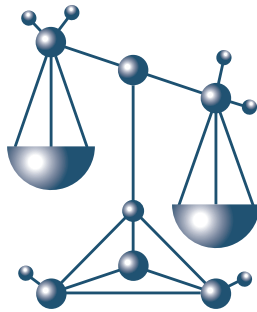


IFSA

International Forensic Strategic Alliance

2010 ANNUAL REPORT



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MESSAGE FROM CHAIR

Dear Reader,

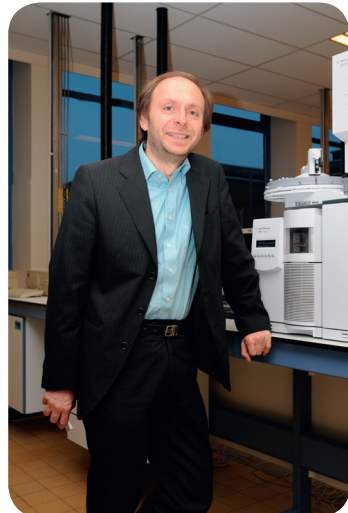
I am proud to present this first annual report of the International Forensic Strategic Alliance (IFSA), a worldwide organization bringing the existing networks of operational forensic service providers around a single table. By bringing the individual networks together, we create a worldwide platform for exchanging information while acting as a single contact point for international organizations.

By its composition, IFSA is the natural body for establishing strategic position statements on a number of forensic science policies. This year, IFSA has taken a number of steps to further its objectives to include: the signing of a Letter of Understanding; setting up internal house rules; and defining a communication strategy - all accomplished while maintaining a regular meeting schedule.

My hope is this annual report will introduce you to IFSA and its important achievements.

Enjoy!

Jan De Kinder



IFSA Chair Jan De Kinder, PhD
2010–2011

IFSA PURPOSE

The International Forensic Strategic Alliance (IFSA) is a partnership among regional networks representing forensic science laboratory management. The participating networks have similar roles, functions and objectives and recognize the value to be gained through long-term collaboration and cooperation on strategic issues related to the management of forensic science laboratories and the promotion of forensic science.

VISION

Create opportunities for strategic collaboration across the global forensic science community

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

To accomplish its vision, IFSA has articulated its goals and objectives to:

- Represent the operational forensic science community;
- Develop and execute a rolling agenda for strategic issues related to forensic science;
- Be a strategic partner to other relevant international organizations and partnerships;
- Encourage the exchange of information related to experience, knowledge and skills between the member networks and other operational forensic experts as appropriate.





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POSITION STATEMENTS

IFSA wishes to provide high level guidelines to those within the international justice sectors. The Position Statements represent IFSA's position on what each network should strive to achieve.

QUALITY

IFSA ADVOCATES that a quality management program with agreed minimum standards and goals for continuous improvement is germane to a reliable, robust forensic science operation. The program should address the three key elements that underpin the forensic sciences product; namely, the provider, the practitioner and the process. International standards such as ISO/IEC 17025 provide confidence and assurance to the justice sector and the broader community by ensuring and continuously raising standards and standardization across Member networks.

ETHICS AND OBJECTIVITY

IFSA BELIEVES the practice of forensic science must be built on a foundation of ethics, objectivity and impartiality. Directors of forensic laboratories must avoid any activity, interest, influence, or association that interferes or appears to interfere with their staffs' independent ability to exercise professional judgment either at a technical or a policy level.

SUPPORT AND COOPERATION

IFSA RECOGNIZES the importance of international cooperation and collaboration between existing and emerging regional networks, their members and forensic enablers through the free exchange and transfer of information, knowledge and technology that enhance regional experience, knowledge and skills.

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INNOVATION

IFSA BELIEVES that forensic practitioners must have a strong grounding in science to ensure appropriate technical competency. Laboratories have a responsibility to build on that education with targeted on-going training. They are also encouraged to engage with the academic community to enhance and accelerate the forensic body of knowledge through informed innovation which should be shared with Member networks.

