

# **Bylaws of the Scientific Working Group on Dog and Orthogonal detector Guidelines (SWGDOG)**

- I. Objectives
- II. Membership
- III Officers and Duties
- IV. Meetings
- V. Subcommittees
- VI. Process for Approval of Guidelines or Recommendations
- VII. Amendments to Bylaws

## **Introduction**

For more than a decade, there have been scientific working groups (SWGs) established initially sponsored by the FBI. The purpose of these working groups is to establish professional forums in which federal, state, and local government experts, together with academic and commercial scientists and other recognized experts in the selected field can develop optimal operational guidelines.

Recently, it has become increasingly clear that local law enforcement as well as national homeland security can benefit from improvements in the performance of deployed detector dogs and their proper combination with electronic detection devices. A variety of leaders in the detection canine and instrument community support the establishment of a scientific working group in this area, and there has already been some standardization efforts in this area that can be drawn from. At the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> National Detector Dog Conferences held in 2001 and 2003, general best practices for detector dog teams were drafted and refined. Also, an Interpol European Working Group on the Use of Police Dogs in Crime Investigation (IEWGPD) recently concluded a similar project in Europe and representatives would be included in this working group.

An exploratory meeting to ascertain if valid justification and broad support could be demonstrated to adopt a formal SWG on dogs and orthogonal detector guidelines was held in Burbank, California, on January 15, 2004, and convened a core group of more than a dozen recognized experts, both domestic and international, in the field of dog and orthogonal detection from the federal, state, and local governments as well as recognized expert private practitioners in the United States.

After affirming a very high interest level from this group for detector dog and orthogonal detector guidelines the Scientific Working Group on Dog and Orthogonal detector Guidelines (SWGDOG) agreed to draft the following bylaws for review and subsequent ratification.

## **I. Objectives**

The Scientific Working Group on Dog and Orthogonal Detector Guidelines hereinafter referred to as (SWGDOG) shall serve as a professional forum in which practitioners and practitioners from related fields can share, discuss, and evaluate methods, techniques, protocols, quality assurance, education, and research relating to detector dogs and orthogonal detection standards. Orthogonal is defined here as mutually independent methods of detecting items of interest such as using different detection and identification modalities. This forum shall address substantive and operational issues within the field of dog and orthogonal detector guidelines and shall work to build consensus-based, or so-called "best practice," guidelines.

In furtherance of its mission, SWGDOG shall recommend and disseminate discipline guidelines for quality assurance and quality control, to provide guidelines and not to mandate decisions of policy, to discuss, share and exchange ideas regarding forensic analysis methods, protocols and research, to bring together organizations and/or individuals actively pursuing relevant analysis methods for the purpose of exchanging and disseminating information, to cooperate with other national and international organizations in developing relevant standards and to monitor and disseminate research and technology related to the discipline.

## **II. Membership**

A. SWGDOG shall consist of a maximum of 55 members and shall consist both of an executive board and a body of regular members. The total number of members comprising the group shall depend, at least in part, upon the number of Subcommittees empanelled by the SWGDOG (see description of SWGDOG Chair under section B). The term "member" shall be used to designate and describe both Executive Board and regular members.

B. The SWGDOG Executive Board shall consist of a maximum of 12 individuals and shall include the SWGDOG Chair, SWGDOG Vice Chair, SWGDOG Legal Counsel, SWGDOG Executive Secretary and regular members. All members of the SWGDOG Executive Board shall have voting privileges with the exception of the SWGDOG Executive Secretary. The SWGDOG Chair has full voting privileges, except on routine business meeting motions where his/her vote will be used to break ties.

1. The SWGDOG Chair shall be a representative from the academic community.
2. The SWGDOG Vice Chair shall be a member of the Sponsoring Agency. The Vice chair position may be ratified by a simple majority vote of the Executive Board.
3. The SWGDOG Legal Counsel shall be appointed by SWGDOG Chair and the position may be ratified by a simple majority vote of the Executive Board.
4. The SWGDOG Executive Secretary shall be appointed by the SWGDOG Chair.
5. The SWGDOG regular members of the SWGDOG Executive Board shall be ratified individually by a simple majority of the Executive Board.

C. Regular members of SWGDOG shall be appointed by a majority vote of the Executive Board.

1. The SWGDOG Membership Committee shall consist of the SWGDOG Vice-Chair and two SWGDOG Executive Board regular members. The SWGDOG Executive Secretary shall receive nominations for membership, utilizing a standardized application process and forward these applications to the SWGDOG Membership Committee. The subcommittee co-chairs shall inform the membership committee of targeted vacancies prior to the membership committee's recommendations. In the absence of targeted vacancies a general vacancy recommendation can be made by the membership of the Executive Board. Prior to submission to the Executive Board, the SWGDOG Membership committee shall ensure that the application materials are complete for each nominee. Membership selections require a  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote of the SWGDOG Executive Board. All membership selections will be made no less than 60 days prior to the next general membership meeting. The SWGDOG Membership Committee shall, to the extent possible, consider ancillary information such as profession (law enforcement, scientist, consultant, etc.), geography (regional, international, etc.), as well as affiliation (local, state, or federal government agencies; private; academic; etc.) in evaluating its potential membership candidates.

