



The Scientific Association Dedicated to Analytical Excellence®



AOAC INTERNATIONAL EXPERT REVIEW PANEL

2015 NEW MEMBER INFORMATION (Fertilizers)

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AOAC INTERNATIONAL BYLAWS

As Amended September 26, 2010

ARTICLE I Name

The name by which this Association shall be known is "AOAC INTERNATIONAL" (hereinafter referred to as the "Association").¹

ARTICLE II Purpose

The primary purpose of the Association is to promote methods validation and quality measurements in the analytical sciences.

ARTICLE III Membership

Section 1. Types of Membership

There shall be three (3) types of membership in the Association: Individual Members, Sustaining Member Organizations, and Organizational Affiliates.

A. Individual Members

There shall be four (4) categories of Individual Members in the Association: Members, Retired Members, Student Members, and Honorary Members.

B. Sustaining Member Organizations

There shall be one (1) category of Sustaining Member Organizations.

C. Organizational Affiliate

There shall be one (1) category of Organizational Affiliate.

Section 2. Qualifications for Membership

A. Individual Members

[1] Members

Qualifications for Members shall be a degree in science, or equivalent as approved by the Board of Directors, and interest in supporting and furthering the purpose and goals of the Association. Such scientists shall be eligible for membership provided they are engaged, or have been engaged, directly or indirectly, in a field relevant to the purpose of the Association.

[2] Retired Members

¹ AOAC INTERNATIONAL was incorporated in the District of Columbia on January 20, 1932, as the Association of Official Agricultural Chemists. On November 10, 1965, the name of the corporation was changed to the Association of Official Analytical Chemists, and on September 12, 1991, the current name was adopted.

A current Member who is no longer actively engaged, directly or indirectly, in a field relevant to the purpose of the Association but who has served the Association as a Member for at least ten (10) years shall be eligible for Retired Member status upon written request and payment of the annual Retired Member dues. Any special benefits accorded Retired Members shall be determined by the Executive Director.

[3] Student Members

Any full-time student working toward an undergraduate or graduate degree in the areas of chemistry, microbiology, food science or other related science shall be eligible for Student Membership in AOAC INTERNATIONAL.

[4] Honorary Members

Honorary Members shall be persons recognized for their substantial contribution toward the achievement of the objectives of the Association. They shall be nominated by the Board of Directors and may be elected by a two-thirds vote of the Individual Members voting.

B. Sustaining Member Organizations

A Sustaining Member Organization shall be any agency of a local, state, provincial, national, or international government; a university, college, or academic department; or any firm, business, or organization with an interest in supporting and furthering the purpose of the Association. Every Sustaining Member Organization must have a designated representative(s). All such Sustaining Member Organization representatives must meet the qualifications for Members and become Individual Members with all the rights and privileges thereof.

C. Organizational Affiliate

An Organizational Affiliate Organization shall be any agency of a local, state, provincial, national, or international government; a university, college, or academic department; or any firm, business, or organization with an interest in supporting and furthering the purpose of the Association. Every Organizational Affiliate must have a designated representative(s). All such Organizational Affiliate representatives must meet the qualifications for Members and become Individual Members with all the rights and privileges thereof.

Section 3. Application for Membership

Applications or requests for membership shall be submitted to the Association's headquarters office. Membership shall become effective upon approval of the application or request, payment of any required membership dues, entry on the membership rolls, and assignment of a member number.

Section 4. Expulsion

The Board of Directors, at any duly called meeting of the Board, by a two-thirds vote of those holding office, may terminate the membership of any member who in its judgment has violated the Bylaws or has been guilty of conduct detrimental to the best interests of the Association. Any member convicted of a felony is subject to immediate expulsion from the Association. Expulsion of a member by the Board of Directors shall be final and shall cancel all rights, interest, or privileges of such member in the services or resources of the Association. Any member, for whom expulsion is proposed, for reasons other than conviction of a felony, shall be entitled to not less than 60 days advance notice of the charges, the date upon which a hearing will be scheduled, and the right to present evidence in defense. The date and place of any such hearing, if held other than at the headquarters or annual meeting site of the Association, must be reasonable with respect to the location of any individual so charged.

Section 5. Dues, Membership Year, and Waivers

- A. Annual dues for membership in the Association shall be fixed by the Board of Directors, subject to approval by the majority of the Individual Members voting by ballot by any of the following means (whichever is deemed appropriate by the Board at the time): mail, telephone call, telegram, cablegram, electronic mail or other means of electronic or telephonic transmission.
- B. Honorary Members of the Association shall be exempt from payment of dues and annual meeting registration fees.
- C. The membership year and the delinquency date shall be determined by the Board of Directors.
- D. The authority to grant waivers of membership dues rests with Executive Director.
- E. Student Member dues shall be one-third of regular Member dues, rounded up to the nearest \$5.00 increment.

Section 6. Members in Good Standing; Rights and Privileges

All Individual Members who maintain their membership by payment of dues as required under these Bylaws and who otherwise qualify shall be considered in good standing and entitled to full privileges of membership.

ARTICLE IV Officers

Section 1. Elected Officers

The elected officers of the Association shall be Individual Members and shall consist of a President, President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, and Immediate Past President.

A. President

The President shall be the principal elected officer of the Association, shall preside at meetings of the Association and of the Board of Directors and of the Executive Committee, and shall be a member ex-officio, with right to vote, of all committees except the Nominating Committee. He or she shall also, at the annual meeting of the Association and at such other times as he or she shall deem proper, communicate to the Association or the Board of Directors such matters and make such suggestions as may in his or her opinion tend to promote the welfare and further the purpose of the Association and shall perform such other

duties as are necessarily incident to the office of President or as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors.

B. President-Elect

In the absence of the President, or in the event of the President's inability or refusal to act, the President-Elect shall perform the duties of the President, and, when so acting, shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the President. The President-Elect shall perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him or her by the President or by the Board of Directors.

C. Secretary

The Secretary shall give notice of all meetings of the Association, keep a record of all proceedings, attest documents, and, in general, perform such other duties as are usual of the office of Secretary and such other duties as may be assigned by the President or by the Board of Directors.

D. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be responsible for the funds and securities of the Association; serve as financial officer of the organization and as Chairperson of the Finance Committee; manage the Board of Director's review of and action related to the Board of Director's financial responsibilities; serve as the chief Board liaison in overseeing and reviewing the annual audit, and in general, perform such other duties as are usual of the office of Treasurer and such other duties as may be assigned by the President or by the Board of Directors.

E. Immediate Past President

The Immediate Past President shall serve as advisor to the President and Directors and perform such other duties as may be assigned from time to time by the President or by the Board of Directors.

Section 2. Appointed Officers

The appointed officers shall include the Executive Director and such other appointed officers as may be designated by the Board of Directors from time to time.

A. Executive Director

The day-to-day administration and management of the Association's offices shall be vested in a salaried manager employed or appointed by, and directly responsible to, the Board of Directors. This manager shall have the title of Executive Director with responsibility for the management and direction of all operations, programs, activities, and affairs of the Association, as approved or delegated by the Board of Directors. The Executive Director shall have direct responsibility for employment and termination of employment and the determination of compensation for staff members within the budgetary framework determined by the Board of Directors. The Executive Director functions as the chief operating officer of the Association within the guidelines established by the policies and procedures of the Board of Directors and, as necessary, with the concurrence of the President. The Executive Director shall have such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board.

B. Other Appointed Officers

Other appointed officers shall have such duties as may be prescribed by the Board.

ARTICLE V
Nominations, Elections, Terms, and Appointments to the Board of Directors

Section 1. Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall annually recommend to the Board of Directors a slate of Individual Members as potential nominees for the elected positions where vacancies will occur. The Nominating Committee shall consist of five (5) members who shall be three (3) immediate Past Presidents, as available, and two (2) Individual Members-at-Large of the Association. If three Past Presidents are not available to serve, other Individual Members-at-Large shall be appointed by the President to the extent necessary to form the five (5)-member committee.

Section 2. Elections and Terms of Office

The President-Elect, the Secretary, Treasurer, and the Directors of the Board of Directors shall be elected by a majority of Individual Members voting, from a slate of nominees recommended annually by the Board of Directors.

Terms of office for all Officers and Directors shall begin with the adjournment of the annual meeting following their election and shall end with the adjournment of the annual meeting occurring nearest the expiration of their term. The six (6) Directors shall be elected to staggered three-year terms with two Directors elected to full three-year terms each year, but not to more than two (2), consecutive, three-year terms. Appointment or election to fill an unexpired term shall not affect the eligibility of a person to subsequently be elected to two (2) full terms. The Secretary shall be elected to a one-year term and may be re-elected to successive one-year terms. The Treasurer shall be elected for a one-year term and may be re-elected to successive one-year terms. The President-Elect shall be elected to a one-year term; whereupon the current President-Elect shall become President and the current President shall become the Immediate Past President, each serving a one-year term.

Section 3. Appointments

Directors-at-Large are appointed by the Board in accordance with Article VI, Section 2. Directors-at-Large are appointed for one (1) year terms, renewable at the discretion of the elected Board.

ARTICLE VI
Board of Directors

Section 1. Composition

The Board of Directors shall consist of eleven (11) elected members to include the President, President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, Immediate Past President, six (6) Directors, and up to three (3) appointed Directors-at-Large, all of whom shall be Individual Members of the Association. The elected Board shall reflect the makeup of the Association membership and shall not be dominated by any single interest.

Section 2. Powers and Duties

The Board of Directors shall provide supervision, control, and direction of the affairs of the Association, shall determine the Association's policies or changes therein within the limits of the Bylaws, shall actively prosecute

its purpose, and shall have discretion in the disbursement of its funds. It may adopt such rules and procedures for the conduct of its business as shall be deemed advisable, and may, in the execution of the powers granted, appoint such agents as it may consider necessary. The Board of Directors may appoint up to three (3) Directors-at-Large, if, in their opinion, such appointments advance the purpose of the Association. Directors-at-Large shall be accorded the same voting privileges as elected Directors.

Section 3. Meetings

Except that the Board shall have a regular meeting at the time and place of the annual meeting, the Board shall meet, in person or via telephone conference call, upon call of the President at such times and places as he or she may designate within the policies adopted by the Board, and shall be called to meet upon demand of a majority of its members. Notice of all meetings of the Board of Directors shall be sent by any of the following means (whichever is deemed appropriate by the President at the time): mail, telephone call, telegram, cablegram, electronic mail or other means of electronic or telephonic transmission to each member of the Board at his or her last recorded address or number at least fourteen (14) days in advance of in-person meetings or forty-eight (48) hours in advance of conference call meetings.

Section 4. Quorum

A quorum for any meeting of the Board is six (6) Board members elected in accordance with Article V (1). Any less number may: (1) set a time to adjourn, (2) adjourn, (3) recess, or (4) take measures to obtain a quorum.

Section 5. Absence

Any member of the Board of Directors unable to attend a meeting of the Board shall notify the President and state the reason for his or her absence. If a member of the Board is absent from two (2) consecutive meetings, he or she may be removed by a two-thirds vote of the Board Members then in office.

Section 6. Compensation

Members of the Board of Directors, as such, shall not receive any compensation for their services as Board members, but the Board may, by resolution under policies it may adopt, authorize reimbursement of expenses incurred in the performance of members' duties. Such authorization may prescribe conditions and procedures for approval and payment of such expenses. Nothing herein shall preclude a Board member from serving the Association in any other capacity and receiving compensation for such services, if compensation is customarily paid for such services.

Section 7. Resignation or Removal

Any member of the Board may resign at any time by giving written notice to the President, Secretary, Treasurer, or to the Board of Directors. Such resignation shall take effect at the time specified therein, or, if no time is specified, at the time of acceptance thereof as determined by the President or the Board.

Any member of the Board may be removed by a three-fourths vote of the Board members then in office and present at any regular or special meeting of the Board.

Section 8. Vacancies: Members of the Board

If a vacancy should occur in the membership of the elected Board of Directors, any Past President may be appointed by action of the remaining members of the Board to temporarily fill such vacancy until the next

regularly scheduled election. At the next regularly scheduled election nominations will be presented to fill the vacancy for the unexpired portion of the term remaining.

Section 9. Vacancies: President and Other Officers

If the office of the President shall become vacant, the President-Elect shall thereupon become President of the Association for the unexpired term, followed by his or her duly elected term. In the event the office of President becomes vacant at a time when the office of President-Elect is also vacant, the Presidency shall be filled for the remainder of the term by the action of the Board of Directors. If any other officer position shall become vacant, the office may be filled for the remainder of the term by action of the Board.

**ARTICLE VII
Committees**

Section 1. Committee Formation

The Board of Directors shall form and adopt terms of reference for such standing or special boards, committees, subcommittees, task forces, or task groups as may be required by these Bylaws or as the Board may determine necessary to carry out the affairs of the Association.

Section 2. Committee Appointments

Subject to the requirements of these Bylaws and the specific terms of reference adopted by the Board, the President shall make the appointments to fill the vacancies occurring in the Association's standing or special boards, committees, subcommittees, task forces, or task groups.

**ARTICLE VIII
Official Methods of Analysis**

The Board of Directors (BoD) is empowered to develop written policies and procedures for the study, adoption, and change in status of the Official Methods of Analysis of AOAC INTERNATIONAL. Implementation of the policies and procedures shall be delegated to an Official Methods Board (OMB).

Section 1. Composition of the Official Methods Board

The Official Methods Board shall consist of a chair and a vice chair, and members who are recommended by the chair. The chair, vice chair and members are appointed by the President of AOAC INTERNATIONAL. The OMB shall be composed of members representing a balance of government, industry, and academia as appropriate to the scope of the group and shall not be dominated by any single interest.

Section 2. Purpose of the Official Methods Board

The OMB shall serve the Association in a scientific and advisory capacity on methods and the process of their adoption. The OMB shall be responsible for implementation of procedures adopted by the BoD, according to the principles in section 3 below.

Section 3. Principles of the Official Methods Program

- A. Adequate records of technical data, discussions, and decisions on the study, adoption, and change of status of Official Methods of Analysis shall be maintained for a reasonable time.
- B. Timely notice of proposed method studies, adoption, or change in status shall be published in an Association publication that is circulated to the members.
- C. Opportunity shall be provided for materially interested parties to submit input during method study and adoption procedures and to submit comments on the adoption, use of, or change in status of specific methods.
- D. Methods submitted to the OMB for inclusion in the OMA shall be thoroughly studied, scientifically reviewed, and available in published form prior to adoption as Final Action by the OMB.
- E. The OMB shall adopt methods as Final Action.

**ARTICLE IX
Meetings**

Section 1. Annual Meeting

The annual business meeting of the Association shall be held at the time and place decided by the Board of Directors. A special meeting of the entire Association may be called by the Board of Directors; announcement thereof shall be made at least thirty (30) days prior to the time of said meeting.

Section 2. Quorum

One hundred Individual Members who are present in person or by proxy and entitled to vote shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the Association which is duly called pursuant to the provisions of these Bylaws.

**ARTICLE X
Voting**

Section 1. Voting by Ballot

By direction of the Board of Directors, unless otherwise required by these Bylaws or conducted under alternative procedures established under these Bylaws, voting on any matter, including the election of officers and directors, the election of Honorary Members, amendment of the Bylaws, and the approval of dues, may be conducted by ballot of the voting membership by any of the following means (whichever is deemed appropriate at the time): mail, telephone call, telegram, cablegram, electronic mail or other means of electronic or telephonic transmission, and the question(s) thus presented shall be determined according to the votes received, provided in each case votes of at least five (5) percent of the voting membership shall be received. Any and all action taken in pursuance of a vote by any of the means indicated above (whichever the Board deemed appropriate at the time)

in each case shall be binding upon the Association in the same manner as would be action taken at a duly called meeting and shall become effective, unless otherwise provided for in these Bylaws or otherwise stated in the ballot, on the day following certification of the vote.

Section 2. Voting by Proxy

At any duly called meeting of Individual Members, a member-of-record, as determined thirty (30) days prior to any meeting and who is entitled to vote, may vote by proxy executed in writing by the Individual Member or his or her duly authorized attorney-in-fact. No proxy shall be valid for more than eleven (11) months after the date of its execution unless otherwise provided in the proxy.

**ARTICLE XI
Earnings and Assets**

Section 1. Non-Profit Status

A. Regardless of any provision of the Bylaws which may be construed otherwise:

[1] No part of the net earnings of the Association shall under any circumstances inure to the benefit of any member or individual.

[2] The Association shall not be operated for a private profit.

B. On lawful dissolution of the Association and after settlement of all just obligations of the Association, the Board of Directors shall distribute all remaining assets of the Association to one (1) or more organizations selected by the Board of Directors which have been held exempt from Federal Income Tax as organizations described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.

