

The International Association of Forensic Toxicologists

2008 Constitution

Preamble: In 1963 an Association was established in London, UK, between scientists engaged or interested in forensic toxicology. This Association proposed a provisional Constitution that was adopted in that same year and modified in 1981 and 1995. An amended Constitution was drafted in 2000 to be adopted in 2001. The text of the Constitution, which governs the activities of the Association, is given below.

Art. 1 Name

The name of the nonprofit Association is The International Association of Forensic Toxicologists (TIAFT).

Art. 2 Aims

The aims of the Association are

- To provide an organization of professionals engaged or interested in the field of forensic toxicology or related areas of analytical toxicology, including the interpretation of the results of these analyses.
- To promote cooperation and coordination of effort among members.
- To encourage research in and the practice of forensic toxicology and related areas of analytical toxicology.
- To provide a forum for the discussion and exchange of professional experiences in forensic toxicology and related areas of analytical toxicology between forensic toxicologists and all other interested parties.
- To promote education and training in forensic toxicology and related areas of analytical toxicology.
- To pursue the above aims throughout the world.

Art. 3 Language

The official language of the Association is English.

Art. 4 Membership

- There shall be four categories of membership: Full member, Student member, Sponsor member and Honorary member.
- Full membership shall be limited to those persons who, at time of application, are actively engaged in forensic toxicology or related areas of analytical toxicology, or who have made significant contributions to the above fields. Application for full membership requires the endorsement of two full members and that of the Regional Representative or of the Executive Board. Acceptance will be by vote of the Executive Board.
- Student membership shall be limited to students in the field of forensic toxicology or related areas of analytical toxicology. Application for student membership requires the endorsement of the academic adviser for each renewal. Acceptance will be by vote of the Executive Board.
- Sponsor membership shall be limited to companies, organizations or individuals with an interest in forensic toxicology or related areas of analytical toxicology and willing to support the Association financially. Application for Sponsor membership must be done to the Secretary. Acceptance will be by vote of the Executive Board.
- Honorary members are those who have served TIAFT in an outstanding manner. They are nominated by the Executive Board. Acceptance will be by vote at the Business meeting.
- Full and honorary members will carry voting privileges and only full members will be eligible to hold office.
- The member may terminate membership by written notification to the Secretary or to the Treasurer at least three months before the end of the calendar year.
- Any member who fails to remit dues after a second written notice from the Treasurer may be removed from the membership list. The Regional Representative shall be consulted before removing a member who defaults payments from membership in his/her region.
- A member in any category may be censured or may be expelled from TIAFT for unethical or other conduct detrimental to the profession of forensic toxicology, or conduct detrimental to TIAFT as an organization. Charge(s) alleging any such conduct must be presented in writing by a member of TIAFT to the President of TIAFT, who, with the approval of the Executive Board, shall appoint an ad hoc Disciplinary Committee to investigate the charge(s) and recommend the action, if any, to be taken against the member. Prior to any

adverse action, a member shall be notified in writing of the nature of the charge(s) and afforded an opportunity to file a written response to the charge(s) and/or to appear at a formal hearing before the Executive Board. The Disciplinary Committee, within one year of start of any charge, recommends suitable action to the Executive Board. The Executive Board shall then act on the Disciplinary Committee's recommendation promptly.

Art. 5 Executive Board

5.1 Board members

The Executive Board of the Association shall consist of a President, a President-elect, the immediate past-president, a Secretary, a Treasurer and three other elected Board Members. They shall be elected every three years and serve for the following triennial period (triennial meetings are held in 2002¹, 2005, etc.).

The Executive Board is responsible for conducting the affairs of the Association. At any meeting of the Board, a majority of the Board members shall constitute a quorum. The Executive Board shall appoint a Webmaster and a Bulletin Editor from within or outside its ranks. The webmaster or the Bulletin editor are invited to the board meetings if they are not elected board members.

