

# **Annual report of The Ethics Group: National DNA Database**

2013



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# FOREWORD



This is the sixth annual report for the Ethics Group (EG) covering another challenging year for the Group. The Protection of Freedoms Act received Royal Assent and brings into effect provisions that the EG has argued for since its inception - the removal of the DNA profiles of innocent people from the National DNA Database (NDNAD).

In line with the Act, Alastair MacGregor QC was appointed as the first Biometrics Commissioner. Along with other responsibilities, he will scrutinise police and other authorities' use of DNA profiles and assess

whether they are being used proportionately. The EG gave advice to Ministers on the development of the role of the Commissioner, and will support his work going forward.

We also advised Ministers on the governance structure of the NDNAD and the need to demonstrate that the database and its use are effective and proportionate in light of the new provisions of the Act.

We are grateful for the continued support and assistance of the Forensic Science Regulator, who is our Home Office sponsor, the Home Office Chief Scientific Adviser, and the Government Chief Scientific Adviser.

I am very pleased to have been reappointed as Chair of the EG for a second three-year term by Ministers. I am very grateful for the support I receive from EG members in carrying out this important work of ensuring there is public confidence in the use of the NDNAD in detecting and preventing crime.

An EG member, Dr Sameer Sarkar, stepped down to take up a post in the United States. Sameer had been with the EG since its inception and the Group has benefited immensely from his expertise and perspective. I wish him well all the best in his future endeavours.

We have continued this year to engage with key stakeholders in and outside government through meetings and presentations.

Our work in the past year has also covered the following areas:

- Management information to measure the impact of the Protection of Freedoms Act
- Minimising DNA contamination through elimination databases
- The governance of all police databases holding DNA information
- The Triennial Review of the EG



Christopher Hughes OBE  
Chair, Ethics Group: National DNA Database

# CHAPTER 1 SUMMARY

This is the sixth annual report of the Ethics Group (EG). Since the last report was published in November 2012, the EG has met formally three times and work has continued in between meetings. The Chair and members have also continued to engage with stakeholders, working groups and other people with an interest in the NDNAD and related DNA matters.

The implementation of the Protection of Freedoms Act has seen the removal of over one million records relating to un-convicted individuals from the NDNAD. We welcome this development as it is in line with previous recommendations of the EG. In fact, this is one of the actions EG has lobbied for most strongly over the years it has been in existence and EG recognise and applaud government for finally taking this step. We also recommended that the Home Office should gather management information that would help demonstrate the usefulness of the retention regime introduced by the Act. We have engaged with Home Office colleagues and the National DNA Database Strategy Board to define what information is required. We endorse the work done so far on data requirements by Home Office colleagues. It is a marked improvement on previously available information.

We have always insisted that the new retention regime be subject to robust statistical data collection and research that would inform policymakers on its effectiveness. The Home Office has a bespoke system for establishing whether a DNA match was linked to a conviction in murder cases. 25% of these cases involve a DNA match. We believe that it would be very helpful in establishing the effectiveness of the NDNAD if the type of data gathered on murder cases was extended to another serious crime like rape. We are also pleased that the Forensic Science Regulator is developing mechanisms, through the use of elimination databases, to reduce the chances of contaminant profiles being loaded on the NDNAD and possibly diluting its effectiveness. In this regard, the EG makes in this annual report a new set of recommendations:

1. The Home Office should collate evidence on rape cases where a DNA match led to conviction.
2. Efforts should be made to purge the NDNAD of contaminant profiles.

## CHAPTER 2

# VISION AND VALUES OF THE ETHICS GROUP

### 1.0 BACKGROUND

The Ethics Group of the National DNA Database is an advisory non-departmental public body of the Home Office. The Ethics Group was established to provide Ministers with independent ethical advice on the operation and practice of the NDNAD. It came into being in 2007 and comprises members from different disciplines and professions led by an independent chair. It publishes its minutes, an annual report and various discussion papers to Home Office Ministers.

### 2.0 VISION

To ensure that all decisions relating to the forensic use of DNA (obtaining, storage, retrieval) are considered in the light of ethical and Human Rights principles, and that individuals may only have their DNA taken for lawful forensic purposes and at all times be treated fairly and with dignity and respect.

