



CONSTITUTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL PEST RISK RESEARCH GROUP

ARTICLE 1. NAME. The official name of this organization is the International Pest Risk Research Group. In correspondence or any other published documents, it may also be referenced by the acronym IPRRG after the first appearance of the official name.

ARTICLE 2. OBJECTIVES. The primary objective of the International Pest Risk Research Group (“Group” hereafter) is to develop enhanced pest risk modelling and mapping methods through rigorous and innovative research focused on the key challenges faced by the discipline, exploiting advances made in related fields. This objective is achieved by regular meetings where developments are presented, discussed, and tested, together with publications as appropriate. A related objective is to communicate findings of the Group and its members regarding these topics to a broad international audience that includes scientists, policymakers, and other end users, seeking their feedback to ensure that their needs are recognized, and that modelling and mapping outputs are used as effectively as possible. Another key objective is to provide technical training in the methods utilized to generate these outputs, thereby promoting best practice in their application.

ARTICLE 3. ORGANIZATION AUTHORITY. Although Group members are typically full-time employees of government agencies or academic institutions, the Group is not affiliated with any particular agency or institution, nor is it directly subject to the rules of governance of such. The Group is instead governed according to the rules defined in this Constitution. It is the responsibility of individual members to ensure that their participation in the Group is in accordance with the policies of their home agency or institution.

ARTICLE 3a. AFFILIATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS. The Group does not operate under the auspices of any other organization (e.g., plant protection organizations) or professional society. However, the Executive Committee has the authority to pursue affiliations and propose them to the general membership, at which time they must be approved by majority vote (see Article 6i).

ARTICLE 4. MEMBERSHIP. Membership is open to all individuals engaged in or interested in pest risk modelling and mapping methodologies or applications. Any person who attends a Group meeting, or who contacts the current Secretary-Treasurer (see Article 5c) with a request for membership, is

considered an active member of the Group (see Article 4b). Each active member has an equal say in elections of office bearers, or any other Group business subject to a general vote.

ARTICLE 4a. MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY. The current Secretary-Treasurer is responsible for maintaining the membership directory of the Group, which includes contact information for each member.

ARTICLE 4b. DURATION AND SUSPENSION OF MEMBERSHIP. Members retain active status for four years after the first Group meeting they attend or after their first membership request to the Secretary-Treasurer, unless they either (1) contact the current Secretary-Treasurer with a request to be removed from the membership list, or (2) fail to respond to repeated (four or more) contact attempts from the Secretary-Treasurer or other officer regarding their participation in the Group. In the latter case, active status can be renewed by attending another Group meeting or by sending a renewal request to the current Secretary-Treasurer.

ARTICLE 5. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. The Executive Committee shall consist of the following five officers: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary-Treasurer, Communications Officer, and Student Representative. A sixth officer, the Local Arrangements Organiser, is appointed by the Chair (see Articles 5a and 5f), and is therefore not a voting member of the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE 5a. CHAIR. The Chair provides administrative oversight of the Group. The Chair also has the authority to represent the Group in dealings with external organizations. Primary responsibilities of the Chair include the following:

- Appoint a Local Arrangements Organiser to host the Group's annual meeting (see Article 7);
- Serve on the Scientific Committee for the annual meeting (see Article 7a);
- Produce an annual accomplishment report summarizing the Group's activities for that year, which is to be distributed to the membership;
- Oversee production of accomplishment reports for activities sponsored by external organizations;
- Ensure adherence of the Group to this Constitution, and propose amendments to the Constitution as appropriate.

The Chair is elected under a parliamentary model. Any of the top four vote-getters in a general Executive Committee election, defined in Article 6, may be selected as the Chair. These four elected members, in consultation with the Student Representative, who is elected separately to the Executive Committee (see Article 6), decide amongst themselves who will be the Chair. This can be determined by a vote or other method the Executive Committee members deem appropriate. The Chair serves a two-year term upon election. The term extends from the end of the Group's annual meeting during the election year until the end of the Group's annual meeting two years later. If an annual meeting is not held at that time, then the term will end with the conclusion of the online voting period for that year (see Article 6a). At the conclusion of

this term, the current office-holder is eligible for re-election, if she or he remains in good standing.

