



Forensic Science Regulator

Drugs and Toxicology Specialist Group meeting

**Note of the meeting held on (19 January 2026) at 2 Marsham
Street, London and Online via MS Teams**

1. Welcome and Introductions

- 1.1.1 The Chair welcomed members to the third meeting of the Drugs and Toxicology Specialist Group (DTSG).
- 1.1.2 The Forensic Science Regulator (FSR), Dr Marc Bailey, was in attendance as this was the first DTSG meeting since he had been in post. The FSR thanked the group for their work on drugs and toxicology, noting the high level of expertise in the group. The Regulator outlined some of the broader changes in forensics and policing that provides a context to the DTSG's workplan and priorities for the coming year.
- 1.1.3 The DTSG Chair noted the Chair of the Section 5A Working Group has recently retired and so will no longer be a member of the DTSG. The DTSG Chair formally recorded his thanks for their work leading the Section 5A Working Group.

Minutes – Minutes – Minutes – Minutes – Minutes – Minutes – Minutes – Minutes

2. Review of minutes of Meeting 2 and status of actions

2.1 Review of minutes from Meeting 2

2.1.1 The minutes from Meeting 2 had been agreed and published on the FSR's webpage. The Chair requested some minor corrections to be made to the published version.

Action 1: OFSR to amend and republish Meeting 2 minutes.

2.2 Meeting 2 status of actions

2.2.1 The Chair ran through the actions from the previous meeting (Annex B) and determined a status update for each. Actions 1, 5, 6 and 7 of Meeting 2 had been completed and could be closed. Actions 2, 3 and 4 of Meeting 2 are in progress and will remain open.

3. Standing Items

3.1 Overview from Section 5A Working Group

3.1.1 The Section 5A Working Group has reformed for phase 2 to develop a Section 9 FSR technical guidance document for forensic science activity (FSA) DTN-102. The aim of the document is to provide further guidance on achieving the regulatory requirements for section 5A toxicology analysis, to accompany the requirements set out in Version 2 of the Code. The intention is for the guidance to be published prior to the FSA-specific requirements coming into force in April 2026. The Chair thanked the DTSG's representative from the Royal Statistical Society who has joined this phase of the Section 5A Working Group.

3.1.2 The intention is to incorporate the guidance into a future version of the Code.

3.2 Overview from Drug Testing Kits Working Group

3.2.1 The DTK Working Group was established to review the regulation of drug testing kits and devices and aims to develop an FSA and accompanying requirements that will be included in a future version of the Code. The group are aiming to finalise their advice to the FSR in March 2026. The FSA and

Minutes – Minutes – Minutes – Minutes – Minutes – Minutes – Minutes – Minutes

requirements would require to be consulted on prior to incorporation in the Code.

3.3 Overview from the Drugs and Toxicology Interpretation Working Group

3.3.1 The FSR's guidance document [Forensic science activities: interpretation and communication \(FSR-GUI-0004\)](#) has now been published. The Drugs and Toxicology Interpretation Working Group are developing discipline-specific guidance to complement the overarching document, and to provide harmonisation for the provision of interpretation for the courts for these disciplines.

3.3.2 A workshop was held in person at 2 Marsham Street in December. Interpretation types, examples and approaches including the use of point systems were discussed as was the need for common language when conveying information. The Group will continue to meet to develop the drugs and toxicology interpretation guidance.

4. Document Review

4.1.1 The DTSG reviewed two papers, a new forensic science standard ISO 21043 and another relating to drink and drug driving disclosure. AFSP representatives had provided comments on the new ISO standard, and the drink and drug driving disclosure document had been approved by the CPS. There was no further input required from the DTSG.

5. DTSG workplan prioritisation

5.1.1 The DTSG considered the prioritised workplan items and agreed next steps.

6. AOB

6.1.1 It was raised that The International Association of Forensic Toxicologist Task Force 2025 had considered the application of artificial intelligence in forensic science. The DTSG discussed their role to advise the FSR of AI applications within drugs and toxicology disciplines.

Minutes – Minutes – Minutes – Minutes – Minutes – Minutes – Minutes – Minutes

6.1.2 The Home Office have published a consultation on a [new legal framework for law enforcement use of biometrics, facial recognition and similar technologies](#).

6.1.3 The Department for Transport have published a new [Road Safety Strategy](#) and accompanying consultation on [proposed changes to penalties for motoring offences](#).

Action 2: OFSR to provide overview of regulatory landscape of AI in forensic science at a future meeting.

Action 3: OFSR to arrange the next meeting for 6 months' time.

Annex A – Representatives Present

In person:

Chair

Association of Forensic Science Providers (AFSP)

British Mass Spectrometry Society (BMSS)

FSR's Drug Testing Kits Working Group Chair

Office of the Forensic Science Regulator

Forensic Science Regulator (FSR) (items 1-3 only)

Online:

Royal Statistical Society (RSS)

Apologies:

Chartered Society of Forensic Sciences (CSFS)

Minutes – Minutes – Minutes – Minutes – Minutes – Minutes – Minutes – Minutes

Annex B – Meeting 2 status of actions

Action 1: OFSR to develop and circulate the DTSG threats and opportunities register. Complete.

Action 2: OFSR to include risk as a standing item and DTSG to develop accountability structures, handling requirements and scoring criteria for the threats and opportunities register at the next meeting. In progress.

Action 3: OFSR to engage with DfT and ACMD on this matter [privately prescribed cannabis and the potential impact to the Criminal Justice System (CJS)]. In progress.

Action 4: Chair and OFSR to collate views from DTSG regarding the document EA-4-23/25. In progress.

Action 5: Members to elaborate on their suggestions for the workplan where required, via email. Complete.

Action 6: OFSR to distribute list of potential DTSG workplan topics to the group, members to score the topics based on criteria determined and return over email. Complete.

Action 7: OFSR and Chair to organise next in person meeting for 6-months' time. Complete.