Section 2. Political Activities

A. No substantial part of the Association's activities shall consist of carrying on propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence local, state, or national legislation. All activities of the Association shall be determined by the Board of Directors.

B. The Association shall not participate or intervene in any manner in any campaign on behalf of any candidate for a political office.

**ARTICLE XII
Sections**

Section 1. Sections

The Board of Directors shall set geographic limits and grant authority to groups of Individual Members of the Association residing or working in the same geographical areas for the establishment of Sections.

Section 2. Purpose of Sections

The purpose of Sections shall be to promote and further the purpose of the Association.

Section 3. Membership in Sections

Individuals interested in the purpose of the Section shall be eligible for Section membership. Only Individual Members of the Association shall be eligible for election to the Executive Committee of the Section.

Section 4. Bylaws of Sections

Subject to approval of the Board of Directors, each Section shall adopt, for its own governance, bylaws not inconsistent with these Bylaws.

Section 5. Dissolution of Sections

When any Section shall cease to function as a Section for a period of more than one year, or if its membership shall be less than ten (10) Individual Members of the Association for a period of one (1) year, the Board of Directors may terminate the existence of such Section.

Section 6. Actions of Sections

No act of a Section or its members shall be considered an act of the Association unless expressly authorized, ratified, or affirmed by the Board of Directors.

**ARTICLE XIII
Technical Divisions**

Section 1. Purpose

Technical Divisions shall represent communities of interest within the Association which have the purpose of furthering the purpose of the Association through the development of the analytical sciences either in a commodity-based or scientific discipline-based field. Their activities shall not duplicate the organizational structure nor conflict with the policies or procedures for the adoption of official methods of analysis by the Association.

Section 2. Creation, Combination, Discontinuance, or Change

Technical Divisions may be created, existing Technical Divisions may be combined or discontinued, or the name of a Technical Division may be changed under policies and procedures adopted by the Board of Directors. Each Technical Division shall adopt bylaws not inconsistent with these Bylaws. The jurisdiction of each Technical Division shall be described in its bylaws. No act of any Technical Division or its members shall be considered an act of the Association unless expressly authorized, ratified, or affirmed by the Board of Directors.

**ARTICLE XIV
Indemnification**

The Association shall have the power to pay, by indemnity, reimbursement, or otherwise, to or for the use of any person designated by resolution of the Board of Directors who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending, or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative (other than an action by or on behalf of the Association), by reason of the fact he or she is or was a director, officer, committee member, employee or agent of the Association, or was serving as such for another at the request of the Association, against expenses (including legal, accounting, witness and other), judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement so long as such person was not found by a court of competent jurisdiction to have been willfully negligent of the interests of the Association or such person had reasonable cause to believe that his or her conduct was lawful.

ARTICLE XV
Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the Association in all cases in which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws or any special rules of order the Association may adopt.

ARTICLE XVI
Amendments to the Bylaws

These Bylaws may be amended, repealed, or altered, in whole or in part, by a three-fourths vote: (a) of the Individual Members at any annual business or duly called special meeting of the Association, provided notice of any amendment proposed for consideration shall be sent by any of the following means (whichever may be deemed appropriate at the time): mail, telephone call, telegram, cablegram, electronic mail or other means of electronic or telephonic transmission to the last recorded address or number of each Individual Member at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of the meeting; or (b) by approval of the Individual Members through ballot sent by any means indicated above in accordance with the provisions of Article X, Voting.

All proposed amendments of these Bylaws shall be presented in writing to the Board of Directors. The Board shall present the proposals to the Association membership, with recommendations. All amendments to the Bylaws, unless otherwise stated, will become effective at the adjournment of the meeting where action is taken or on the day following the certification of a vote by mail ballot.

AOAC INTERNATIONAL
POLICY ON THE USE OF THE
ASSOCIATION NAME, INITIALS,
IDENTIFYING INSIGNIA, LETTERHEAD, AND BUSINESS CARDS

Introduction

The following policy and guidelines for the use of the name, initials, and other identifying insignia of AOAC INTERNATIONAL have been developed in order to protect the reputation, image, legal integrity and property of the Association.

The name of the Association, as stated in its bylaws, is "AOAC INTERNATIONAL". The Association is also known by its initials, AOAC, and by its logo, illustrated below, which incorporates the Association name and a representation of a microscope, book, and flask. The AOAC logo is owned by the Association and is registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.



The full Association insignia, illustrated below, is comprised of the logo and the tagline, "The Scientific Association Dedicated to Analytical Excellence," shown below. The typeface used is Largo. The AOAC tagline is owned by the Association and is registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark office.



The Scientific Association Dedicated to Analytical Excellence®

Policy

Policy on the use of the Association's name and logo is established by the AOAC Board of Directors as follows:

“The Board approves and encourages reference to the Association by name, either as AOAC INTERNATIONAL or as AOAC; or reference to our registered trademark, AOAC®, in appropriate settings to describe our programs, products, etc., in scientific literature and other instances so long as the reference is fair, accurate, complete and truthful and does not indicate or imply unauthorized endorsement of any kind.

The insignia (logo) of AOAC INTERNATIONAL is a registered trade and service mark and shall not be reproduced or used by any person or organization other than the Association, its elected and appointed officers, sections, or committees, without the prior written permission of the Association. Those authorized to use the AOAC INTERNATIONAL insignia shall use it only for the purposes for which permission has been specifically granted.

The name and insignia of the Association shall not be used by any person or organization in any way which indicates, tends to indicate, or implies AOAC official endorsement of any product, service, program, company, organization, event or person, endorsement of which, has not been authorized by the Association, or which suggests that membership in the Association is available to any organization.”

The Executive Director, in accordance with the above stated policy, is authorized to process, approve, fix rules, and make available materials containing the Association name and insignia.

It should be noted that neither the Association's name nor its insignia nor part of its insignia may be incorporated into any personal, company, organization, or any other stationery other than that of the Association; nor may any statement be included in the printed portion of such stationery which states or implies that an individual, company, or other organization is a Member of the Association.

Instructions

1. Reproduction or use of the Association name or insignia requires prior approval by the Executive Director or his designate.
2. Association insignia should not be altered in any manner without approval of the Executive Director or his designate, except to be enlarged or reduced in their entirety.
3. Artwork for reproducing the Association name or insignia, including those incorporating approved alterations, will be provided on request to those authorized to use them (make such requests to the AOAC Marketing Department). Examples of the types of alterations that would be approved are inclusion of a section name in or the addition of an officer's name and address to the letterhead insignia.

4. When the Association name is used without other text as a heading, it should, when possible, be set in the Largo typeface.
5. Although other colors may be used, AOAC blue, PMS 287, is the preferred color when printing the AOAC insignia, especially in formal and official documents. It is, of course, often necessary and acceptable to reproduce the insignia in black.
6. Do not print one part of the logo or insignia in one color and other parts in another color.
7. The letterhead of AOAC INTERNATIONAL shall not be used by any person or organization other than the Association, its elected and appointed officers, staff, sections, or committees; except by special permission.

Correspondence of AOAC official business should be conducted using AOAC letterhead. However, those authorized to use AOAC letterhead shall use it for official AOAC business only.

Copies of all correspondence using AOAC letterhead or conducting AOAC official business, whether on AOAC letterhead or not, must be sent to the appropriate office at AOAC headquarters.

8. AOAC INTERNATIONAL business cards shall not be used by any person or organization other than the Association, its staff, and elected officials, except by special permission.

Those authorized to use AOAC business cards shall use them for official AOAC business only and shall not represent themselves as having authority to bind the Association beyond that authorized.

Sanctions

1. Upon learning of any violation of the above policy, the Executive Director or a designate will notify the individual or organization that they are in violation of AOAC policy and will ask them to refrain from further misuse of the AOAC name or insignia.
2. If the misuse is by an Individual Member or Sustaining Member of the Association, and the misuse continues after notification, the Board of Directors will take appropriate action.
3. If continued misuse is by a nonmember of the Association or if a member continues misuse in spite of notification and Board action, ultimately, the Association will take legal action to protect its property, legal integrity, reputation, and image.

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AOAC INTERNATIONAL
ANTITRUST POLICY
STATEMENT AND GUIDELINES

Introduction

It is the policy of AOAC INTERNATIONAL (AOAC) and its members to comply strictly with all laws applicable to AOAC activities. Because AOAC activities frequently involve cooperative undertakings and meetings where competitors may be present, it is important to emphasize the on-going commitment of our members and the Association to full compliance with national and other antitrust laws. This statement is a reminder of that commitment and should be used as a general guide for AOAC and related individual activities and meetings.

Responsibility for Antitrust Compliance

The Association's structure is fashioned and its programs are carried out in conformance with antitrust standards. However, an equal responsibility for antitrust compliance __ which includes avoidance of even an appearance of improper activity __ belongs to the individual. Even the appearance of improper activity must be avoided because the courts have taken the position that actual proof of misconduct is not required under the law. All that is required is whether misconduct can be inferred from the individual's activities.

Employers and AOAC depend on individual good judgment to avoid all discussions and activities which may involve improper subject matter and improper procedures. AOAC staff members work conscientiously to avoid subject matter or discussion which may have unintended implications, and counsel for the Association can provide guidance with regard to these matters. It is important for the individual to realize, however, that the competitive significance of a particular conduct or communication probably is evident only to the individual who is directly involved in such matters.

Antitrust Guidelines

In general, the U.S. antitrust laws seek to preserve a free, competitive economy and trade in the United States and in commerce with foreign countries. Laws in other countries have similar objectives. Competitors (including individuals) may not restrain competition among themselves with reference to the price, quality, or distribution of their products, and they may not act in concert to restrict the competitive capabilities or opportunities of competitors, suppliers, or customers.

Although the Justice Department and Federal Trade Commission generally enforce the U.S. antitrust laws, private parties can bring their own lawsuits.

Penalties for violating the U.S. and other antitrust laws are severe: corporations are subject to heavy fines and injunctive decrees, and may have to pay substantial damage judgments to injured competitors, suppliers, or customers. Individuals are subject to criminal prosecution, and will be punished by fines and imprisonment.

Under current U.S. federal sentencing guidelines, individuals found guilty of bid rigging, price fixing, or market allocation must be sent to jail for at least 4 to 10 months and must pay substantial minimum fines.

Since the individual has an important responsibility in ensuring antitrust compliance in AOAC activities, everyone should read and heed the following guidelines.

1. Don't make any effort to bring about or prevent the standardization of any method or product for the purpose or intent of preventing the manufacture or sale of any method or product not conforming to a specified standard.
2. Don't discuss with competitors your own or the competitors' prices, or anything that might affect prices such as costs, discounts, terms of sale, distribution, volume of production, profit margins, territories, or customers.
3. Don't make announcements or statements at AOAC functions, outside leased exhibit space, about your own prices or those of competitors.
4. Don't disclose to others at meetings or otherwise any competitively sensitive information.
5. Don't attempt to use the Association to restrict the economic activities of any firm or any individual.
6. Don't stay at a meeting where any such price or anti_competitive talk occurs.
7. Do conduct all AOAC business meetings in accordance with AOAC rules. These rules require that an AOAC staff member be present or available, the meeting be conducted by a knowledgeable chair, the agenda be followed, and minutes be kept.
8. Do confer with counsel before raising any topic or making any statement with competitive ramifications.
9. Do send copies of meeting minutes and all AOAC_related correspondence to the staff member involved in the activity.
10. Do alert the AOAC staff to any inaccuracies in proposed or existing methods and statements issued, or to be issued, by AOAC and to any conduct not in conformance with these guidelines.

Conclusion

Compliance with these guidelines involves not only avoidance of antitrust violations, but avoidance of any behavior which might be so construed. Bear in mind, however, that the above antitrust laws are stated in general terms, and that this statement is not a summary of applicable laws. It is intended only to highlight and emphasize the principal antitrust standards which are relevant to AOAC programs. You must, therefore, seek the guidance of either AOAC counsel or your own counsel if antitrust questions arise.

* * * * *

Adopted by the AOAC Board of Directors: September 24, 1989
Revised: March 11, 1991
Revised October 1996



The Scientific Association Dedicated to Analytical Excellence®

AOAC INTERNATIONAL
POLICY AND PROCEDURES ON
VOLUNTEER CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Statement of Policy

While it is not the intention of AOAC INTERNATIONAL (AOAC) to restrict the personal, professional, or proprietary activities of AOAC members nor to preclude or restrict participation in Association affairs solely by reason of such activities, it is the sense of AOAC that conflicts of interest or even the appearance of conflicts of interest on the part of AOAC volunteers should be avoided. Where this is not possible or practical under the circumstances, there shall be written disclosure by the volunteers of actual or potential conflicts of interest in order to ensure the credibility and integrity of AOAC. Such written disclosure shall be made to any individual or group within the Association which is reviewing a recommendation which the volunteer had a part in formulating and in which the volunteer has a material interest causing an actual or potential conflict of interest.

AOAC requires disclosure of actual or potential conflicts of interest as a condition of active participation in the business of the Association. The burden of disclosure of conflicts of interest or the appearance of conflicts of interest falls upon the volunteer.

A disclosed conflict of interest will not in itself bar an AOAC member from participation in Association activities, but a three-fourths majority of the AOAC group reviewing the issue presenting the conflict must concur by secret ballot that the volunteer's continued participation is necessary and will not unreasonably jeopardize the integrity of the decision-making process.

Employees of AOAC are governed by the provision of the AOAC policy on conflict of interest by staff. If that policy is in disagreement with or mute on matters covered by this policy, the provisions of this policy shall prevail and apply to staff as well.

Illustrations of Conflicts of Interest

1. A volunteer who is serving as a committee member or referee engaged in the evaluation of a method or device; who is also an employee of or receiving a fee from the firm which is manufacturing or distributing the method or device or is an employee of or receiving a fee from a competing firm.
2. A volunteer who is requested to evaluate a proposed method or a related collaborative study in which data are presented that appear detrimental (or favorable) to a product distributed or a position supported by the volunteer's employer.
3. A referee who is conducting a study and evaluating the results of an instrument, a kit, or a piece of equipment which will be provided gratis by the manufacturer or distributor to one or more of the participating laboratories, including his or her own laboratory, at the conclusion of the study.

4. Sponsorship of a collaborative study by an interest (which may include the referee) which stands to profit from the results; such sponsorship usually involving the privilege granted by the investigator to permit the sponsor to review and comment upon the results prior to AOAC evaluation.
5. A volunteer asked to review a manuscript submitted for publication when the manuscript contains information which is critical of a proprietary or other interest of the reviewer.

The foregoing are intended as illustrative and should not be interpreted to be all-inclusive examples of conflicts of interest AOAC volunteers may find themselves involved in.

Do's and Don'ts

Do avoid the appearance as well as the fact of a conflict of interest.

Do make written disclosure of any material interest which may constitute a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest.

Do not accept payment or gifts for services rendered as a volunteer of the Association without disclosing such payment or gifts.

Do not vote on any issue before an AOAC decision-making body where you have the appearance of or an actual conflict of interest regarding the recommendation or decision before that body.

Do not participate in an AOAC decision-making body without written disclosure of actual or potential conflicts of interest in the issues before that body.

Do not accept a position of responsibility as an AOAC volunteer, without disclosure, where the discharge of the accepted responsibility will be or may appear to be influenced by proprietary or other conflicting interests.

Procedures

Each volunteer elected or appointed to an AOAC position of responsibility shall be sent, at the time of election or appointment, a copy of this policy and shall be advised of the requirement to adhere to the provisions herein as a condition for active participation in the business of the Association. Each volunteer, at the time of his or her election or appointment, shall indicate, in writing, on a form provided for this purpose by AOAC, that he or she has read and accepts this policy.

Each year, at the spring meeting of the AOAC Board of Directors, the Executive Director shall submit a report certifying the requirements of this policy have been met; including the names and positions of any elected or appointed volunteers who have not at that time indicated in writing that they have accepted the policy.

Anyone with knowledge of specific instances in which the provisions of this policy have not been complied with shall report these instances to the Board of Directors, via the Office of the Executive Director, as soon as discovered.

* * * * *

Adopted: March 2, 1989
Revised: March 28, 1990
Revised: October 1996



EXPERT REVIEW PANEL (ERP) FOR FERTILIZERS

Hall, William (Chair)

Mosaic

Bartos, James

Office of Indiana State Chemist

Clifford, Robert

Shimadzu

Gopala, Anil

PerkinElmer

Guertal, Elizabeth

Auburn University

Hartshorn, Jon

Morral Companies, LLC

Hojjat, Michael

Tessengerlo Kerely, Inc.