ARTICLE 5b. VICE-CHAIR. The primary responsibility of the Vice-Chair is to lead the Scientific Committee for the Group's annual meeting (see Article 7a). The Vice-Chair may also act on behalf of the Chair in cases where the Chair is unable to fulfil his or her responsibilities. The Vice-Chair is not directly elected; rather, the position is filled by one of the top four vote-getters in an Executive Committee election defined in Article 6. The Vice-Chair serves a two-year term upon election. The term extends from the end of the Group's annual meeting during the election year until the end of the Group's annual meeting two years later. If an annual meeting is not held at that time, then the term will end with the conclusion of the online voting period for that year (see Article 6a). At the conclusion of this term, the current office-holder is eligible for re-election, if she or he remains in good standing.

ARTICLE 5c. SECRETARY-TREASURER. The Secretary-Treasurer serves as the chief fiscal agent and membership coordinator of the Group. The Secretary-Treasurer documents the financial holdings and activities of the Group, and maintains the Group's membership directory. The Secretary-Treasurer is responsible for summarizing recent financial and membership activities at Group annual meetings and as otherwise requested by the Chair. The Secretary-Treasurer is not directly elected; rather, the position may be filled by any one of the top four vote-getters in an Executive Committee election defined in Article 6. The Secretary-Treasurer serves a two-year term upon election. The term extends from the end of the Group's annual meeting during the election year until the end of the Group's annual meeting two years later. If an annual meeting is not held at that time, then the term will end with the conclusion of the online voting period for that year (see Article 6a). At the conclusion of this term, the current office-holder is eligible for re-election, if she or he remains in good standing.

ARTICLE 5d. COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER. The primary responsibilities of the Communications Officer are to maintain the Group web site (URLs - <http://www.pestrisk.org> and <http://www.pestrisk.net>) and to send meeting announcements and other information of interest to Group members. The Communications Officer is responsible for the currency and accuracy of the web site content (which must include this Constitution document), and has the authority to modify the web site when deemed appropriate by the Executive Committee. The Communications Officer is not directly elected; rather, the position may be filled by any one of the top four vote-getters in an Executive Committee election defined in Article 6. The Communications Officer serves a two-year term upon election. The term extends from the end of the Group's annual meeting during the election year until the end of the Group's meeting two years later. If an annual meeting is not held at that time, then the term will end with the conclusion of the online voting period for that year (see Article 6a). At the end of this term, the current office-holder is eligible for re-election, if she or he remains in good standing.

ARTICLE 5e. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE. The primary responsibility of the Student Representative is to serve as a voice for all student Group members, both on the Executive

Committee and with respect to other Group activities. The Student Representative is also expected to communicate relevant Group business to the other student members. The Student Representative is directly elected according to voting rules defined in Article 6. Any Group member who is classified as a student is eligible for this position. The Student Representative serves a two-year term upon election. The term extends from the end of the Group's annual meeting during the election year until the end of the Group's meeting two years later. If an annual meeting is not held at that time, then the term will end with the conclusion of the online voting period for that year (see Article 6a). At the end of this term, the current office-holder is eligible for re-election, if she or he remains in good standing as a student member.

ARTICLE 5f. LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS ORGANISER. The Local Arrangements Organiser is responsible for hosting an annual Group meeting (see Article 7). Duties of the Local Arrangements Organiser include the following:

- Select a venue for the meeting;
- Ensure the availability of local accommodations for meeting participants;
- Arrange for refreshments/meals during the course of the meeting;
- Arrange for information technology during the meeting;
- Extend local invitations to participate in the meeting;
- Liaise with the Communications Officer to ensure that meeting announcements and details of local arrangements are circulated in a timely fashion;
- Provide a brief written summary of the meeting (dates of meeting, location, main agenda topics, participants, and countries of origin) to the Secretary-Treasurer for distribution to the Group membership. A list of meeting participants, with their contact information, must also be provided to the Secretary-Treasurer to ensure that the Group's membership directory remains up-to-date.

