



Terms of Reference for the INTERPOL Disaster Victim Identification Working Group

THE SECRETARY GENERAL,

Acting under Article 29 of the Constitution,

DECIDES as follows:

ARTICLE 1

ESTABLISHMENT AND MANDATE

1. The INTERPOL Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) Working Group (WG), (hereafter referred to as the “DVI-WG”) is a working group of the INTERPOL General Secretariat. Its predecessor began as a Working Party established by a resolution of the 49th General Assembly, held from 13th-21st November 1980 in Manila, Philippines (Resolution 49/RES/2). The Working Party became the INTERPOL Standing Working Party on Disaster Victim Identification via a resolution of the 55th General Assembly, held from 6th-13th October 1986 in Belgrade, former Yugoslavia (Resolution AGN/55/RES/14). The Standing Working Party became the INTERPOL Standing Committee on Disaster Victim Identification via a resolution of the 65th General Assembly, held from 23rd-29th October 1996 in Antalya, Turkey (Resolution AGN/65/RES/13). In 2015, a resolution of the 84th General Assembly, held from 2nd-5th November 2015 in Kigali, Rwanda (Resolution AG/2015/RES/08) dissolved, with immediate effect, the INTERPOL Standing Committee on Disaster Victim Identification, with a view to its replacement by a DVI Working Group of the General Secretariat.
2. Subject to the financial regulations and other decisions of the General Secretariat and the Executive Committee, the DVI-WG shall operate in accordance with these Terms of Reference, INTERPOL’s Constitution and the Rules on the Processing of Data.
3. The purpose of the DVI-WG, is to provide expert guidance and advice to assist the General Secretariat in the formulation of policies and guidelines within its field of expertise and to promote international cooperation and best practices in the field of DVI. The DVI-WG aims to enhance the quality, efficiency and reliability of DVI standards and methods, and to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and technologies among the global DVI community.

ARTICLE 2

SPECIFIC TASKS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Within its mandate, the DVI-WG shall:
 - a. Serve as a forum for member countries to exchange ideas, information and good practice with a view to enhancing INTERPOL's role in DVI;
 - b. Provide recommendations on the use of INTERPOL DVI standards, and any other relevant and developing areas related to INTERPOL's mandate in line with its Constitution and relevant legislation;
 - c. Provide expert advice and guidance in the formulation of policies and strategies referred to the DVI-WG by the General Secretariat;
 - d. Provide advice on DVI related matters referred to the DVI-WG.
2. To the above ends, the DVI-WG shall:
 - a. Provide ongoing development of the DVI process through improved functionality, efficiency and effectiveness;
 - b. Promote the extension of DVI knowledge including national, bi-lateral, regional and international expert platforms;
 - c. Promote the use of INTERPOL's DVI standards and databases to member countries, national agencies and other fora (for example, worldwide events, special operations);
 - d. Create, develop and promote the use of international DVI standards;
 - e. Support and enhance the DVI capacity of member countries;
 - f. Promote connectivity and liaison within the INTERPOL General Secretariat and with established professional and expert organizations and networks;
 - g. Provide expert advice and guidance on DVI matters referred to the DVI-WG by the General Secretariat;
 - h. Maintain the INTERPOL DVI forms, Guide and other similar documents as may be deemed necessary;
 - i. Support the development of an international DVI IT system;
 - j. Create, develop, and promote ethical frameworks within the INTERPOL DVI standards.

ARTICLE 3

COMPOSITION

MEMBERS

1. The INTERPOL General Secretariat shall seek to ensure a broad representation of countries in all geographical regions and, as outlined in 3.1.4, the required expertise and profile. It may be necessary to limit the number of attendees per organization or per member country for logistical reasons or in order to achieve this aim.
2. The DVI-WG is open to officials employed by law enforcement agencies from INTERPOL member countries, who shall be assigned in coordination with the respective National Central Bureaus (NCBs).
3. Every country willing to participate in the DVI-WG shall submit an application to the Secretary General through their National Central Bureau (NCB). Member countries are afforded one designated delegate (hereafter "member"), and therein one vote in the DVI-WG. Members shall be vetted and approved by the country's NCB and act as a representative of their country.
4. Each member should present at least one of the following profiles:

- a. Officials involved and experienced with the decision-making process of DVI;
 - b. Scientific experts, managers or practitioners in relevant biometric processes employed by or associated with a law enforcement agency and in their role as Chair of one of the sub-working groups mentioned in Article 7 of this Terms of Reference;
 - c. Officials involved and experienced in DVI response (and have up-to-date and operational knowledge) and/or
 - d. Other profiles that the General Secretariat considers would add value to the DVI-WG's work or facilitate achieving its objectives.
5. Each member will have the assurance from their home administration that they will benefit from the time and resources necessary to commit to regular attendance and contribute to the tasks assigned to the DVI-WG.
6. In order to ensure consistency and continuity, members should represent their country or organization for a period of not less than two (2) continuous years.
7. Members are expected to attend a minimum of one of the scheduled meetings in person per calendar year. Members are also expected to actively participate in and contribute to the tasks of the DVI-WG.
8. Membership of the DVI-WG shall be for a maximum of ten (10) years, whether or not in continuous periods. For countries whose head of the National DVI organization (hereinafter the "commander") holds office in excess of ten (10) years, written permission can be given by the INTERPOL General Secretariat to extend this term while the individual is the country's lead representative for DVI matters.

OBSERVERS AND EXPERTS

9. Observers and experts may only attend the DVI-WG with prior written approval as outlined in paragraph 3.2.3.
10. In the present Terms of Reference:
 - "Observers" shall mean individuals who attend one or more meetings of the DVI-WG. Observers do not have the right to vote.
 - "Experts" shall mean individuals who are invited for a specific topic. Experts do not have the right to vote.
11. The presence of observers and experts may only take place following a substantiated request (by the designated member or NCB) and subsequent written permission from the Chair of the DVI-WG. The consent shall be valid for the duration of one meeting, a specific agenda item or the period during which the applicant is a DVI-WG member. This period of validity will be included in the written permission.

ARTICLE 4

EXECUTIVE POSITIONS

- 1 The Chair and Deputy-Chair of the DVI-WG shall be elected from and by the majority vote of members of the DVI-WG, and confirmed by the Secretary General. Both executive functions shall be carried out for a maximum period of two (2) years. If there is no suitable replacement candidate for the positions, their terms may be extended in one (1) year increments until a new candidate is proposed and voted on by the majority of the DVI-WG members. The appointment will be approved in writing by the INTERPOL General Secretariat.

2. The DVI-WG has a rotation scheme for the positions of the Chair and the Deputy-Chair. This scheme ensures the consistency and continuity of the executive positions. After a two (2) year period, the Deputy-Chair will take over the position of Chair and a new Deputy-Chair will be elected. This means that candidates for the position of Deputy-Chair must be available for at least four (4) years (2 x 2 years).
3. The Chair shall:
 - a. Preside at the DVI-WG meetings and direct the discussions, ensuring good order and continuing dialogue, as well as the observance of INTERPOL's ethical and legal framework;
 - b. Ensure discussions remain relevant to the DVI-WG prescribed objectives;
 - c. Invite speakers as they deem necessary for the execution of the tasks of the DVI-WG;
 - d. Be the initial point of contact and the source of timely advice for the DVI Unit of the INTERPOL General Secretariat;
 - e. Assist with the organization of meetings, symposia and conferences;
 - f. Represent the DVI-WG in formal communications or engagements.
4. The Deputy-Chair shall:
 - a. Represent the Chair and take over their duties in their absence;
 - b. Support the Chair during the above mentioned activities;
 - c. Consider the position as a preparation to become the subsequent Chair.

ARTICLE 5

DECISION-MAKING

1. The DVI-WG shall act by consensus or if necessary, by simple majority of its members present (or represented) with each member country having one vote. If the designated member from any country is unable to be present, they must proxy their right to vote to another member of their country for the duration of one meeting, in writing, to the DVI-WG Chair. These proxy votes are subject to the approval of the DVI-WG Chair.
2. Votes must be taken during the annual meetings by the show of hands. For topics that can be voted on outside regular meetings, electronic voting can be carried out.
3. The selection and voting of a new Deputy Chair will take place electronically and anonymously. In the instance of a tie, a second round of voting will be held. If no candidate is selected in this round, a candidate will be randomly selected during the next working group meeting in order to facilitate a fair unbiased result.

ARTICLE 6

MEETINGS

1. The DVI-WG shall meet at least twice a year in order to carry out its assigned tasks. Once a year, this meeting is prior to the annual DVI Conference (typically in May or June) and once at the invitation of a member country (typically in October or November). The venue of the former (May or June) meetings may be at the INTERPOL General Secretariat in Lyon or the INTERPOL Global Complex for Innovation in Singapore. The venue of the latter (October or November) meeting can be at another location only when proposed and hosted by a member country. If no member country is hosting this meeting, it will be held at the IPSG in Lyon. The Chair of the DVI-WG may decide, that meetings may be held virtually, where circumstances warrant the same.
2. In the case of a meeting hosted by a member country, INTERPOL will not provide financial support for the expenses incurred, for example, towards members' travel and subsistence, or meeting room facilities.