LEADERSHIP

IFSA PROMOTES the creation and support of an advisory infrastructure which includes current and emerging networks aimed at encouraging scientific and managerial excellence in the global forensic community. The IFSA infrastructure is comprised of forensic sciences network laboratory directors who understand the emerging critical issues and the implication of new technologies that have universal relevance and require robust Member communication, cooperation and/or advocacy.





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ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

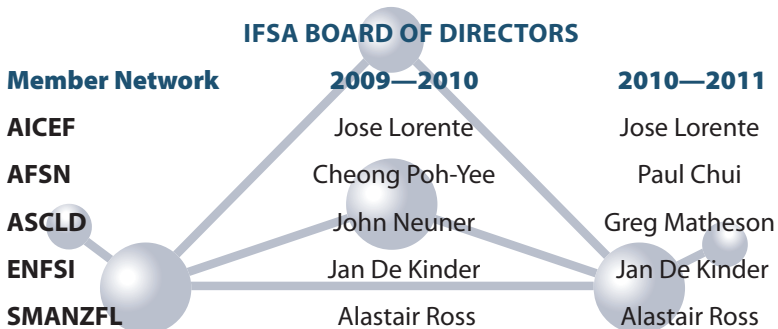
MEMBERS

IFSA members include five regional autonomous networks representing operational forensic laboratory directors:

- AICEF: Academia Iberoamericana de Criminalistica Y Estudios Forenses
- AFSN: Asian Forensic Sciences Network
- ASCLD: American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors
- ENFSI: European Network of Forensic Science Institutes
- SMANZFL: Senior Managers of Australia and New Zealand Forensic Laboratories

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors serves to facilitate IFSA collaboration among its member networks. The President/Chair (or designee) of the member network serves as an IFSA Director on its Board.



At the 2010 Annual Meeting in October, the 2010-2011 Directors began their one year term on the IFSA Board.



2010 –2011 IFSA Board and Liaison Officers and Guests

Pictured left to right: Paul Chui, John Scheffer, Jacobo Orellana Suarez, Justice Tettey, Tony Raymond, Susan Johns, Jan De Kinder, Greg Matheson, Peter de Bruyn, Pawel Rybicki, Heesun Chung, and Alastair Ross.





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CHAIR

The IFSA Chair serves a one year term beginning at the IFSA annual meeting. The Chair is customarily the President/Chair (or designee) of the member network hosting the annual meeting.

John Neuner (ASCLD designee), served as the 2009—2010 Chair beginning at the annual IFSA meeting in Anaheim in September 2009. At the annual meeting in Lyon, France in October 2010, Jan De Kinder (the ENFSI chair) assumed responsibility as the 2010– 2011 IFSA chair.



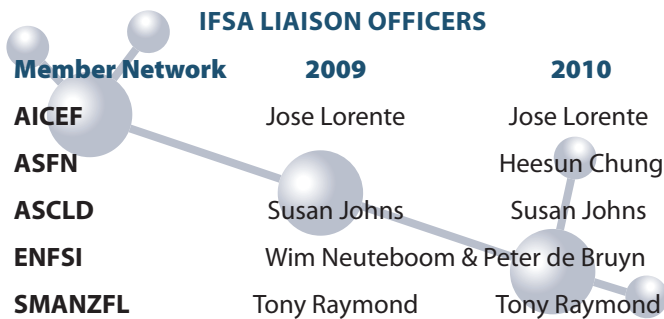
*2009–2010 Chair
John Neuner*



*2010–2011 Chair
Jan De Kinder*

LIAISON OFFICERS

Each IFSA member has established an International Liaison position to facilitate IFSA activities and serve as a constant point of contact for the member network. The ILOs collectively serve as the IFSA Secretariat.