James, Barbara

PotashCorp

Kariuki, Solomon

University of Kentucky Division of

Liu, Kai

Eurofins Scientific

Nacharaju, Krishnamurthy (Murthy)

ICL-SF

Nagarajan, Rajamani

Hexion Inc.

Nogueira, Ana Rita

Embrapa

Oppermann, Uwe

Shimadzu

Parisi, Salvatore

Industrial Consultant

Pereira, David

3B's Research Group Dept. of Polymer

Phillips, Heidi

Self Employed

Provance-Bowley, Mary C.

Harsco Metals & Minerals

Reba, Rick

Nestle - USA

Shelite, Kristopher

Compass Minerals Inc.

Shoemaker, Dirk D.

Nebraska Dept. of Agriculture Labs

Tan, Rechel

Abu Dhabi Fertilizer Ind. Co. W.L.L.

Tsourides, Dion

Spectro A.I. Inc.

Wegner, Keith

Colorado Department of Agriculture

Zor, Medet

Istanbul Food Control Laboratory

EXPERT REVIEW PANELS

--Policies and Procedures--

Introduction

Expert Review Panels (ERP) are created to provide stakeholders with an expert resource to evaluate analytical solutions to identified needs and concerns.

The ERP will be tasked to search for appropriate methods, issue a “Call for Methods” in the ILM and other avenues, and critically evaluate all collected methods. The ERP will then recommend appropriate methods (as submitted or modified) for adoption as Official First Action methods or for further validation. The ERP, if requested by the Committee/Topic Advisor, would be expected to assist in identifying appropriate materials to be used in the validation studies and in reviewing the protocols for such studies.

Outline of ERP establishment process

An Expert Review Panel is established as follows: A stakeholder or stakeholder body submits a request for the creation of an ERP to the AOAC staff. The request includes a description of the subject area, the desired outcome, and should include a list of recommended subject experts with supporting documentation (see "Qualifications of Expert Reviewers"). Included with this list of recommended subject experts could be a recommendation for an ERP Chair. The request is forwarded to the appropriate AOAC Chief Science Officer (CSO) who identifies potential members for the ERP from a recognized Pool of Experts, a Call for Experts on the AOAC website, and from the stakeholder recommendations. The candidate list and supporting documentation are forwarded to the Chair of the OMB who will assign the review to at least two OMB members. The OMB reviewers will review the candidates for expertise and perceived conflicts of interest and the OMB may then approve the members of the ERP. A Chair for the ERP is also selected. The Chair of the ERP will organize meetings of the ERP to discuss and make recommendations relative to method recommendations, the method(s) to be further validated, and the materials to be used in the validation studies. The conclusions and recommendations of the ERP will be transmitted by the ERP Chair to the OMB and stakeholder body. The stakeholder body will proceed with implementation of the ERP's recommendations by organizing the appropriate SLV study and other items needed for application.

Pool of Potential Expert Reviewers:

Candidates for ERPs are pulled from the following sources. Upon acceptance of the request for the formation of an ERP, a Call for Experts is posted on the AOAC website for a minimum of two weeks. Candidates can then contact AOAC with their interest and credentials. Also, AOAC maintains a Pool of Experts database containing a list of

*Approved by Official Methods Board, November 13, 2008
Approved by AOAC Board of Directors, December 9, 2008
Appeals Process Appended – September 2009
Revised by AOAC Board of Directors, May 25, 2011*

AOAC members willing to serve as experts and cataloging their education, experience, and other applicable credentials. Candidates can also be recommended by the stakeholder(s). Note: Candidates (except for the chair) do not need to be members of AOAC. The appointment of experts to an ERP will be for a minimum of 3 years.

Qualification of Expert Reviewers: To qualify as an Expert Reviewer, the candidate must meet one of the following requirements: (1) Demonstrated knowledge in the appropriate scientific disciplines. (2) Demonstrated knowledge regarding data relevant to adequate method performance. (3) Demonstrated knowledge of practical application of analytical methods to bona fide diagnostic requirements. These qualifications must be clearly described in a CV submitted to the CSO and kept on file at AOAC headquarters.

Duties: Members of the Pool of Experts will be called upon to serve on ERPs as needed, and to review documents prepared in the course of the project. These documents may include: (1) procedural documents on how methods will be selected and how single laboratory validation studies will be done; (2) methods submitted for consideration as Official First Action Methods; (3) methods submitted for selection for further validation studies; (4) protocols to be used for single laboratory validation studies; (5) the selection of methods to be considered for full collaborative studies; and (6) validation study reports.

Expert Review Panel:

The CSO selects candidates for an ERP from the Pool of Experts database, the Call for Experts on the AOAC website, and from candidates recommended by the stakeholders. Selection of ERP candidates is based upon their knowledge and experience to adequately evaluate the scope of the study and the anticipated number of submitted methods. The size of the ERP will be sufficient to assure the necessary expertise is present. The CSO may recommend one of the Panel members to serve as Chair.

The CSO submits the following to the OMB Chair: The original submission package, a list of all candidates considered for inclusion on the ERP, the slate of recommended candidates, and a list of possible alternates. Explanations for the ERP choices may be included by either the CSO or a stakeholder if desired. The OMB Chair will delegate two members of the OMB to perform a review. The reviewers submit their recommendations in writing to the OMB. The OMB then votes on the reviewers' recommendations. This vote can be either by email or during an OMB meeting. The OMB may choose not to select one or more individuals on the Panel as submitted and may or may not accept the recommendation of the CSO for the panel Chair. A majority of those voting will be required for approval. The vote of the Chair will break any tie. The CSO, ERP members, and stakeholder body are notified of the vote within one week.

Conflict of Interest: It is incumbent upon each ERP member to avoid any known or potential conflicts of interest and make these known to the CSO and OMB Chair. Each pool member chosen for an ERP will be asked to agree to the AOAC Policies and Procedures on Conflicts of Interest evidenced by completing a Conflict of Interest Form.

*Approved by Official Methods Board, November 13, 2008
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If a Pool member being considered to serve on any particular panel is an author, or his/her laboratory is the source of a method under consideration by the Panel, they must so indicate to the CSO or OMB Chair. At the discretion of the CSO or OMB, the names of such Pool members may be removed from consideration, or they may be considered to serve on the ERP with the understanding that a deliberate effort will be required to avoid any known or potential conflicts of interest. In these latter cases, assignments of individual methods for peer review will be made in such a way by the Chair that ERP members will not review any method for which they are an author or co-author, or for which their laboratory is the source; and, most importantly, the Chair will require that they abstain from voting on such a method during the final method selection process. The CSO or OMB may also allow Pool members that qualify under the requirements of expert reviewers, but for whom there is a known or potential conflict of interest to be present as an observer on any particular Panel. In these cases, and only at the discretion of the Chair, observers may provide comments, but only if and when called upon by the Chair to do so.

Non-disclosure Statement: All members of an ERP must have signed the AOAC Volunteer Acceptance Form. For certain contracts, each Pool member or observer chosen may be asked to sign a non-disclosure statement agreeing not to discuss or disclose confidential information presented and discussed during meetings of the ERP.

Meetings of the ERP: The ERP Chair will organize meetings of the ERP, to review the methods and accompanying validation data, score them numerically, and prepare a summary report. Meetings of the ERP can include voting members of the Panel, and non-voting members (AOAC staff, stakeholder members, and observers).

The CSO may assist the Panel Chair in facilitating meetings. The members of the Panel are to review distributed documents before the meeting. To facilitate the process, the Chair may assign primary and secondary reviewers for each method. The primary and secondary reviewers prepare a short critique of the method that is distributed or presented to the ERP. If both the primary and secondary reviewers conclude that the method should not be considered further, the ERP Chair may call for a vote by the Panel; if a unanimous vote to drop a method without further discussion results, the Chair removes the method from further consideration. The Panel then discusses each of the remaining methods in turn.

Method Selection Process: The ERP will evaluate all of the methods in a scientifically unbiased manner.

Occasionally, a large number of analytical methods of variable quality are encountered. When this occurs, the following “pre-screening” procedure is suggested to eliminate methods that are not satisfactory. The Chair of the ERP with the assistance of at least one other member of the ERP may review all of the methods and remove unsatisfactory methods from consideration. The remainder of the methods would be sent to the ERP members for review.

The basic requirements for selection of methods for further validation studies will be: fitness for purpose, applicability to the scope needed, clarity of method description, satisfactory performance characteristics, and single laboratory validation data. To assist the Panel, the AOAC will provide a “Methods Selection Worksheet,” which may be modified at the discretion of the ERP. ERP members will identify the best method(s) for further validation, and identify any modifications to be made to the method. An example of the Method Selection Worksheet is attached.

Samples: The ERP will be asked to recommend the specific materials (matrices) to be included in the subsequent validation studies, along with detailed justifications.

Summary Report: The Chair of the ERP prepares a Summary Report clearly enunciating the recommendations of the Panel, the manner in which these conclusions were reached, any modifications of the method(s) chosen, and the materials (matrices) to be included in the validation studies. The report is to be submitted to the ERP in a timely fashion after the concluding ERP meeting. Comments are also due back to the ERP Chair in a timely fashion. The report is then sent to the stakeholders and a copy is forwarded to the Chair of the OMB.

Post-ERP Activities: AOAC retains the right to call on the panelists, as well as members of the Industry Groups, for continued assistance in the subsequent validation studies. This may include (1) help in obtaining the required samples for use in the subsequent validation studies, as well as participating laboratories; (2) help in developing and reviewing the validation study protocols; and (3) help in reviewing the data resulting from the validation studies and reviewing the manuscript describing the results. These activities will be coordinated by the CSO.

Method Selection Worksheet

Method Title:

Method Number:

Overall evaluation score (1 being lowest, 10 being highest):

Additional Factors to Consider:

Recommendation:

Signature (date):

Expert Review Panel Selection Criteria:

1. AOAC paid consultants and AOAC staff should not act as Chairs of ERPs.
 2. Members of the BoD may act as voting members but it is recommended that they sit as non-voting members of the panel, unless the CSO can demonstrate that there are so few experts in the field available to the community that they are needed to move the project forward.
 3. Paid consultants of AOAC and AOAC staff may not serve as voting members on ERPs.
 4. If a single business location is represented by more than one person on an ERP, that location shall have only one vote.
 5. The Chair of the ERP must be a member of AOAC INTERNATIONAL.
-

Appeals Process:

ERP - Openness of Process and Appeals:

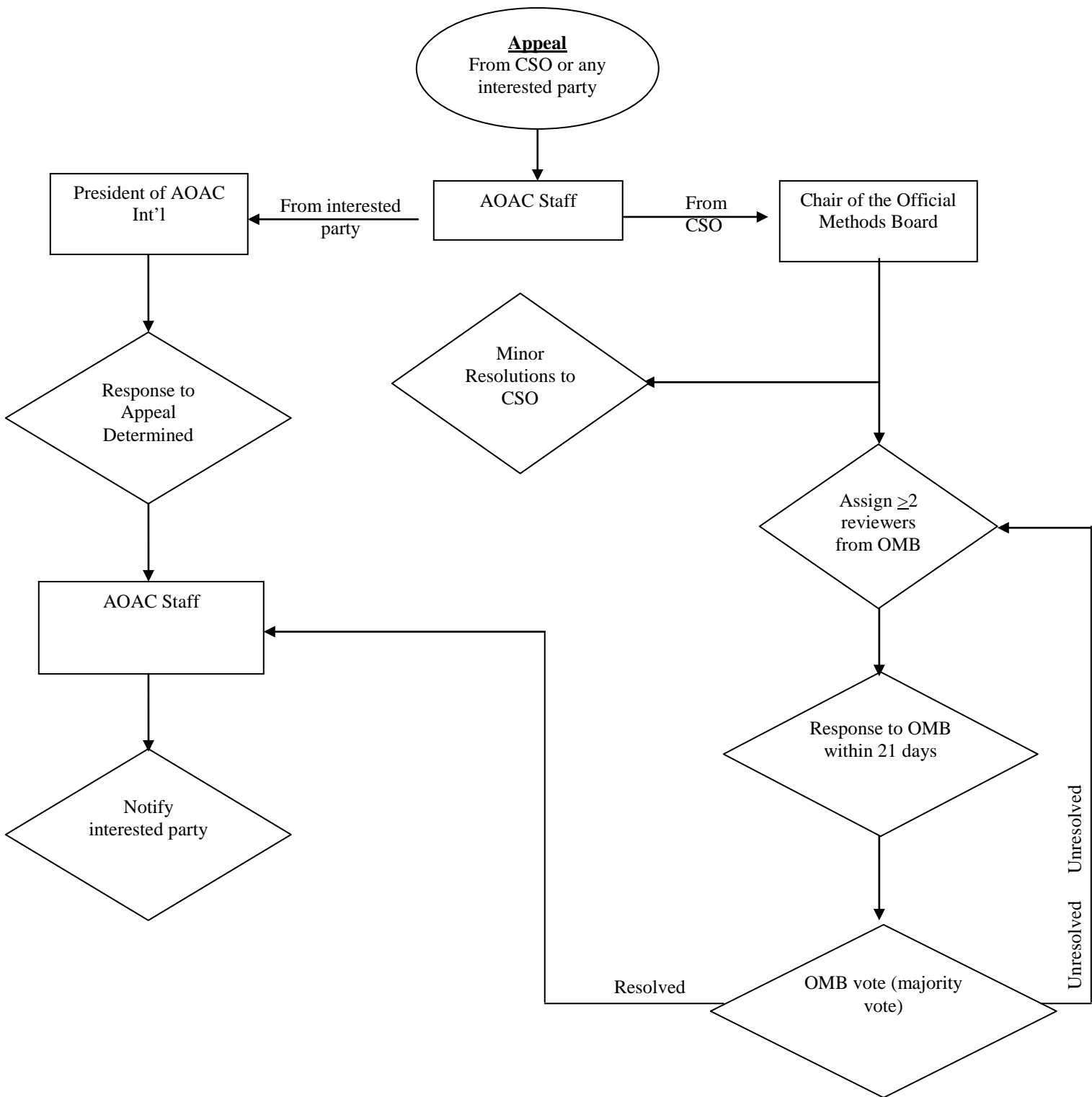
The entire ERP review process is fully open. Any interested party (person, agency, organization, association, company, Chief Scientific Officer (CSO), or group) shall have the right to comment.

Appeals or comments are sent to the AOAC Staff.

Technical decisions by the ERP are final and are not subject to review or appeal. Other questions or issues regarding procedures, conflict of interest, or impropriety may be appealed to the President of the AOAC INTERNATIONAL.

All written concerns will be considered and given a response.

If there is disagreement between the CSO and the Official Methods Board reviewers, the CSO may appeal to the Chair of the Official Methods Board for consideration. The Official Methods Board can select an impartial panel to review the issue, which must report to the Official Methods Board with a resolution within 21 days of its assignment.



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 Appeals Process Appended – September 2009
 Revised by AOAC Board of Directors, May 25, 2011



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FIRST ACTION TO FINAL ACTION METHODS

GUIDANCE FOR AOAC EXPERT REVIEW PANELS

Expert Review Panels working within the AOAC alternate pathway process may recommend a First Action status method be elevated to Final Action status. Such a recommendation leverages the ERP's high level of expertise supported by data from the initial evaluation, and results from the subsequent two year method performance evaluation period.

The Official Methods Board receives the recommendation with supporting documentation, and determines if Final Action status is warranted. OMB's review verifies the method process was conducted in compliance with the guidelines and protocols of the Association.

For transparency and to expedite the review process, the main areas OMB will review when evaluating ERP recommendations to promote methods to Final Action are listed below. Documentation of the areas listed below will also increase confidence in method performance and assist users to properly and safely perform the methods at their locations.

A. Method Applicability

- a. A method's applicability to the identified Stakeholder needs is best assessed by the Stakeholder Panel and should be a part of the process from the onset. OMB liaisons will remind Stakeholder Panels to maintain this focus point.
- b. OMB may ask ERPs and Stakeholder Panels for feedback to improve the applicability of the method such as potential method scope expansions and potential points of concern.

B. Safety Concerns

- a. A safety review must be performed for a method to be recognized as First Action.
- b. All safety concerns identified during the 2 year evaluation period must be addressed.
- c. Guidance and support can be obtained from the AOAC Safety Committee.

C. Reference Materials

- a. Document efforts undertaken to locate reference materials. Methods may still progress to Final Action even if reference materials are not available.
- b. Guidance and support can be obtained from the AOAC Technical Division on Reference Materials.

D. Single Laboratory Validation

- a. Data demonstrating Response Linearity, Accuracy, Repeatability, LOD/LOQ, and Matrix Scope must be present. Experimental designs to collect this data may vary with the method protocol and the intended use of the method.

