

VETQAS Newsletter



Welcome

Welcome to the VETQAS newsletter, we hope this publication will keep you informed of who we are and how we can help you.

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APHA Scientific Exhibiting at World Veterinary Poultry Association Congress

APHA Scientific are exhibiting at the World Veterinary poultry Association Congress this week. This year the congress will be held at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre from the 4th- 8th September. Come and See us on Stand 25.



We will be promoting our wide range of products and services including our Research and Development capabilities, Proficiency Testing Schemes, Biological Reagents, Testing services for veterinary practitioners, vaccine development and diagnostic kits.

We are proud to announce that the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) specialist, Professor Ian Brown will also be a keynote speaker at the congress. Professor Ian Brown is Head of Virology at APHA and Director of EU/OIE/FAO International Reference Laboratories for Avian Influenza, Newcastle Disease and Swine Influenza. Ian is a founder member of the OFFLU Laboratory Network and the UK national expert on Avian Influenza.

Ian's keynote will focus on the recent science relating to the H5N8 major epizootic in Europe, Asia and Africa. The presentation will also assess current global threats from avian influenza to veterinary public health and how they can be mitigated. The keynote will be held at 8am on Tuesday 5th September.

We are exhibiting at

XXTH WORLD VETERINARY POULTRY ASSOCIATION CONGRESS
Edinburgh 2017

Come and see us on
stand 25

4 - 8 September 2017
www.wvpac2017.com

VETQAS is the Animal and Plant Health Agency's (APHA) independent, accredited Quality Assurance unit based at Sutton Bonington, in Leicestershire, UK.

VETQAS is the international market leader in Proficiency Testing (PT) for veterinary laboratories. It is a UKAS accredited proficiency testing provider No. 0004. Please follow the link for our schedule of accreditation <https://search.ukas.com/#/tabbed/search?q=VETQAS>

aphascientific.com | +44 (0)1509 670607 | vetqas@apha.gsi.gov.uk



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

APHA SCIENTIFIC

Tissue Copper Tissue Lead

Does your laboratory test for copper and lead poisoning in animals?

Did you know that VETQAS offers Tissue Copper and Tissue Lead Proficiency Testing schemes? These PT schemes help to provide testing laboratories with the evidence necessary to prove that their tests meet third party accreditation quality standards.

Proficiency testing is an essential part of laboratory quality procedures. Taking part gives you confidence in your laboratory equipment methods and staff, and assurance that you are delivering the quality results demanded by your customers.

If you would like further information on these or any other Proficiency Testing Schemes please call +44 (0)1509 670607 or email vetqas@apha.gsi.gov.uk



Tissue Copper - Proficiency Testing Scheme

UKAS Accredited scheme

Distributions:	4 distributions a year
Dates of Distributions:	27th June, 26th September, 12th December, 27 Feb
Cost:	£400
Further Information:	<p>Samples provided in this scheme are freeze dried powdered tissue which is either from diagnostic cases or has been spiked to create samples with various concentrations of copper.</p> <p>Copper is an essential element in animals and has multiple roles within different biological systems. Nutritional deficiency may result in clinical disease and production losses in livestock. Common clinical signs include ill thrift, anaemia, infertility and swayback in young lambs.</p> <p>If exposure to copper is too high copper poisoning can occur. Copper poisoning is most frequently seen in dairy cows and in sheep. The total input of copper from all sources should be taken into consideration. Sources vary from veterinary products to feedstuffs.</p> <p>Analysis of liver tissue can be used to help assess the copper status of the animal which is useful in helping to reduce the risks of deficiency or toxicity occurring.</p>

Tissue Lead- Proficiency Testing Scheme

UKAS Accredited scheme

Distributions:	4 distributions a year
Dates of Distributions:	25th July, 28th November, 30th January, 27th March
Cost:	£400
Further Information:	<p>Samples provided in this scheme are freeze dried powdered tissue which has been spiked to create samples of various concentrations of lead.</p> <p>Exposure to the heavy metal lead and acute and chronic lead poisoning is of major concern worldwide in animals and humans. Exposure to lead can be from many different sources; these include lead acid batteries, paint that may contain lead, lead shot and naturally contaminated soils.</p> <p>Analysis of tissue samples to determine lead concentrations can help to diagnose lead poisoning and can also be used to screen foodstuffs and animal feed for the presence of undesirable lead residues. Since lead has no biological use, animal exposure to lead needs to be kept minimal.</p>

WAVLD

The 18th World Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (WAVLD) congress 2017 took place in Sorrento Italy on the 7th to 10th June 2017. The WAVLD congress takes place every two years and APHA Scientific are a proud sponsor of the event.



