



The Scientific Association Dedicated to Analytical Excellence®

**AOAC INTERNATIONAL
TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**I. NAME:
AOAC Community on Chemical Contaminants & Residues in Food**

II. MISSION:

To reach consensus on methods needs, performance criteria, validation study design and level of validation for methods in the area of chemical contaminants and residues in foods, and to participate in and contribute to methods development and validation.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES:

To establish a forum where stakeholders can introduce and resolve methods needs and issues on an international level in the area of chemical contaminants and residues in foods.

To establish, via consensus, a documented system of community and subgroup governance, that follows the principles of openness, transparency and balance in the development of voluntary consensus standards. This system must ensure that all members of the community are provided fair opportunity to have a voice in all community business, recommendations and decisions.

To work with AOAC-appointed methods volunteer experts in the community and to ensure these volunteer experts are present to guide and advise subgroups, stakeholders and stakeholder experts on good scientific practices in methods development, design and validation.

To work with assigned AOAC staff to ensure

- the community and subgroups stay within mission and scope so that only those community activities with stakeholder sponsorship are undertaken and pursued,
- the community and subgroups stay on track and fulfill their objectives and members fulfill their assignments,
- the active participation and engagement of the community members through timely and comprehensive AOAC communications, AOAC-orchestrated face-to-face meetings, virtual meetings, conference calls, balloting, surveys, reporting, updates, coordinating and maintenance of e-communities, and similar activities.

To identify and prioritize, by consensus, the methodologies most needed to detect, identify and/or quantify chemical contaminants and residues in foods.

To identify principal stakeholder sponsors for priority methods, include them in the community, and have them appointed by the Chair as leaders of priority methods subgroups.

To assist principal stakeholder sponsors in forming balanced subgroups of stakeholders, experts, and stakeholder sponsors from industry, government and academia internationally, focused on a specific method, or similar methods, who are willing to participate and contribute to methods development and validation efforts.

If appropriate, conduct a call for methods for any subgroup that requires this activity to view testing methods already available in the community.

If appropriate, work with selected expert review panels and non-stakeholder groups that have only 3rd party independent scientists, to determine the best methods available from the community in any particular method area. The community/subgroup must agree that the final decision of the expert review panel will be adhered to regarding best methods as determined by stakeholder criteria. This may or may not be criteria based on the Official Methods process if the stakeholders decide an Official Method is not fit for purpose.

To evaluate annually the performance of the community, its subgroups, and AOAC staff in fulfilling the objectives and mission of the community, with a plan to resolve any issues revealed; and to provide a report of community activities in written form to the Board of Directors, and to the AOAC staff for publication, and to present this report at the AOAC Business Meeting each year.

IV. COMPOSITION, ORGANIZATION and GOVERNANCE

The Community will be composed of all stakeholders, including experts and AOAC members, involved with or affected by the analysis of chemical contaminants and residues in food from international, federal, and state governments, academia, industry, business, and trade associations. The Community will also include AOAC-appointed volunteer methods experts whose role will be to guide and advise the community in methods development and validation practices and standards that are based on good science.

The Community Chair will be a member of AOAC.

The Chair of the Community is a principal stakeholder/expert and a stakeholder sponsor from the international community, appointed by the President of AOAC. The Chair cannot be an AOAC-appointed volunteer methods expert, but must be a member of AOAC. The role of the Chair is two-fold. First, the chair represents his/her own stake in community matters. Second, the Chair is responsible for ensuring that the community and subgroups follow open, fair, transparent and balanced principles of governance so that the methods developed are defensible and represent consensus decision making. If needed, the Chair can appoint other community officers as needed. If needed community co-Chairs can be appointed by the President of AOAC.

The Chair can appoint subgroup Chairs who are each principal stakeholder sponsors of a method. All members of the community and community subgroups must be approved by the Chair.

Each subgroup Chair must also be a member of the community, or become a member of the community before being appointed subgroup Chair.

Each subgroup Chair will recommend a balanced group of subgroup members from industry, government and academia internationally, who are also stakeholders and/or experts of that particular method or method area. Subgroup members must also be members of the Community. The subgroup chair will provide the recommendations to the Community Chair for approval.

The subgroups shall, thereafter, adopt an appropriate working structure and governance following the open and transparent voluntary consensus standards principles, and by consensus select two

members from their subgroup to recommend to the Community Chair to represent them in general community meetings and as part of the community's voting group.

An individual with a vested interest in a particular method or methods may not form a subgroup for the sole purpose of driving that method toward validation by AOAC.

Members of a subgroup with a vested interest in a particular method must reclude themselves from voting on the method.

Each voting member of the community will be appointed for a two-year term, which may be renewed at the Chair's discretion.

In consensus voting, ultimately the hope is that all stakeholders approve a particular item. But a consensus vote does not have to be unanimous. At the minimum to have a vote pass by consensus, at least two thirds of the voting body has to approve a motion.

All members are expected to actively participate in the work of the Community including, but not limited to, promptly responding to communications, attending and actively participating in meetings, reviewing meeting background material and agendas prior to meeting, and accepting and following through on assignments. Persons who do not actively participate will be removed from the Community by the Chair.

The meetings of the Community and subgroups will be open to all interested parties.

Recommendations are made by subgroups through consensus. These recommendations are passed to the community for discussion and then for vote by the representative voters. If the stakeholder group votes to pursue method validation through AOAC, a group of AOAC-appointed experts will approve/disapprove the recommendations of the stakeholders depending on the performance/acceptance criteria, design and validation level established by stakeholder consensus vote.

V. STAFF LIAISON

If a community forms with Board approval, the Executive Director shall immediately assign a member or members of the staff to serve as staff liaison(s) to assist the community in achieving its objectives under the AOAC mission. Because change or reduction in staffing impacts directly on the ability of a volunteer group to fulfill its objectives, staff liaisons will not be changed or withdrawn from the community without Board approval and then appropriate notification by the Executive Director.

VI. REVIEW SCHEDULE

Every quarter of 2007 and 2008 or until such time as OMB restructuring has been completed.

VII. DATE ESTABLISHED

Proposed: to be determined

VIII. DATES REVISED