The Local Arrangements Organiser is an unelected position. Instead, this position is appointed by the Chair of the Executive Committee. The Local Arrangements Organiser does not take part in official Executive Committee decision-making. Typically, the Local Arrangements Organiser will be from the host country (or geographical region) where the next Group meeting is to be held. The term of the Local Arrangements Organiser extends from initial appointment until completion and submission of the meeting summary and participant list for the next Group meeting.

ARTICLE 6. ELECTIONS AND VOTING. Group members will vote for Executive Committee members every two years. They may also be called on to vote for propositions presented by the Executive Committee, including possible affiliations with other organizations (see Article 3a); such votes may take place once per year. At least 30% of the active membership must participate (i.e., submit a completed ballot) for the results of any election or proposition vote to be valid.

ARTICLE 6a. GENERAL VOTING PROCEDURE. Voting will be done via an online voting service that provides secure balloting. The Secretary-Treasurer is responsible for administering the online voting process, including the following duties:

- Convert the Group membership list into a list of eligible voters;
- Generate an appropriate ballot;
- Utilize a system that limits each voter to one vote (voting by proxy is not allowed);
- Compile and report voting results to all Group members;
- Ensure that the balloting process is as confidential as possible (i.e., administered in such a way that it is impossible to determine how any individual member voted).

Each year's online voting window will be linked to the schedule of the annual Group meeting (see Article 7). The window must open no less than 3 weeks (21 days) before the start of the meeting and closes at 9:00 am (local time) on the last day of the meeting, so there is time for the Secretary-Treasurer to retrieve and report the results to meeting attendees.

In the event that an annual Group meeting is not held during a given year, then the current Secretary-Treasurer, in consultation with the rest of the Executive Committee, will designate an online voting period that is consistent with the above guidelines (i.e., it must remain open for no less than 24 days).

ARTICLE 6b. NOMINATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE POSITIONS. The process of electing new Executive Committee officers is initiated by the current Secretary-Treasurer in the second year of his or her two-year term. The Secretary-Treasurer is responsible for soliciting nominees for two separate elections, the first to select four Group members to serve in the primary Executive Committee offices (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary-Treasurer, and Communications Officer) in the upcoming term, and the second to elect the Student Representative. The Secretary-Treasurer issues a call for nominations to all Group members. The call is issued via electronic mail and posted on the Group web site. The opportunity for nominations extends for at least three weeks (21 days) from when the call is issued. The Secretary-Treasurer may opt to lengthen the nomination window if she or he feels there are insufficient nominees for either election, but the nomination window must be closed at least one week (7 days) prior to the start of the actual elections (see Article 6c) so there is sufficient time to create and distribute the final lists of confirmed candidates. Group members may nominate themselves or any other members, including current office-holders, for inclusion on the primary Executive Committee candidate list. Group members may nominate any student member as Student Representative, and any student member may nominate his or her self for this office. Group members may make multiple nominations, but no more than the number of currently vacant offices (usually five). All nominations must be communicated to the Secretary-Treasurer, and do not need to be seconded.

At the conclusion of the nomination window, the current Secretary-Treasurer compiles the lists of nominees for the primary Executive Committee offices and for Student Representative in the upcoming term. The Secretary-Treasurer must then contact all nominees to confirm that they agree to serve if elected, and remove any nominees from the list who decline. There are no restrictions on the number of potential candidates in either election. The current Secretary-Treasurer will then convert the final lists of confirmed candidates into a ballot (see Article 6c), and also give them to the current Communications Officer, who will distribute the lists to members via electronic mail and post them on the Group web site. The lists must be distributed at least one day before the online election window opens.