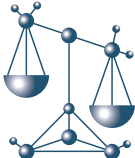
| Member Network | 2009 | 2010 |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|--------------|
| AICEF | Jose Lorente | Jose Lorente |
| ASFN | | Heesun Chung |
| ASCLD | Susan Johns | Susan Johns |
| ENFSI | Wim Neuteboom & Peter de Bruyn | |
| SMANZFL | Tony Raymond | Tony Raymond |

MEETINGS

IFSA has established a schedule of regular meetings. An on-site meeting is held in conjunction with a major forensic science symposium each year. Conference calls are also used by IFSA to conduct business between Annual Meetings. In 2010, teleconferences were held March 31, August 12, and December 9. New teleconference call dates have been set for 2011.

Meeting minutes are available and provided on the IFSA website hosted by ENFSI at www.ifsaworldwide.org





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2010 ANNUAL MEETING

The 2010 IFSA Annual Meeting was held in Lyon, France immediately preceding the 16th International Forensic Science Symposium hosted by INTERPOL. All member networks were represented (AICEF, AFSN, ASCLD, ENFSI and SMANZFL). Service providers and partners including NIFS, INTERPOL and UNODC, also participated in the meeting.



Annual Meeting Participants at the INTERPOL Venue



INTERPOL Secretary General Ronald K. Noble

At the 2010 annual meeting held at the INTERPOL International Forensic Science Symposium in Lyon, IFSA members agreed to work jointly with INTERPOL and the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on strategic issues related to law enforcement and community safety. INTERPOL Secretary General Ronald K. Noble addressed the symposium about the significance of the IFSA collaboration, saying that constant transnational co-operation and networking among forensic science experts was pivotal to enhance the impact of forensic sciences on investigation worldwide.

The signing of a Letter of Understanding (LOU) was the culmination of extensive talks between the networks to secure ongoing collaboration. Lyon provided a fitting venue for the signing, as it celebrated the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the first forensic crime laboratory. Dr. Edmond Locard, the “Sherlock Holmes of France” established his laboratory in Lyon in 1910. His daughter and granddaughter attended the Symposium and witnessed the signing of the LOU to commemorate Dr. Locard’s accomplishments.





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Introduction of Dr. Locard's Daughter and Granddaughter at the INTERPOL Forensic Science Symposium

Pictured from left to right: Locard's daughter Ms Lacroix and granddaughter Ms Stagnara, with Dominique Saint Dizier, Head of the Department of Science, National Institute for Scientific Police, Central Laboratory Services.

2011 ANNUAL MEETING

The 2011 Annual Meeting will be held in Madeira, Portugal. The meeting will be held in conjunction with the 19th Triennial Meeting of the International Association of Forensic Sciences (IAFS), scheduled September 14-17, 2011.

IFSA EXPANDS

On Tuesday, October 5, 2010, IFSA was expanded with the inclusion of the Asian Forensic Sciences Network (AFSN) during the 16th International Forensic Science Symposium hosted by INTERPOL in Lyon, France.

A Letter of Understanding (LOU) was signed by the Presidents/Delegates of the individual networks participating in IFSA (ENFSI, AICEF, ASCLD, SMANZFL and AFSN).

The agreement spells out areas of collaboration for the participating networks who have agreed to assist in the growth of forensic science in developing countries in accordance with the resolution on International Cooperation in the Forensic Field, issued by the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in May 2010.



LOU Signing in Lyon France

IFSA signatories seated (left to right): Paul Chui (AFSN), Greg Matheson (ASCLD), Jacobo Orellana Suarez (AICEF), Alastair Ross (SMANZFL), and Jan De Kinder (ENFSI). International Liaison Officers standing (left to right): Heesun Chung (AFSN), Susan Hart Johns (ASCLD), Tony Raymond (SMANZFL), and Peter de Bruyn (ENFSI).





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MEMBER UPDATES

The International Forensic Strategic Alliance (IFSA) is a partnership among five autonomous regional networks representing forensic science laboratory management. During the 2010 Annual Meeting, each member network provided an update.