- b. Resources can be identified by the AOAC Statistics Committee.
- E. Reproducibility/Uncertainty and Probability of Detection
- a. For quantitative methods, data demonstrating Reproducibility & Uncertainty must be present. Experimental designs to collect this data may vary with the method protocol, available laboratories, and the intended use of the method (i.e., collaborative studies, proficiency testing, etc.).
 - b. For qualitative methods, data must be present demonstrating the probability of detection at specified concentration levels as defined by the SMPR. Experimental designs to collect this data may vary with the method protocol, available laboratories, and the intended use of the method.
 - c. Guidance and support can be obtained from the AOAC Statistics Committee.
- F. Comparison to SMPR
- a. Document method performance versus SMPR criteria. Note which SMPR criteria are met. For SMPR criteria not met, the ERP documents the reasoning why the method is still acceptable.
 - b. Data is present to assure the matrix and analyte scopes are covered. This is critical for methods used for dispute resolutions.
- G. Feedback From Users of Method
- a. Document positive and negative feedback from users of the method during the trial period.
 - b. Feedback from users demonstrating method ruggedness should be documented.
 - c. Assess the future availability of vital equipment, reference materials, and supplies.
- H. ERP Recommendations to Repeal First Action Methods
- a. Recommendations to repeal First Action methods shall be accompanied with detailed reasons for the decision.

Appendix F: Guidelines for Standard Method Performance Requirements

Contents

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Introduction to Standard Method Performance Requirements

Standard method performance requirements (SMPRs) are a unique and novel concept for the analytical methods community. SMPRs are voluntary consensus standards, developed by stakeholders, that prescribe the minimum analytical performance requirements for classes of analytical methods. In the past, analytical methods were evaluated and the results compared to a “gold standard” method, or if a gold standard method did not exist, then reviewers would decide retrospectively if the analytical performance was acceptable. Frequently, method developers concentrated on the process of evaluating the performance parameters of a method, and rarely set acceptance criteria. However, as the *Eurachem Guide* points out: “. . . the judgment of method suitability for its intended use is equally important . . .” (1) to the evaluation process.

International Voluntary Consensus Standards

An SMPR is a form of an international, voluntary consensus standard. A standard is an agreed, repeatable way of doing something that is published as document that contains a technical specification or other precise criteria designed to be used consistently as a rule, guideline, or definition. SMPRs are a *consensus* standards developed by stakeholders in a very controlled process that ensures that users, research organizations, government departments, and consumers work together to create a standard that meets the demands of the analytical community and technology. SMPRs are also *voluntary* standards. AOAC cannot, and does not, impose the use of SMPRs. Users are free to use SMPRs as they see fit. AOAC is very careful to include participants from as many regions of the world as possible so that SMPRs are accepted as *international* standards.

Guidance for Standard Method Performance Requirements

Commonly known as the “SMPR Guidelines.” The first version of the SMPR Guidelines were drafted in 2010 in response to the increasing use and popularity of SMPRs as a vehicle to describe the analytical requirements of a method. Several early “acceptance

criteria” documents were prepared for publication in late 2009, but the format of the acceptance criteria documents diverged significantly from one another in basic format. AOAC realized that a guidance document was needed to promote uniformity.

An early version of the SMPR Guidelines were used for a project to define the analytical requirements for endocrine disruptors in potable water. The guidelines proved to be extremely useful in guiding the work of the experts and resulted in uniform SMPRs. Subsequent versions of the SMPR Guidelines were used in the Stakeholder Panel for Infant Formula and Adult Nutritionals (SPIFAN) project with very positive results. The SMPR Guidelines are now published for the first time in the *Journal of AOAC INTERNATIONAL* and *Official Methods of Analysis*.

Users of the guidelines are advised that they are: (1) a *guidance* document, not a statute that users must conform to; and (2) a “living” document that is regularly updated, so users should check the AOAC website for the latest version before using these guidelines.

The SMPR Guidelines are intended to provide basic information for working groups assigned to prepare SMPRs. The guidelines consist of the standard format of an SMPR, followed by a series of informative tables and annexes.

SMPR Format

The general format for an SMPR is provided in *Annex A*.

Each SMPR is identified by a unique SMPR number consisting of the year followed by a sequential identification number (YYYY.XXX). An SMPR number is assigned when the standard is approved. By convention, the SMPR number indicates the year a standard is approved (as opposed to the year the standard is initiated). For example, SMPR 2010.003 indicates the third SMPR adopted in 2010.

The SMPR number is followed by a method name that must include the analyte(s), matrix(es), and analytical technique (unless the SMPR is truly intended to be independent of the analytical technology). The method name may also refer to a “common” name (e.g., “Kjeldahl” method).

The SMPR number and method name are followed by the name of the stakeholder panel or expert review panel that approved the SMPR, and the approval and effective dates.

Information about method requirements is itemized into nine categories: (1) intended use; (2) applicability; (3) analytical technique; (4) definitions; (5) method performance requirements; (6) system suitability; (7) reference materials; (8) validation guidance; and (9) maximum time-to-determination.

An SMPR for qualitative and/or identification methods may include up to three additional annexes: (1) inclusivity/selectivity panel; (2) exclusivity/cross-reactivity panel; and (3) environmental material panels. These annexes not required.

Informative tables.—The SMPR Guidelines contain seven informative tables that represent the distilled knowledge of many years of method evaluation, and are intended as guidance for SMPR working groups. The informative tables are not necessarily AOAC

policy. SMPR working groups are expected to apply their expertise in the development of SMPRs.

Table A1: Performance Requirements. Provides recommended performance parameters to be included into an SMPR. Table A1 is organized by five method classifications: (1) main component quantitative methods; (2) trace or contaminant quantitative methods; (3) main component qualitative methods; (4) trace or contaminant quantitative methods; and (5) identification methods. The table is designed to accommodate both microbiological and chemical methods. Alternate microbiological/chemical terms are provided for equivalent concepts.

Table A2: Recommended Definitions. Provides definitions for standard terms in the SMPR Guidelines. AOAC relies on *The International Vocabulary of Metrology Basic and General Concepts and Associated Terms* (VIM) and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) for definition of terms not included in Table A2.

Table A3: Recommendations for Evaluation. Provides general guidance for evaluation of performance parameters. More detailed evaluation guidance can be found in *Appendix D, Guidelines for Collaborative Study Procedures to Validate Characteristics of a Method of Analysis* (2); *Appendix I, Guidelines for Validation of Biological Threat Agent Methods and/or Procedures* (3); *Appendix K, AOAC Guidelines for Single-Laboratory Validation of Chemical Methods for Dietary Supplements and Botanicals* (4); *Codex Alimentarius Codex Procedure Manual* (5); and *ISO Standard 5725-1-1994* (6).

Table A4: Expected Precision (Repeatability) as a Function of Analyte Concentration. The precision of a method is the closeness of agreement between independent test results obtained under stipulated conditions. Precision is usually expressed in terms

of imprecision and computed as a relative standard deviation (RSD) of the test results. The imprecision of a method increases as the concentration of the analyte decreases. This table provides target RSDs for a range of analyte concentrations.

Table A5: Expected Recovery as a Function of Analyte Concentration. Recovery is defined as the ratio of the observed mean test result to the true value. The range of the acceptable mean recovery expands as the concentration of the analyte decreases. This table provides target mean recovery ranges for analyte concentrations from 1 ppb to 100%.

Table A6: Predicted Relative Standard Deviation of Reproducibility (PRSD_R). This table provides the calculated PRSD_R using the Horwitz formula:

$$PRSD_R = 2C^{-0.15}$$

where C is expressed as a mass fraction.

Table A7: POD and Number of Test Portions. This table provides the calculated probability of detection (POD) for given sample sizes and events (detections). A method developer can use this table to determine the number of analyses required to obtain a specific POD.

Informative annexes.—The SMPR Guidelines contain informative annexes on the topics of classification of methods, POD model, HorRat values, reference materials, and method accuracy and review. As with the informative tables, these annexes are intended to provide guidance and information to the working groups.

Initiation of an SMPR

See Figure 1 for a schematic flowchart diagram of the SMPR development process.

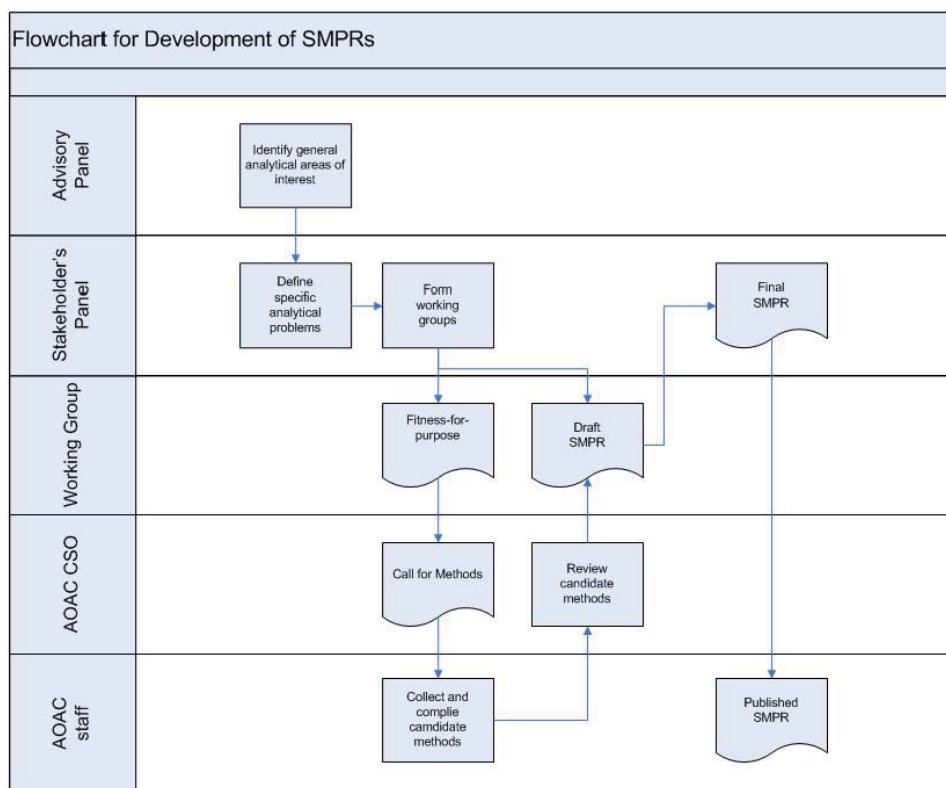


Figure 1. Schematic flowchart diagram of the SMPR development process.

Advisory panels.—Most commonly, an SMPR is created in response to an analytical need identified by an advisory panel. Advisory panels normally consist of sponsors and key stakeholders who have organized to address analytical problems. Usually, the advisory panel identifies general analytical problems, such as the need to update analytical methods for determination of nutrients in infant formula. An advisory panel, with the input of appropriate subject matter experts, also prioritizes the specific analytical problems within the general topic. This panel is critical in planning for the stakeholder panel meeting.

Stakeholder panels.—After an advisory panel has identified a general analytical problem, AOAC announces the standards development activity, identifies stakeholders, and organizes a stakeholder panel. Membership on a stakeholder panel is open to anyone materially affected by the proposed standard. AOAC recruits scientists to participate on stakeholder panels on the basis of their expertise with the analytical problem identified by the advisory panel. Experts are recruited from academia, government, nongovernmental organizations (such as ISO), industry, contract research organizations, method developers, and instrument/equipment manufacturers. AOAC employs a representative voting panel model to ensure balance with regards to stakeholder perspective, and to ensure that no particular stakeholder perspective dominates the proceedings of the stakeholder panel. All stakeholder candidates are reviewed by the AOAC Chief Scientific Officer (CSO) for relevant qualifications, and again by the Official Methods Board to ensure that the stakeholder panel is balanced and all stakeholders are fairly represented.

Stakeholder panels are extremely important as they serve several functions: (1) identify specific analytical topics within the general analytical problem described by the advisory panel; (2) form working groups to address the specific analytical topics; (3) identify additional subject matter experts needed for the working groups; (4) provide oversight of the SMPR development; and (5) formally adopt SMPRs originally drafted by working groups.

Working groups.—Working groups are formed by the stakeholder panel when a specific analytical topic has been identified. The primary purpose of a working group is to draft an SMPR. Working groups may also be formed to make general recommendations, such as developing a common definition to be used by multiple working groups. For example, SPIFAN formed a working group to create a definition for “infant formula” that could be shared and used by all of the SPIFAN working groups.

The process of drafting an SMPR usually requires several months, and several meetings and conference calls. An SMPR drafted by a working group is presented to a stakeholder panel. A stakeholder panel may revise, amend, or adopt a proposed SMPR on behalf of AOAC.

Fitness-for-Purpose Statement and Call for Methods

One of the first steps in organizing a project is creating a fitness-for-purpose statement. In AOAC, the fitness-for-purpose statement is a very general description of the methods needed. It is the responsibility of a working group chair to draft a fitness-for-purpose statement. A working group chair is also asked to prepare a presentation with background information about the analyte, matrix, and the nature of the analytical problem. A working group chair presents the background information and proposes a draft fitness-for-purpose statement to the presiding stakeholder panel. The stakeholder panel is asked to endorse the fitness-for-purpose statement.

The AOAC CSO prepares a call for methods based on the stakeholder panel-approved fitness-for-purpose statement. The call for methods is posted on the AOAC website and/or e-mailed to the AOAC membership and other known interested parties. AOAC staff collects and compiles candidate methods submitted in response to the call for methods. The CSO reviews and categorizes the methods.

Creating an SMPR

Starting the process of developing an SMPR can be a daunting challenge. In fact, drafting an SMPR should be a daunting challenge because the advisory panel has specifically identified an analytical problem that has yet to be resolved. Completing an SMPR can be a very rewarding experience because working group members will have worked with their colleagues through a tangle of problems and reached a consensus where before there were only questions.

It is advisable to have some representative candidate methods available for reference when a working group starts to develop an SMPR. These methods may have been submitted in response to the call for methods, or may be known to a working group member. In any case, whatever the origin of the method, candidate methods may assist working group members to determine reasonable performance requirements to be specified in the SMPR. The performance capabilities of existing analytical methodologies is a common question facing a working group.

Normally, a working chair and/or the AOAC CSO prepares a draft SMPR. A draft SMPR greatly facilitates the process and provides the working group with a structure from which to work.

Working group members are advised to first consider the “intended use” and “maximum time-to-determination” sections as this will greatly affect expectations for candidate methods. For example, methods intended to be used for surveillance probably need to be quick but do not require a great deal of precision, and false-positive results might be more tolerable. Whereas methods intended to be used for dispute resolution will require better accuracy, precision, and reproducibility, but time to determination is not as important.

Once a working group has agreed on the intended use of candidate methods, then it can begin to define the applicability of candidate methods. The applicability section of the SMPR is one of the most important, and sometimes most difficult, sections of the SMPR. The analyte(s) and matrix(es) must be explicitly identified. For chemical analytes, International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) nomenclature and/or Chemical Abstracts Service (CAS) registry numbers should be specified. Matrix(es) should be clearly identified including the form of the matrix such as raw, cooked, tablets, powders, etc. The nature of the matrix may affect the specific analyte. It may be advantageous to fully identify and describe the matrix before determining the specific analyte(s). It is not uncommon for working groups to revise the initial definition of the analyte(s) after the matrix(es) has been better defined.

Table 1. Example of method performance table for a single analyte

Analytical range	7.0–382.6 µg/mL	
Limit of quantitation (LOQ)	≤7.0 µg/mL	
Repeatability (RSD,)	<10 µg/mL	≤8%
	≥10 µg/mL	≤6%

Table 2. Example of method performance table for multiple analytes

	Analyte 1		Analyte 2		Analyte 3	
Analytical range	10–20 µg/mL		100–200 µg/mL		200–500 µg/mL	
Limit of quantitation (LOQ)	≤10 µg/mL		≤100 µg/mL		≤200 µg/mL	
Repeatability (RSD,)	<10 µg/mL	≤8%	<10 µg/mL	≤8%	<200 µg/mL	≤10%
	≥10 µg/mL	≤6%	≥10 µg/mL	≤6%	≥200 µg/mL	≤8%

For projects with multiple analytes, for example, vitamins A, D, E, and K in infant formula, it may be useful to organize a separate working group to fully describe the matrix(es) so that a common description of the matrix(es) can be applied to all of the analytes.

For single analyte SMPRs, it is most common to organize the method performance requirements into a table with 2–3 columns as illustrated in Table 1. For multiple analyte SMPRs, it is often convenient to present the requirements in an expanded table with analytes forming additional columns as illustrated in Table 2.