ARTICLE 6c. ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CANDIDATES. As outlined in Article 6a, the current Secretary-Treasurer is responsible for administering all aspects of the election process, including online balloting and voter access. The Secretary-Treasurer will report the election results on the last day of the next Group meeting (i.e., after the online voting window has closed). The results become official once they are posted on the Group web site or sent to all members via electronic mail. This will happen as soon as possible, and no later than one week (7 days) after the conclusion of the Group meeting.

With respect to the primary Executive Committee election, the top four vote recipients in that election are considered new, and temporarily at-large, members of the Executive Committee. If there are only four names on the primary Executive Committee candidate list, then those individuals may be considered elected without online balloting. If there are fewer than four names, then those individuals will be considered elected, and they must then identify and appoint additional Group members to occupy the unfilled positions on the Committee. This at-large Executive Committee then decide amongst themselves, in consultation with the Student Representative, who will be Chair and, in turn, who will fill the other three offices of Vice-Chair, Secretary-Treasurer, and Communications Officer (see Article 6d).

Since there may be three or more candidates for Student Representative, the candidate who receives a simple majority of the votes cast in that election is elected as the new Student Representative. If there is only one name on the candidate list for Student Representative, then that individual may be considered elected without online balloting. If no one nominates as a candidate for Student Representative, the other members of the new Executive Committee, upon their installation (see Article 6d), will identify and appoint a student Group member to occupy the position. The Student Representative is not eligible for any of the other Executive Committee offices.

Article 6d. INSTALLATION OF PRIMARY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND APPOINTMENT TO SPECIFIC OFFICES. The four new Executive Committee members are considered officially installed once the election results are official (see Article 6c). As noted in Article 6c, they then decide amongst themselves, in consultation with the Student Representative, who will be appointed as the new Chair, and then who will fill each of the other offices (i.e., Vice-Chair, Secretary-Treasurer, or Communications Officer). All appointment decisions must be made within three weeks (21 days) of installation. The outgoing Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary-Treasurer,

and Communications Officer must transfer any documentation and data associated with their positions to their successors within three weeks (21 days) of appointment.

Article 6e. INSTALLATION OF NEW STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE. The new Student Representative is considered officially installed once the election results are official (see Article 6c). The outgoing Student Representative must transfer any documentation and data associated with the position to his or her successor within three weeks (21 days) of installation.

Article 6f. VACATING OFFICES. Any officer may relinquish his or her position on the Executive Committee for any reason. Notice of intent to vacate the office should be sent to the other members of the Executive Committee and should indicate the date at which his or her resignation becomes effective. Members who elect to vacate an office will still be considered in good standing and will be eligible to hold office in any future election.

The Executive Committee has authority to remove any officer found not to be fulfilling his or her responsibilities. A motion to remove an Executive Committee member may be brought by any member of the Executive Committee. The motion must be presented to the entire committee in writing that details specific instances/examples of failure to fulfill responsibilities. The accused officer has three weeks (21 days) to respond to the motion in a letter to the Executive Committee. A vote will occur no sooner than 22 days after a motion for removal is made. Only Executive Committee members may vote on a motion to remove an officer; the accused officer may not vote. A vote to remove an officer requires unanimous concurrence of the other members of the Executive Committee. An officer who is removed will not be considered in good standing and will not be eligible for office in the next election.

ARTICLE 6g. FILLING OF VACATED OFFICES. If the Chair either steps down or is removed during the current two-year term, the Vice-Chair will be promoted to Chair for the remaining portion, and may subsequently appoint any Group member to serve the remainder of his or her term as Vice-Chair. If the Vice-Chair, Secretary-Treasurer, or Communications Officer either steps down or is removed during the current two-year term, the Committee may appoint any Group member to serve the remainder of that officer's term. If the Student Representative either steps down or is removed during the current two-year term, the Committee may appoint any student Group member to serve the remainder of the term. Elections will proceed as usual in the upcoming term.

