

National Commission on Forensic Science

A Federal Advisory Committee
for the U.S. Department of Justice



What is a Federal Advisory Committee?

The Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 and its amendments provide strict rules including:

- Meeting notices are posted in the Federal Register prior to each meeting
- Meeting are open to the public
- Public comments are encouraged and accepted
- Meeting minutes and other relevant documents are available online at <http://www.facadatabase.gov/> (Committee 83353)

Duties of the National Commission on Forensic Science (NCFS) per its Charter

Duties include:

1. To recommend priorities for standards development to the Attorney General;
2. To review and recommend that the Attorney General endorse guidance identified or developed by subject-matter experts;
3. To develop proposed guidance concerning the intersection of forensic science and the courtroom;
4. To develop policy recommendations, including a uniform code of professional responsibility and minimum requirements for training, accreditation and/or certification;
5. To consider the recommendations of the National Science and Technology Council's Subcommittee on Forensic Science;
6. To identify and assess the current and future needs of the forensic sciences to strengthen their disciplines and meet growing demands.

NCFS Membership

- The Commission is **co-chaired by Jim Cole, Deputy Attorney General and Pat Gallagher, Director of NIST.**
- Members were appointed by the Attorney General in consultation with the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology.
- Members were selected to achieve a diversity of experiences, including Federal, State, and Local forensic science service providers; research scientists and academicians; Federal, State, Local prosecutors, defense attorneys and judges; law enforcement; and other relevant stakeholders. DOJ encouraged submissions from diverse applicants with respect to backgrounds, professions, ethnicities, gender, and geography.
- **The Commission comprises 37 members** who serve as Special Government Employees without compensation.
- The Commission plans to meet four times each year at approximately three-month intervals.

Commission Leadership and Support

DOJ
Co-Chair



James M. Cole
Deputy Attorney General

NIST
Co-Chair



Patrick D. Gallagher
NIST Director & Acting, Deputy
Secretary of Commerce

DOJ
Vice-Chair

Nelson Santos

Deputy Assistant Administrator
for the Office of Forensic Sciences
at the Drug Enforcement Administration

NIST
Vice-Chair

John M. Butler

NIST Fellow &
Special Assistant to the Director
for Forensic Science

Brette Steele
Designated Federal Official

Robin Jones

First NCFS Meeting

- **February 3-4, 2014**
- 810 7th Street, NW, Washington DC (NIJ building)
- **Open to public** (up to ~150 can attend in person)
 - Will have a public comment period each day
- Notice will be published in Federal Register at least two weeks before meeting
- Plan to discuss accreditation, certification, and proficiency testing
- Plan to review NIST progress with guidance groups

NIST Guidance Groups

- Under the DOJ-NIST Memorandum of Understanding announced in February 2013, NIST is responsible for developing “guidance groups”, which are intended to replace the current SWGs (Scientific Working Groups)
- NIST collected public comments via a Federal Register Notice of Inquiry (NOI) Sept 27 to Nov 26, 2013 (~85 responses)
- A summary of the NOI responses and NIST plan will be shared in a Feb 4, 2014 presentation to NCFS
- A series of public presentations are planned for upcoming AAFS, IAI, NAME, AFTE, and SOFT meetings
 - The Feb 18, 2014 (5:30-7:00pm, Pacific) presentation at the AAFS meeting will also be webcast



www.nist.gov/forensics