Once the intended use, analytical techniques, and method performance requirements have been determined, then a working group can proceed to consider the quality control parameters, such as the minimum validation requirements, system suitability procedures, and reference materials (if available). It is not uncommon that an appropriate reference material is not available. *Annex F* of the SMPR Guidelines provides comprehensive guidance for the development and use of in-house reference materials.

Most working groups are able to prepare a consensus SMPR in about 3 months.

Open Comment Period

Once a working group has produced a draft standard, AOAC opens a comment period for the standard. The comment period provides an opportunity for other stakeholders to state their perspective on the draft SMPR. All collected comments are reviewed by the AOAC CSO and the working group chair, and the comments are reconciled. If there are significant changes required to the draft standard as a result of the comments, the working group is convened to discuss and any unresolved issues will be presented for discussion at the stakeholder panel meeting.

Submission of Draft SMPRs to the Stakeholder Panel

Stakeholder panels meet several times a year at various locations. The working group chair (or designee) presents a draft SMPR to the stakeholder panel for review and discussion. A working group chair is expected to be able to explain the conclusions of the working group, discuss comments received, and to answer questions from the stakeholder panel. The members of the stakeholder panel may revise, amend, approve, or defer a decision on the proposed SMPR. A super majority of 2/3 or more of those voting is required to adopt an SMPR as an AOAC voluntary consensus standard.

Publication

Adopted SMPRs are prepared for publication by AOAC staff, and are published in the *Journal of AOAC INTERNATIONAL* and in the AOAC *Official Methods of Analysis*SM compendium. Often, the AOAC CSO and working group chair prepare a companion article to introduce an SMPR and describe the analytical issues considered and resolved by the SMPR. An SMPR is usually published within 6 months of adoption.

Conclusion

SMPRs are a unique and novel concept for the analytical methods community. SMPRs are voluntary, consensus standards developed by stakeholders that prescribe the minimum analytical performance requirements for classes of analytical methods. The SMPR Guidelines provide a structure for working groups to use as they develop an SMPR. The guidelines have been employed in several AOAC projects and have been proven to be very useful. The guidelines are not a statute that users must conform to; they are a “living” document that is regularly updated, so users should check the AOAC website for the latest version before using the guidelines.

References

- (1) Eurachem, *The Fitness for Purpose of Analytical Methods: A Laboratory Guide to Method Validation and Related Topics, Validation*, <http://www.eurachem.org/guides/pdf/valid.pdf>, posted December 1998, accessed March 2012
- (2) *Guidelines for Collaborative Study Procedures to Validate Characteristics of a Method of Analysis* (2012) *Official Methods of Analysis, Appendix D*, AOAC INTERNATIONAL, Gaithersburg, MD
- (3) *AOAC INTERNATIONAL Methods Committee Guidelines for Validation of Biological Threat Agent Methods and/or Procedures* (2012) *Official Methods of Analysis*, 19th Ed., *Appendix I, Calculation of CPOD and dCPOD Values from Qualitative Method Collaborative Study Data*, AOAC INTERNATIONAL, Gaithersburg, MD
- (4) *AOAC Guidelines for Single-Laboratory Validation of Chemical Methods for Dietary Supplements and Botanicals* (2012) *Official Methods of Analysis*, 19th Ed., *Appendix K*, AOAC INTERNATIONAL, Gaithersburg, MD
- (5) Codex Alimentarius Codex Procedure Manual
- (6) International Organization for Standardization, Geneva, Switzerland

ANNEX A
Format of a
Standard Method Performance Requirement

AOAC SMPR YYYY.XXX
(YYYY = Year; XXX = sequential identification number)

Method Name: Must include the analyte(s), matrix(es), and analytical technique [unless the standard method performance requirement (SMPR) is truly intended to be independent of the analytical technology]. The method name may refer to a “common” name (e.g., “Kjeldahl” method).

Approved By: Name of stakeholder panel or expert review panel

Final Version Date: Date

Effective Date: Date

1. Intended Use: Additional information about the method and conditions for use.

2. Applicability: List matrixes if more than one. Provide details on matrix such as specific species for biological analytes, or International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) nomenclature and Chemical Abstracts Service (CAS) registry number for chemical analytes. Specify the form of the matrix such as raw, cooked, tablets, powders, etc.

3. Analytical Technique: Provide a detailed description of the analytical technique if the SMPR is to apply to a specific analytical technique; or state that the SMPR applies to any method that meets the method performance requirements.

4. Definitions: List and define terms used in the performance parameter table (*see* Table A2 for list of standard terms).

5. Method Performance Requirements: List the performance parameters and acceptance criteria appropriate for each method/analyte/matrix. *See* Table A1 for appropriate performance requirements.

If more than one analyte/matrix, and if acceptance criteria differ for analyte/matrix combinations then organize a table listing each analyte/matrix combination and its minimum acceptance criteria for each performance criteria.

6. System Suitability Tests and/or Analytical Quality Control: Describe minimum system controls and QC procedures.

7. Reference Material(s): Identify the appropriate reference materials if they exist, or state that reference materials are not available. Refer to *Annex E (AOAC Method Accuracy Review)* for instructions on the use of reference materials in evaluations.

8. Validation Guidance: Recommendations for type of evaluation or validation program such as single-laboratory validation (SLV), *Official Methods of Analysis*SM (OMA), or *Performance Tested Methods*SM (PTM).

9. Maximum Time-to-Determination: Maximum allowable time to complete an analysis starting from the test portion preparation to final determination or measurement.

Annex I: Inclusivity/Selectivity Panel. Recommended for qualitative and identification method SMPRs.

Annex II: Exclusivity/Cross-Reactivity Panel. Recommended for qualitative and identification method SMPRs.

Annex III: Environmental Materials Panel. Recommended for qualitative and identification method SMPRs.

Table A1. Performance requirements

Classifications of methods ^a				
Quantitative method		Qualitative method		Identification method
Main component ^b	Trace or contaminant ^c	Main component ^b	Trace or contaminant ^c	
Parameter				
Single-laboratory validation				
Applicable range	Applicable range	Inclusivity/selectivity	Inclusivity/selectivity	Inclusivity/selectivity
Bias ^d	Bias ^d	Exclusivity/cross-reactivity	Exclusivity/cross-reactivity	Exclusivity/cross-reactivity
Precision	Precision	Environmental interference	Environmental interference	Environmental interference
Recovery	Recovery	Laboratory variance	Laboratory variance	
Limit of quantitation (LOQ)	LOQ	Probability of detection (POD) ^e	POD at AMDL ^f	Probability of identification (POI)
Reproducibility				
RSD _R or target measurement uncertainty	RSD _R or target measurement uncertainty	POD (0) POD (c) Laboratory POD ^g	POD (0) POD (c) Laboratory POD ^g	POI (c) Laboratory POI

^a See Annex B for additional information on classification of methods.

^b ≥100 g/kg.

^c <100 g/kg.

^d If a reference material is available.

^e At a critical level.

^f AMDL = Acceptable minimum detection level.

^g LPOD = CPOD.

Table A2. Recommended definitions

Bias	Difference between the expectation of the test results and an accepted reference value. Bias is the total systematic error as contrasted to random error. There may be one or more systematic error components contributing to the bias.
Environmental interference	Ability of the assay to detect target organism in the presence of environmental substances and to be free of cross reaction from environmental substances.
Exclusivity	Strains or isolates or variants of the target agent(s) that the method must not detect.
Inclusivity	Strains or isolates or variants of the target agent(s) that the method can detect.
Laboratory probability of detection (POD)	Overall fractional response (mean POD = CPOD) for the method calculated from the pooled POD_j responses of the individual laboratories ($j = 1, 2, \dots, L$). ^a See Annex C.
Limit of quantitation (LOQ)	Minimum concentration or mass of analyte in a given matrix that can be reported as a quantitative result.
POD (0)	Probability of the method giving a (+) response when the sample is truly without analyte.
POD (c)	Probability of the method giving a (–) response when the sample is truly without analyte.
POD	Proportion of positive analytical outcomes for a qualitative method for a given matrix at a given analyte level or concentration. Consult Annex C for a full explanation.
Probability of identification (POI)	Expected or observed fraction of test portions at a given concentration that gives positive result when tested at a given concentration. Consult <i>Probability of Identification (POI): A Statistical Model for the Validation of Qualitative Botanical Identification Methods</i> . ^c
Precision (repeatability)	Closeness of agreement between independent test results obtained under stipulated conditions. The measure of precision is usually expressed in terms of imprecision and computed as a standard deviation of the test results. ^d
Recovery	Fraction or percentage of the analyte that is recovered when the test sample is analyzed using the entire method. There are two types of recovery: (1) Total recovery based on recovery of the native plus added analyte, and (2) marginal recovery based only on the added analyte (the native analyte is subtracted from both the numerator and denominator). ^e
Repeatability	Precision under repeatability conditions.
Repeatability conditions	Conditions where independent test results are obtained with the same method on identical test items in the same laboratory by the same operator using the same equipment within short intervals of time.
Reproducibility	Precision under reproducibility conditions.
Reproducibility conditions	Conditions where independent test results are obtained with the same method on identical test items in different laboratories with different operators using different equipment.
Relative standard deviation (RSD)	$RSD = s_i \times 100/\bar{x}$
Standard deviation (s_i)	$s_i = [\sum(x_i - \bar{x})^2/n]^{0.5}$

^a AOAC INTERNATIONAL Methods Committee Guidelines for Validation of Biological Threat Agent Methods and/or Procedures (Calculation of CPOD and dCPOD Values from Qualitative Method Collaborative Study Data), *J. AOAC Int.* **94**, 1359(2011) and *Official Methods of Analysis of AOAC INTERNATIONAL* (2012) 19th Ed., Appendix I.

^b *International Vocabulary of Metrology (VIM)—Basic and General Concepts and Associated Terms* (2008) JCGM 200:2008, Joint Committee for Guides in Metrology (JCGM), www.bipm.org

^c LaBudde, R.A., & Harnly, J.M. (2012) *J. AOAC Int.* **95**, 273–285.

^d ISO 5725-1-1994.

^e *Official Methods of Analysis* (2012) Appendix D (Guidelines for Collaborative Study Procedures to Validate Characteristics of a Method of Analysis), AOAC INTERNATIONAL, Gaithersburg, MD.

Table A3. Recommendations for evaluation

Bias (if a reference material is available)	A minimum of five replicate analyses of a Certified Reference Material. ^a
Environmental interference	Analyze test portions containing a specified concentration of one environmental materials panel member. Materials may be pooled. Consult with AOAC statistician.
Exclusivity/cross-reactivity	Analyze one test portion containing a specified concentration of one exclusivity panel member. More replicates can be used. Consult with AOAC statistician.
Inclusivity/selectivity	Analyze one test portion containing a specified concentration of one inclusivity panel member. More replicates can be used. Consult with AOAC statistician.
Limit of quantitation (LOQ)	Estimate the LOQ = average (blank) + 10 × s ₀ (blank). Measure blank samples with analyte at the estimated LOQ. Calculate the mean average and standard deviation of the results. Guidance ^b : For ML ≥ 100 ppm (0.1 mg/kg): LOD = ML × 1/5. For ML < 100 ppm (0.1 mg/kg): LOD = ML × 2/5.
Measurement uncertainty	Use ISO 21748: <i>Guidance for the use of repeatability, reproducibility, and trueness estimates in measurement uncertainty estimation to analyze data collected for bias, repeatability, and intermediate precision to estimate measurement uncertainty.</i>
POD(0)	Use data from collaborative study.
POD (c)	
Repeatability	Prepare and homogenize three unknown samples at different concentrations to represent the full, claimed range of the method. Analyze each unknown sample by the candidate method seven times, beginning each analysis from weighing out the test portion through to final result with no additional replication (unless stated to do so in the method). All of the analyses for one unknown sample should be performed within as short a period of time as is allowed by the method. The second and third unknowns may be analyzed in another short time period. Repeat for each claimed matrix.
Probability of detection (POD)	Determine the desired POD at a critical concentration. Consult with Table A7 to determine the number of test portions required to demonstrate the desired POD.
Probability of identification (POI)	Consult <i>Probability of Identification (POI): A Statistical Model for the Validation of Qualitative Botanical Identification Methods</i> ^c .
Recovery	Determined from spiked blanks or samples with at least seven independent analyses per concentration level at a minimum of three concentration levels covering the analytical range. Independent means at least at different times. If no confirmed (natural) blank is available, the average inherent (naturally containing) level of the analyte should be determined on at least seven independent replicates. Marginal % recovery = $(C_f - C_u) \times 100 / C_A$ Total % recovery = $100(C_f) / (C_u + C_A)$ where C _f = concentration of fortified samples, C _u = concentration of unfortified samples, and C _A = concentration of analyte added to the test sample. ^d Usually total recovery is used unless the native analyte is present in amounts greater than about 10% of the amount added, in which case use the method of addition. ^e
Reproducibility (collaborative or interlaboratory study)	Quantitative methods: Recruit 10–12 collaborators; must have eight valid data sets; two blind duplicate replicates at five concentrations for each analyte/matrix combination to each collaborator. Qualitative methods: Recruit 12–15 collaborators; must have 10 valid data sets; six replicates at five concentrations for each analyte/matrix combination to each collaborator.

^a *Guidance for Industry for Bioanalytical Method Validation* (May 2001) U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Food and Drug Administration, Center for Drug Evaluation and Research (CDER), Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM).

^b Codex Alimentarius Codex Procedure Manual.

^c LaBudde, R.A., & Harnly, J.M. (2012) *J. AOAC Int.* **95**, 273–285.

^d *Guidelines for Collaborative Study Procedures to Validate Characteristics of a Method of Analysis* (2012) *Official Methods of Analysis*, 19th Ed., Appendix D, AOAC INTERNATIONAL, Gaithersburg, MD.

^e *AOAC Guidelines for Single-Laboratory Validation of Chemical Methods for Dietary Supplements and Botanicals* (2012) *Official Methods of Analysis*, 19th Ed., Appendix K, AOAC INTERNATIONAL, Gaithersburg, MD.

Table A4. Expected precision (repeatability) as a function of analyte concentration^a

Analyte, %	Analyte ratio	Unit	RSD, %
100	1	100%	1.3
10	10 ⁻¹	10%	1.9
1	10 ⁻²	1%	2.7
0.01	10 ⁻³	0.1%	3.7
0.001	10 ⁻⁴	100 ppm (mg/kg)	5.3
0.0001	10 ⁻⁵	10 ppm (mg/kg)	7.3
0.00001	10 ⁻⁶	1 ppm (mg/kg)	11
0.000001	10 ⁻⁷	100 ppb (µg/kg)	15
0.0000001	10 ⁻⁸	10 ppb (µg/kg)	21
0.00000001	10 ⁻⁹	1 ppb (µg/kg)	30

^a Table excerpted from AOAC Peer-Verified Methods Program, Manual on Policies and Procedures (1998) AOAC INTERNATIONAL, Gaithersburg, MD.

The precision of a method is the closeness of agreement between independent test results obtained under stipulated conditions. Precision is usually expressed in terms of imprecision and computed as a relative standard deviation of the test results. The imprecision of a method increases as the concentration of the analyte decreases. This table provides targets RSDs for a range of analyte concentrations.

Table A5. Expected recovery as a function of analyte concentration^a

Analyte, %	Analyte ratio	Unit	Mean recovery, %
100	1	100%	98–102
10	10 ⁻¹	10%	98–102
1	10 ⁻²	1%	97–103
0.01	10 ⁻³	0.1%	95–105
0.001	10 ⁻⁴	100 ppm	90–107
0.0001	10 ⁻⁵	10 ppm	80–110
0.00001	10 ⁻⁶	1 ppm	80–110
0.000001	10 ⁻⁷	100 ppb	80–110
0.0000001	10 ⁻⁸	10 ppb	60–115
0.00000001	10 ⁻⁹	1 ppb	40–120

^a Table excerpted from AOAC Peer-Verified Methods Program, Manual on Policies and Procedures (1998) AOAC INTERNATIONAL, Gaithersburg, MD.

Recovery is defined as the ratio of the observed mean test result to the true value. The range of the acceptable mean recovery expands as the concentration of the analyte decreases. This table provides target mean recovery ranges for analyte concentrations from 100% to 1 ppb.

Table A6. Predicted relative standard deviation of reproducibility (PRSD_R)^a

Concentration (C)	Mass fraction (C)	PRSD _R , %
100%	1.0	2
1%	0.01	4
0.01%	0.0001	8
1 ppm	0.000001	16
10 ppb	0.00000001	32
1 ppb	0.000000001	45

^a Table excerpted from *Definitions and Calculations of HorRat Values from Intralaboratory Data*, HorRat for SLV.doc, 2004-01-18, AOAC INTERNATIONAL, Gaithersburg, MD.