ARTICLE 6h. FIRST ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OFFICERS AFTER RATIFICATION. When this Constitution is ratified, there will be no sitting members of the Executive Committee. Therefore, it will be necessary to elect an initial Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary-Treasurer, Communications Officer, and Student Representative. These elections will be timed with the next general Group meeting that occurs after ratification. The nomination, candidacy, and voting procedures for this first election will be identical to the procedures outlined in Articles 6a, 6b, and 6c, except that the Chair of the constitutional drafting committee will be responsible for balloting, the announcement of candidates, and reporting of the election results. The length of

the nomination and voting periods are allowed to deviate as necessary to ensure timing with the next general Group meeting.

ARTICLE 6i. PROPOSITIONS. In addition to possible affiliations with other organizations, the Executive Committee may propose activities, position statements, or other items that require the consideration of Group members. Furthermore, any Group member may also propose activities, position statements, or other items for Group consideration, as long as they are first communicated to the Executive Committee for their review. These propositions will be subject to the voting procedures outlined in Article 6a, and will be decided by a majority vote of participating members. Any such propositions must be communicated to Group members via electronic mail at least one week (7 days) prior to the start of the online voting window linked to the next Group meeting. If a proposition arises in a non-election year, an online voting window may be opened specifically for the proposition; it must begin at least 3 weeks (21 days) prior to the start of the meeting. The proposition must also be discussed in the business meeting portion of the upcoming Group meeting (see Article 7c). The results of the proposition vote will be reported by the current Secretary-Treasurer on the last day of the meeting.

ARTICLE 7. MEETINGS. A general Group meeting will normally be held once each calendar year.

ARTICLE 7a. SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE. Development of the meeting agenda, including selection of focus topics and scheduling of oral and/or poster presentations, is the responsibility of the Scientific Committee for the meeting. The current Vice-Chair of the Executive Committee serves as the leader of the Scientific Committee. The current Chair of the Executive Committee is also a member of the Scientific Committee. Any other Group member may volunteer to serve on the Scientific Committee, or may be appointed by the Vice-Chair. The Scientific Committee should consist of no fewer than three members.

ARTICLE 7b. MEETING STRUCTURE. The Scientific Committee has flexibility in terms of developing the agenda. Typically, the agenda will include sessions for Group members, as well as interested individuals currently outside the Group, to make oral and/or poster presentations describing their work. The Scientific Committee determines the amount of time available for presenters; the anticipated time limits and technical requirements will be included in a call for abstracts (Article 7g). The meeting may also include focus group sessions (where a subgroup of attendees works collaboratively on a specific project) or symposia (where Group members and/or outside speakers present material organized around a specific topic) at the discretion of the Scientific Committee. The only mandatory components of the meeting agenda are an annual business meeting and, in any year where voting is scheduled, a session on the last day of the meeting where the Secretary-Treasurer can report the voting results (see Article 6a).

ARTICLE 7c. BUSINESS MEETING. The business meeting is open to all meeting attendees, although attendance is optional except for members of the Executive Committee. Because some business items (e.g., propositions) may be linked to an ongoing online vote, the business

meeting must happen at some time prior to the last day of the Group meeting. The purpose of the business meeting is to discuss the business of the Group, including elections, financial status, and membership updates. In particular, the current Secretary-Treasurer is required to report on the Group's finances during the preceding calendar year, including presentation of the year's balance sheet to meeting attendees. Another key objective is to select a host country or region for the next Group meeting. Any Group member may nominate their own country or region to host; they should contact the Chair of the Group in advance if they will be unable to attend the business meeting. The nomination should include a list of suitable candidates to act as Local Arrangements Organizer. The name of the host institution and the venue should also be included where possible. The Executive Committee will discuss the nominated host countries (or regions) and select one by the end of the business meeting. The Chair of the Group will then begin the process of identifying and appointing a Local Arrangements Organiser; the Local Arrangements Organiser for the upcoming meeting should be in place within four weeks (28 days) of the end of the current meeting. If no Local Arrangements Organiser can be identified within this time period, or if any issues arise that appear likely to hinder a successful meeting, the Executive Committee may select an alternative host country or region from those proposed at the business meeting.

