Laboratories Working Group

Terms of Reference and *modus operandi*

The Aims of the Laboratories Working Group

To provide a focus for promoting best practice. To facilitate a group approach to identifying and resolving issues faced by both Geotechnical and geo-environmental laboratories. To be a forum for formulating unified industry responses to proposed changes in legislation and standards. These aims are achieved through:

a) Encourage and assist Members to provide high quality, appropriate and reliable testing services.
b) Provide a forum for discussion of commercial issues.
c) Provide a forum for discussion of issues affecting the testing sector of the ground industry (e.g. Health and Safety accreditation training)
d) Facilitate co-ordination of industry views and comments on new legislation, regulations and standards.
e) Support external accreditation.

Terms of Reference

1 Identification

The Laboratories Working Group is, until such times as a re-arrangement of the Association takes place, one of the Standing Working Groups.

2 Composition and Membership

In common with all working groups, the Laboratories WG consists of the WG Leader, appointed to the Executive by the Members of the Association, and who is supported by an appropriate number of Members of the Association, supplemented as necessary, by individuals with recognised expertise from the wider industry, such that the WG can function efficiently and effectively.

Members of the Laboratories WG are appointed directly by the Laboratories WG Leader from among the Specialists within the Membership and their colleagues in Member and Affiliate Organisations, to serve for a year at a time. They may be appointed for further terms.

The WG Leader will review the membership of his or her WG directly after the AGM – usually in March or April each year. At this review, those who have not significantly contributed to the work of the WG over the past year will be retired and new members will be sought to replace them.

In addition to those members of the WG who are appointed by the WG Leader, Members of the Association who have particular skills in one or other aspect of communications and wish to serve on the Laboratories WG may inform the Administrator of their interest, which will, in turn, be conveyed to the WG Leader for his or her decision to accept or decline.

There is no fixed number of members of the Laboratories WG, but it would not normally exceed, say 20 members, unless the creation of a new *ad hoc* WG, for example, requires differing talents of areas of knowledge. Other WGs may have different optimum membership numbers.

3 Duties

The duties of the Laboratories WG (and all other WGs) are:

i) to fulfil the brief given to it by the AGS Chair, via its WG Leader, and
ii) to communicate and engage with the Membership of the Association and the wider industry on matters relating to their Working Group.

The members the Laboratories WG and all WGs and their various sub-committees are expected to participate actively and contribute to the work of their WG. Thus, membership of a WG is not a virtual sinecure – it will not be sufficient merely to be present at meetings – everybody should expect to have tasks assigned to them, for completion outside the meetings.

4 Line of Responsibility

All Standing WGs report to the Executive Committee via their WG Leader.

Modus operandi

1 The Byelaws require that each WG shall arrange to meet, at least twice annually, and that the Administrator shall consult with the WG Leader and choose the location, date and time. The Administrator will communicate this with other members of the Working Group at least 30 days prior to the meeting.

2 In the interval between meetings, the LWG members will continue to communicate with each other by whatever means and at such frequency that will enable them to conduct their business efficiently. The WG Leader will co-ordinate such communication, with the assistance of the Administrator.

3 The Byelaws specify that the Leader of the Laboratories WG (and Leaders of all other WGs) will make the decisions of their WG, having considered the arguments and advice given to them by the members of the Group.

4 Working with the Administrator, the Laboratories WG Leader will formulate and finalise the agenda for all of the Laboratories WG's meetings.

5 Each member of the Laboratories WG who has an action from the previous meeting against their name, or a member who wishes to raise a substantial issue, shall provide a brief paper on their subject to the Administrator. These papers must be submitted in accordance with the published timetable of actions referred to in item 8, such that they can be issued with the Agenda for the meeting. The former practice of providing *ad hoc* verbal reports at meetings is now actively discouraged.

6 In an effort to streamline the proceedings of meetings, all papers will be taken as read and, if for information only, will be annotated thus and will not be discussed further in the meeting. Self-evidently, this does not apply to papers for further discussion or matters for decision.

7 The WG Leader shall arrange with the Administrator to organise, distribute and make available the records of all activities of the Working Group, as appropriate.

8 When the finalised record of a meeting is distributed to the WG members, it will, as a matter of routine, be accompanied by a list of actions arising from the meeting for members to progress, together with a timetable for those actions leading up to the next meeting.

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