2. SWGDOG Membership resides with the individual and not his/her agency or affiliation.

3. Regular members of SWGDOG shall have voting privileges for the purpose of ratifying SWGDOG draft documents and other work products, Bylaw amendments, Executive Board members, with the exception of first time Executive Board appointees, and other business as deemed necessary by the SWGDOG Chair.

D. The SWGDOG Chair may offer *ex officio* membership to a representative from an agency or organization related to Dog and Orthogonal detection and ratified individually by a simple majority vote of the regular members at a planned SWGDOG meeting. *Ex officio* members shall not be considered regular members of SWGDOG and shall not be granted voting privileges.

E. The SWGDOG Chair may invite guests to participate in SWGDOG meetings. Invited guests shall not be considered members of SWGDOG and shall not be granted voting privileges.

F. The term of appointment for the SWGDOG Chair, Vice-Chair, SWGDOG Executive Secretary, and SWGDOG Executive Board regular members shall be seven years. The term of appointment for SWGDOG Legal Counsel shall be seven years. Regular members of SWGDOG shall be appointed for seven-year terms. Subsequent terms of appointment for all member positions shall be seven years with no limitation of the number of terms served either consecutively or in total. All members will be required to sign and comply with the SWGDOG non-disclosure agreement.

G. The vacancy of a SWGDOG membership position occurs upon the death of a SWGDOG member, the resignation of a SWGDOG member from SWGDOG, or the completion of a SWGDOG membership term. A SWGDOG member can have their membership revoked under any of the following conditions: 1) absence from two consecutive SWGDOG meetings without good cause, 2) unprofessional behavior, 3) non-compliance under the SWGDOG non-disclosure agreement, 4) inadequate participation. The procedure for

revoking membership is as follows: i) the offending member's subcommittee chair shall recommend revocation to the Membership Committee, ii) the Membership Committee shall recommend a course of action to the Executive Board, and iii) revocation of SWGDOG membership requires a ¾ vote of the SWGDOG Executive Board. The decision by the SWGDOG Executive Board shall be final and revocation of SWGDOG membership will be effective immediately. Any SWGDOG membership vacancy shall be filled in the manner prescribed for initial appointment and said SWGDOG membership shall extend through the remainder of the active term initiated by the originally appointed SWGDOG member.

### **III. Officers and Duties**

A. The SWGDOG Chair shall manage the activities of the SWGDOG Executive Board and perform all duties incident to the office of SWGDOG Chair, including but not necessarily limited to the following: scheduling SWGDOG meetings, preparing SWGDOG meeting agendas, presiding at SWGDOG meetings, appointing SWGDOG Executive Board Members, appointing SWGDOG Regular Members, establishing SWGDOG committees, inviting guests to SWGDOG meetings, assigning tasks to SWGDOG members and/or SWGDOG Subcommittees, acting as the principle spokesperson for SWGDOG, and forwarding appropriate SWGDOG recommendations on to the sponsoring agency as necessary.

B. The SWGDOG Vice-Chair will assist the SWGDOG Chair in his/her duties as needed. The SWGDOG Vice-Chair, in the temporary absence of the SWGDOG Chair, shall be authorized to conduct SWGDOG business, to include presiding over SWGDOG meetings in accordance with the agenda set by the SWGDOG Chair. The SWGDOG Vice-Chair will serve as the Chair of the SWGDOG Membership Committee.

C. The SWGDOG Executive Secretary shall perform such duties as may be assigned by the SWGDOG Chair and shall perform all administrative duties incident to the office including, but not necessarily limited to the following: preparing summary minutes of SWGDOG meetings, maintaining records of SWGDOG meetings and bylaws, and keeping custody of SWGDOG records. The SWGDOG Executive Secretary may be assisted by staff provided by the sponsoring agency if necessary.

D. The SWGDOG Executive Board shall review and evaluate all recommendations made by SWGDOG Subcommittees and vote on such recommendations. A unanimous vote of the SWGDOG Executive Board members shall constitute an act of the Board. A vote by the SWGDOG Executive Board shall be considered the final action on any SWGDOG Subcommittee recommendation.

### **IV. Meetings**

A. SWGDOG shall meet a minimum of one time, but no more than twice, per calendar year. SWGDOG meetings are dependent on available resources by the sponsoring agency. The SWGDOG Executive Board may convene from time to time when deemed necessary by the Chair and when in accordance with available resources.

B. All SWGDOG members shall be notified of SWGDOG meetings as far in advance of the meeting date as possible; however, in all cases, no less than two weeks advance notice of a planned SWGDOG meeting shall be given to all SWGDOG members.