Additionally, any Group member may nominate their country or region as host for the Group meeting to be held two years from the current meeting. Nominations should include a list of suitable candidates to act as the Local Arrangements Organiser. The name of the host institution and the venue should also be included where possible. A Group member who intends to make such a nomination should inform the Chair of the Group in advance of the business meeting, especially if unable to attend that meeting, so that the Chair can advise the rest of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will discuss nominations for the host country (or region) at the business meeting, and may either make a selection or table the nominations for discussion at the next Group meeting. If selected as host, the Local Arrangements Organiser should be in place no later than four weeks (28 days) after the next Group meeting, and sooner if possible. As noted above, the Executive Committee may select an alternative host country or region if issues arise that appear likely to hinder meeting success, including an inability to identify a Local Arrangements Organiser.

ARTICLE 7d. LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS. As noted in Article 5e, the Local Arrangements Organiser has primary responsibility for selecting a venue for the meeting in the chosen host country or region (also see Article 7e). In addition, the Local Arrangements Organiser is responsible for logistical details including local hotel accommodation for meeting attendees, availability of refreshments/meals during the meeting, availability of information technology, and extending local invitations for meeting participation. The Local Arrangements Organiser will regularly confer with the Scientific Committee to make sure planned meeting activities are compatible with the local arrangements. The Local Arrangements Organiser may recruit additional Group members or other colleagues to assist with meeting preparation and logistics.

ARTICLE 7e. MEETING VENUE. Once the host country (or region) for the upcoming Group meeting has been identified and the Local Arrangements Organiser has been appointed, the Local Arrangements Organiser will identify potential venues where the meeting can be held. Any candidate venue (e.g., government facility or hotel conference centre) should be able to accommodate the expected number of attendees and provide sufficient information technology infrastructure. The Local Arrangements Organiser must also ensure that each candidate venue is supported by sufficient hotel accommodation and transportation options. The Local Arrangements Organiser will confer with the Scientific Committee regarding candidate venues, and the final venue choice will be approved by a simple majority. A city and venue must be secured at least 22 weeks (154 days) before the planned meeting.

ARTICLE 7f. MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS. The Scientific Committee and Local Arrangements Organiser will coordinate with the Communications Officer to ensure that registration details, hotel and transportation arrangements, and a preliminary agenda are posted on the Group web site and communicated to Group members (as well as any other registered attendees such as guest speakers) via electronic mail. Basic meeting information (dates, city and venue, and hotel options) must be posted on the Group website and sent to all Group members via electronic mail at least 16 weeks (112 days) prior to the meeting.

ARTICLE 7g. ABSTRACTS. The Scientific Committee will issue a call for presentation abstracts at least 12 weeks (84 days) prior to the meeting. The Committee has freedom to set a word limit or to require that abstracts be entered into a consistent template for ease of compilation and reproduction. They may also request graphical abstracts from presenters. The call for abstracts will be posted on the Group website and sent to all Group members via electronic mail; this will require that the Scientific Committee coordinate with the Communications Officer. All abstracts will be compiled into a program that will be made available to meeting attendees and posted on the Group web site after the conclusion of the meeting.

ARTICLE 7h. REGISTRATION FEE. Meeting attendees will be required to pay a registration fee determined by the Scientific Committee, in consultation with the Local Arrangements Organiser. This fee will be applied, as necessary, toward costs associated with the meeting venue. In addition, a portion of the registration fee will be directed toward operating expenses of the Group (e.g., web site development), in lieu of annual membership fees (also see Article 8). Initially, this membership fee component will be US\$50. The Executive Committee can change the amount of this component from time to time by simple resolution.

Student members are eligible for a reduced registration fee; this reduction will be equivalent to half of the portion of the registration fee directed toward Group operating expenses. Thus, student members will initially pay a registration fee that is US\$25 dollars less than the general member registration fee. The Executive Committee can change the student registration fee discount by simple resolution.

Any Group member, including a student member, may apply for registration fee relief. The member must submit their relief request in writing to the Executive Committee, including a brief justification for their request. The request is then subject to an Executive Committee vote.