### 3.0 MISSION

We aim to ensure that the culture of the operational framework supporting the NDNAD in England and Wales places ethical issues at the forefront of all activities at all times.

### 4.0 VALUES

The following are the values and principles that the EG bring to our role in terms of establishing and resolving ethical issues:

- That the NDNAD must have a proper lawful basis that is compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998 and which provides for independent and accountable governance of its operations.
- That there are clear, detailed, open and transparent rules governing the every day operations of the NDNAD so as to ensure that processes are just and lawful and provide sufficient guarantees against the risk of abuse.
- That the use of forensic DNA sampling should be appropriate and proportionate and should not discriminate against members of any section of society.
- That the operations of the NDNAD are at all times fully based in credible science which shows a strong and cogent rationale for justifying such activities.
- That all decisions taken in relation to the operation of the NDNAD within the criminal justice system are proportionate and fair when balancing the rights of individuals against the needs of society to detect and prevent crime.
- That all persons who are lawfully required to give a DNA sample are treated fairly with dignity and respect and that there is an established independent appeals process to guarantee their right to an effective remedy.
- That the public is fully informed about all aspects of the NDNAD in ways that are understandable including providing information to those individuals who are required to provide a DNA sample.
- That research using the NDNAD is only permitted after full consideration that it is fully compatible with these principles and has been submitted to independent scientific scrutiny.
- That the rights of children and young people should be protected in light of their vulnerability and in accordance with international conventions.

## CHAPTER 3

# MEMBERSHIP, ADMINISTRATION AND ACTIVITIES OF THE ETHICS GROUP

The current EG membership is as follows:

Chairman: Christopher Hughes

Members: Dr Derrick Campbell  
Mrs Wendy Coates  
Ms Madeleine Colvin  
Dr Nina Hallowell  
Professor David Latchman  
Dr Jane Pearson  
Dr Clive Richards  
Ms Sarah Thewlis  
Dr Suzy Walton

During the year April 2012 – March 2013, the EG Chair presented papers at a seminar at the University of Northumbria on the Protection of Freedoms Act and on Familial Searching to the European Association for Forensic Science in Den Haag, Holland.

The EG gave advice on using the NDNAD to identify a missing person, the use of elimination databases, speculative searches and monitoring the impact of legislative changes in reference to the Protection of Freedoms Act.

Other members of Ethics Group kept ‘watching briefs’ on their various topics of responsibility and took part in relevant visits and briefings which are too numerous to mention here.

The EG also received contributions in the form of presentations from: Andrew Rennison, the Forensic Science Regulator, Kevin Sullivan, Quality and Validation Expert at Principal Forensic Services, Mick Carling, Forensic Policy Manager, Police Transparency Unit in the Home Office, and Will Reynolds, Head of Home Office Science Advisory Bodies. An appraisal report on the contributions of EG members was submitted by the Chairman to the EG sponsor, the Forensic Science Regulator, as required by the Terms of Reference of the group. For all the oral presentations that EG received, the EG challenged and probed the speaker with regard to relevant ethical issues.

During the year, there were four General Meetings of the EG. The minutes of these meetings are published and can be found on the Gov.UK website via the web link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/national-dna-database-ethics-group>

During the period of this report, the Chairman and members of the group also met with, attended and/or made contributions and representations to:

- Lord Taylor of Holbeach, Minister for Criminal Information
- The National DNA Database Strategy Board
- The Home Office Chief Scientific Adviser
- The National Policing Improvement Agency
- The Forensic Science Regulator
- The NDNAD Delivery Unit
- The Government Chief Scientific Adviser’s meeting for Chairs of Scientific Advisory Committees

The EG is funded by the Home Office and had a budget allocation of £25,000 in the accounting year 2012/13. Costs were associated with the provisions of facilities for meetings and expenses of members properly incurred. The EG generated no income of its own. Members are not paid for undertaking activities on behalf of the EG.

Administrative support to the EG has been provided by a Secretariat made up of staff from the Home Office. Press Office support also comes from the Home Office. The EG has the right, as an NDPB, to call evidence from relevant parties if it so wishes, that may be unconnected to government. This year this right was not exercised.



