



# Forensic Science Regulator

## Newsletter Number 2 | February 2023

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## Contact details

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If you have any comments or feedback on this newsletter, please contact the Regulator via the following routes:

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Website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/forensic-science-regulator](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/forensic-science-regulator)

## Message from the Forensic Science Regulator

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This newsletter marks a significant milestone in the introduction of statutory regulation of forensic science in England and Wales with the laying of the draft statutory Code of Practice in Parliament. Before setting out information on this and other progress toward the statutory regulation I must recognise the contribution of two members of the Office of the Forensic Science Regulator (formerly Forensic Science Regulation Unit) who have recently moved on to other roles. Jeff Adams and June Guinness have been involved in forensic science regulation since it was first established in 2007. I think I can say on behalf of all of the holders of the post of Forensic Science Regulator that without Jeff's and June's contribution forensic science regulation would not have been established and we would not have such a strong platform on which to build statutory regulation. Jeff has taken a role within the wider Home Office science group and June has taken on the Head of FINDS leadership role on a temporary basis. May I also take the opportunity to introduce Chanda Lowther-Harris who has taken on the new leadership role of Head of the Office of the Forensic Science Regulator. There has been an expansion of the Office of the Forensic Science Regulator team and details of this are set out in this newsletter.

In my last newsletter published in July last year I set out the work that had been done on preparing the statutory Code of Practice and the preparatory work for the statutory consultation. I am now very pleased to say that the statutory consultation that was launched in August and ended in October has been completed and the finalised Code has been approved by Ministers and was laid in Parliament on the 26th of January 2023. There

is a period of six sitting weeks for both Houses of Parliament to consider and approve the Code.

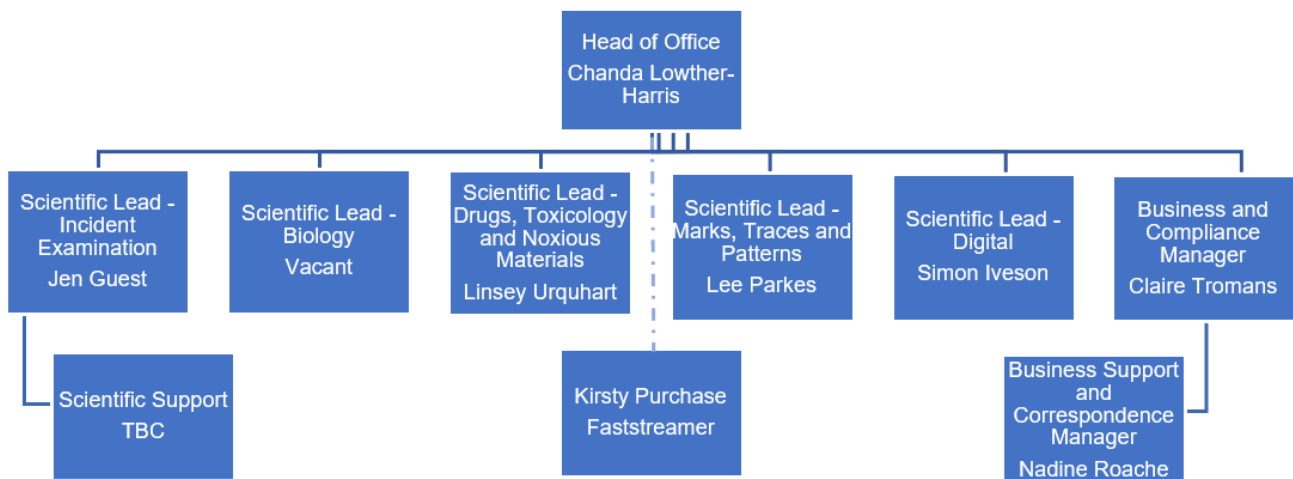
This newsletter sets out brief details of the statutory consultation and signposts the formal consultation response that is published alongside this newsletter. One significant change made as a result of the statutory consultation is the introduction of a transition period following approval of the Code by Parliament. Subject to the approval by Parliament the Code will come into force on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October 2023. This will allow organisations who hold the appropriate accreditation and have issue 7 of the Codes of Practice and Conduct on their accreditation schedule to transition to having the statutory Code on their accreditation schedule such that they will be able to declare compliance with the statutory Code when it comes into force.

Looking forward the next phase of work will be to run a further compliance survey based on the finalised Code, to prepare for the transition described above and to work with the Ministry of Justice and other stakeholders to understand / mitigate any risks to the Code coming into force.

Finally, I would like to sincerely thank everyone who responded to the statutory consultation and all the people across the forensic community and in stakeholder organisations who have supported the implementation and achievement of the statutory regulation of forensic science.