Predicted relative standard deviation = PRSD_R. Reproducibility relative standard deviation calculated from the Horwitz formula:

$$\text{PRSD}_R = 2C^{-0.15}, \text{ where } C \text{ is expressed as a mass fraction}$$

This table provides the calculated PRSD_R for a range of concentrations. See *Annex D* for additional information.

Table A7. POD and number of test portions^{a,b}

Sample size required for proportion							
Assume	1. Binary outcome (occur/not occur). 2. Constant probability rho of event occurring. 3. Independent trials (e.g., simple random sample). 4. Fixed number of trials (N)						
Inference	95% Confidence interval lies entirely at or above specified minimum rho						
Desired	Sample size N needed						
Minimum probability rho, %	Sample size (N)	Minimum No. events (x)	Maximum No. nonevents (y)	1-Sided lower confidence limit on rho ^c , %	Expected lower confidence limit on rho, %	Expected upper confidence limit on rho, %	Effective AOQL ^d rho, %
50	3	3	0	52.6	43.8	100.0	71.9
50	10	8	2	54.1	49.0	94.3	71.7
50	20	14	6	51.6	48.1	85.5	66.8
50	40	26	14	52.0	49.5	77.9	63.7
50	80	48	32	50.8	49.0	70.0	59.5
55	4	4	0	59.7	51.0	100.0	75.5
55	10	9	1	65.2	59.6	100.0	79.8
55	20	15	5	56.8	53.1	88.8	71.0
55	40	28	12	57.1	54.6	81.9	68.2
55	80	52	28	55.9	54.1	74.5	64.3
60	5	5	0	64.9	56.5	100.0	78.3
60	10	9	1	65.2	59.6	100.0	79.8
60	20	16	4	62.2	58.4	91.9	75.2
60	40	30	10	62.4	59.8	85.8	72.8
60	80	56	24	61.0	59.2	78.9	69.1
65	6	6	0	68.9	61.0	100.0	80.5
65	10	9	1	65.2	59.6	100.0	79.8
65	20	17	3	67.8	64.0	94.8	79.4
65	40	31	9	65.1	62.5	87.7	75.1
65	80	59	21	65.0	63.2	82.1	72.7
70	7	7	0	72.1	64.6	100.0	82.3
70	10	10	0	78.7	72.2	100.0	86.1
70	20	18	2	73.8	69.9	97.2	83.6
70	40	33	7	70.7	68.0	91.3	79.7
70	80	63	17	70.4	68.6	86.3	77.4
75	9	9	0	76.9	70.1	100.0	85.0
75	10	10	0	78.7	72.2	100.0	86.1
75	20	19	1	80.4	76.4	100.0	88.2
75	40	35	5	76.5	73.9	94.5	84.2
75	80	67	13	75.9	74.2	90.3	82.2
80	11	11	0	80.3	74.1	100.0	87.1
80	20	19	1	80.4	76.4	100.0	88.2
80	40	37	3	82.7	80.1	97.4	88.8
80	80	70	10	80.2	78.5	93.1	85.8
85	20	20	0	88.1	83.9	100.0	91.9
85	40	38	2	86.0	83.5	98.6	91.1
85	80	74	6	86.1	84.6	96.5	90.6
90	40	40	0	93.7	91.2	100.0	95.6
90	60	58	2	90.4	88.6	99.1	93.9
90	80	77	3	91.0	89.5	98.7	94.1
95	60	60	0	95.7	94.0	100.0	97.0
95	80	80	0	96.7	95.4	100.0	97.7
95	90	89	1	95.2	94.0	100.0	97.0
95	96	95	1	95.5	94.3	100.0	97.2
98	130	130	0	98.0	97.1	100.0	98.6
98	240	239	1	98.2	97.7	100.0	98.8
99	280	280	0	99.0	98.6	100.0	99.3
99	480	479	1	99.1	98.8	100.0	99.4

^a Table excerpted from Technical Report TR308, *Sampling plans to verify the proportion of an event exceeds or falls below a specified value*, LaBudde, R. (June 4, 2010) (not published). The table was produced as part of an informative report for the Working Group for Validation of Identity Methods for Botanical Raw Materials commissioned by the AOAC INTERNATIONAL Presidential Task Force on Dietary Supplements. The project was funded by the Office of Dietary Supplements, National Institutes of Health.

^b Copyright 2010 by Least Cost Formulations, Ltd. All rights reserved.

^c Based on modified Wilson score 1-sided confidence interval.

^d AOQL = Average outgoing quality level.

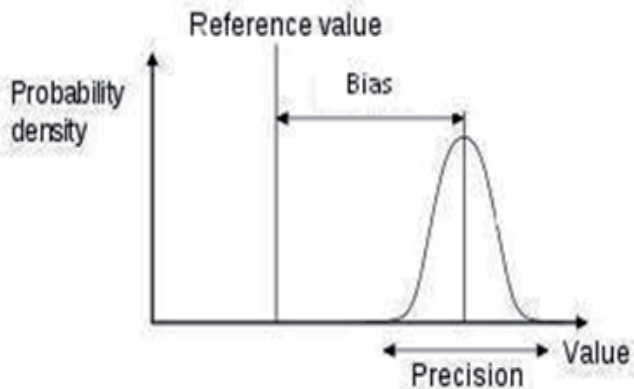


Figure A1. Relationship between precision versus bias (trueness). Trueness is reported as bias. Bias is defined as the difference between the test results and an accepted reference value.

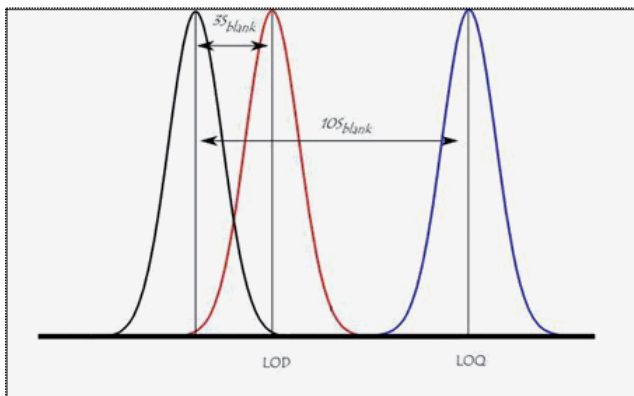


Figure A2. Relationship between LOD and LOQ. LOD is defined as the lowest quantity of a substance that can be distinguished from the absence of that substance (a blank value) within a stated confidence limit. LOQ is the level above which quantitative results may be obtained with a stated degree of confidence.

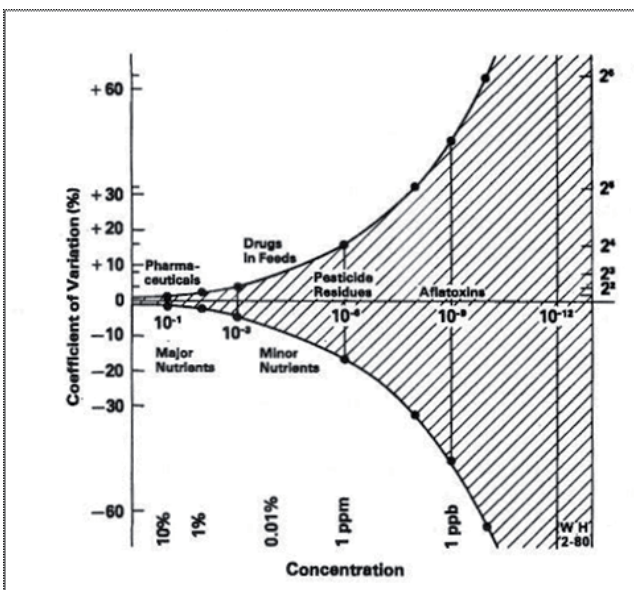


Figure A3. Horwitz Curve, illustrating the exponential increase in the coefficient of variation as the concentration of the analyte decreases [J. AOAC Int. 89, 1095(2006)].

ANNEX B Classification of Methods

The following guidance may be used to determine which performance parameters in Table A1 apply to different classifications of methods. AOAC INTERNATIONAL does not recognize the term “semiquantitative” as a method classification. Methods that have been self-identified as semiquantitative will be classified into one of the following five types:

Type I: Quantitative Methods

Characteristics: Generates a continuous number as a result.

Recommendation: Use performance requirements specified for quantitative method (main or trace component). Use recovery range and maximum precision variation in Tables A4 and A5.

In some cases and for some purposes, methods with less accuracy and precision than recommended in Tables A4 and A5 may be acceptable. Method developers should consult with the appropriate method committee to determine if the recommendations in Tables A4 and A5 do or do not apply to their method.

Type II: Methods that Report Ranges

Characteristics: Generates a “range” indicator such as 0, low, moderate, and high.

Recommendation: Use performance requirements specified for qualitative methods (main component). Specify a range of POD for each range “range” indicator.

Type III: Methods with Cutoff Values

Characteristics: Method may generate a continuous number as an interim result (such as a CT value for a PCR method), which is not reported but converted to a qualitative result (presence/ absence) with the use of a cutoff value.

Recommendation: Use performance requirements specified for qualitative methods.

Type IV: Qualitative Methods

Characteristics: Method of analysis whose response is either the presence or absence of the analyte detected either directly or indirectly in a specified test portion.

Recommendation: Use performance requirements specified for qualitative methods.

Type V: Identification Methods

Characteristics: Method of analysis whose purpose is to determine the identity of an analyte.

Recommendation: Use performance requirements specified for identification methods.

ANNEX C Understanding the POD Model

Excerpted from AOAC INTERNATIONAL Methods Committee Guidelines for Validation of Biological Threat Agent Methods and/or Procedures, J. AOAC Int. 94, 1359(2011) and Official Methods of Analysis of AOAC INTERNATIONAL (2012) 19th Ed., Appendix I.

The Probability of Detection (POD) model is a way of characterizing the performance of a qualitative (binary) method. A binary qualitative method is one that gives a result as one of two possible outcomes, either positive or negative, presence/absence, or +/-.

The single parameter of interest is the POD, which is defined as the probability at a given concentration of obtaining a positive response by the detection method. POD is assumed to be dependent on concentration, and generally, the probability of a positive response will increase as concentration increases.

For example, at very low concentration, the expectation is that the method will not be sensitive to the analyte, and at very high concentration, a high probability of obtaining a positive response is desired. The goal of method validation is to characterize how method response transitions from low concentration/low response to high concentration/high response.

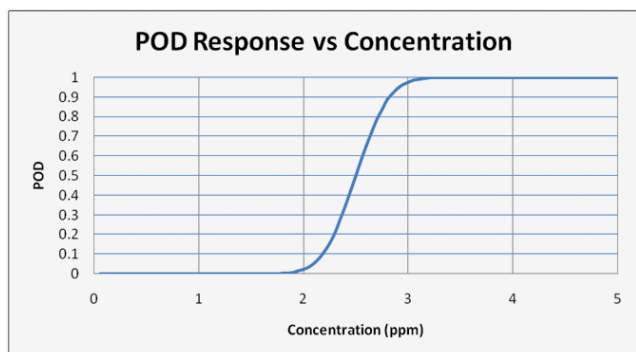


Figure C1. Theoretical POD curve for a qualitative detection method.

POD is always considered to be dependent upon analyte concentration. The POD curve is a graphical representation of method performance, where the probability is plotted as a function of concentration (*see, for example, Figure C1*).

The POD model is designed to allow an objective description of method response without consideration to an a priori expectation of the probabilities at given concentrations. The model is general enough to allow comparisons to any theoretical probability function.

The POD model is also designed to allow for an independent description of method response without consideration to the response of a reference method. The model is general enough to allow for comparisons between reference and candidate method responses, if desired.

Older validation models have used the terms “sensitivity,” “specificity,” “false positive,” and “false negative” to describe method performance. The POD model incorporates all of the performance concepts of these systems into a single parameter, POD.

For example, false positive has been defined by some models as the probability of a positive response, given the sample is truly negative (concentration = 0). The equivalent point on the POD curve for this performance characteristic is the value of the curve at Conc = 0.

Similarly, false negative has sometimes been defined as the probability of a negative response when the sample is truly positive (concentration >0). In the POD curve, this would always be specific to a given sample concentration, but would be represented as the distance from the POD curve to the POD = 1 horizontal top axis at all concentrations except C = 0.

The POD model incorporates all these method characteristics into a single parameter, which is always assumed to vary by concentration. In other models, the terms “false positive,” “false negative,” “sensitivity,” and “specificity” have been defined in a variety of ways, usually not conditional on concentration. For these reasons, these terms are obsolete under this model (*see Table C1*).

The terms “sensitivity,” “specificity,” “false positive,” and “false negative” are obsolete under the POD model (*see Figure C2*).

Table C1. Terminology

Traditional terminology	Concept	POD equivalent	Comment
False positive	Probability of the method giving a (+) response when the sample is truly without analyte	POD(0) POD at conc = 0	POD curve value at conc = 0; “Y-intercept” of the POD curve
Specificity	Probability of the method giving a (-) response when the sample is truly without analyte	1-POD(0)	Distance along the POD axis from POD = 1 to the POD curve value
False negative (at a given concentration)	Probability of a (-) response at a given concentration	1-POD(c)	Distance from the POD curve to the POD = 1 “top axis” in the vertical direction
Sensitivity (at a given concentration)	Probability of a (+) response at a given concentration	POD(c)	Value of the POD curve at any given concentration
True negative	A sample that contains no analyte	C = 0	Point on concentration axis where c = 0
True positive	A sample that contains analyte at some positive concentration	C > 0	Range of concentration where c > 0

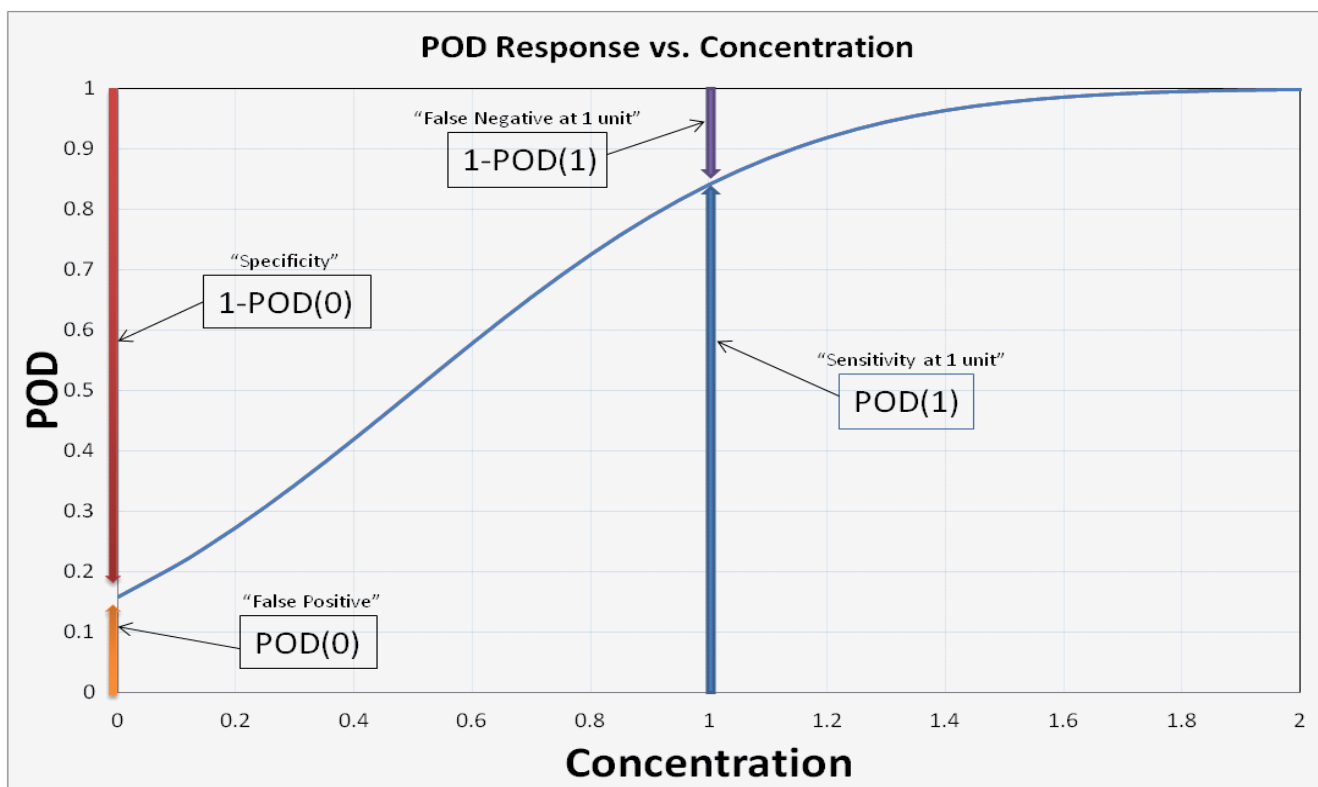


Figure C2. Comparison of POD model terminology to other obsolete terms.

