



Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC) for Forensic Science

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE HUMAN FACTORS COMMITTEE (HFC)

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

1. Purpose

The Human Factors Committee (HFC) shall serve as a resource to OSAC Members on issues related to human factors.

The aim of HFC is to provide guidance on the influence of systems design on human performance and on ways to minimize cognitive and confirmation bias and mitigate errors.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The HFC is responsible for:

- Working with relevant SACs and Subcommittees on discipline specific human factors issues (e.g., determining domain irrelevant information).
- Providing feedback and recommendations on human factors issues to be addressed in the development of draft standards.
- Producing internal guidance documents that will support OSAC standards development work.
- Providing guidance on the influence of system design on human performance, ways to minimize cognitive and confirmation bias and mitigate errors in complex tasks.
- Preparing human factor impact statements for draft standards submitted for review, if appropriate, such as subjectivity in decision making, error magnets, cognitive load, error identification and mitigation.
- Provide feedback on the development of forensic science laboratory case notes and report templates, as appropriate.

2.1 Task Groups

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

3. Membership

The Human Factors Committee will consist of eleven (11) members possessing expertise in psychology, quality systems management and usability. Additional members may be appointed with the approval of a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the FSSB.

4. Organizational Authority

The Human Factors Committee oversees:

- Task Groups of the HFC.

5. Operation

5.1 Executive Officers

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

- The HFC Chair shall manage the activities of Human Factors Committee. These duties include, but are not limited to, approval of meeting agendas, presiding over meetings, inviting guests to HFC meetings, acting as a spokesperson for the HFC, preparing and presenting HFC activities to the OSAC Forensic Science Standards Board (FSSB), and coordinating communication between the HFC and other OSAC units.
- The HFC Vice-Chair shall execute the HFC Chair's role in the absence of the HFC Chair. The HFC Vice-Chair shall manage all of its HFC Task Group activities.
- The HFC 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 HFC Members

- HFC 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.)
- The terms of the HFC Members shall be 3 years and shall commence at the beginning of the Federal fiscal year. Vacant positions shall be filled by the FSSB.
- 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.
- A HFC 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 HFC Officers

- The HFC Chair is appointed by the FSSB.
- The HFC Vice-Chair and Executive Secretary are elected by a majority vote of the HFC's total Membership.
- The terms of HFC officers shall be a fixed term of three (3) years.
- In the event of disengagement or withdrawal of the HFC Chair, the title and all duties and obligations shall be assumed by the HFC Vice-Chair until the FSSB appoints a new Chair.

5.3 HFC Meetings

5.3.1 Frequency

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

5.3.2 Venue

- The HFC 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 HFC's Membership shall represent a quorum. A quorum is required to conduct business in which a vote is required.
- All HFC Members shall attend as many meetings as possible.
- Active healthy debate is encouraged; once a decision is made, the HFC speaks with one voice.
- Up to five (5) guests may be invited to participate in the HFC meetings. Invitations will be extended by the HFC 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 HFC 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 HFC Members.
- The agenda shall be distributed prior to the start of each HFC meeting by the HFC Executive Secretary.

5.3.6 Minutes

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

6. Voting

- Each Member shall have one (1) vote. HFC Members who will not be present for an in-person or virtual meeting may notify the HFC 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 HFC Membership shall represent a voting quorum. A majority vote of the quorum is required unless otherwise specified.
- Votes may take place during HFC meetings or via an electronic poll.

7. Representation and Communication

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