

Wildlife Proficiency Testing Program Charter

1.0 Scope

This document provides the framework for the Society for Wildlife Forensic Science (SWFS) Wildlife Proficiency Testing Program (hereafter referred to as “Proficiency Testing Program”) and associated **Testing Schemes**. The disciplines covered by this document are detailed in the **Proficiency Testing Schemes** (Annexes to the Charter).

NOTE: **Bolded terms** appear in Appendix I: Terms and Definitions.

2.0 Program Charter

2.1 Proficiency Test Administration

- 2.1.1 The Society for Wildlife Forensic Science (SWFS) is the **proficiency testing provider**.
- 2.1.2 The SWFS Board of Directors (hereafter referred to as “**The Board**”) will establish an advisory group called the **Proficiency Test Board** (hereafter referred to as the “**PTB**”). The **PTB** will oversee the Proficiency Testing Program development, implementation, and administration per the guidelines established herein.
- 2.1.3 Upon recommendation by the **PTB**, **The Board** will approve a **duty lab(s)** to perform the tasks of assembling, dissemination, and quality control of items for the Proficiency Testing Program as well as collecting completed **proficiency testing reports** and compiling all results into a **Consensus Report** (see section 2.5).
- 2.1.4 Proficiency Testing Program Personnel
 - 2.1.4.1 The **Proficiency Test Board (PTB)**.
 - 2.1.4.1.1 The **PTB** should consist of a Chair plus four (4) to six (6) elected **members**.
 - 2.1.4.1.2 The Chair shall be appointed as the Director of Proficiency Testing by **The Board**. The term duration of the **PTB** Chair shall be determined by **SWFS** bylaws.
 - 2.1.4.1.3 The Chair of the **PTB** shall act as liaison between the **PTB** and **The Board**.
 - 2.1.4.1.4 **PTB members** should be from different participating **laboratories**.
 - 2.1.4.1.5 **PTB members** shall serve two-year terms beginning in the month of July with no term limits. In the case of an unplanned vacancy, the **PTB** Chair may appoint a replacement to serve the remainder of the original term.
 - 2.1.5 Duties of the **PTB**

- 2.1.5.1 Determine criteria for **participant** participation in the Proficiency Testing Program (see section 2.4.1).
- 2.1.5.2 Advise, facilitate, and otherwise participate in the development of **proficiency testing schemes**.
- 2.1.5.3 Evaluate **apparent inconsistencies (AI)** in **proficiency test** results.
- 2.1.5.4 Develop and engage in the **dispute resolution** process.
- 2.1.5.5 Assemble and respond to feedback from **participants**.
- 2.1.5.6 Communicate with the **duty lab(s)** as needed to ensure efficient execution of the **proficiency testing rounds**.
- 2.1.5.7 Periodically evaluate and revise **proficiency testing schemes** and recommend changes to **The Board**, if needed.
- 2.1.5.8 Periodically review of the Proficiency Testing Program Charter (the “Charter”) at least every five (5) years.
- 2.1.6 Duties of the **PTB** Chair
 - 2.1.6.1 Act as liaison between the **PTB** and **The Board**.
 - 2.1.6.2 Act as liaison between the **PTB** and the **duty lab(s)**.
 - 2.1.6.3 Act as a point of contact for **proficiency test participants**.
 - 2.1.6.4 Organize **PTB** meetings and ensure that all **PTB members** are available to conduct the duties of the Proficiency Testing Program.
 - 2.1.6.5 Administer the election of **PTB members**.
 - 2.1.6.6 Manage the planning, administration, and evaluation of the Proficiency Testing Program.
 - 2.1.6.7 Approve reporting of results of the Proficiency Testing Program.
 - 2.1.6.8 Implement and/or facilitate the development of new **proficiency testing schemes**.
- 2.1.7 **PTB** Elections
 - 2.1.7.1 A call for nominations to the **PTB** will be initiated by the **PTB** Chair and sent to **SWFS members** during the month(s) of May/June on an annual basis.
 - 2.1.7.2 **SWFS members** may self-nominate or nominate another **SWFS member** for the **PTB**.
 - 2.1.7.3 Nominations require the nominee’s approval prior to the election. A nominee shall also be a routine **participant** in or a supervisor of **participant(s)** in the Proficiency Testing Program. Routine participation is defined as **successful completion** of at least two (2) of the most recent four (4) test rounds in any single **testing scheme** or combination of **testing schemes**.
 - 2.1.7.4 Elections will be held immediately following the round of nominations. The **PTB** Chair will notify **SWFS members** of nominees and the voting period.