ANNEX D
Definitions and Calculations
of HorRat Values from Intralaboratory Data

Excerpted from *Definitions and Calculations of HorRat Values from Intralaboratory Data*, AOAC INTERNATIONAL, HorRat for SLV.doc, 2004-01-18.

1. Definitions

1.1 Replicate Data

Data developed under common conditions in the same laboratory: simultaneous performance, or, if necessary to obtain sufficient values, same series, same analyst, same day. Such data provides “repeatability statistical parameters.”

1.2 Pooled Data

Replicate data developed in the same laboratory under different conditions but considered sufficiently similar that, for the purpose of statistical analysis, they may be considered together. These may include different runs, different instruments, different analysts, and different days.

1.3 Average

\bar{x} = Sum of the individual values, x_i , divided by the number of individual values, n .

$$\bar{x} = (\sum x_i)/n$$

1.4 Standard Deviation

$$s_i = [\sum(x_i - \bar{x})^2/n]^{0.5}$$

1.5 Relative Standard Deviation

$$RSD = s_i \times 100/\bar{x}$$

1.5.1 Repeatability Relative Standard Deviation [RSD(r) or RSD_r]

The relative standard deviation calculated from within-laboratory data.

1.5.2 Reproducibility Relative Standard Deviation [RSD(R) or RSD_R]

The relative standard deviation calculated from among-laboratory data.

Table D1. Predicted relative standard deviations

Concentration (C)	Mass fraction (C)	PRSD _R , %
100%	1.0	2
1%	0.01	4
0.01%	0.0001	8
1 ppm	0.000001	16
10 ppb	0.00000001	32
1 ppb	0.000000001	45

1.6 Mass Fraction

Concentration, C, expressed as a decimal fraction. For calculating and reporting statistical parameters, data may be expressed in any convenient units (e.g., %, ppm, ppb, mg/g, µg/g; µg/kg; µg/L, µg/µL, etc.). For reporting HorRat values, data must be reported as a mass fraction where the units of the numerator and denominator are the same: e.g., for 100% (pure materials), the mass fraction C = 1.00; for 1 µg/g (ppm), C = 0.000001 = (E-6). See Table D1 for other examples.

1.7 Predicted Relative Standard Deviation [PRSD(R) or PRSD_r]

The reproducibility relative standard deviation calculated from the Horwitz formula:

$$PRSD(R) = 2C^{-0.15}$$

where C is expressed as a mass fraction. See Table D1.

In spreadsheet notation: PRSD(R) = 2 * C ^(-0.15).

1.8 HorRat Value

The ratio of the reproducibility relative standard deviation calculated from the data to the PRSD(R) calculated from the Horwitz formula:

$$HorRat = RSD(R)/PRSD(R)$$

To differentiate the usual HorRat value calculated from reproducibility data from the HorRat value calculated from repeatability data, attach an R for the former and an r for the latter. But note that the denominator always uses the PRSD(R) calculated from reproducibility data because this parameter is more predictable than the parameter calculated from repeatability data:

$$HorRat(R) = RSD_R/PRSD(R)$$

$$HorRat(r) = RSD_r/PRSD(R)$$

Some expected, predicted relative standard deviations are given in Table D1.

2 Acceptable HorRat Values

2.1 For Interlaboratory Studies

HorRat(R): The original data developed from interlaboratory (among-laboratory) studies assigned a HorRat value of 1.0 with limits of acceptability of 0.5 to 2.0. The corresponding within-laboratory relative standard deviations were found to be typically 1/2 to 2/3 the among-laboratory relative standard deviations.

Table D2. Predicted relative standard deviations

Concentration (C)	PRSD _R , %	PRSD _r , %
100%	2	1
1%	4	2
0.01%	8	4
1 ppm	16	8
10 ppb	32	16
1 ppb	45	22

2.1.1 Limitations

HorRat values do not apply to method-defined (empirical) analytes (moisture, ash, fiber, carbohydrates by difference, etc.), physical properties or physical methods (pH, viscosity, drained weight, etc.), and ill-defined analytes (polymers, products of enzyme reactions).

2.2 For Intralaboratory Studies

2.2.1 Repeatability

Within-laboratory acceptable predicted target values for repeatability are given in Table D2 at 1/2 of PRSD(R), which represents the best case.

2.2.2 HorRat(r)

Based on experience and for the purpose of exploring the extrapolation of HorRat values to SLV studies, take as the minimum acceptability 1/2 of the lower limit (0.5 × 0.5 ≈ 0.3) and as the maximum acceptability 2/3 of the upper limit (0.67 × 2.0 ≈ 1.3).

Calculate HorRat(r) from the SLV data:

$$HorRat(r) = RSD(r)/PRSD(R)$$

Acceptable HorRat(r) values are 0.3–1.3. Values at the extremes must be interpreted with caution. With a series of low values, check for unreported averaging or prior knowledge of the analyte content; with a series of high values, check for method deficiencies such as unrestricted times, temperatures, masses, volumes, and concentrations; unrecognized impurities (detergent residues on glassware, peroxides in ether); incomplete extractions and transfers and uncontrolled parameters in specific instrumental techniques.

2.3 Other Limitations and Extrapolations

The HorRat value is a very rough but useful summary of the precision in analytical chemistry. It overestimates the precision at the extremes, predicting more variability than observed at the high end of the scale (C > ca 0.1; i.e., >10%) and at the low end of the scale (C < E-8; i.e., 10 ng/g; 10 ppb).

ANNEX E

AOAC Method Accuracy Review

Accuracy of Method Based on Reference Material

Reference material (RM) used.—The use of RMs should be seen as integral to the process of method development, validation, and performance evaluation. RMs are not the only component of a quality system, but correct use of RMs is essential to appropriate quality management. RMs with or without assigned quantity values can be used for measurement precision control, whereas only RMs with assigned quantity values can be used for calibration or measurement trueness control. Method development and validation for matrices within the scope of the method is done to characterize attributes such as recovery, selectivity, “trueness” (accuracy, bias), precision (repeatability and reproducibility), uncertainty estimation, ruggedness, LOQ or LOD, and dynamic range. RMs should be chosen that are fit-for-purpose. When certified reference materials (CRMs) are available with matrices that match the method scope, much of the work involved in method development has already been completed, and that work is documented through the certificate. RMs with analyte values in the range of test samples, as well as “blank” matrix RMs, with values below or near detection limits, are needed.

Availability of RM.—Consideration needs to be given to the future availability of the chosen RM. Well-documented methods that cannot be verified in the future due to lack of material may lose credibility or be seen as inferior.

Fit to method scope.—Natural matrix CRMs provide the greatest assurance that the method is capable of producing accurate results for that matrix. When selecting an RM to perform a method validation, analysts should consider the method to material fit. An example of a good fit would be a method for specified organic molecules in infant formula and using an infant formula or powder milk RM. A poor fit would be a method for specified organic molecules in infant formula and using a sediment material.

Stability.—Providing a stable RM can be challenging where analytes are biologically active, easily oxidized, or interactive with other components of the matrix. CRM producers provide assurance of material stability, as well as homogeneity. CRMs are accompanied by a certificate that includes the following key criteria:

- (1) Assigned values with measurement uncertainty and metrological traceability
- (2) Homogeneity
- (3) Stability, with the expiration date for the certificate
- (4) Storage requirements
- (5) Information on intended use
- (6) Identity of matrix

For some RMs, such as botanical RMs, the source and/or authenticity can be a very important piece of information that should be included with the certificate. Even under ideal storage conditions, many analytes have some rate of change. Recertification may be done by the supplier, and a certificate reissued with a different expiration date and with certain analyte data updated or removed.

Definition of CRM.—Refer to the AOAC TDRM document for definitions from ISO Guide 30, Amd. 1 (2008), <http://www.aoc.org/divisions/References.pdf>.

Information on source of RM is available.—It is the responsibility of the material producer to provide reliable authentication of the RM and make a clear statement in the accompanying documentation. This should be an as detailed listing as possible, including handling of ingredients, identification of plant materials as completely as feasible (species, type, subtype, growing region), etc. This is comparable to other required information on an RM for judging its suitability for a specific application purpose (e.g., containing how much of the targeted analyte, stabilized by adding acid—therefore not suited for certain parameters/procedures, etc.).

Separate RM used for calibration and validation.—A single RM cannot be used for both calibration and validation of results in the same measurement procedure.

Blank RM used where appropriate.—Blank matrix RMs are useful for ensuring performance at or near the detection limits. These are particularly useful for routine quality control in methods measuring, for instance, trace levels of allergens, mycotoxins, or drug residues.

Storage requirements were maintained.—Method developers should maintain good documentation showing that the RM producer’s recommended storage conditions were followed.

Cost.—The cost of ongoing method checks should be considered. Daily use of CRMs can be cost prohibitive. Monthly or quarterly analysis of these materials may be an option.

Concentration of analyte fits intended method.—Concentration of the analyte of interest is appropriate for standard method performance requirements (SMPRs).

Uncertainty available.—Every measurement result has an uncertainty associated with it, and the individual contributions toward the combined uncertainty arise from multiple sources. Achieving the target measurement uncertainty set by the customer for his/her problem of interest is often one of the criteria used in selecting a method for a given application. Estimation of measurement uncertainty can be accomplished by different approaches, but the use of RMs greatly facilitates this part of a method validation.

Demonstration of Method Accuracy when No Reference Material Is Available

If an RM is not available, how is accuracy demonstrated?

There are many analytes for which a CRM with a suitable matrix is not available. This leaves the analyst with few options. For some methods, there may be proficiency testing programs that include a matrix of interest for the analyte. Proficiency testing allows an analyst to compare results with results from other laboratories, which may or may not be using similar methods. Spiking is another technique that may be used. When alternative methods are available, results may be compared between the different methods. These alternatives do not provide the same level of assurance that is gained through the use of a CRM.

Spike recovery.—In the absence of an available CRM, one technique that is sometimes used for assessing performance is the spiking of a matrix RM with a known quantity of the analyte. When this method is used, it cannot be assumed that the analyte is bound in the same way as it would be in a natural matrix. Nevertheless, a certified blank RM would be the preferred choice for constructing a spiked material.

When preparing reference solutions, the pure standards must be completely soluble in the solvent. For insoluble materials in a liquid suspension or for powdered forms of dry materials, validation is required to demonstrate that the analyte is homogeneously distributed and that the response of the detection system to the analyte is not affected by the matrix or preparation technique. When a matrix material is selected for spiking, it should be reasonably

The document, *AOAC Method Accuracy Review*, was prepared by the AOAC Technical Division on Reference Materials (TDRM) and approved by the AOAC Official Methods Board in June 2012.

characterized to determine that it is sufficiently representative of the matrix of interest. Spiked samples must be carried through all steps of the method. Many analytes are bound in a natural matrix and whether the spiked analyte will behave the same as the analyte in a natural matrix is unknown.

Other.—Use of a substitute RM involves the replacement of the CRM with an alternative matrix RM matching the matrix of interest as close as possible based on technical knowledge.

ANNEX F Development and Use of In-House Reference Materials

The use of reference materials is a vital part of any analytical quality assurance program. However, you may have questions about their creation and use. The purpose of this document is to help answer many of these questions.

- What is a reference material?
- Why use reference materials?
- What certified reference materials are currently available?
- Why use an in-house reference material?
- How do I create an in-house reference material?
- How do I use the data from an in-house reference material?

What Is a Reference Material?

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) defines a reference material as a “material or substance one or more of whose property values are sufficiently homogeneous and well established to be used for the calibration of an apparatus, the assessment of a measurement method, or for assigning values to materials” (1). In plain English, natural-matrix reference materials, such as those you might prepare for use in-house, can be used to validate an analytical method or for quality assurance while you’re using your method to analyze your samples. (Natural-matrix materials are not generally used as calibrants because of the increased uncertainty that this would add to an analysis.) The assigned values for the target analytes of an in-house reference material can be used to establish the precision of your analytical method and, if used in conjunction with a CRM, to establish the accuracy of your method.

ISO defines a certified reference material (CRM) as a “reference material, accompanied by a certificate, one or more of whose property values are certified by a procedure which establishes traceability to an accurate realization of the unit in which the property values are expressed, and for which each certified value is accompanied by an uncertainty at a stated level of confidence” (1).

Why Use Reference Materials?

Certified reference materials can be used across the entire scope of an analytical method and can provide traceability of results to the International System of Units (SI). During method development, CRMs can be used to optimize your method. During method validation, they can be used to ensure that your method is capable of producing the “right” answer, and to determine how close your result is to that answer. During routine use, they can be used to determine within-day and between-day repeatability, and so demonstrate that your method is in control and is producing accurate results every time it is used.

Excerpted from *Development and Use of In-House Reference Materials*, Rev. 2, 2009. Copyright 2005 by the AOAC Technical Division on Reference Materials (TDRM).

Natural-matrix reference materials should mimic the real samples that will be analyzed with a method. They should behave just as your samples would during a procedure, so if you obtain accurate and precise values for your reference material, you should obtain accurate and precise values for your samples as well.

What Certified Reference Materials Are Currently Available?

CRMs are available from a number of sources, including (but not limited to):

- American Association of Cereal Chemists (AACC)
- American Oil Chemists Society (AOCS)
- International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
- Institute for Reference Materials and Measurements (IRMM)
- LGC Promochem
- National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)
- National Research Council Canada (NRC Canada)
- UK Food Analysis Proficiency Assessment Program (FAPAS)

A number of websites provide general overviews and catalogs of producers’ and distributors’ reference materials:

<http://www.aocs.org/tech/crm/>
<http://www.comar.bam.de>
<http://www.erm-crm.org>
<http://www.iaea.org/oregrammes/laqcs>
<http://www.aaccnet.org/checksample>
<http://www.irmm-ire.be/mrm.html>
<http://www.lgcpromochem.com>
<http://www.naweb.iaea.org/nahu/nmrm/>
<http://www.nist.gov/srm>
<http://www.fapas.com/index.cfm>
<http://www.virm.net>

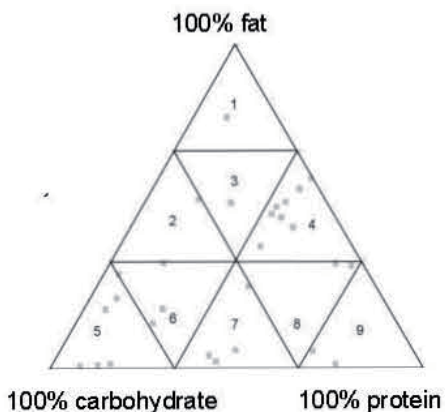
Because new reference materials are produced regularly, it is important to check these websites to determine what is currently available.

Why Use an In-House Reference Material?

There are many benefits to the use of a CRM. CRMs have been prepared to be homogeneous and, if stored under the proper conditions, stable. You are provided with a certified value as well as the statistical data for the concentration of your analyte; this is about as close as you can come to knowing the true value of the concentration of the analyte. The material has been tested by experienced analysts in leading laboratories, so you have the security of knowing that your method is generating values similar to those generated in other competent laboratories. The CRMs from the sources mentioned above are nationally and/or internationally recognized, so when you obtain acceptable results for a CRM using your analytical method, you give credibility to your methodology and traceability to your results.

But there are some drawbacks associated with CRMs. Unfortunately, many analyte/matrix combinations are not currently available. When testing food products for nutrient content, for example, a laboratory can be asked to analyze anything that might be found in a kitchen or grocery store. Reference materials that represent all of the types of foods that need to be tested are not available, and most CRMs are certified for a limited number of analytes. It is important to match the reference material matrix to your sample matrix. (Food examples dominate the discussion below, but the same processes apply to the development of in-house RMs in other areas of analytical chemistry.)

To demonstrate the applicability of an analytical method to a wide variety of food matrices, AOAC INTERNATIONAL’s Task



Force on Methods for Nutrition Labeling developed a triangle partitioned into sectors in which foods are placed based on their protein, fat, and carbohydrate content (2, 3). Since ash does not have a great impact on the performance of an analytical method for organic-material foods, and water can be added or removed, it can be assumed that the behavior of an analytical method is determined to large extent by the relative proportions of these proximates. AOAC INTERNATIONAL anticipated that one or two foods in a given sector would be representative of other foods in that sector and therefore would be useful for method assessment. Similarly, one or two reference materials in a given sector (or near each other in adjacent sectors) should be useful for quality assurance for analyses involving the other foods in the sector. The positions of many of the food-matrix CRMs from the sources listed above are shown in the triangle and are provided in the list.

