

# SCSC Assurance Case Working Group (ACWG) – Terms of Reference

Version 3 : May 2021 (changes from Version 2 marked with change bars)

## 1 PURPOSE

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

A number of safety standards explicitly require a safety case to be developed and maintained. Further, where standards don't explicitly require a safety case, they define obligations such that there is an implicit requirement to justify the sufficiency of measures taken to ensure safety. The underpinning principles of assurance can be applied to any risk based property, whether that is safety, security, availability, etc.

Whilst standards have explicit, or implicit, obligations for assurance of risk based properties, they contain little guidance on how to construct such a case, how to present the case with clarity, or how to determine whether it is sufficiently robust for its purpose. As a consequence, there is a demand from the community for guidance in this important area.

### 1.2 Reason for establishing a SCSC Working Group

Due to the nature of the SCSC being cross domain and non-profit making, it provides an opportunity for experts from different domains and academia to come together to network and share good practice and experience.

### 1.3 Vision

To produce clear, non-sector specific, guidance on production and maintenance of assurance cases that are complete, coherent and proportionate.

- The guidance will focus on topics that are perceived by the ACWG as containing weaknesses or poor practice and where no, or limited, guidance currently exists.
- It will avoid repeating established guidance. Where guidance exists, it will be sign-posted from the ACWG guidance
- Where there is an opportunity to influence standards and guidance development, the ACWG will provide a focal point for assurance cases.

To maintain the GSN community standard, responding to feedback on its use and evolving good practice.

## 2 OPERATION

### 2.1 Proposed Working Methods

- Meet for a day approximately every 3 months, to reach agreements and resolve contentious points
- Intent to rotate hosting (alternating North/South subject to suitable offers to host the venue). Refreshments are appreciated but not expected from the host organisation.
- Between meetings, carry out detailed work (independently, or by collaborating electronically)
- Continue to operate in accordance with the perceived need and potential for mutual benefit.

### 2.2 Membership

Membership is open to all interested parties (UK and worldwide) – membership of the SCSC is encouraged but not required.

- Interested parties may join the working group by contacting the working group leader and registering via the SCSC website.

Active participation from members is encouraged. Where this is not practical through physical contribution at meetings, involvement through review and participation through email and SCSC group discussion forum is expected.

- Participation in working group meetings will not be limited other than by physical constraints of the facilities provided by the hosting organisation.
- Where there is a need to restrict attendance, priority will be given to those actively participating in working group activities towards the objectives.
- Ensuring fair representation across sectors and interest groups may result in requests for organisations to rationalise their representation.
- Where a member of the group has not participated in any form for more than two years, they may be removed from the group's membership at the discretion of the group's chair. There is no restriction on their re-joining at any time.

### 2.3 Sharing of Information

Information sharing is via the SCSC website, utilising the Groups' area set up for this purpose.

- Active members of the working group are required to register with the website (<http://scsc.uk/gc>) to gain access to WG material.
- WG material accessed through the group area and attendance at meeting should be considered privileged material and should not be further distributed or used for purposes other than connected with the group's activities.
- The group's members email address may be shared with other members of the group for the purpose of collaboration in pursuit of the purpose of the group.

Discussions outside of the WG meetings should use the SCSC working group discussion forum (currently public but may be made private to WG members).

## 3 Control

### 3.1 Decision making

The WG will appoint a WG Leader (Chair) from amongst its membership.

- Appointment will be by simple majority voting of members present at a regular WG meeting.
- Any member may volunteer to take on the role of WG Leader.
- There is no fixed term for the WG Leader.
- The WG Leader is responsible for liaison with the SCSC Steering Group (SG), arranging WG meetings and ensuring appropriate communication with the WG members.

Decisions will be made by consensus of members present where practicable, or by simple majority.

- A record of decisions made will be recorded in notes of the WG meeting stored in the group area.

### 3.2 Dispute resolution

Every effort should be made to resolve disputes amicably amongst the members of the WG.

- Where a resolution cannot be reached, the issue may be escalated to the SCSC SG.

### 3.3 Participation basis

The purpose of the ACWG is to support the System Safety community by undertaking activities such as sharing good practice, developing guidance documents, and influencing research programmes and the development of standards. This is achieved by putting the major outputs from WG activities in the public domain without restriction on use and adaptation. WG members contributing to the activities do so on the basis that their contribution will become public and that they, and/or their employer, agree to this. Contributors to WG outputs will normally be listed but individual contributions will not be identified. Contributors, and/or their employers may be included in the list on request.

The model for contributors is:

- If a meeting attendee brings a submission to the group, they are implicitly offering it to the SCSC for inclusion in the guidance.
- It is the responsibility of the individual to declare any constraints on use of information provided.
- It is the responsibility of each WG member to ensure that, if appropriate, their employer supports their involvement.

### 3.4 Governance

The working group is responsible to the SCSC steering group.

- The working group's terms of reference will be presented to the steering group for ratification.
- The working group shall report progress to the steering group, via its group pages on the SCSC website and at the annual SCSC symposium.

The working group is responsible for its day to day operation within these terms of reference.

- The working group has no authority to commit the SCSC to any financial, contractual or legal obligation without the approval of the steering group.
- Any expenses associated with the working group activities should be met through the support of the working group members and/or their employers.

### 3.5 Dissolution

On completion of its objectives the working group will declare to the steering group that its work is complete and all published material will be made available via the SCSC website.

Should the number of interested parties reduce below a sustainable level, the group may be declared dormant. The steering group may encourage re-activation of the group.

## 4 Outputs

### 4.1 Intellectual Property, Copyright and Liability

SCSC policy is that “WG outputs **must not** make any statement regarding Copyright or Intellectual Property”

### 4.2 Publication

The working group may publish output from its activity on the SCSC website in its working group area, in the SCSC Publications/Resources area and, in the case of GSN related material, in the [scsc.uk/gsn](http://scsc.uk/gsn) site. This includes information private to the working group and information that is publicly available.

- Publication in other locations is subject to approval of the steering group
- The working group is responsible for ensuring that any published material is suitable for the forum in which it is published.

Output from the WG that is deemed by the group to be sufficiently mature to publish will be made freely available via the SCSC website.

- Where the working group determines that the published output is suitable, it may also be made available via a suitable publishing media e.g. Amazon print on demand.
- Charges made for obtaining copies from such a publisher will be set to cover production costs only and will not include any element for the development of the material.
- Publications will indicate that the work was supported and facilitated by the SCSC and include prominent use of its logo.
- Publications will include a SCSC provided document reference in addition to any other relevant reference e.g. ISBN.
- Where an appropriate organisation is willing to publicly endorse a publication, the working group will obtain appropriate letters of endorsement and will file these with the SCSC administrator.

### 4.3 Liability

All published WG outputs must contain a statement on liability as defined by SCSC SG policy.

### 4.4 Licencing

WG outputs should be made as widely available for use and reuse by the system safety community as possible. This is supported by publishing under the Creative Commons Attribution License and should contain a statement as defined by SCSC SG policy.