- 2.1.7.5 The **SWFS member(s)** receiving the greatest number of votes will be elected to the **PTB**. In the event of a tie, a runoff election will be held. In the event of a tie after a runoff election, the **PTB** Chair will appoint one of the candidates.
- 2.1.8 Removal of a **PTB member** or Chair as it relates to conduct associated with **PTB** duties
 - 2.1.8.1 At any time, any **participant** of the Proficiency Testing Program may call for the removal of a **PTB member** or Chair.
 - 2.1.8.2 Motions to remove shall be made by email to the President on **The Board**.
 - 2.1.8.3 Motions to remove shall include details and justification for the motion.
 - 2.1.8.4 Examples of grounds for removal may include, but not be limited to, misconduct, ethical violations, or conflicts of interest. **The Board** will determine if a motion to remove is justified.
 - 2.1.8.5 **The Board** will notify the **PTB** and appropriate parties of their decision.
- 2.1.9 **Duty lab(s)**
 - 2.1.9.1 **The Board** is responsible for the work completed by the **duty lab(s)** on behalf of **SWFS**.
 - 2.1.9.2 **Duty lab(s)** should follow the principles of ISO/IEC 17043:2023.
 - 2.1.9.3 **Duty lab(s)** should be an accredited laboratory meeting the requirements of international standard ISO/IEC 17025:2017.
 - 2.1.9.3.1 If the candidate **duty lab(s)** is not ISO/IEC 17025:2017 accredited, **The Board** may outline additional qualifications (e.g., **SWFS** assessment review).

2.2 Proficiency Testing Schemes

- 2.2.1 When setting up **interlaboratory comparisons**, scheme design shall be in accordance with the general concepts of accredited forensic **proficiency testing providers** following the principles of ISO/IEC 17043.
- 2.2.2 Currently approved **testing schemes** are included as Annexes to the Charter.

2.3 New Testing Schemes shall:

- 2.3.1 Be proposed to the **PTB** and be approved by **The Board**.
- 2.3.2 Following the principles of ISO/IEC 17043:2023, including the following:
 - 2.3.2.1 Identify the personnel involved in design and operation of the **testing scheme**.
 - 2.3.2.2 Adhere to species relevant to the wildlife forensics community.
 - 2.3.2.3 Scheme designs may include, but are not limited to, those listed in ISO/IEC 17043:2023 such as **qualitative scheme**, **simultaneous scheme**, and **single occasion exercise**.
 - 2.3.2.4 Identify the **measurand(s)** to be analyzed. Examples include **species**

identification, sex identification, and individual identification.

- 2.3.2.5 Propose the frequency of testing or dates upon which **proficiency test items** are to be distributed to **participants**, including test completion dates.
- 2.3.2.6 Propose and justify the cost of the **proficiency testing to participants**.
- 2.3.2.7 Describe the expected number of **participants** in the proposed **testing scheme**.
- 2.3.3 Initial **pre-distribution testing** results and all quality control measures shall be reviewed by the **PTB** prior to scheme implementation.

