

Bylaws
Technical Working Group for
Fire and Explosions

1 NAME:

1.1 The name of this organization shall be the Technical Working Group for Fire and Explosions, hereinafter referred to as TWGFEX.

2 PURPOSE:

2.1 The purpose of TWGFEX is to promote and maintain dialogue among personnel in the forensic laboratory, public safety, private investigation, and legal communities and to promulgate and foster development of:

2.1.1 National protocols and/or guides for the collection and analysis of fire and explosion debris, and residues, to be published by the National Center for Forensic Science or other appropriate organizations or to be submitted to ANSI accredited standards development organizations

2.1.2 Training and quality assurance guidelines for fire and explosion scene personnel and laboratory practitioners

2.1.3 Job descriptions

2.1.4 For practitioner positions

2.1.5 Guidelines and protocols that integrate fire and bombing scene investigations and forensic laboratory analyses into incidents of terrorism or weapons of mass destruction.

2.2 Toward this end, TWGFEX has the power to:

2.2.1 Develop and carry out programs and activities to achieve the above purpose.

2.2.2 Encourage research and development of new techniques in the field of forensic fire and explosion investigation and laboratory analyses.

3 MEMBERSHIP:

3.1 All TWGFEX members should be professionals involved in the investigation and/or training/education of fire and/or explosion incidents, and/or the laboratory analysis of fire and explosion debris and residues, except those identified in 3.3.

3.1.1 No person shall be denied membership for reason of race, sex, creed, or religion.

3.1.2 Subject matter experts selected to work with ad hoc committees, who are not members of TWGFEX, must meet the requirements for members as defined in 3.1 or 3.3.

3.2 TWGFEX may vote to adopt or suspend the collection of monetary dues payments from its members.

3.3 It may be necessary to add members outside of the fire and explosion scene investigation or laboratory analysis field as stated in 3.1. This would occur when special expertise is required (such as, but not limited to, the fields of anthropology, safety, training, quality assurance, and legal issues) which cannot be provided by a person as described in 3.1.

3.4 Only TWGFEX members are allowed to vote.

3.5 With the exception of fraud or malfeasance, the sponsor (NCFS) shall defend and indemnify every member acting on behalf of TWGFEX on any matter involving TWGFEX.

4 ORGANIZATION:

4.1 TWGFEX shall seek and maintain sponsorship by the National Center for Forensic Science and the National Institute of Justice who will assist TWGFEX in achieving its purpose.

4.2 TWGFEX shall be divided into standing and ad hoc committees:

4.2.1 Standing Committees

4.2.1.1 Executive

4.2.1.2 Research

4.2.1.3 Communications

4.2.1.4 Membership

4.2.1.5 By-Laws

4.3 Ad hoc committees may be created or abolished by a simple majority vote of the Executive Committee.

4.4 The TWGFEX Chair, upon the advice and consent of the Membership and Executive Committees, will appoint the members who are to serve on any Ad Hoc Committee.

4.4.1 The assignment of committee members to a particular committee should, insofar as possible, seek a balance of affected interest.

4.4.2 Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs, with the approval of the TWGFEX Chair may appoint non-TWGFEX members (subject matter experts) to their ad hoc committee as needed.

4.5 The TWGFEX Chair, at his or her discretion, may choose to either appoint the Committee Chairs/Co-Chairs or allow the committee members to elect their Chair and Co-Chair.

4.5.1 Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs serve a term of (4) four years.

4.5.2 Committee Chairs/Co-Chairs terms may not exceed the period of time which their committee is in existence.

4.5.3 If a committee is abolished, the former chair/co-chair shall be moved to regular member status.

5 OFFICERS:

5.1 The officers of TWGFEX shall consist of the following and shall hold terms of office as indicated.

5.1.1 Chair, four (4) years

5.1.2 Vice-Chair, four (4) years

5.1.3 Five members of the Executive Committee (3) years.

5.1.3.1 The Executive Committee consists of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Director of NCFS, one NCFS Director's designee, and the five elected members of the Executive Committee.

5.1.3.2 The Executive Secretary is an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee.

5.1.4 Executive Secretary, four (4) years

5.1.5 In recognition that an elected officer may be unable to fill their term of office due to illness, termination of membership, transfer of job duties, or other reasons, they may be replaced as follows:

5.1.5.1 Should the vacancy be the Chair of TWGFEX, the Vice-Chair shall move to the position of Chair for the remainder of the unexpired term.