This event is a fantastic opportunity for our team to meet with you, exchange views and knowledge. As always WAVLD was a busy event with lots of exciting developments.

As you can see from the images below Sorrento made a wonderful destination, but the beautiful surroundings did not stop you from coming to say hello to our team on the stand.

Thank you to everyone that took part in our parasitology competition. We gave delegates the chance to examine a series of slides, to see if they could recognise the type and species of the various parasites. The competition proved to be a challenge for some. But we are pleased to congratulate Jim Klaassen who had the most correct answers and won himself a Samsung Tablet.

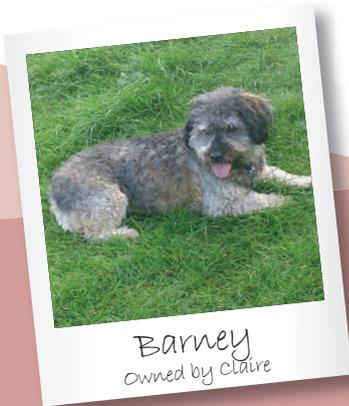
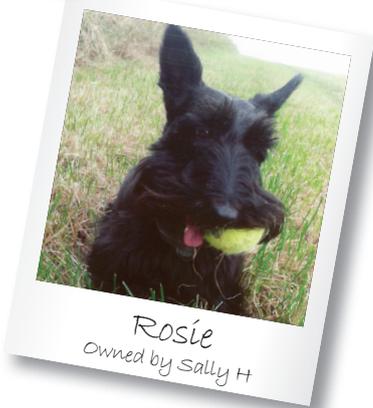
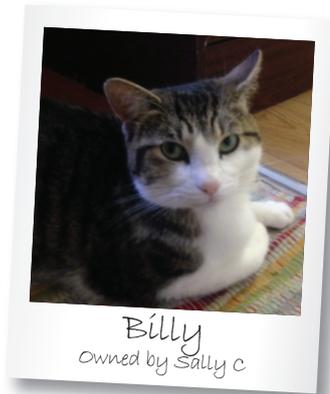
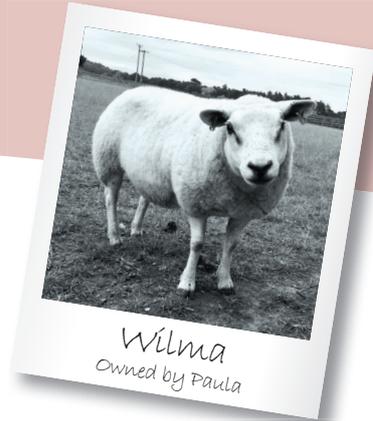
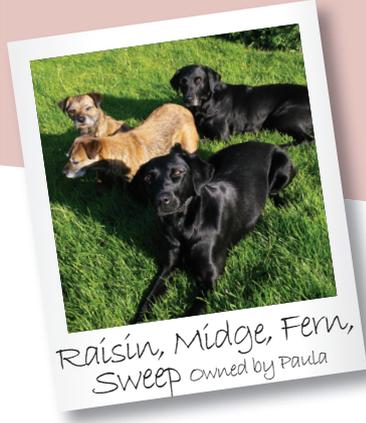
Did you know that VETQAS also run a twice yearly Ectoparasite Proficiency Testing Scheme? If you would like any further information on the services that we have to offer please contact one of the team on the contact details below.



VETQAS Pets

The team at VETQAS are definitely animal lovers, and so we thought it would be nice to share with you some photographs of our pets.

Look how cute they are!



Proficiency Testing Schemes.

Reminder - The schemes listed below all have a distribution dates starting in August and September. It is not too late to sign up. Click [here](#) to order our Proficiency Testing schemes, using the password and user name that were emailed to you, when your account was first set up.