2.4 Program Operation

2.4.1 Criteria for Participation

- 2.4.1.1 **Participants** shall be **SWFS members** in good standing with **SWFS**.
- 2.4.1.2 **Participants** shall formally agree to the terms of the **Proficiency Testing Program Agreement** (Appendix II: Forms) by signing and submitting this form prior to participating in a testing round.
- 2.4.1.3 All **participants** (new and existing) shall provide a current **Laboratory Statement of Capabilities** (Appendix II: Forms).
- 2.4.1.4 **Participants** shall be responsible for all applicable fees related to their participation³

2.4.2 Proficiency Test Frequency and Procedures

- 2.4.2.1 The Proficiency Program administers each test at the frequency described in the individual **testing schemes**.
- 2.4.2.2 Notification of an upcoming **proficiency testing round** shall be sent to all **SWFS members** at least thirty (30) days prior to the test start date. **Participants** shall complete and submit all required forms prior to the established deadline. Required documents may include, but are not limited to, the **Proficiency Testing Program Agreement, Laboratory Statement of Capabilities, Proficiency Testing Program Order Form, and Proficiency Testing Program Release Form** (Appendix II: Forms).
- 2.4.2.3 **Test items** shall be sent to **participants** no later than the established **proficiency test** start date.
- 2.4.2.4 **Participants** shall conduct each test as indicated on their **Laboratory Statement of Capabilities** utilizing **laboratory SOPs** typically applied to casework.
- 2.4.2.5 In the event of multiple **participants** from the same **laboratory**, items for the **participants** should be shipped as one set to the **participants' laboratory** and will be the responsibility of the **participants' laboratory** to disseminate.
- 2.4.2.6 **Proficiency test** results shall not be shared between **participants** before the test

deadline.

2.4.2.7 **Participants** shall be given at least sixty (60) **days** from the **proficiency test** start date to complete **laboratory** analysis and reporting requirements.

2.4.3 Reporting Procedures

2.4.3.1 Each purchased **proficiency test** shall be reported to the **duty lab** by the due date as indicated on the testing paperwork.

2.4.3.2 Reports should be submitted in electronic format, (e.g., as an email attachment).

2.4.3.3 The **duty lab** shall not disclose testing results until after the test completion date.

2.4.3.4 The **PTB** will review and approve by **simple majority** the results of the **proficiency test** once the **duty lab** has collated and emailed the results to the **PTB**.

2.4.3.5 **Proficiency test** evaluations shall be completed by the **PTB** within thirty (30) **days** of the test completion date.

2.4.3.6 Notification of test results shall be sent to **participants** within thirty (30) **days** of test evaluation.

2.4.3.7 Any **participant** that requires the **proficiency testing provider** to supply results to an **accrediting body** shall send a signed **Proficiency Testing Release Form** (Appendix II: Forms) to the **duty lab** for each individual report requested.

2.4.3.8 Proficiency test results may not be released by **The Board** or **PTB** to a third party, the only exception is 2.4.3.7.

2.5 Consensus Report

2.5.1 The results of the Proficiency Testing Program should be shared with all **participants** and their immediate supervisor within sixty (60) **days** after the test completion date via **Consensus Report**.

2.5.1.1 Obscures **participants'** identities by use of codes.

2.5.1.2 Contains the compiled results reported from all **participants**.

2.5.1.3 Includes a description of the test design, test objective, origin of the test items, and results of any **pre-distribution testing** or a statement that **pre-distribution testing** confirmed the expected results.

2.5.1.4 Includes a brief summary and/or analysis of all results plus any feedback or additional comments by **participants**.

2.5.2 The **PTB** should periodically review the contents of the **Consensus Report** to identify trends in **participant** performance that may need to be addressed in future **proficiency tests**.

2.6 Evaluation of Apparent Inconsistencies (AIs)

2.6.1 The **duty lab** shall identify **AIs** during the process of compiling the **Consensus Report** and refer these to the **PTB**. Examples of **AIs** include, but are not limited to, any identifiable error,

such as a **reporting irregularity** or an **out-of-consensus result**.