ARTICLE 7

SUB WORKING GROUPS

1. Subject to the approval of the INTERPOL Secretary General, the DVI-WG may establish specialized sub-groups to assist with its work. These sub-groups shall be known as "Sub Working Groups" or DVI-SWG.
2. These DVI-SWG shall report on their activities to the DVI-WG during the latter's meetings. The DVI-SWG shall also present their specialized recommendations to the DVI-WG for the latter's consideration.
3. The Chair and Deputy-Chair of the DVI-WG cannot hold office in any DVI-SWG formed under these Terms of Reference.
4. The Chair and Deputy-Chair of a DVI-SWG shall be elected by the majority vote of members of the DVI-SWG, and confirmed by the DVI-WG Chair. Both executive functions shall be carried out for a maximum period of two (2) years. If there is no suitable replacement candidate for the DVI-SWG positions, their terms may be extended in one (1) year increments until a new candidate is proposed and voted on by the DVI-SWG. An application for extension must be submitted in writing to the INTERPOL General Secretariat (DVI Unit) and be approved by the Secretary General.
5. The DVI-SWG elections have the same rotation scheme as mentioned in paragraph 4 for the Chair and Deputy-Chair of the DVI-WG. To avoid the simultaneous renewal of all the chairpersons, this election will take place in an alternating year to the election of the executive members of the DVI-WG.
6. Each member country shall be afforded one vote pertaining to membership and procedural decisions within the DVI-SWG's. The voting designation for any given country must be approved by the country's DVI commander and/or the NCB.
7. The DVI-SWG have their own Terms of Reference which are in line with the Terms of Reference of the DVI-WG.

ARTICLE 8

CODE OF CONDUCT

- 1 Members, observers and experts must conduct themselves with integrity, in a professional and ethical manner and should refrain from any action which may adversely affect INTERPOL.
- 2 Members, observers and experts are expected to conduct themselves in line with the international nature of INTERPOL and demonstrate respect, consideration, and tolerance for other members of the DVI-WG and the diversity of INTERPOL member countries.
- 3 Members, observers and experts are expected to respect the confidentiality of the DVI-WG and must not:
 - a. Take visual or audio recordings of INTERPOL staff members, other DVI-WG members, observers or experts for the purposes of publication (in any manner, including social media), without their prior and explicit permission;
 - b. Share or publish content from a meeting including but not limited to written documents, presentations, screenshots/photos or information communicated verbally;
 - c. Misrepresent the activities and discussions of the DVI-WG.

- 4 Members, observers or experts of the DVI-WG do not have the authority to speak on behalf of or represent INTERPOL, without prior approval of the INTERPOL General Secretariat – Communications Office (COM). Specifically, the members of the DVI-WG, when assuming the role of speaking on behalf of the INTERPOL General Secretariat, must have the approval of the INTERPOL General Secretariat prior to making public appearances, speeches, or giving interviews to the media.

ARTICLE 9

SECRETARIAT

1. The INTERPOL General Secretariat (DVI-Unit) is tasked to organize the meetings of the DVI-WG and to assist in the discharge of its mandate.
2. The INTERPOL General Secretariat shall:
 - a. Advise and assist the DVI-WG on matters of procedure and substance.
 - b. Conduct background research and prepare and circulate documents for discussion by the DVI-WG.
 - c. Liaise with the Chair and the members and facilitate dialogue with relevant actors within the Organization.
 - d. Ensure the availability and preparation of an appropriate venue for meetings in Lyon or Singapore (the meetings before and after the DVI conference) and support member countries that offered to organize meetings in October or November.
3. Interpretation and translation shall not be provided for the meetings of the DVI-WG. The working language of the DVI-WG shall be English.
4. The INTERPOL General Secretariat shall ensure the security of information that is communicated by the DVI-WG, including *via* electronic mail, web facilities and shared document sites.

ARTICLE 10

FINANCES

The INTERPOL General Secretariat does not finance the travel, accommodation, or subsistence costs of the members of the DVI-WG.

ARTICLE 11

FINAL PROVISION

The INTERPOL General Secretariat (DVI unit) will review the activities and Terms of Reference of the DVI-WG every five (5) years.

Done in Lyon, France, on **30 SEP.** 2024.


Jürgen Stock
Secretary General