If you would like further information on these or any other Proficiency Testing Schemes please call +44 (0)1509 670607 or email vetqas@apha.gsi.gov.uk

Key	
▲	Accredited by UKAS to ISO/IEC 17043

Scheme Code	Proficiency Testing Scheme Name	Test Method	Price*	Delivery Method	Distribution Dates	Key
Antibody Detection						
PT0137	African Swine Fever (ASF)	ELISA - serum	£346	C	19 Sep	
PT0003	Aujeszky's disease	ELISA / SNT - serum	£513	C	12 Sep, 5 Dec, 13 Mar	▲
PT0009	Big Liver & Spleen disease (BLS)	AGIDT - serum	£555	C	15 Aug, 20 Feb	
PT0011	Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD)	ELISA - milk	£454.50	C	15 Aug, 21 Nov, 20 Feb	▲
PT0015	Brucella abortus	CFT / SAT - serum	£661.50	C	15 Aug, 21 Nov, 20 Feb	▲
PT0016		ELISA - serum	£621	C	15 Aug, 21 Nov, 20 Feb	▲
PT0020		Rose Bengal test - serum	£292.50	C	8 Aug, 14 Nov, 13 Feb	▲
PT0036	Classical Swine Fever (CSF)	ELISA / SNT - serum	£380	C	12 Sep, 13 Mar	▲
PT0045	Enzootic Bovine Leukosis (EBL)	ELISA / AGIDT - serum	£369	C	19 Sep, 12 Dec, 20 Mar	▲
PT0172	Fasciola hepatica (liverfluke)	ELISA - serum	£345	C	8 Aug, 13 Feb	
PT0139	Foot & Mouth Disease (FMD) Eurasian strains	ELISA / VNT - serum	£460	C	19 Sep, 20 Mar	▲
PT0051	Hypoderma bovis (Warble fly)	Titration / cELISA - serum	£730	C	8 Aug, 13 Feb	▲
PT0052	Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis (IBR)	ELISA - milk	£450	C	15 Aug, 21 Nov, 20 Feb	▲
PT0055	Infectious Bronchitis Virus (IBV) avian	HAIT - serum	£420	C	26 Sep, 27 Mar	▲
PT0057	Leptospira hardjo	ELISA - milk	£459	C	8 Aug, 14 Nov, 13 Feb	▲
PT0059	Maedi visna / CAEV	AGIDT / ELISA - serum	£616.50	C	15 Aug, 21 Nov, 20 Feb	▲
PT0076	Porcine Parvovirus (PPV)	ELISA / HAIT - serum	£410	C	15 Aug, 12 Dec, 20 Mar	▲
PT0077	Porcine Reproductive & Respiratory Syndrome (PRRS)	ELISA / IPMA - serum	£400.50	C	12 Sep, 5 Dec, 13 Mar	▲
PT0175	Streptococcus equi subs equi (Strangles)	ELISA - serum	£355	C	8 Aug, 13 Feb	
Haematology						
PT0050	Haematology - Ruminant blood	Blood cell counts	£830	C	22 Aug, 26 Sep, 24 Oct, 28 Nov, 12 Dec, 30 Jan, 27 Feb, 27 Mar	▲
Clinical Chemistry						
PT0107	Tissue - copper	Tissue biochemistry	£360	C	26 Sep, 12 Dec, 27 Feb	▲
Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy						
PT0094	Scrapie blood genotyping	Genotyping - blood	£265	C	15 Aug, 20 Feb	▲
Virology						
PT0178	Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) virus	PCR - ear tissue	£390	C	1 Aug, 9 Jan	
PT0160	Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) virus	PCR - bulk milk	£395	C	1 Aug, 6 Feb	
Parasitology						
PT0111	Trichinella spiralis	Enumeration in post digestion filtrate	£549	C	26 Sep, 12 Dec, 27 Mar	
PT0114	Worm egg count	WEC - faeces	£690	C	26 Sep, 12 Dec, 27 Mar	▲
Feed Tests						
PT0063	Bone in animal feed	Microscopic examination	£666	C	26 Sep, 12 Dec, 27 Mar	
Microbiology						
PT0002	Bacillus anthracis	Microscopic exam of blood	£465	C	26 Sep, 27 Mar	▲
PT0025	Brucella abortus - slides	Stain & ID	£288	C	26 Sep, 12 Dec, 27 Mar	▲
PT0040	E.coli	Serotyping	£310	C	5 Sep, 6 Mar	▲
PT0134	Equine microbiology	Isolation & ID of equine pathogens	£441	C	5 Sep, 5 Dec, 6 Mar	▲
PT0060	Mastitis - bovine	Isolation & ID of milk pathogens	£192.50	C	5 Sep	▲
PT0061	Microbiology - farm animals	Isolation & ID of animal pathogens	£840	C	5 Sep, 3 Oct, 7 Nov, 5 Dec, 9 Jan, 6 Feb, 6 Mar	▲
PT0126	Mycoplasma hyopneumoniae	Culture	£395	C	5 Sep, 6 Mar	
PT0074	Pasteurella multocida toxin detection	Culture & ELISA / PCR	£428	C	5 Sep, 9 Jan	▲