## CHAPTER 4

# WORKSTREAMS COMPLETED AND DEVELOPED DURING THE YEAR APRIL 2012 – MARCH 2013

The EG continued to work closely with the National DNA Database Strategy Board. The Strategy Board, which is the overall entity in charge of the National DNA Database, acts as the delivery agent for the recommendations of the EG. The EG Chairman sits on the Strategy Board as an ex-officio member and EG members with lead responsibilities for certain issues remain involved in the related Strategy Board work programmes.

The following EG members lead for the Group on these work programmes:

- Clive Richards and Madeleine Colvin – Advice on the **implementation of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012**
- Sarah Thewlis, Madeleine Colvin and Clive Richards – Ethical advice on **elimination databases**
- Madeleine Colvin and Chris Hughes – Advise and review the implementation of the **deletion of profiles from the NDNAD**
- Sarah Thewlis, Madeleine Colvin and Clive Richards – Ensuring all **police and supplier DNA databases are subject to robust governance standards**
- Wendy Coates, Chris Hughes, Sarah Thewlis and Suzy Walton – **Ethical advice to the Biometrics Commissioner** and others as required
- Madeleine Colvin and Sameer Sarkar – **International exchange of DNA**
- Wendy Coates, Chris Hughes, Nina Hallowell and David Latchman – Monitoring of developments on **crime scene DNA testing** and other new technology
- Suzy Walton – Monitoring the **treatment of children and young people in relation to DNA sampling and retention** with a view to ensuring that they are safeguarded and that their distinct rights are recognised
- Wendy Coates and Derrick Campbell – Monitoring/assessing potential **disproportionate or discriminatory effects of the use and operation of the NDNAD may have on ethnic minority groups** and vulnerable people
- Derrick Campbell and Nina Hallowell – Supporting the NDNAD Strategy Board in developing more **transparent, ethical and user-friendly information about the forensic use of DNA and the database**

The work undertaken in these areas is described below with detail being found in the meeting minutes.

## ADVICE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROTECTION OF FREEDOMS ACT 2012

Since the Act received Royal Assent, the EG gave advice on how to monitor the impact of the legislative changes and gather evidence that underpins the effectiveness of the NDNAD. The EG contributed to drafting what is required for management information on the NDNAD. The EG's major concern is that the use of the database should be proportionate rather than disproportionate and it should be fair in its operation. The obtaining of a DNA profile of a named individual, its storage and its comparison with crime scene profiles may be proportionate if in weighing the intrusion into the rights of the citizen which such profiling entails, there is an appropriate over-balancing of that intrusion by an increase in detection of crime and conviction of criminals. Therefore in advising on the management information required, the EG tries to ensure that the information necessary to support the research which provides public reassurance on this proportionality is collected.

The EG also made representations in writing and in a meeting with Home Office Ministers about data collection and the publication of the data. This could demystify the functioning of the database, which the EG has argued in the past is of considerable value in terms of using a proper understanding of science to give a justifiable basis for trust in public institutions, as well as providing reassurance that the new arrangements are lawful.

The EG welcomes the fact that most of its suggestions in terms of data requirements have been accepted by the NDNAD Strategy Board. It is important to have data available to demonstrate the effectiveness (or otherwise) of the NDNAD in bringing to justice the perpetrators of significant crimes such as murder and sexual violence. There are currently data returns in respect of murder which reveal information as to the effectiveness of the NDNAD in supporting investigations. In this report the EG makes a further recommendation about collating data that would highlight whether a DNA match was significant in securing a conviction in rape cases. This type of information on the effectiveness of state use of personal data will serve as a major contribution to public confidence in the NDNAD.

## ADVISE AND REVIEW THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DELETION OF PROFILES FROM THE NDNAD

The EG continued to monitor the deletion of the profiles of the un-convicted from the NDNAD in line with the Protection of Freedoms Act. The Group received updates on the deletion process. At the time of writing, over 500 000 DNA profiles have been removed from the NDNAD and over 439 000 DNA samples destroyed under the provisions of the Act. The EG welcomes this progress and looks forward to the complete removal of the profiles from the NDNAD of those that were not convicted of a crime. This would ensure that no one's biometric material is held unlawfully. The EG is understanding of the constraints upon government of swift removal due to the complexity of data entry and storage. Nonetheless, the EG has always felt it was important to keep up the pressure on government to find ways through the financial and practical constraints to deletion and the EG is pleased with progress. The EG will continue careful monitoring in this area.

