

## Veterinary testing – PT Programs Needed: Parasitology, Microbiology



The purpose of this document is to promote the provision of proficiency testing (PT) in the area of *veterinary testing*.

The document lists the key program features PT providers should consider when establishing a PT program which supports NATA's accreditation activities.

### **NOTE:**

- 1. This document does not apply to NATA's processes for accrediting proficiency testing providers.**
- 2. NATA applicant and accredited facilities should not interpret this document as criteria for the selection of a particular PT provider.**

NATA publicly lists all providers who have indicated to NATA an interest in offering PT programs. Details of the listing process are given in the *NATA Information Paper 4 – Needs and specifications for proficiency testing programs* available from the NATA website.

When selecting PT providers, facilities are advised that preference should be given to accredited services, where available, and to those providers who offer programs which satisfy the facilities' testing needs. Facilities should also be able to arrange with their selected provider(s) the inclusion of additional samples required for testing where those routinely offered by the provider do not adequately satisfy their testing needs.

### **1. ISO/IEC 17043**

PT providers are expected to comply with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17043: Conformity assessment – General requirements for proficiency testing.

ISO/IEC 17043 details the requirements for the competence of PT providers and for the development and operation of PT schemes. These requirements are intended to be general for all types of PT schemes and can be used as a basis for specific technical requirements for particular fields of application.

### **2. Statistical Design**

ISO/IEC 17043 highlights that appropriate statistical design of a proficiency testing program is essential.

### **3. Test Details Including the Desirable Program Frequency**

## **Parasitology**

- **Quantitative detection of liver fluke eggs**  
(expansion of program to include wider range of fluke egg numbers)
- **Detection of Fasciola hepatica eggs at limit of test sensitivity**
- **Correct identification of eggs as Fasciola hepatica**  
(spiking of samples with similar eggs such as Paramphistomes and mite eggs)
- **Liver fluke ELISA** (naturally infected animal samples)

Preferred frequency: **6 monthly**

Preferred sample matrix: **Faecal samples spiked with known numbers of eggs.**

## **Microbiology**

- **Aquatic animal isolates**
- **Bacterial isolates associated with common Australian animal diseases**

Preferred frequency: **3 monthly**

### **4. Feedback from Program Participants**

ISO/IEC 17043 requires PT providers to seek feedback from participants. Such feedback should consider the frequency of rounds (where greater than two rounds per year is desirable), fitness for purpose of the PT program, coverage and other details of program design.

### **5. Sample Matrix**

The PT provider should provide a suitable sample matrix taking into account sample stability and transportation.

### **6. Guidance about Samples**

ISO/IEC 17043 requires PT providers to provide instructions to participants.

### **7. Results and Program Report**

The program should provide for electronic (web-based) entry of results by participants to assist in the timely return of results.

It is recommended that the final report be published within four weeks of result submission.

## **8. Sample Stability**

ISO/IEC 17043 requires PT providers to demonstrate that samples will not undergo significant changes through the conduct of the PT, including storage and transport.

## **9. Program Ownership**

The PT provider is responsible for all costs associated with running the program, including the invoicing of participant facilities and the collection of all fees owing.

## **10. Confidentiality**

ISO/IEC 17043 requires PT providers to keep confidential the identity of all participants.

## **11. Compliance with IATA Requirements (Where applicable)**

Sample packaging must meet IATA requirements.

## **12. Contact Details**

PT providers who wish to express an interest in providing a program in accordance with this document should write to:

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PT and Technical Projects Coordinator  
National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA)  
7 Leeds Street, Rhodes NSW 2138

e-mail: [Edita.Grujic@nata.com.au](mailto:Edita.Grujic@nata.com.au)