These food-matrix reference materials are spread through all sectors of the triangle, thereby making it likely that you can find an appropriate CRM to match to your samples. Ultimately, however, the routine use of a CRM can be cost prohibitive, and is not really the purpose of CRMs. For example, in order to use NIST’s Standard Reference Material (SRM) 2387 Peanut Butter for all mandatory nutrition labeling analyses, you could buy one sales unit (three jars, each containing 170 g material) for \$649 (2009 price). If you charge your customer about \$1000 for analysis of all mandatory nutrients in a test material, the control material would account for more than 60% of your fees. Therefore, many laboratories have found it more cost-effective to create in-house reference materials for routine quality control and characterize them in conjunction with the analysis of a CRM (4). You can prepare larger quantities of a reference material by preparing it in-house, and you have more flexibility in the types of matrices you can use. There are not many limitations on what can be purchased.

How Do I Create an In-House Reference Material?

There are basically three steps to preparing an in-house reference material: selection (including consideration of homogeneity and stability), preparation, and characterization. Additional guidance through these steps can be provided from TDRM as well as in ISO Guides 34 (5) and 35 (6).

References

(1) JCGM 200:2008, *International vocabulary of metrology—Basic and general concepts and associated terms (VIM)*, International Bureau of Weights and Measures (www.bipm.org)

Sector	RM No.	Matrix
	NIST 1563	Coconut oil
1	NIST 3274	Fatty acids in botanical oils
1	NIST 3276	Carrot extract in oil
1	LGC 7104	Sterilized cream
2	NIST 2384	Baking chocolate
3	NIST 2387	Peanut butter
4	NIST 1546	Meat homogenate
4	LGC 7106	Processed cheese
4	LGC 7000	Beef/pork meat
4	LGC 7150	Processed meat
4	LGC 7151	Processed meat
4	LGC 7152	Processed meat
4	SMRD 2000	Fresh meat
4	LGC 7101	Mackerel paste
4	LGC QC1001	Meat paste 1
4	LGC QC1004	Fish paste 1
5	BCR-382	Wheat flour
5	BCR-381	Rye flour
5	LGC 7103	Sweet digestive biscuit
5	LGC 7107	Madeira cake
5	LGC QC1002	Flour 1
6	NIST 1544	Fatty acids
6	NIST 1548a	Typical diet
6	NIST 1849	Infant/adult nutritional formula
6	LGC 7105	Rice pudding
7	LGC 7001	Pork meat
7	NIST 1566b	Oyster tissue
7	NIST 1570a	Spinach leaves
7	NIST 2385	Spinach
8	NIST 1946	Lake trout
8	LGC 7176	Canned pet food
9	NIST 1974a	Mussel tissue
9	NIST 3244	Protein powder

(2) Wolf, W.R., & Andrews, K.W. (1995) *Fresenius’ J. Anal. Chem.* **352**, 73–76

(3) Wolf, W.R. (1993) *Methods of Analysis for Nutrition Labeling*, D.R. Sullivan & D.E. Carpenter (Eds), AOAC INTERNATIONAL, Gaithersburg, MD

(4) European Reference Materials (2005) *Comparison of a Measurement Result with the Certified Value*, Application Note 1

(5) *ISO Guide 34 General Requirements for the Competence of Reference Material Producers* (2009) 2nd, International Organization for Standardization, Geneva, Switzerland

(6) *Guide 35 Certification of Reference Materials—General and Statistical Principles* (2006) International Organization for Standardization, Geneva, Switzerland

For more information about the AOAC Technical Division on Reference Materials, visit <http://aoac.org/divisions/tdrm>.

Appendix G: Procedures and Guidelines for the Use of AOAC Voluntary Consensus Standards to Evaluate Characteristics of a Method of Analysis

Expert Review Panels, Official Methods Board, First and Final Action *Official Methods*SM

In early 2011, an AOAC Presidential Task Force recommended that AOAC use Expert review panels (ERPs) to assess candidate methods against standard method performance requirements (SMPRs) to ensure that adopted First Action *Official Methods*SM are fit for purpose.

Formation of an ERP

AOAC ERPs are authorized to adopt candidate methods as First Action *Official Methods* and to recommend adoption of these methods to Final Action *Official Methods* status. Scientists are recruited to serve on ERPs by a variety of ways. Normally, a call for experts is published at the same time as a call for methods is posted. Interested scientists are invited to submit their *curriculum vitae* (CV) for consideration. Advisory panel, stakeholder panel, and working group members may make recommendations to AOAC for ERP members. All CVs are reviewed and evaluated for expertise by the AOAC Chief Scientific Officer (CSO). The CVs and CSO evaluations are forwarded to the OMB for formal review. Both the CSO and OMB strive to ensure that the composition of a proposed ERP is both qualified and represent the various stakeholder groups. The recommended ERP members are submitted to the AOAC president who then appoints the ERP members.

Review of Methods

Methods submitted to AOAC in response to a call for methods are collected and compiled by AOAC staff. The AOAC CSO and working group chair perform a preliminary review of the methods and classify them into three categories: (1) fully developed and written methods that appear to meet SMPRs; (2) fully developed and written methods that may or may not meet SMPRs; and (3) incomplete methods with no performance data. Method submitters are apprised of the evaluation of their methods. Method developers with submissions that are classified as Category 2 or 3 are encouraged to provide additional information if available. A list of all the submitted methods and their classifications are posted for public review.

Usually, two ERP members (sometimes more) are assigned to lead the review of each Category 1 method. An ERP meeting is convened to review the methods. ERP meetings are open to all interested parties, and are usually well-attended events with about 50–60 attendees common. Each Category 1 method is reviewed and discussed by the ERP. If stakeholders have designated the method to be a dispute resolution method (as stated in the SMPR), then the ERP is asked to identify the single best candidate method to be adopted as a First Action *Official Method*. If the SMPR does not specify the need for a dispute resolution method, then the ERP may choose to adopt all methods that meet the SMPRs, or may choose to adopt the single best method in their collective, expert opinion.

In addition, an ERP may choose to require changes to a candidate method as part of its First Action adoption and/or identify issues

that are required to be resolved prior to adoption as a Final Action *Official Method*.

Methods adopted by an ERP as First Action *Official Methods* may not be in AOAC *Official Methods* format. Method developers/authors are asked to assist AOAC to rewrite the method and accompanying manuscript into an AOAC-acceptable format.

Two-Year First Action Evaluation Period

Under the new pathway, a method may be designated as a First Action *Official Method* based on the collective judgment of an ERP. *Official Methods* remain as First Action for a period of about 2 years. During the First Action period, the method will be used in laboratories, and method users will be asked to provide feedback on the performance of the method.

As previously described, two (or more) ERP members are assigned to lead the review of candidate methods for adoption as First Action *Official Methods*. After a method has been adopted as First Action, these lead reviewers are expected to keep track of the use of and experience with the First Action *Official Method*. At the conclusion of the 2-year evaluation period, one or both of the lead reviewers will report back to the ERP on the experience of the First Action *Official Method*.

The presiding ERP will monitor the performance of the method, and, at the completion of the 2-year First Action evaluation period, determine whether the method should be recommended to the OMB for adoption as an AOAC Final Action *Official Method*.

It is also possible that First Action *Official Methods* are not recommended for Final Action. There are two possibilities for an ERP to decide not to proceed with a First Action method: (1) feedback from method users indicates that a First Action method is not performing as well in the field as was expected; or (2) another method with better performance characteristics has been developed and reviewed. In either case, the ERP may choose to repeal the First Action status of a method.

OMB Review

The OMB will review all methods recommended for Final Action or repeal by the ERP, and will consider a number of factors in their decision. A guidance document for factors to consider is provided on the AOAC website at http://www.aoac.org/vmeth/OMB_ERP_Guidance.pdf. Some of the factors identified by the guidance document for OMB consideration are (1) feedback from method users, (2) comparison to the appropriate SMPR, (3) results from single-laboratory validation, (4) reproducibility/uncertainty and probability of detection, (5) availability of reference materials, and (6) safety concerns.

Conclusion

The new pathway to *Official Methods*SM is deliberately designed to avoid creation of elaborate review systems. The intent of the model is for method experts to use their scientific knowledge, experience, and good judgment to identify and adopt the best methods possible for the analytical need.

These methods are then published as First Action *Official Methods*, and used by analysts while additional information about the method is collected.

Method reviewers may consider other forms of information in lieu of the traditional collaborative study to demonstrate method reproducibility.

Additional Information

Coates, S. (2012) “Alternative Pathway,” *Inside Laboratory Management* 16(3), pp 10–12

Expert Review Panels, Policies and Procedures, AOAC INTERNATIONAL, <http://www.aoac.org/News/EXPERT%20REVIEW%20PANELS%20final%20revision.pdf>

Standard Format and Guidance for AOAC Standard Method Performance Requirement (SMPR) Documents, AOAC INTERNATIONAL, <http://www.aoac.org/ISPAM/pdf/3.5%20SMPR%20Guideline%20v12.1.pdf>

Guidance Documents

Requirements for First Action Official MethodsSM Status

See Figure 1 for process flowchart.

Expert Review Panels

- (1) Supported by relevant stakeholders.
- (2) Constituted solely for the ERP purpose, not for SMPR purposes or as an extension of an SMPR.
- (3) Consist of a minimum of seven members representing a balance of key stakeholders.
- (4) ERP constituency must be approved by the OMB.
- (5) Hold transparent public meetings only.
- (6) Remain in force as long as method in First Action status.

First Action Official MethodSM Status Decision

- (1) Must be made by an ERP constituted or reinstated post March 28, 2011 for First Action *Official MethodSM* status approval.
- (2) Must be made by an ERP vetted for First Action *Official MethodSM* status purposes by OMB post March 28, 2011.
- (3) Method adopted by ERP must perform adequately against the SMPR set forth by the stakeholders.
- (4) Method must be adopted by unanimous decision of ERP on first ballot. If not unanimous, negative votes must delineate scientific reasons.
- (5) Negative voter(s) can be overridden by 2/3 of voting ERP members after due consideration.
- (6) Method becomes Official First Action on date when ERP decision is made.
- (7) Methods to be drafted into AOAC format by a knowledgeable AOAC staff member or designee in collaboration with the ERP and method author.
- (8) Report of First Action *Official MethodSM* status decision complete with ERP report regarding decision, including scientific background (references, etc.), to be published concurrently with method in traditional AOAC publication venues.

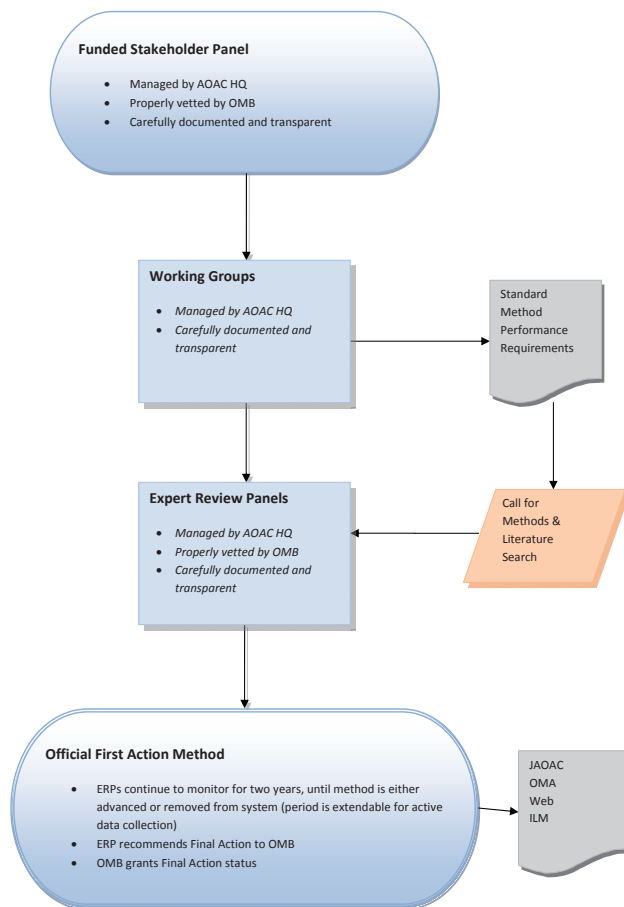


Figure 1. Summary of standards development through Official Methods of Analysis.

Method in First Action Status and Transitioning to Final Action Status

- (1) Further data indicative of adequate method reproducibility (between laboratory) performance to be collected. Data may be collected via a collaborative study or by proficiency or other testing data of similar magnitude.
- (2) Two years maximum transition time [additional year(s) if ERP determines a relevant collaborative study or proficiency or other data collection is in progress].
- (3) Method removed from Official First Action and OMA if no evidence of method use available at the end of the transition time.
- (4) Method removed from Official First Action and OMA if no data indicative of adequate method reproducibility is forthcoming as outlined above at the end of the transition time.
- (5) ERP to recommend method to Final Action Official status to the OMB.
- (6) OMB decision on First to Final Action status.

These guidance documents were approved by the AOAC Board of Directors on May 25, 2011.

First Action to Final Action Methods: Guidance for AOAC Expert Review Panels

In December 2011, the Official Methods Board (OMB) approved a guidance document for ERPs to support their work as they deliberate on methods, adopt methods as Official First Action, and, subsequently, track method usage and performance between First Action status and Final Action consideration. The guideline is based on parameters of a method that the OMB will consider when deliberating on methods recommended for Final Action status. ERPs are to use this guideline in their deliberations.

ERPs working within the AOAC process may recommend a First Action status method be elevated to Final Action status. Such a recommendation leverages the ERP's high level of expertise supported by data from the initial evaluation, and results from the subsequent 2-year method performance evaluation period.

The OMB receives the recommendation with supporting documentation, and determines if Final Action status is warranted. OMB's review verifies the method process was conducted in compliance with the guidelines and protocols of the Association.

For transparency and to expedite the review process, the main areas OMB will review when evaluating ERP recommendations to promote methods to Final Action are listed below. Documentation of the areas listed below will also increase confidence in method performance and assist users to properly and safely perform the methods at their locations.

A. Method Applicability

(a) A method's applicability to the identified stakeholder needs is best assessed by the stakeholder panel and should be a part of the process from the onset. OMB liaisons will remind stakeholder panels to maintain this focus point.

(b) OMB may ask ERPs and stakeholder panels for feedback to improve the applicability of the method, such as potential method scope expansions and potential points of concern.

B. Safety Concerns

(a) A safety review must be performed for a method to be recognized as First Action.

(b) All safety concerns identified during the 2-year evaluation period must be addressed.

(c) Guidance and support can be obtained from the AOAC Safety Committee.

C. Reference Materials

(a) Document efforts undertaken to locate reference materials. Methods may still progress to Final Action even if reference materials are not available.

(b) Guidance and support can be obtained from the AOAC Technical Division on Reference Materials.

D. Single-Laboratory Validation

(a) Data demonstrating response linearity, accuracy, repeatability, LOD/LOQ, and matrix scope must be present. Experimental designs to collect this data may vary with the method protocol and the intended use of the method.

(b) Resources can be identified by the AOAC Statistics Committee.

E. Reproducibility/Uncertainty and Probability of Detection

(a) For quantitative methods, data demonstrating reproducibility and uncertainty must be present. Experimental designs to collect this data may vary with the method protocol, available laboratories, and the intended use of the method (i.e., collaborative studies, proficiency testing, etc.).

(b) For qualitative methods, data must be present demonstrating the probability of detection at specified concentration levels as defined by the SMPR. Experimental designs to collect this data may vary with the method protocol, available laboratories, and the intended use of the method.

(c) Guidance and support can be obtained from the AOAC Statistics Committee.

F. Comparison to SMPR

(a) Document method performance versus SMPR criteria. Note which SMPR criteria are met. For SMPR criteria not met, the ERP documents the reasoning why the method is still acceptable.

(b) Data is present to assure the matrix and analyte scopes are covered. This is critical for methods used for dispute resolutions.

G. Feedback from Users of Method

(a) Document positive and negative feedback from users of the method during the trial period.

(b) Feedback from users demonstrating method ruggedness should be documented.

(c) Assess the future availability of vital equipment, reference materials, and supplies.

H. ERP Recommendations to Repeal First Action Methods

Recommendations to repeal First Action methods shall be accompanied with detailed reasons for the decision.

The First to Final Action guidance for ERPs was approved by the OMB in December 2011 and effective as of February 1, 2012.

