**Choosing Effective Committee Chairs**

Most of the work of the grand jury is performed by its committees. Whether committee work will be done correctly and on time depends in large measure on the personal characteristics and skills of the committee chairs. It is vital that the right jurors are chosen to fill these key positions.

CGJA recommends that the foreperson appoint a temporary chair for each committee based on information provided in an officer/committee interest form. (Examples of such forms are available on our website under Jury Resources, Sample Documents.) A permanent chair should be chosen by the committee itself after enough time has gone by for the committee members to get to know each other and interact as a team. At that point, jurors with the following characteristics and skills will become apparent.

Characteristics and skills:

* Organized, diligent, and motivated
* Has enough time available to devote to the job
* Demonstrates integrity; has no personal agendas
* Can work well with a wide range of people
* Communicates effectively, in person and electronically
* Respects laws and rules
* Values collegiality and transparency
* As chair, is willing to do more work than the other members of the committee

Responsibilities:

* Becomes well informed about the grand jury’s duties and objectives
* Determines skills and interests of committee members
* Guides members to tasks related to their skills and interests
* Oversees development of a project management plan for each of the committee’s investigations and promotes adherence to the plan and its timeline
* Consistently communicates with other members about activities and timelines
* Focuses the committee on completing its tasks and completing them on time
* Discourages unnecessary discussions and activities
* Confirms that all evidence is fully verified using a report logic matrix
* Oversees the report writing and editing process
* Keeps foreperson and pro tem informed of work progress and any interpersonal issues
* Reports about investigations’ progress at each plenary meeting
* Encourages ethical and respectful behavior toward other jurors and public officials

A committee chair who does not perform effectively should be counseled or mentored by the foreperson. When necessary, a chair can be replaced by another juror; this should be done in accordance with the grand jury’s rules of procedure.