC Nominations Procedure*.
- The term of a member appointed to fill a vacancy created by the departure of a member shall commence when the replacement is made and conclude at the end of two more fiscal years.

- A member may be removed for insufficient participation or for other good cause as specified in the *OSAC Charter and Bylaws*. Such removal requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the FSSB.

5.2.2 Officers

- The FSSB shall appoint the subcommittee chair.
- The members of the subcommittee shall elect the vice chair and executive secretary by majority vote of the subcommittee's total membership prior to the end of the existing term.
- The terms of subcommittee officers shall be a fixed term of three (3) years.
- A member may hold only one officer position at a time.
- If the chair resigns, becomes incapacitated, or is removed from office, the vice chair shall assume the title and duties of the chair until the FSSB appoints a new chair.

5.3 Subcommittee Meetings

5.3.1 Frequency

- The subcommittee meets at least quarterly.
- Meetings may be called by the chair with at least 48 hours' notice.

5.3.2 Venue

- Each subcommittee may meet in-person or virtually.
- NIST shall approve the venue for any in-person meetings.
- Meetings shall be closed to the public.

5.3.3 Participation

- Members shall participate in accordance with the *OSAC Unit Participation Requirements*.
- Members shall attend as many meetings as possible.
- The chair may invite guests to attend meetings. Guest invitations for in-person meetings require approval from the OSAC Program Office.
- Active, healthy debate is encouraged. OSAC processes and voting requirements support a consensus decision where different perspectives are provided an opportunity to be heard and dissenting opinions are recorded but the process moves forward after the required level of support is achieved.

5.3.4 Manner of Acting

- Meetings may be conducted without following formal rules of procedure; however, if a member objects to a procedure or the chair deems it appropriate, the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* shall be followed.

5.3.5 Agendas

- Agenda items may be suggested by the FSSB chair, SAC chairs, subcommittee chair and members, and FSSB resource task group chairs.
- The executive secretary shall ensure the meeting agenda is distributed at least 24 hours prior to the start of each meeting.

5.3.6 Minutes

- The executive secretary (or designee) shall take the minutes of each meeting and distribute them for approval by the subcommittee prior to the next meeting.
- The approved minutes shall be made available to the SAC within ten days of approval.

6. Voting

- Two-thirds (2/3) of a subcommittee's membership constitutes a quorum. A quorum is required to conduct business in which a vote is required.
- Each member shall have one vote.
- Subcommittee members who will not be present at a meeting may notify a subcommittee officer of their votes in advance of the meeting or may designate proxies.
- Proxy voting contributes to the voting quorum.
- Unless otherwise specified in the *OSAC Charter and Bylaws* or these *Terms of Reference*, a simple majority vote of the membership is required to pass a motion.
- A two-thirds (2/3) majority of the membership is required to forward a standard for consideration.
- Votes may take place during subcommittee meetings or via an electronic poll.

7. Representation and Communication

- The subcommittee chair, or designee, may be invited to represent OSAC at the request of NIST.
- A subcommittee member has no authority to make official representations about OSAC positions without the specific prior, written approval of NIST.

8. Amendments

These *Terms of Reference* may be amended in writing upon a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the FSSB.