ARTICLE 7i. SPONSORSHIPS. The Scientific Committee and Local Arrangements Organiser have authority to pursue outside sponsorships of the Group meeting. Sponsorships can be applied toward general meeting costs or to cover travel costs of invited attendees. In selecting potential sponsors, the Scientific Committee need to have regard for the potential of sponsorship to bring the Group into disrepute. If there is any doubt, the candidate sponsors should be referred to the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE 8. MEMBERSHIP FEE. There are no initial or annual fees for membership in the Group. Instead, a portion of the registration fee paid by each attendee at the annual Group meeting (initially US\$50 per general registrant, or US\$25 per student registrant) will be directed toward basic operating costs of the Group (also see Article 7h). These operating costs may include further development of the Group web site, or development and printing of publications associated with Group business. None of the collected funds will be used to compensate members of the Executive or Scientific Committees for their efforts; these are all uncompensated positions. Members may be reimbursed for authorised expenses incurred on behalf of the group.

ARTICLE 9. GROUP FUNDS. The collected funds will be held in a bank account that can be accessed by the Secretary-Treasurer; withdrawals, deposits, or transfers of funds may be authorized by the signature of the Secretary-Treasurer or any other group member appointed by the committee. If the Group is dissolved for any reason and there are funds remaining in this account, the remaining funds will be transferred to one or more other organizations, as selected during the business meeting portion of the next Group meeting after this Constitution is ratified.

The accounts of the Group may be audited from time to time, and the report presented at the annual meeting. The Secretary-Treasurer will present a summary of the accounts to the annual meeting.

ARTICLE 10. WEB SITE. The Group has two official URLs, <http://www.pestrisk.org> and <http://www.pestrisk.net>. The Communications Officer is responsible for maintaining the web site and ensuring that all posted information is as up-to-date as possible. Authority to modify the web site may be delegated by the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE 11. IDENTIFICATION AND AUTHORIZATION OF SPECIAL OFFICERS TO COMPLETE SPECIFIC TASKS. From time to time, the Chair, in consultation with the rest of the Executive Committee, may identify and authorize one or more Group members as special officers who will complete a specific task, such as coordinating production aspects of a Group publication. Upon authorization, the Chair will designate the length of the term to be served by a special officer; the term's length may not extend beyond the term of the current Executive Committee. Like the Local Arrangements Organiser, special officers do not take part in official Executive Committee decision-making.

ARTICLE 12. RATIFICATION OF AND AMENDMENTS TO THIS CONSTITUTION. This Constitution will be considered provisionally ratified once approved by the constitutional drafting committee. It will then be distributed to the full Group membership and posted on the Group web site, thereby ensuring that members will have the opportunity to review it prior to the next scheduled Group meeting. At this next scheduled Group meeting, any member in attendance may suggest a change to the Constitution. Alternatively, any Group member who is unable to attend may propose a change by communicating it to the constitutional drafting committee prior to the meeting. Proposed changes must be voted on and approved by a majority vote of the meeting attendees. Once all proposed changes have been approved or denied, the Constitution, incorporating any approved changes, will be presented for formal ratification via online vote. The Constitution will be considered formally ratified by a simple majority vote in a ballot of members with at least 30% of the active Group membership participating.

At that time, the rules set forth in the articles of this Constitution will be considered binding. Any subsequent changes to the articles included in this Constitution must be approved by a 2/3 majority vote in a ballot of members with at least 50% of the active Group membership participating. If a ballot to consider a constitutional amendment fails to secure the required minimum participation rate, a second ballot may be held. If this second ballot fails to secure the required minimum participation rate the Executive Committee may consider the results of the ballots and approve or decline the proposed amendment. Any Group member may submit a proposal for a constitutional amendment by communicating the exact language of the proposed change to the Executive Committee, along with a brief written justification for the proposed change. The amendment is then treated as a general proposition, as described in Article 6i, and thus will be subject to the voting procedures describe in Article 6a. The proposed change and written justification will both be included on the ballot. If the amendment is approved, a revised copy of the Constitution will be distributed to Group members and posted on the Group web site.