AICEF

The Academia Iberoamericana de Criminalística Y Estudios Forenses serves Spanish and Portuguese speaking countries in Europe and Latin America and has 32 active members from 19 different countries. AICEF has four working groups: crime scene (CITEC), forensic genetics (GITAD), ballistics (CITBAF) and drugs of abuse (GITADA).



In 2010, AICEF set priorities on the quality assurance of crime scene; i.e., the collection of evidence, which is customarily performed by non-forensic personnel. They are also focusing on best practices and quality assurance as a prelude to accreditation and are attempting to develop a repository for QA documents.

Two advisory committees have been established to accomplish these goals. The first, the Academic Committee for Professionalization (CAP), supports the AICEF Executive Committee in proposing, designing and developing common strategies and programs related to: teaching, practicing and research in the forensic sciences. Masters level courses are being provided in Spain (University of Alcalá) and Mexico as part of this initiative. The second advisory committee is focused on Quality in Forensic Sciences (CICAL). It, too, is working in coordination with the Executive Committee in furthering AICEF priorities.

For additional information see the AICEF website at www.AICEF.net

AFSN

The Asian Forensic Sciences Network was established in 2008. It now has 18 member institutes from 11 countries and serves as a collective representation for the forensic science community in Asia. AFSN acts as the forum for forensic science institutes in Asia for discussion on issues relating to forensic services. A newsletter named "Forensic Asia" is published regularly with the aim of sharing forensic sciences related information amongst our members. An annual meeting & symposium is organized for members with programming to include: plenary lectures, scientific sessions, workshops and laboratory tour.



AFSN is focusing its efforts on enhancing the quality of forensic services in Asia through expert working groups, training and multilateral collaborative studies. Workgroups in DNA, Illicit Drugs, Toxicology and Trace Evidence, as well as a Committee on Quality Assurance and Standards, have been formed to work on areas of common interest. In 2010, a survey of its members was carried out to identify the key needs of its members so as to enable future strategic planning to take place.

For additional information see the AFSN website at www.asianforensic.net

ASCLD



The American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors was formally established in 1976, as a professional society dedicated to providing excellence in forensic science through leadership and innovation. In 2010, ASCLD expanded its membership to include laboratory managers and supervisors as well as laboratory directors. As a result, its membership includes over 600 individuals from North America as well as other countries.





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In 2010, accreditation continues as a major focus for the network. The primary accrediting body in the United States is a separate entity (ASCLD/LAB) and approximately 350 laboratories are accredited by this body. All accreditations conducted are now under ISO 17025 and by 2012, all accredited laboratories will be accredited under the international standard. ASCLD is working on the identification of all forensic service providers throughout the US, including fingerprint and crime scene services within the law enforcement agencies.

ASCLD has also been busy with advocacy issues in 2010, addressing issues raised in the National Academy of Sciences report (“Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward”). There has also been a lot of focus on the elimination of backlogs due to scrutiny by groups such as the Human Rights Watch. To respond, ASCLD has issued position statements. Additionally, an Advocacy Council has been established with regional points of contacts. ASCLD and other forensic entities are pushing to have more influence on national forensic legislation through the Consortium of Forensic Science Organizations (CFSO).

For additional information see the ASCLD website at www.ASCLD.org

ENFSI

In 1992 the directors of Western European governmental forensic laboratories agreed that they should hold regular meetings to discuss topics of mutual interest. The European Network of Forensic Science Institutes was established with the purpose of sharing knowledge, exchanging experiences and coming to mutual agreements in the field of forensic science. ENFSI now has 59 members from 34 countries in Europe.