2.6.1.1 **Reporting irregularities** include any identifiable error(s) in a **proficiency testing report** aside from **out-of-consensus results**. Examples of **reporting irregularities** include, but are not limited to, **incomplete reports**, non-payment, and/or reporting results inconsistent with those outlined by **participant Proficiency Testing Program Agreements**.

2.6.1.2 **Out-of-consensus results** are test results or conclusions in a **proficiency testing report** inconsistent with those reported in the **Consensus Report** or the **pre-distribution testing**.

2.6.2 Either the **PTB Chair** or the **duty lab** may directly resolve any **reporting irregularities** (e.g., an isolated instance of non-payment or incomplete forms) in consultation with the **PTB**.

2.6.2.1 Notification of **AIs** that requires further clarification shall be sent by email to the **participant**. **Participants** shall respond within fourteen (14) **days** to request information from the **PTB** regarding **AIs** or any aspect of the **proficiency testing round**. Failure of **participants** to respond to the **PTB** may result in a **participant's** supervisor being contacted.

2.6.2.2 **Late test reports** shall not be accepted.

2.6.2.3 Results deemed out-of-consensus by the **PTB** will be reported as such when all **participants** are notified of results.

3.0 Dispute Resolution Process

3.1 If a **participant** chooses to dispute a finding regarding the Proficiency Testing Program, this shall be communicated by email to the **PTB Chair** (see **SWFS** website for contact details) in the first instance. (Any communication of this nature to the **duty lab** will be forwarded to the **PTB Chair**.)

3.2 The **PTB Chair** shall acknowledge the dispute has been lodged with the **PTB** via return email within fourteen (14) **days** of receipt.

3.3 The **PTB Chair** shall convene a meeting of the **PTB** to assess the dispute that has been raised within thirty (30) **days** of dispute acknowledgement by the **PTB Chair**.

3.4 The **PTB Chair** shall communicate the outcomes of the **PTB** findings to the **participant** within seven (7) **days** of the **PTB** decision.

3.5 If the **participant(s)** choose to appeal the findings of the **PTB** they may do so to **The Board** by contacting the **SWFS President** by email (see **SWFS** website for contact details). The **PTB** shall send all communications, applicable forms, and documents to the **SWFS President** within fourteen (14) **days** from the date the **PTB** decision was received.

3.6 Any disputes related to the conduct of **members** of the **PTB** shall be made directly to **The Board** (see section 2.1.8).

3.7 Re-Testing

3.7.1 In the event an **AI** is determined to be the result of irregularities during the preparation and/or shipment of the test packet, the **participant(s)** will be given an opportunity to retake the **proficiency test** at no additional cost.

3.7.1.1 **Participants** are responsible for proper storage and handling of test items upon receipt. Damage to test items that occurs after receipt is the sole liability of the **participant** (see section 4.2.3).

3.7.1.2 If it is determined that irregularities occurred during preparation of the test items and affected the integrity of the entire testing round, the affected round will be voided, **participants** in that round will be notified, and a new **proficiency test** will be offered at no additional expense to **participants** (see section 4.3).

4.0 Quality Control of Proficiency Test Items

4.1 Proficiency test items for use in the **proficiency test** will be acquired from validated **reference materials** (see section 3.4 in [SWFS Standards and Guidelines, Moore et al. 2021](#)) and/or through extensive **pre-distribution testing** of available materials as described in section 4.1.4 below.

4.1.1 Documentation of relevant test item metadata (e.g., item source, geographic source, contributing party, etc.) shall be maintained by the **duty lab**. Test items shall be identified by an appropriate expert.

4.1.2 Test items and sub-items shall be individually identified, verified, archived, and stored appropriately. Access to test items shall be limited and controlled by the **duty lab**.

4.1.3 Attributes relevant to the **testing scheme** should be confirmed through the use of **pre-distribution testing**.

4.1.4 **Pre-distribution testing** should be performed by at least three (3) independent laboratories before use in a **proficiency testing round**.