5.1.5.2 Should the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair of TWGFEX be vacant at the same time, the Executive Committee by a majority vote, shall appoint a member of TWGFEX as Chair for the remainder of the unexpired term.

5.1.5.3 Should one or more elected Executive Committee positions be vacant, the Chair, Vice-Chair, and remaining members of the Executive Committee shall, by majority vote, appoint member(s) of TWGFEX to the Executive Committee for the remainder of the unexpired term.

5.1.5.4 In the event of a tie vote, the Director of NCFS shall cast the deciding vote.

5.1.6 The term of the Executive Secretary shall not be concurrent with the term of the Chair and Vice-Chair.

5.2 Elections

5.2.1 Nominations for candidates to fill the Chair, Vice Chair, and Executive Committee shall be open to the floor at the appropriate annual TWGFEX meeting.

5.2.3 TWGFEX Chair, Vice Chair, and Executive Committee members, shall be elected by a simple majority vote of a quorum of members responding to either an annual or special TWGFEX Meeting of the current office holder's term.

5.2.4 A special meeting for the purpose of electing officers may be a physical meeting or an electronic call for nominations and votes using such resources as the internet, email, telephone, or fax.

5.2.4 All officers may serve up to two consecutive terms.

6 DUTIES OF OFFICERS:

6.1 Chair of TWGFEX shall preside over general meetings and Executive Committee meetings. The Chair will recommend establishment of ad hoc committees as necessary and serve as an ex-officio member of all committees. The Chair shall also make recommendations and assign tasks to committees as necessary. The Chair shall execute any other duties as listed in the By-Laws or Rules for TWGFEX.

6.2 Vice-Chair of TWGFEX shall assist the Chair in his or her duties and act for the Chair in his or her absence.

6.3 The Executive Committee shall perform the duties prescribed by these by-laws and by the parliamentary authority adopted in these by-laws. They will create and follow any operational rules for the organization and the various committees.

7 MEETINGS:

- 7.1 TWGFEX shall have at least one general meeting per year (referred to as the “annual” meeting) provided that the sponsor has sufficient funds to sponsor such a physical meeting.
- 7.2 The Chair of TWGFEX may call for additional meetings at any time provided sufficient notice is conveyed.
- 7.3 To the extent possible, notice of the meetings will be communicated to each member at least sixty (60) days before the meeting date.
- 7.4 Public notice of TWGFEX meetings may be made on the TWGFEX website or other vehicles as selected by the Executive Committee.

8 PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY:

- 8.1 The rules contained in the current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern TWGFEX in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these by-laws and any operational rules that the Executive Committee may adopt.

9 AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS:

- 9.1 Proposed amendments to the Bylaws shall be submitted to the By-Laws Committee.
- 9.2 Upon review, the By-Laws committee may either return the proposed amendments to the proposer with recommendations for changes and re-submittal or pass the proposed by-laws amendments to the Executive Committee.
- 9.3 If accepted by the Executive Committee of TWGFEX, the proposed by-laws amendments shall be communicated to the TWGFEX membership a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to a scheduled vote.
- 9.4 Amendments to bylaws shall require a two-thirds positive vote of TWGFEX members present at a meeting where a quorum is present or two-thirds positive vote by those responding to an electronic (email, listserv, or web initiated) vote (if the quorum described under 10.1.2 is established).

10 VOTING:

- 10.1 A quorum for voting purposes is defined as:
 - 10.1.1 An assembly of twenty-five (25) or more members of TWGFEX comprising members from both the laboratory and scene committees.
 - 10.1.2 The total number of attendees shall be determined by the number registered for attendance at the opening of the meeting.
 - 10.1.3 A written or electronic response by twenty-five (25) or more members of TWGFEX comprising members from both the laboratory and scene committees.
- 10.2 One vote per member
- 10.3 Members may not transfer their vote by proxy to another member.
- 10.4 Voting is valid at TWGFEX meetings, functions, or on assigned projects.
- 10.5 Voting by electronic means is permitted:

10.5.1 At the discretion of the TWGFEX Chair, on items requiring a vote by the general membership.

10.5.2 At the discretion of a committee co-chair, on items requiring a vote by their specific committee.

10.6 The terms “majority” or “simple majority” are defined as one vote above fifty percent of all positive and negative votes received, within the voting time frame as defined in the by-laws.

10.7 The term “two-thirds majority” will be determined by the total number of positive and negative votes received within the voting time frame as defined in these by-laws.

10.8 Voting may be by a show of hands, written on a form, or an electronic response of an email, listserv query, or other web based query.