C. The SWGDOG Executive Secretary shall facilitate travel and/or lodging arrangements for SWGDOG members to attend SWGDOG meetings. The sponsoring agency may assist in the making of travel and/or lodging arrangements for SWGDOG members in coordination with the SWGDOG Executive Secretary.

D. Other than the SWGDOG Executive Secretary, the SWGDOG Executive Board and SWGDOG regular members shall receive no compensation or honoraria in lieu of salary or wages for their time spent attending SWGDOG meetings or working on SWGDOG business.

### **V. Subcommittees**

A. The SWGDOG Chair may empanel a SWGDOG Subcommittee to address a specific topic or set of issues identified to be important to the group or the general discipline of Dogs and Orthogonal detection. The SWGDOG Chair shall designate a SWGDOG member to serve as the Chair of that SWGDOG Subcommittee. The SWGDOG Chair will appoint, upon recommendation from the SWGDOG Subcommittee Chair, a minimum of two additional SWGDOG regular members to serve on said SWGDOG Subcommittee. The SWGDOG Subcommittee Chair shall manage the activities of the Subcommittee and perform all duties incident to the office of a SWGDOG Subcommittee Chair, including but not necessarily limited to the following: preparing

Subcommittee meeting agendas, presiding at Subcommittee meetings, preparing summary minutes of Subcommittee meetings, maintaining records of Subcommittee meetings, preparing Subcommittee task documents, acting as spokesperson for the Subcommittee, and forwarding appropriate draft documents and other work products to the SWGDOG Chair and SWGDOG membership.

B. Upon completion of an assigned task(s) to include a draft document or other work product, the SWGDOG Subcommittee Chair shall advise the SWGDOG Chair and request to be placed on the agenda of a planned SWGDOG meeting. The SWGDOG Subcommittee Chair shall report to the SWGDOG membership during a planned SWGDOG meeting on the Subcommittee's draft document or other work product.

C. Upon completion of all the duties assigned it by the SWGDOG Chair, and absent any additional emerging tasks, a SWGDOG Subcommittee shall be indefinitely suspended or dissolved. The SWGDOG Chair shall make any necessary reassignments of SWGDOG Subcommittee members from suspended or dissolved Subcommittees to new or existing SWGDOG Subcommittees.

## **VI. Process for Approval of Guidelines or Recommendations**

A. Following the presentation by the SWGDOG Subcommittee Chair, SWGDOG members shall be provided with the Subcommittee's draft document or work product and granted an opportunity to conduct a review. A review shall be considered a written evaluation and/or an oral evaluation captured within the SWGDOG meeting minutes of the Subcommittee's draft document or work product. Such review shall be deadlines at the discretion of the SWGDOG Chair, and this critique shall then be forwarded to the SWGDOG Subcommittee Chair for review and response by the Subcommittee.

B. After revision, the draft document or work product will be re-presented to the SWGDOG members for a vote. An acceptance vote of 3/4 (either present or *in absentia*) of the full SWGDOG membership will be required for forwarding the draft document or work product to the SWGDOG Executive Board for action. The SWGDOG Chair will set a minimum of a 14-day deadline for the vote. Failure to vote by the deadline will be considered a vote in favor of the draft document or work product. Failure to achieve a 3/4 vote will return the draft document or work product to the SWGDOG Subcommittee and will follow the prescribed process until accepted or rejected.

C. The SWGDOG Executive Board shall vote on the Subcommittee's accepted draft document or work product. A unanimous vote (either present or *in absentia*) of the SWGDOG Executive Board will be required for approval of the draft document or work product. The SWGDOG Chair will set a minimum of a 14-day deadline for the vote. Failure to vote by the deadline will be considered a vote in favor of the draft document or work product.

D. An approved draft document or work product will be offered for public comment for a minimum of 60 days. Comments made in writing will be sent to the Subcommittee where each comment will be formally addressed.

E. After public comment and any necessary revision(s), the draft document or work product will be re-presented to the SWGDOG membership in accordance with section VI. B. If accepted the draft document or work product will be forwarded to the SWGDOG Executive Board for final approval by unanimous vote in accordance with section VI. C.

F. All revisions to approved documents will be reflected as follows: deletions will be shown as strikethroughs, and additions will be underlined. Both marked and unmarked documents will be posted on the website for review; one document will show the changes and the other document will be the clean version.

G. After final approval by the SWGDOG Executive Board, the work product will be published in *Forensic Science Communications* and/or through other public forums including on a SWGDOG website.

## **VII. Amendments to the Bylaws**

A. Proposed amendments to the bylaws will be made to the SWGDOG Executive Board for consideration.

B. If the SWGDOG Executive Board deems it appropriate, the proposed amendment shall be provided to SWGDOG members at least 30 days prior to a planned SWGDOG meeting at which they are to be voted

upon. The member may be present, vote by proxy, or vote *in absentia*. Votes must be received by the deadline set by the SWGDOG Chair. Failure to vote will be considered a vote in favor of the amendment.

C An affirmation vote of 2/3 of regular membership.