4.1.4.1 Any specimen for which **pre-distribution testing** produces equivocal or inconsistent results shall not be included in subsequent **proficiency testing rounds** until further testing can be conducted to determine its suitability.

4.1.4.2 Results of **pre-distribution testing** will be maintained by the **duty lab** and available to the **PTB** upon request.

4.2 Packaging and Shipment of Test Items

4.2.1 **Proficiency test items** shall be shipped to **participants** in appropriate packaging and conditions to maintain integrity during transit.

- 4.2.2 All schemes shall provide storage recommendations for **proficiency test** items. The **proficiency testing provider** is not responsible for items not stored under recommended conditions upon arrival at the intended facility.
- 4.2.3 **Participants** shall inspect the contents of the **proficiency test** packages upon arrival and contact the **duty lab** if items or documentation are missing or compromised. Damaged packages or contents thereof shall be brought to the attention of the transit/shipping company and the **duty lab**. In the event that test items are compromised during shipping, new items shall be provided if requested by the **participant**.

4.3 Out-of-Consensus Results in Proficiency Test Preparation

- 4.3.1 In the event that preparation of the test items is determined to be unsatisfactory or erroneous, either through detection of erroneous practices, or through evaluation of test results, the **duty lab** will cease activities related to the distribution of test items until the source of the event is determined and corrected.
- 4.3.2 In the event of an error, a written summary of the event and the action taken to correct and prevent recurrence of the event will be submitted to the **PTB** and documented in the test records.
- 4.3.3 **Participants** will be notified that an error has affected the integrity of a **proficiency testing round** and a new **proficiency test** will be offered at no expense to the **participants**.
- 4.3.4 Upon approval of the **PTB**, the **duty lab** will resume preparation and dissemination of **proficiency test items**.

5.0 Document Security

- 5.1 Documents for use in the Proficiency Testing Program include the following:
 - 5.1.1 Charter and Current **Testing Schemes**.
 - 5.1.2 **Proficiency Testing Program Agreement** (Appendix II: Forms).
 - 5.1.3 **Laboratory Statement of Capabilities** (Appendix II: Forms).
 - 5.1.4 **Proficiency Testing Program Order Form** (Appendix II: Form).
 - 5.1.5 **Proficiency Testing Program Reporting Form** (Appendix II: Forms).
 - 5.1.6 **Consensus Report** (Appendix II: Forms).
 - 5.1.7 **Proficiency Testing Program Release Form (AB)** (Appendix II: Forms).
- 5.2 All completed forms will be maintained by the **duty lab(s)** under controlled conditions to maintain confidentiality of test **participants**.
- 5.3 Test results will be compiled into a **Consensus Report** by the **duty lab**. Test results will be kept with restricted access by the **duty lab** until after the **proficiency test** completion date.

5.4 New Test results and all appropriate documents shall be archived in a secure location. The **duty lab** is responsible for archiving all applicable documents.

5.5 Amendments to the Charter

5.5.1 If any **participant** in the Proficiency Testing Program wishes to modify this Charter or the schemes, the proposed modifications shall be communicated to the **PTB** Chair by email (see **SWFS** website for contact details).

5.5.2 The proposed modifications will be reviewed by the **PTB** and must be approved by **simple majority** before dissemination to **The Board** for review.

5.5.3 Once **The Board** approves the proposed amendments, the amended charter will be placed on the **SWFS** website and shared with the **SWFS** membership.

6.0 References

ANSI/ASB Standard 019, [Wildlife Forensics General Standards](#), First Edition, 2019.

International Organization for Standardization. 2023. *Conformity assessment – General requirements for proficiency testing*. ISO/IEC 17043:2023.

International Organization for Standardization. 2017. *General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories*. ISO/IEC 17025:2017.

SWFS Technical Working Group, [Standards and Guidelines for Wildlife Forensic Analysis](#), Version 3. Ed. Lucy M.I. Webster. Published by the Society for Wildlife Forensic Science, 19th November 2018.