The President and the President-elect shall serve only one term.

5.2 Nominations

Any full member can nominate candidates for office by writing to the President at least 30 days before the business meeting held at the triennial meeting.

5.3 Duties

- The duties of the President are to preside at all Association and Executive Board meetings, to represent the Association to other organizations and publicly. The President calls business meetings, Executive Board meetings and any other required Association meetings. The President is ex officio a member of all committees and empowered to sign checks and drafts on TIAFT accounts.
- The duties of the President-elect are to liaise with the organizing committee of TIAFT meetings and to assist the President in his/her duties. He/she automatically follows the President in his/her office after his/her term.
- The duties of the Secretary are to prepare minutes of Association meetings called by the President, to publish the minutes of the business meeting in TIAFT Bulletin, to promote membership and to process membership applications and to keep the membership list. The Secretary shall be responsible for the regular correspondence of the Association.
- The duties of the Treasurer are to keep all financial records and accounts of the association, to establish and receive dues payments or other payments to TIAFT, and to pay association expenses. The Treasurer shall prepare a financial report for presentation at the business meeting, which shall be published in TIAFT Bulletin. A suitable, independent trained auditor or licensed accountant in the country where the treasurer resides shall audit the Treasurer's accounts presented at the annual meeting and his/her report bears the name and signature of this person, as well as the date of the audit. The auditor may be paid a fee as agreed upon by the Executive Board. The finances of TIAFT are kept in an internationally acceptable currency.
- The duties of the other Executive Board Members will be determined by decision of the Executive Board.

5.4 Vacancies

Vacancies in office shall be filled until the next business meeting by appointment of the Executive Board.

Art. 6 Annual dues

- The Treasurer shall set the amount of the annual dues for each category of membership with the agreement of the Executive Board and with the approval of the voting members present at the annual business meeting. This amount shall be reviewed in relation to the Association's financial position each year. Student members benefit from a reduced fee (covering the Bulletin and mailing charges only) to be determined by the Treasurer. The dues are waived for members from developing countries (DCF countries). The list of countries that qualify for DCF status is determined by the board. Members from DCF countries are full members, but they do not receive a printed version of the Bulletin.
- The payment shall be set in U.S. dollars and converted using the current exchange rate to Pounds Sterling and Euro. Payment should normally be in these currencies, but other currencies may be accepted at the discretion of the Treasurer.

¹ At the triennial meeting in 2002, both the president and the president-elect will be elected.

Art. 7 Regional Representatives

- The Executive Board shall appoint Regional Representatives for a renewable five year term. The Executive Board may ask a group of TIAFT members for a geographical area to nominate a representative. Regional representatives shall be full members of TIAFT.
- The Regional Representative represents TIAFT in his/her area of the world. He/she processes requests for TIAFT membership, is responsible for liaison with related scientific societies in his/her area and serve their local TIAFT members as their needs arise.
- Regional Representatives may assist the Executive Board with their respective duties.
- Regional representatives may be removed from this position at the discretion of the Executive Board.

Art. 8 TIAFT Bulletin and TIAFTnet

- The Association shall publish and circulate a Bulletin to its members under the responsibility of the Editor.
- The Editor may appoint an editorial board with the approval of the Executive Board, to assist in his/her tasks.
- Policy matters concerning the Bulletin shall involve consultation between the Executive Board, the Editor and the editorial board.
- The Association shall maintain a website.
- The webmaster may appoint other members, with the approval of the Executive Board, to assist in his/her tasks.
- Policy matters concerning the website shall involve consultation between the Executive Board and the webmaster.