* The prices quoted are based on the amount of distributions in the remainder of the year.

Reagent Price Reductions

Did you know that APHA Scientific offers a wide range of specialist biological reagents and diagnostic kits for effective and reliable laboratory testing. APHA Scientific is excited to announce that we have reduced the price of our Brucella Diagnostic Reagents and Avian Influenza Reagents from the 1st April 2017.

Please see the revised prices below. We believe that these new prices not only give you great value but reflects our commitment to customer satisfaction.

All of our reagents are manufactured in a dedicated production unit certified to ISO 9001 quality standard. For the full list of our reagents please view our [online catalogue](#).

If you would like further information on any of our other Biological reagents please call 01932 357 641 or email salesdesk@apha.gsi.gov.uk

Product	Description	16/17 Price	17/18 Price	% Reduction
Brucella Diagnostic Reagents				
RAI2006	COMPELISA - 400	£296	£199	33%
RAI2005	COMPELISA - 160	£190	£127	33%
RAA0066	Brucella abortus Complement Fixation Test antigen	£153	£110	28%
RAA0060	Brucella Rose Bengal Test (Standard)	£487	£249	49%
RAA2016	Brucella Rose Bengal Test (Sensitive)	£559	£249	55%
RAA0048	Brucella abortus Milk Ring Test Antigen	£421	£249	41%
RAA0054	Brucella abortus Serum Agglutination Test antigen	£378	£199	47%
RAB0974	Brucella melitensis positive control serum	£75	£29	61%
RAB1003	Brucella abortus positive control serum	£75	£29	61%
RAB0701	Brucella abortus negative control serum	£31	£19	38%
Avian Influenza Reagents				
RAA7003	H5N2 Inactivated Antigen	£73	£51	30%
RAA7006	H7N1 Inactivated Antigen	£73	£51	30%
RAA7007	H7N7 Inactivated Antigen	£73	£51	30%
RAA7008	H5N3 Inactivated Antigen	£73	£51	30%
RAB7001	H5N1 Antiserum	£104	£73	30%
RAB7001	H5N2 Antiserum	£104	£73	30%
RAB7004	H7N1 Antiserum	£104	£73	30%
RAB7005	H7N7 Antiserum	£104	£73	30%
RAB7009	H5N3 Antiserum	£104	£73	30%

Staff Spotlight - Linda Howgill



To help you get to know the VETQAS team better we have introduced a new 'Staff Spotlight' feature.

We thought that Linda Howgill would be the perfect person to put in the spotlight first. Most of you have probably already communicated with Linda either on the phone or by email. Here is your chance to get to know her better...

What is your role at VETQAS?

Administration Manager. I deal with customers, VETQAS Proficiency Testing contracts, customer enquiries, greeting visitors to the VETQAS QA Unit, general office manager roles and multiple internal roles for APHA regarding finance, health and safety etc. Line Manager to Claire Jones.

What is the most satisfying part of your job?

Being appreciated for providing a quality service to our customers. I enjoy investigating problems and queries and providing satisfying solutions and answers.

Who have you learnt the most from in your career and why?

My husband. When I'm getting really stressed he puts things into perspective.

If you could do any other job what would you be?

Private Investigator.