[The Society for Wildlife Forensic Science standards and guidelines](#). Forensic Science International: Animals and Environments. Moore, M.K., Baker, B.W., Bauman, T.L., Burnham-Curtis, M., Espinoza, E.O., Ferrell, C.S., Frankham, G.J., Frazier, K., Giles, J.L., Hawk, D. and Rovie-Ryan, J.J., 2021.

Appendix I: Terms and Definitions

Terminology and Definitions, where possible, follow the SWFS Technical Working Group (TWG) Standards and Guidelines and the Organization of Scientific Area Committees for Forensic Science (OSAC) Wildlife Forensic Biology Subcommittee Standards.

Accrediting Body (AB) – An organization that provides accreditation services, which is a formal, third-party recognition of competence to perform specific tasks.

Analyst – An individual who conducts and/or directs the analysis of forensic casework items, interprets data, reaches conclusions, and/or issues reports concerning conclusions.

Apparent Inconsistency (AI) – A report or associated form containing any identifiable error, such as a reporting irregularity or an out-of-consensus result.

Consensus Report – Report containing results specific to a testing round with individual participants identified anonymously by code. The Consensus Report includes results from both individual participants and a summary of all results, including a description of the testing scheme, test item origin, validation, and feedback or comments from participants.

Day – All references to days contained in this document refer to calendar days.

Dispute Resolution – Process by which participants can raise concerns to the Proficiency Test Board (PTB) and work together towards a solution.

Duty Lab – Entity, individual or otherwise, authorized by the proficiency testing provider to construct, disseminate, and compile results of proficiency tests during a proficiency testing round or testing scheme. See individual schemes for duty lab details.

Identification – Analyses to establish the taxonomic classification of the item. These analyses are based on class characters diagnostic for the taxonomic level in question and conducted to assign taxonomic classification to biological items. See also, Species Identification.

Incomplete Report – A proficiency testing report in which all required or requested information is not provided by the test participant.

Individual Identification – see Individualization.

Individualization – Analyses that attempt to match an unknown to a known item to the exclusion of all others, syn. *Individual Identification*.

Interlaboratory Comparison – Design, performance, and evaluation of measurements or tests on the same or similar items by two or more laboratories in accordance with predetermined conditions.

Laboratory – The entity providing the analysis, including the staff and the physical facility.

Laboratory Statement of Capabilities – Formal document required of proficiency test participants that identifies the specific capabilities of a participating laboratory.

Late Test Report – A testing report received by the duty lab after the established test completion date.

- Measurand** – Feature, characteristic, or value evaluated and documented for purposes of the testing scheme.
- Member** – See Society for Wildlife Forensic Science (SWFS) Member.
- Out-of-Consensus Result** – Test result or conclusions in a proficiency testing report that are not consistent with those reported in the Consensus Report or pre-distribution testing.
- Participant** – Laboratory, organization, or individual that receives proficiency test items and submits results for review by the proficiency testing provider.
- Pre-distribution Testing** – A quality control scheme where items of known provenance are subject to analysis by test participants for the purpose of measurand validation. Pre-distribution test items are provided on an as-needed basis and concurrently with proficiency test items but are not part of the proficiency testing round.
- Proficiency Test** – A method by which participant performance in a scientific discipline is evaluated against pre-established criteria by means of interlaboratory comparisons.
- Proficiency Test Board (PTB)** – A group of four (4) to six (6) elected members, plus an appointed Chair, in good standing from the Society for Wildlife Forensic Science (SWFS) who oversee the Proficiency Testing Program development, implementation, and participant conduct.
- Proficiency Test Item** – Sample, product, artifact, reference material, piece of equipment, data set or other information used for proficiency testing.
- Proficiency Testing Program Release Form** – Form required of participants whose laboratory is accredited by an accrediting body (AB) requiring such release and shall be submitted as part of their external proficiency test requirements.
- Proficiency Testing Program Reporting Form** – Formal written presentation of the results and conclusions drawn from a proficiency test completed by participants. Also referred to as a proficiency testing report.
- Proficiency Testing Program Agreement** – Agreement required of each participant in a proficiency testing round. The purpose of the agreement is to ensure compliance with the rules of the SWFS Proficiency Testing Program and the SWFS Code of Ethics and Conduct.
- Proficiency Testing Provider** – Organization responsible for all tasks in the development and operation of proficiency testing scheme. The proficiency testing provider is the Society for Wildlife Forensic Science (SWFS).
- Proficiency Testing Round** – A single complete sequence of distribution of proficiency test items, and the evaluation and reporting of results to the participants.
- Proficiency Testing Scheme** – Proficiency testing designed in one or more proficiency testing rounds for a specified area of measurement, testing, calibration, examination, sampling or inspection. Plan that outlines the components, process, expectations, and evaluation of a specified area of testing. See also, Testing Scheme.
- Qualitative Scheme** – A scheme design in which the objective is to identify or describe one or more characteristics of the proficiency test item(s).
- Reference Material** – Biological specimens of known identity or data derived from them, or from published

