



## PROFICIENCY TESTING PROGRAM

### LEGIONELLA

#### Company Background

Proficiency Testing Australia (PTA) is one of Australia's largest and most experienced proficiency testing providers. We have a reputation for providing friendly, customer-focussed service using qualified, experienced staff and specialists.

Proficiency Testing Australia is able to service a very broad range of industries, and many of our clients come to use our services based on the recommendation of colleagues. Proficiency Testing Australia has offices in Sydney and Brisbane, so our services and support are readily accessible.

Proficiency Testing Australia is accredited as a Proficiency Testing Provider by The American Association for Laboratory Accreditation. The accreditation covers the specific proficiency testing sample/artefact types listed on the agreed scope of accreditation. The accreditation meets the requirements of ISO/IEC 17043 *Conformity assessment - general requirements for proficiency testing*.

#### Aim of the Program

The purpose of this program is to test the laboratories' capability in the identification and enumeration of *Legionella* from water samples.

#### Application of program to accreditation

Participation in proficiency testing programs would satisfy requirements of ISO/IEC 17025: 2005 *General requirements for competence of testing and calibration laboratories*.

#### Program Details

The *Legionella* Program is an annual program consisting of two rounds per year. The rounds are usually scheduled for February/ March and August/ September of each year.

Participants receive a set of three lenticule discs. Participants are asked to re-hydrate the samples and prepare sufficient media for the isolation and confirmation of *Legionella*. The samples are designed to represent natural

cooling tower water containing various levels of *Legionella* and other background flora that would normally be encountered by an analyst in routine work.

Laboratories are requested to test the samples for the presence of *Legionella* species, giving quantitative (in CFU/L) results for total *Legionella*, *L. pneumophila* Serogroup 1, *L. pneumophila* other than Serogroup 1, other *Legionella* species, and, in some programs the heterotrophic colony count.

Participants are also requested to provide details of the test methods used, the *Legionella* identification kit including the use by date and to report the number of colonies picked and the number of those then confirmed as *Legionella*.

Participants are invited to choose their own method for enumeration, rather than adhere strictly to a prescribed method.

Laboratories results are assessed for the number of extreme results that are reported. Statistical outliers are identified using a robust z-score technique to detect excessively large variations between the individual laboratory and the overall consensus. In addition to statistical outliers, other types of extreme results are false positives/negatives - i.e. when a laboratory erroneously reports the presence/absence of an organism or species which is/is not present.

A final report, summarising the information submitted by all of the participants can be viewed on the PTA website at the conclusion of each round of the program. A summary sheet is also sent to each individual participant at the conclusion of the program. This summary sheet details the performance of that laboratory in the program.

## **Confidentiality**

Each participating laboratory is assigned a code number to allow for confidential treatment of results in all reports and publications produced by PTA. Please refer to the PTA website ([http://www.pta.asn.au/pta\\_Confidentiality](http://www.pta.asn.au/pta_Confidentiality)) for more information.

## **Fees**

Refer to the current PTA fee schedule available on the PTA website ([www.pta.asn.au/pta\\_Schedules](http://www.pta.asn.au/pta_Schedules))

## **Further Information**

For further information on the *Legionella* Program contact [ptaenquiry@pta.asn.au](mailto:ptaenquiry@pta.asn.au)