Art. 9 TIAFT Meetings

- The Association strives to hold at least one scientific meeting per year.
- The organization of TIAFT meeting shall be done by the Chairperson of the meeting, in consultation with the Executive Board.
- The Chairperson of the meeting shall be appointed at or by the time of the business meeting at least two years prior to the anticipated date of the event. He/She shall be a full member of TIAFT.
- The Chairperson of the meeting may appoint a local organizing committee to help organize TIAFT meeting.
- The financing of TIAFT meeting is the full responsibility of its Chairperson.
- The Association has no financial obligations towards the meeting. The Executive Board can make exceptions to this rule.
- TIAFT meetings may be organized jointly or in conjunction with other relevant scientific meetings.

Art. 10 Business Meeting

- The Association holds a business meeting during each main TIAFT meeting.
- The date and place of the business meeting shall be announced in the program of TIAFT meeting.
- The agenda of the business meeting shall be announced and approved at the beginning of the meeting.

Art. 11 Business Meeting Rules

- The business meeting shall be held under the Chairship of the President, the president-elect or one of the other Board members.
- The meeting is open to all members, as well as to other interested persons. Parts of the meeting may be limited to members only, if requested by at least two full members.
- Only full and honorary members carry speaking and voting privileges but speaking privileges may be granted to other attendees by the Chairperson.
- Issues shall be decided upon by acclamation or by vote if requested by at least two full members.
- Voting shall be done in the open, by counting members in favor, those opposed, or abstaining, unless specified otherwise.
- A written ballot of those in attendance shall settle election of Board members, as well as other matters considered sensitive by the Chairperson.
- Decisions shall be taken by simple majority of the valid votes cast. When the votes are equally divided, the Chairperson shall cast the final vote.
- The Chairperson may appoint a voting committee to assist in carrying out the ballots and in counting the votes.

- All other issues pertaining to the proper running of the meeting shall be settled at the discretion of the Chairperson.

Art. 12 Committees

- As required, the Executive Board may appoint committees to assist with particular issues. Committees report to the Executive Board. In addition, committee activities shall be presented and discussed at the business meeting.

Art. 13 Awards

- As required, the President, after consultation with the Executive Board, may confer awards on persons who have made extraordinary contributions to the Association or to forensic toxicology in general.
- The Executive Board may appoint ad hoc Award Committees to draft award terms, recommend recipients for awards and prepare appropriate award ceremonies and mementos. Requests for nominations are published in TIAFT bulletin, and members can nominate individuals by writing to the chair of the committee.

Art. 14 Archives

- The Association shall maintain archives of all relevant materials.
- The archives shall at least include, but not be limited to: the correspondence of the Executive Board, the minutes of all Executive Board meetings and business meetings, the Treasurer's reports, the issues of TIAFT Bulletin, the membership lists.
- The archives shall be managed by one of the Board members and be kept at an appropriate place.

Art. 15 Amendments

- Proposals for amending the Constitution must emanate from the Executive Board or from 10% of the total full-voting membership.
- All proposals for changing the Constitution must first be discussed at a Business meeting and the Executive Board must notify the membership via TIAFT Bulletin at least two months prior to the date of this meeting.
- Adoption of amendments is to be done by a mail ballot and requires a two-third majority of full members casting a mail ballot. The returned ballots must exceed 10% of the total full membership.
- The Executive Board must notify the membership about the final text of the amendment proposal through TIAFT Bulletin, at least two months prior to the closing date of the mail ballot.
- If the mail votes do not exceed 10% of the membership, the issue will be carried over to the next annual business meeting. Adoption of amendments in the latter then requires a quorum of 5% of the total full membership and a two-third majority of full members casting a vote.

Art. 16 Liquidation

- Liquidation of the Association requires the same procedure as described for adoption of amendments of the Constitution, as described in Art. 15.
- The assets and income of the organization shall be applied exclusively to the promotion of its objectives and no portion shall be paid or distributed directly to the members of the organization except as bona fide remuneration for services rendered or expenses incurred on behalf of the organization.
- In the event of the organization being dissolved, the amount which remains after such dissolution and the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities shall be paid and applied by the organization with its powers to any organization which has similar objectives and which has rules prohibiting the distribution of its assets and income to its members.