What was your first ever job?

What was then called a 'machine room clerk' at National Westminster Bank when I was 17 years old straight after O'levels (GCSE). Basically doing all the 'junior' jobs like making the coffee for everyone twice a day; printing cheque books; imputing data into one of the first banking 'computers' - this was 1974 after all!

What would you most like to tell yourself at age 13?

Don't go into banking. My grandfather suggested I do so as it was 'a job for life'. At the time I had to make a decision I couldn't think of anything else. What he didn't know was that the nature of retail banking would change so much over the next few decades.

What is the strangest job you have ever had?

In my teens I got my pocket money working for a local lady that bred and showed guinea-pigs. Nothing quite like mucking out dozens of hutches four flights upstairs in an attic on a cold winter's day! In the summer the hutches were in a shed in the yard - not so many stairs, but you had to contend with the rats that tried to get into the hutches. I got to travel all over the UK going to shows so that was fun.

What is your proudest achievement?

Giving birth to my daughter with no pain relief or intervention.

What does your ideal weekend involve?

Relaxing time with my husband, daughter, daughter-in-law and grandchildren.

What is your personal philosophy?

If you can't change or influence something don't worry about it (easier said than done)

What one thing could you not live without?

Eyebrow pencil

Where is your favourite place?

Other than home -
Praa Sands beach in Cornwall

What is the best book you have ever read?

The Time Traveller's Wife

If you could spend an hour with a famous person who would it be and why?

Peter Kay - I just adore his sense of humour and attitude to life in general.

If you were stranded on a desert island what 3 things would you take with you?

A desalination machine; a crate of assorted books and a photo of my family.

Tell us something that might surprise us about you?

When I was 40 I decided to do something rebellious for once in my life. It was a choice between getting a tattoo and a piercing. I went for the piercing. Won't tell you where but I had them for a year!



New - Online ordering system

We have developed a new online system for single lab customers to place their orders online.

The online ordering system allows customers to create their own contract with a full price breakdown. Customers have the ability to update distributions, add and remove schemes.

Claire Jones from the QA unity said:

“Customers can place an order at any time, as it is on-line. There is no time difference to consider.”

The streamlined process reduces the administration of emails. Once the customer has placed the order an automatically generated email is sent to confirm this.

Since the launch the feedback from VETQAS customers has been positive and when any queries have been raised, the customer has been helped through the process and been satisfied with the reply. We continue to strive for improvement and any feedback we get has been used to tweak instructions or the on-line system itself.

We believe this has been a major success for VETQAS, it allowed us to significantly improve the ordering process for our customers, whilst still providing the excellent customer service our customers expect.

Any single Lab customer can access the on-line ordering system through the VETQAS website and logging into their unique account.

If you would like any more information or would like to offer feedback please call +44(0)1509 670607 or email vetqas@apha.gsi.gov.uk



New Accredited Scheme

We are proud to announce the additional accreditation of ELISA methods in our Equine Viral Arteritis (EVA) serology scheme (PT0047) which previously was only accredited for SNT.

Vetqas currently operates 98 PT schemes available to participants on our price list of which 64 (65 %) are accredited by UKAS to ISO 17043.

UKAS Visit

Our annual surveillance visit was carried out by UKAS (United Kingdom Accreditation Service) on the 6 -7th March 2017.

The visit went very well with the assessors being very complimentary. Only 4 findings were raised; these have since been actioned and our accreditation has been maintained.



Ehrlichia canis IFAT.

We have limited stocks of Ehrlichia canis IFAT positive serum but we may be able to open our existing scheme to a limited number of participants. Please contact vetqas@apha.gsi.gov.uk to register your interest.

Sourcing suitable material, such as sera, can be difficult. If you are able to offer any new material that could be used in any of our VETQAS Proficiency Testing schemes, please see our [sourcing material web page](#) for more information.

Potential New Schemes

We are considering adding the following schemes to our offer.

- Avian Leukosis Antibody ELISA PT
- Mycobacterium avium subspecies paratuberculosis (Johnes) PT – Antibody ELISA in individual milk samples.

If you would be interested in participating in either of the potential new schemes shown here, please email us on vetqas@apha.gsi.gov.uk with your expression of interest.