During the past year, ENFSI has focused on issues resulting from expanding its sphere of influence. In 2009, the European Commission (EC) recognized ENFSI as the monopoly organisation in the area of forensic science. The result is that the EC will invite ENFSI to participate in situations when information or advice on forensics is needed. Also as a result of this decision, ENFSI is receiving a financial grant from the European Commission. The budget of this grant is divided into annual programs. The first two programs focus on Quality Assurance (2009) and Evaluation of Forensic Evidence (2010). The grant funds for the 2009 program were received by ENFSI in December 2010.

ENFSI has 16 working groups in the different forensic disciplines. Currently ENFSI has two Standing Committees: one for Quality and Competence and one for R&D. A provisional Standing Committee for Education & Training was established in 2010 and is expected to be formalized in 2011. ENFSI organizes open triennial scientific meetings under the name European Academy of Forensic Sciences Triennial Conference. The next one to be held in 2012 in The Netherlands.

SMANZFL

The Senior Managers of Australian and New Zealand Forensic Laboratories (SMANZFL) was established in 1986, when a group of forensic science laboratory directors met in Sydney, Australia. The aim of the group was to establish a vehicle to facilitate regular communication among the directors of all of the major forensic science service providers within government and including police. SMANZFL meets formally once a year ...“to promote leadership in the forensic sciences in the pursuit of excellence.”



In 1992, a National Institute of Forensic Science (NIFS) was established in Australia via an agreement signed by the Australian Police Minister's Council. This followed the investigation of several high profile cases where forensic science was called into question.





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SMANZFL and NIFS have a close and very productive working relationship which reflects an holistic and exclusive approach to the forensic sciences. Each relies on technical and scientific advice from eight specialist advisory groups (SAGs) that represent field, laboratory and medical sciences.

SMANZFL is faced with many of the same issues as the other networks and is seeking greater involvement in policy development at all levels of government. However, there are also specific projects in which SMANZFL and NIFS are involved that are priorities for the Australian and New Zealand forensic science communities.

The focus of a number of these projects is the improvement of the effectiveness and efficiency of forensic science. Such projects include: a large study into the cost effectiveness of forensic science; a study of the end-to-end forensic science process (based on the UK Scientific Work Improvement Model (SWIM) report), a study of the interactions between forensic medicine and science and law enforcement practitioners in homicide and sexual assault cases; and the investigation of the concept of national Centres of Specialisation.

There is also a focus on DNA, with a project examining policy, legislation and regulation related to familial searching and predictive DNA; and another project to upgrade the national DNA profiling system through the introduction of new technology 16 loci kits.

As a result of the NAS report, there are also projects related to method validation in document examination and the implications of contextual bias in forensic science.

Both SMANZFL and NIFS are keen to work with other Networks in relation to these projects.

For additional information see the SMANZFL website at www.nifs.com.au/SMANZFL/index.asp

STRATEGIC PARTNERS

Forensic service providers/enablers are governmental or non-profit organizations actively involved in the improvement of the practice of the forensic sciences. These agencies exist to enable and provide support and services to the forensic community. IFSA recognizes the need to work collaboratively with these organizations to promote collaboration and coordination of outreach activities. In 2010, the primary partners for IFSA included INTERPOL, NIFS and UNODC.

INTERPOL

As it did in 2007, INTERPOL provided support for IFSA by providing the site for the 2010 IFSA Annual Meeting. IFSA and its member networks were also provided invitations to the International Forensic Symposium hosted by INTERPOL. INTERPOL representative Susan Hitchin attended the IFSA Annual Meeting and agreed to explore mechanisms for further collaborations with IFSA in the coming year, to include outreach to emerging forensic networks.



NIFS



In 2010, the National Institute of Forensic Science (NIFS) in Australia was an active partner with both the Australasian forensic community (SMANZFL) and IFSA. NIFS provides support for SMANZFL's participation in IFSA, has taken the lead on several research projects of interest to IFSA member networks, and offers much needed data for IFSA to consider.