## **ETHICAL ADVICE ON ELIMINATION DATABASES**

The Forensic Science Regulator has started a programme of work to minimise the occurrence and impact of the contamination DNA evidence. This involves the use of elimination databases for police personnel and DNA kit manufacturing staff. The Regulator asked the EG to support this work, advising on its ethical implications. The EG received a presentation from Dr Kevin Sullivan, a consultant engaged by the Regulator to undertake this work.

The EG agreed that the Regulator should consider a single staff database for all personnel that are exposed to material that is loaded on the NDNAD. The EG recognised that there are many profiles on the NDNAD that cannot be reconciled. Many of these would be from staff exposed to crime scene samples or staff from firms that make the kits used in the forensic process. Staff elimination databases are a useful tool in purging the NDNAD of profiles arising from contamination. The EG agreed that steps should be put in place to purge the NDNAD of contaminant profiles. It should be a priority to clear the database of profiles that should not be there. In this regard, the EG has made the removal of contaminant profiles a recommendation in this annual report.

The development of a centralised elimination database would have to consider who owns it and the governance structure. This is necessary for the staff whose profiles are kept to have confidence in its use. There is also a need for appropriate consent forms. Issues around removal from the database, withdrawal of consent, staff leaving the organisation, etc have to be dealt with. A well-managed staff and manufacturers elimination database would increase the integrity of the NDNAD.

## **ENSURING ALL POLICE AND SUPPLIER DNA DATABASES ARE SUBJECT TO ROBUST GOVERNANCE STANDARDS**

The EG is concerned that there is no statutory footing for the Counter-Terrorism DNA Database (CTDNA Database) where profiles are held under a national security determination. Questions about checks and balances are therefore not addressed. While the EG does not have jurisdiction over the CTDNA Database, the EG can raise its concerns in connection with the interface between that database and the NDNAD. The EG highlighted this concern in last year's annual report. The EG had previously recommended that all databases containing DNA information held by the police service should be subject to a robust governance framework.

The public needs to be assured, given the secrecy that surrounds the CTDNA Database, that the interaction between the CTDNA Database and the NDNAD does not compromise the NDNAD. The EG has been assured by the NDNAD Strategy Board that following the implementation of the Protection of Freedoms Act, consideration will be given to how to provide assurance as to retention and use of Counter Terrorism material.

## **ETHICAL ADVICE TO THE BIOMETRICS COMMISSIONER AND OTHERS AS REQUIRED**

Alastair MacGregor QC was appointed as the new Commissioner for the Retention and Use of Biometric Material ('Biometrics Commissioner') on 4 March 2013. His role was created by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 to provide independent oversight to the operation of the new regime and is necessary to ensure that decisions by the authorities to keep biometric material are made in accordance with the law, and that there is public confidence in the exercise of such powers.

The EG had made representations to Ministers about how the Biometrics Commissioner could best perform, and expects him to call on the expertise of the Group in carrying out his duties. The EG also gave advice to the NDNAD Strategy Board on the guidance being developed for applications to the Biometrics Commissioner to make a decision in exceptional circumstances whether the DNA profile obtained, from a person arrested but not subsequently charged with an offence, should be retained for a period of three years.. The EG looks forward to working with the Commissioner as he settles in his new role.

The EG continued in this year to provide ethical advice to the NDNAD Strategy Board and police forces around the use of DNA material, ensuring it was appropriate, proportionate, relevant and lawful. The EG dealt with a few 'one off' requests for specific ethical advice from police forces where the ability to profile could assist cases but where there were ethical concerns about doing so. In answering such cases EG consider all sides of an argument and arrive at a recommendation.