**Gary Pugh**  
**Forensic Science Regulator**

# Staffing Of The Office Of The Forensic Science Regulator



## Chanda Lowther-Harris - Head of Office

I have worked for 18 years in policing in quality management and leadership roles before joining the Office of the Forensic Science Regulator last year. Prior to that I have worked in a private organisation as a laboratory manager undertaking research, chemical and physical testing and quality management. I have a chemistry background.

## Lee Parkes - Scientific Lead - Marks, Traces and Patterns

I had a 28 year career as a practitioner, both in the public and private sectors, specialising in marks and traces disciplines before joining the Home Office Forensic Science Regulation Unit in 2018. Since then I have dealt with several referrals relating to my specialisms and have led on, and contributed to, the development of a number of the Regulator's publications.

## Linsey Urquhart - Scientific Lead - Drugs, Toxicology and Noxious Materials

I have a background in drugs analysis, particularly the chemistry of controlled drugs, and worked as a forensic scientist in the private sector before joining the Civil Service in 2015. I have held a number of roles across government, including supporting the Advisory Council for the Misuse of Drugs at the Home Office and in the Chemicals Sector Policy team at the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. I am pleased to join the office of the

Forensic Science Regulator as the Scientific Lead for Drugs, Toxicology and Chemistry-based Forensic Science Activities.

Simon Iveson - Scientific Lead - Digital

A career of over 25 years in various roles in forensic science, the last 15 years specialising in quality standards including leading on the non-statutory regulator's quality framework and developing the standards framework in various specialisms including the application of standards in digital forensics.

Claire Tromans - Business and Compliance Manager

A career of over 17 years as a Civil Servant. I have held a number of roles across government, including business planning, inspection support manager and strategy, performance and risk. Now, I look forward to working with the Office of the Forensic Science Regulator as the team business and compliance lead.

Nadine Roache - Business Support and Correspondence Manager

I have worked in the Civil Service for four years, and have supported science advisory committees in providing the Government with essential advice in areas such as Forensics, Data Ethics, and Biometrics. I am delighted to have joined the team as the Business Support and Correspondence Manager.

Jen Guest - Scientific Lead - Incident Examination

With a background in biology, I joined the office from my previous role delivering scientific advice for the Home Office, including on biometrics and forensics. Previously a court reporting forensic scientist and expert witness in bloodstain pattern analysis, I also have experience of working towards accreditation for crime scene examination as a Competency and Standards Officer. I also really enjoy teaching forensic science and I am a visiting lecturer.

Kirsty Purchase – Fast stream

I am currently working in the Office of the Forensic Science Regulator as part of the Science and Engineering Fast Stream. Prior to joining the team I have worked in the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and completed a PhD in Inorganic Chemistry.

## Scientist leading on Forensic Science Activities (FSA)

Number		Name	Scientist responsible
<b>Incident examination</b>			
INC	100	Incident scene examination	Jen Guest
INC	101	Collision investigation	
INC	102	Examination of fire scenes	
INC	103	Examination to establish the origin and cause of an explosion	
INC	200	Forensic examination of detainees	
INC	201	Forensic examination of deceased individuals	
<b>Biology</b>			
BIO	100	Forensic examination of sexual offence complainants	To be Confirmed
BIO	200	Human biological material examination and analysis	
BIO	201	Non-human biological examination and analysis: vertebrates	
BIO	202	Non-human biological examination and analysis: plants, microbes and invertebrates	
BIO	300	Human body fluid distribution analysis	
BIO	400	Human DNA analysis	
BIO	401	Human kinship analysis	
BIO	500	Taggant analysis	
<b>Drugs, toxicology and noxious materials</b>			
DTN	100	Toxicology: analysis for drug(s), alcohol and/or noxious substances	Linsey Urquhart
DTN	101	Toxicology: analysis for drugs and alcohol under the Road Traffic Act 1988, Transport and Works Act 1992, and Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003	
DTN	102	Toxicology: analysis for drugs in relation to s5A of the Road Traffic Act 1988	
DTN	103	Examination and analysis to identify and quantify controlled drugs and/or associated materials	
DTN	104	Toxicology: alcohol technical calculations	
DTN	105	Examination and analysis relating to the preparation and production of drugs and/or psychoactive substances	
DTN	200	Examination and analysis of corrosives and/or noxious substances	
DTN	300	Examination and analysis of residues of lubricants used in sexual offences, including oils, greases and lubricants	
DTN	400	Examination and analysis of ignitable liquids and their residues	
DTN	500	Examination and analysis of chemical and/or biological agents and associated materials	
DTN	501	Examination and analysis of explosives, explosives precursors and explosive residues	
DTN	502	Examination and analysis of radioactive material	
DTN	503	Examination and analysis of suspected explosive devices and associated material	
<b>Marks, traces and pattern</b>			
MTP	100	Friction ridge detail: visualisation and enhancement	Lee Parkes
MTP	101	Friction ridge detail: comparison	
MTP	200	Footwear: coding	
MTP	201	Footwear: screening	