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UNODC

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) was also an important IFSA partner in 2010. Most notably, in May 2010, the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice passed a resolution in support of International cooperation in the forensic field, recognizing the role the IFSA networks play in promoting quality in the field. This resolution requested that the UNODC continue to support international cooperation in the forensic field and facilitate the establishment and/or sustainability of regional forensic science associations or networks. During the past year, IFSA partnered with the UNODC Laboratory and Scientific Section (LSS) to participate in outreach activities with emerging networks in the Arab region, Asia and Africa. In addition, IFSA worked with the UNODC LSS in pursuing a number of mechanisms for mutual benefit, including establishing the basis for a twinning program. A twinning document was approved at the IFSA Annual Meeting which will allow the UNODC to call upon IFSA to identify forensic mentors for laboratories needed assistance. The program will focus initially on the provision and exchange of forensic science information and will tailor existing training programs in crime scene investigation and drug strategy awareness to be fit for purpose for delivery to jurisdictions new to these concepts. The tailoring would take into account language barriers and the level of knowledge of these two issues that already exist in targeted jurisdictions. A second twinning initiative is being explored which will deliver pilot projects in two to three identified jurisdictions.

Additional collaborations are being identified in three areas: crime scene awareness, forensic document examination, and using forensics in combating identity-related crime. UNODC LSS participated in discussions

about sharing information and tools with IFSA member networks to include the UNODC best practice manual for crime scene investigation.



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

The IFSA Board also agreed to assist the UNODC in the coordination of cooperation activities. Technical assistance in the forensic field is provided by a range of different mechanisms, including multi-lateral and bilateral efforts, dedicated government agencies as well as laboratory-to-laboratory ad-hoc assistance. A coordinated approach to providing assistance avoids duplication of effort. The IFSA Board of Directors has approved a survey which will be used to facilitate coordinating assistance in the forensic field. It is anticipated that this survey will be sent to all IFSA member networks to distribute by May 2011. Information will be collected and shared among IFSA and the UNODC.





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INITIATIVES

Success for IFSA will be gained by realistic expectations of what can be achieved. To this end IFSA, sets annual targets that are achievable, strengthen the partnership and are consistent with its goals and objectives.

IFSA is focusing on information exchange (communications), quality, crime scene and training. Outreach to emerging networks is also a focus area.

COMMUNICATIONS

In 2010, IFSA conducted a gap analysis and approved a communications plan to improve information exchange among the networks, their membership and external entities. During 2010, IFSA implemented many of the plan's provisions.

- Formal meetings and teleconferences were held;
- An IFSA poster and brochure for presentations and public contacts was developed. In October 2010, a presentation was made at the INTERPOL Triennial Forensic Symposium in Lyon, France. Brochures were also distributed during that presentation;
- The website www.ifsaworldwide.org was updated;
- IFSA position statements were approved;
- IFSA business rules were approved. A policy and procedures manual was also implemented.

A plan for additional communications activities to be implemented in 2011 was also approved.

QUALITY

In 2010, IFSA member networks exchanged information about accreditation and other quality issues. IFSA member networks were also invited to participate in developing an update to the ILAC Guide 19.

A 2011 plan for future quality initiatives was developed and will be implemented by NIFS and other strategic partners. Topics include:

- Value of evidence
- DNA contamination
- Benchmarking
- Validations
- Retrospective reviews
- Interpretation of forensic data

TRAINING DELIVERY

In collaboration with the UNODC, IFSA has agreed to examine training delivery opportunities under a Forensic Science Fundamentals and Challenges Initiative. The identified topics include: crime scene examination, illicit drugs and identity crime.

OUTREACH

In 2010, IFSA developed a mechanism to encourage new and emerging regional forensic networks to participate in IFSA and ultimately become a full IFSA member. Contacts with networks and emerging networks in Asia, the Middle East and Africa were maintained throughout 2010. Invitations to participate in IFSA meetings were extended to potential Asian and African networks. IFSA worked collaboratively with the UNODC to attend meetings in those regions and participate in workshops





IFSA
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