## **INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE OF DNA**

The EG advised that exchanging DNA data between international jurisdictions must be underpinned by the following principles:

- There has to be a policing purpose
- The receiving nation must have a database subject to proper legal controls
- The use must be proportionate
- It should meet certain scientific standards
- Ethical considerations should be factored in

## **MONITOR DEVELOPMENTS ON CRIME SCENE DNA TESTING AND OTHER NEW TECHNOLOGY**

The EG was briefed on developments with Y-STR databases and considered whether the NDNAD should be developed to include searching of the Y-STR information derived from subjects and crime stains, or whether STR profiling should only be assessed on a case by case basis within the interpretation of the DNA results of a particular case. A Y-STR is a "short tandem repeat" on the Y-chromosome and is often used in genealogical DNA testing. The Y-chromosome is passed down the paternal line from male to male. It contains more information and can be used to identify families and groups of families. The American FBI are looking into a much more extensive profiling system that would include Y-STR information.

The main use for this is in terms of familial searches. Y-STRs are used outside the UK primarily for investigating sex offences, where STR profiling is unsuitable. The further profiling of samples for Y-STR is used in familial searching in both undetected serious offences and kinship analysis in victim identification (males) as appropriate.

The old Forensic Science Service (FSS) used to hold a Y-STR database. This data now sits with the Home Office. The EG considered a proposal to create a centralised UK Y-STR database that would inherit the data from the FSS database. The EG was concerned about who appears on the FSS list. Concerns were also raised over the question of whether the Y-STR database would only be used for the specified purposes. There are also data protection questions in terms of information was given to individuals whose Y-STR profiles are held. The database will be inherently discriminatory as it would consist only of males. Questions of transparency, accountability, etc would also need to be addressed.

The EG would like to see more scientific knowledge underpinning the need for a Y-STR database or for keeping Y-STR data. The Group was concerned that it was not anonymised, public information about it was very limited and further questions are raised about its use. These include, who operates the database, who owns it, how often it is used, etc. The database should have the same deletion rules/regime as prescribed in the Protection of Freedoms Act.

#### **MONITOR THE TREATMENT OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN RELATION TO DNA SAMPLING AND RETENTION WITH A VIEW TO ENSURING THAT THEY ARE SAFEGUARDED AND THAT THEIR DISTINCT RIGHTS ARE RECOGNISED**

The EG kept a watching brief on the treatment of children and young people and is pleased that the retention regime under the Protection of Freedoms Act means that the profiles of many children and young people previously held on the NDNAD will be deleted. We are also pleased that management information on the effectiveness of the Act will include data about children and young people. The EG also noticed that earlier reports and advice to Ministers about obtaining proper informed consent for DNA taking from children and young people(those that are able to consent) is being followed where possible.

#### **MONITOR AND ASSESS POTENTIAL DISPROPORTIONATE OR DISCRIMINATORY EFFECTS THE USE AND OPERATION OF THE NDNAD MAY HAVE ON ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS AND VULNERABLE PEOPLE**

The EG has been concerned since its inception about the disproportionate representation of ethnic minority groups on the NDNAD. The removal of substantial numbers of those without convictions from the database is widely welcomed. The Group also welcome the fact that the new regime of inclusion and exclusion from the database can be properly evaluated with management information on the different ethnic categories, which will assist in the understanding of the impact of the database. Such data collection and publication will help to demystify the functioning of the database.

The EG also gave advice on the use of NDNAD in identifying a vulnerable missing person.

#### **SUPPORT THE NDNAD STRATEGY BOARD IN DEVELOPING MORE TRANSPARENT, ETHICAL AND USER-FRIENDLY INFORMATION ABOUT THE FORENSIC USE OF DNA AND THE DATABASE**

The EG spent a considerable amount of time this year helping develop management information for assessing the impact of the Protection of Freedoms Act. A critical part of the implementation of the Act is to win public confidence in the operation of the NDNAD and to demonstrate that it is both proportionate and effective. This requires transparency around the implementation of the Act and its ongoing operations. EG is pleased that the Home Office will publish information on the deletion of profiles from the NDNAD, the retention of profiles, and the effectiveness of the retention of profiles. The Group expects this to also be published in the NDNAD annual reports and encourages the Home Office to minimise delays in publishing the annual reports.



# REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS MADE IN PREVIOUS ANNUAL REPORTS

## RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE 5TH ANNUAL REPORT

Recommendation	Progress made
<p><b>Recommendation 1: The Home Office should collate evidence that demonstrates the effectiveness of the new retention regime and report the findings on a regular basis.</b></p>	<p>The Home Office is to collect and publish data on the effectiveness of the retention provisions in the Protection of Freedoms Act. The information will be from the following categories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of DNA matches produced in a period broken down by the reason for retention of the subject DNA profile.</li> <li>• The number of speculative searches in a period.</li> <li>• Number of DNA matches produced in a period by the speculative search process.</li> <li>• Number of DNA matches produced in a period broken down by the crime for which the subject DNA profile was taken.</li> <li>• Number of DNA matches produced in a period broken down by the crime from which the crime scene profile was taken.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendation 2: In particular, the Home Office should collect data on a routine basis on what extent retaining the profiles of the convicted helps solve crimes. This evidence should be held for qualifying and non-qualifying offences.</b></p>	<p>New information on the people whose profiles are retained on the NDNAD will be published on a regular basis (likely every three months). The information will be from the following categories.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number Retained (currently produced)</li> <li>• Breakdown by Ethnic Appearance, Gender, Current Age and Age on Sampling (currently produced)</li> <li>• Breakdown by reason for retention (new)</li> </ul>

Recommendation	Progress made
<p><b>Recommendation 3: The National DNA Database Strategy Board should aim for more transparency by involving more lay members in its governance structure.</b></p>	<p>New governance rules have been proposed for the Strategy Board in line with the Protection of Freedoms Act.</p> <p>However, the EG is still keen that membership is widened to include more lay members.</p>

The following recommendations from previous reports have had some action, but not progressed as far as they could:

### 1ST ANNUAL REPORT

**Recommendations C&D: Improvement of the process for taking consent and providing a better consent form for adult volunteers**

The EG still remains concerned that the forms provided do not show that the rights of individuals concerned are sufficiently protected.

### 2ND ANNUAL REPORT

**Recommendation 4: To urgently improve the level of easily available and assimilated public information on the use of forensic DNA.**

A website has been developed by the NPIA. This website is designed to give information to the public and professionals on the database. The EG supports this development, however, it does not go as far as the EG had asked in recommendations. There is a continued and widely acknowledged need to provide information to individuals who are being sampled at the time they are being sampled. Individuals may be in a state of increased anxiety and should be provided with basic information covering:

- What DNA is (and what is it not – many people have a misperception from the media);
- How their sample will be taken;
- What will happen after their sample is taken;
- What their rights are.

The EG produced a suggested information template sheet to sit on the back of the consent form. They based this template on an early prototype by the NPIA which was believed to not fully meet the needs of the public. There has been acknowledgement of the importance of providing people with information but there is currently no work underway to produce DNA information sheets, though it is believed that it has been discussed.

## CHAPTER 6

# RECOMMENDATIONS

### 4TH ANNUAL REPORT

**Recommendation 1: All databases containing DNA information including the counter terrorism database held by the police service should be subject to a robust statutory governance framework, appropriate systems and controls, and should be transparent and only be used for statutory purposes.**

The EG has been informed that this is currently the case (governance provided by the Strategy Board) and this will continue as the Strategy Board is on a statutory footing in light of the Protection of Freedoms Act. The EG is not wholly satisfied because the Strategy Board still does not have sufficient independent members, and the counter-terrorism database has no statutory basis.

1. The Home Office should collate evidence on rape cases where a DNA match led to conviction.
2. Efforts should be made to purge the NDNAD of contaminant profiles.

## CHAPTER 7

# FUTURE WORK PLAN

- To advise on the implementation of the Protection of Freedoms Act.
- To monitor, advise, and review the implementation of the deletion of profiles from the NDNAD
- To provide ethical advice on elimination databases.
- To ensure all police and supplier databases containing DNA information are subject to robust governance requirements.
- To provide support and advice on ethical matters to the Biometrics Commissioner and others as required.
- To monitor developments on crime scene DNA testing and other new technology.
- To continue to monitor the treatment of children and young people in relation to DNA sampling and retention with a view to ensuring that they are safeguarded and that their distinct rights are recognised.
- To continue to monitor and assess potential disproportionate or discriminatory effects of the use and operation of the NDNAD may have on ethnic minority groups and vulnerable people.
- To embed new governance arrangements and responsibilities for the EG in light of the findings of the Triennial Review of the Group.