MTP	202	Footwear mark comparisons	
MTP	300	Marks visualisation and enhancement	
MTP	301	Marks comparison	
MTP	400	Damage and physical fit	
MTP	500	Examination and analysis of particulate trace materials	
MTP	600	Examination and analysis of gunshot residue (GSR)	
MTP	601	Examination, analysis and classification of firearms, ammunition and associated materials	
MTP	602	Firearms: ballistics	
MTP	700	Document handwriting	
MTP	701	Document authenticity and origin	
<b>Digital</b>			
DIG	100	Data capture, processing and analysis from digital storage devices	Simon Iveson
DIG	101	Analysis of communications network data	
DIG	102	Digital network capture and analysis	
DIG	200	Cell site analysis for geolocation	
DIG	300	Recovery and processing of footage from closed-circuit television (CCTV) /video surveillance systems (VSS)	
DIG	301	Specialist video multimedia, recovery, processing and analysis	
DIG	400	Technical audio operations	
DIG	401	Speech and audio analysis	
<b>Case and data management</b>			
CDM	100	Case review	Chanda Lowther-Harris
CDM	200	Control and management of a forensic database service	

# Consultation On The Draft Statutory Code Of Practice

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The consultation on the draft of the Code (identified as “Consultation Draft 08.08.2022”) was launched on the 8<sup>th</sup> of August 2022 and closed on the 31<sup>st</sup> of October 2022. The consultation was undertaken through a questionnaire posted on the Regulator’s website with the facility for an online response, response by e-mail, and by post. Direct approaches were made to organisations who undertake FSAs, and the consultation was drawn to the attention of stakeholders and agencies across the Criminal Justice System. Alongside this, the Regulator prepared detailed information and response guidance for consultees. This set out the background to the development of the Code highlighting that the Code was based on the non-statutory Codes of Practice and Conduct and proposed that the underlying regulatory model for forensic science would not change with the introduction of a statutory Code.

The Regulator is grateful to all of the respondents for commenting and taking the time to feed back on the proposed Code. Comments and responses to the consultation were received from a range of stakeholders, including law enforcement, commercial providers and academia reflecting a broad range of views and perspectives which provided valuable feedback for considering and amending the Code. The Regulator has given due consideration to the comments received in response to the consultation. As a result of the comments significant changes have been made to some FSAs accommodating the concerns that have been raised in consultation responses. Some minor changes to grammar and terminology have also been made for clarity.

Overall, the Regulator has focused on making the core areas of forensic science subject to the first version of the Code with the requirement to declare compliance or non-compliance. For other areas the Regulator has defined FSAs that are not subject to the first version of the Code to send a clear signal that these are FSAs that will be subject to consultation with a view to including them in the range of FSAs subject to statutory regulation in future versions of the Code. The Regulator is keen to work with practitioners and stakeholders in these areas to develop a meaningful and robust regulatory framework and to move to a position where any requirements including accreditation will be in place and complied with in advance of a subsequent version of the Code being approved.

The full consultation response report can be found at;

[Forensic Science Regulator - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)



# Preparing For The Transition Period And The Code Coming Into Force

The FSR has asked UKAS to assess all relevant organisations, i.e. those with the non-statutory Codes on their scope, within a six-month period from the date of publication of the Code. To facilitate this UKAS will develop a Transition Template for relevant organisations to complete which will require evidence of compliance with the Code to be attached, this will be reviewed through a desktop assessment. UKAS will be setting out a timeline for the transition, including a deadline for submission of completed Transition Templates and have identified a dedicated team of assessment staff to complete these desktop assessments. Further details can be found on the UKAS website at [Latest Technical Bulletins - UKAS](#).

The Regulator is exploring a solution whereby forensic organisations undertaking FSAs in England and Wales can declare their compliance with the Code through a portal. This approach will allow organisations to input and update their status of compliance through a secure platform. The Regulator is working with the Ministry of Justice who is developing a risk categorisation model to understand the risk of forensic evidence being challenged and/or excluded at court after full commencement of the Forensic Science Regulator Act 2021 and the statutory Code of Practice.

## **and Finally**

We look forward to working with the forensic community in introducing the statutory forensic regulation. We hope you have found this newsletter useful. If you wish to provide any feedback, please email [FSRenquiries@forensicscienceregulator.gov.uk](mailto:FSRenquiries@forensicscienceregulator.gov.uk)

Office of Forensic Science Regulator