sources. Voucher specimens are a type of reference material which are of known identity, curated with relevant metadata such as geographical origin, life history stage, and sex.

Reporting Irregularity – Identifiable error(s) in a proficiency testing report that is not an out-of-consensus result. Examples of reporting irregularities include, but are not limited to, incomplete reports, non-payment, and/or reporting results inconsistent with those outlined by participant program agreements.

Sex Identification – Test(s) performed to identify the chromosomal sex of an animal.

Simple Majority – A majority in which the highest number of votes cast for any one candidate, issue, or item exceeds the second-highest number, while not constituting an absolute majority.

Simultaneous Scheme – A scheme in which proficiency test items are distributed for concurrent testing within a defined time period.

Single Occasion Exercise – A scheme in which proficiency test items are provided on a single occasion in each testing round to each participant.

Society for Wildlife Forensic Science (SWFS) – An international organization that supports practitioners and promotes best practice in wildlife forensic science (<https://www.wildlifeforensicscience.org>).

Society for Wildlife Forensic Science (SWFS) Member – An individual in good standing with the Society for Wildlife Forensic Science.

Species Identification – See Identification.

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) – Written documentation maintained by the laboratory including laboratory policies, technical procedures and protocols or analytical methods for specific forensic procedures. SOPs should be controlled documents with mechanisms to assure that content is current and authorized, that previous or outdated versions are archived for reference, and that the SOPs are implemented in the laboratory.

Successful Completion – Result of a proficiency test in which the participant has formally provided a proficiency testing report with results and conclusions that contain no outstanding reporting irregularities and that conforms with the Consensus Report and the participants' Proficiency Testing Program Agreement.

Taxonomic Identification – Analysis to establish the taxonomic classification of the sample. These analyses are based on class characters diagnostic for the taxonomic level in question. NOTE: For the purposes of the Proficiency Testing Program and reporting, species is the lowest level of taxonomic hierarchy.

Testing Scheme – See Proficiency Testing Scheme.

Appendix II: Forms

The following forms are associated with the **SWFS Proficiency Testing Program**:

1. **Proficiency Testing Program Agreement (Mammals)**
2. **Proficiency Testing Program Agreement (Fish)**
3. **Proficiency Testing Program Agreement (Timber)**
4. **Proficiency Testing Program Agreement (Ivory)**
5. **Laboratory Statement of Capabilities**
6. **Proficiency Testing Program Order Form**
7. **Proficiency Testing Program Reporting Form (Mammals)**
8. **Proficiency Testing Program Reporting Form (Fish)**
9. **Proficiency Testing Program Reporting Form (Timber)**
10. **Proficiency Testing Program Reporting Form (Ivory)**
11. **Consensus Report**
12. **Proficiency Testing Program Release Form (AB)**