“Taking part in VETQAS Proficiency Testing schemes not only gives us confidence in the work that we do but is great evidence to provide to accreditation bodies.”

Sara Savic: Head of Department for Serology, Immunology and Biochemistry at Scientific Veterinary Institute 'Novi Sad', Serbia.



The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) is a world leader for its expertise and knowledge in animal and plant health. APHA Scientific is the commercial department of APHA.

APHA Scientific products and services available include:

- Biological reagents and test kits
- Proficiency testing for veterinary laboratories (VETQAS)
- Wildlife management and radar detection
- Laboratory diagnostic testing
- Vaccine development and testing
- Virus discovery
- Pathology and bio-imaging
- Bacterial identification and characterisation
- Disinfectant testing
- Veterinary research and development
- Access to Animal and Plant Health Agency intellectual property.

For more information about any of our services please contact +44 (0)1932 357641 aphascientific@apha.gsi.gov.uk

Entering PT results online:

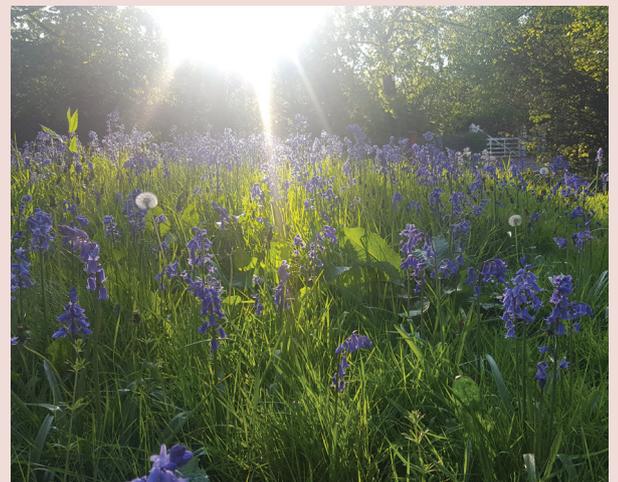
A few customers have noted that they have made mistakes when entering results due to accidentally changing their results/interpretation entries by rolling their mouse wheel over the entry boxes. Please take care not to do this. If you find that this is a risk it may be better to disable your mouse wheel or use a mouse without a wheel.

Front cover image: Bluebells

You may have noticed on the front cover of this edition we have featured a image of some beautiful bluebells.

The VETQAS team are very lucky to be based in the English countryside and we thought it would be nice to show you the view from our office front door.

The snowdrops bloomed in February and the Bluebells followed at the end of April.



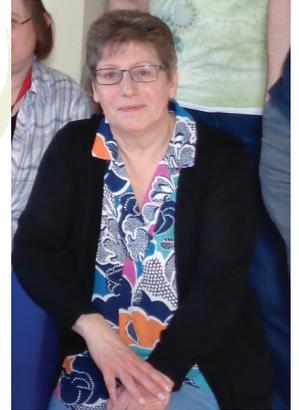
Congratulations on your Retirement!

It is with mixed feelings that we announce the retirement of our much loved and appreciated employee Linda Gray. Linda has worked at APHA as our Assistant Scientific Officer for over 27 years and she has decided that the time has come to retire.

Linda was a hard-working, committed, and friendly person who will leave a huge gap in our team. We could always rely on Linda to train staff and pass on her vast knowledge. Linda is a kind hearted individual and would always make time to support any member of the team.

To celebrate Linda's well deserved retirement, the team at VETQAS organised coffee and cakes to honour and appreciate an esteemed employee. Linda is a true inspiration to us all and her achievements will not be forgotten.

On behalf of everyone here at VETQAS, we wish Linda the best of luck. Enjoy!



Introduction to a New Member of the Team



Jake Webster - Scientist

I began working in the scientific industry in 2005 as a microbiologist for a global research company working as part of a team monitoring the health of research models both for the company and its varied clients.

As the laboratory grew team members specialised in specific areas to offer more in-depth expertise and

knowledge mine being bacteriology and antibiotic resistance, eventually branching out into parasitology both for work and as a personal interest.

I joined APHA surveillance laboratories in 2015 working on surveillance of M.Bovis (bovine tb) through both gamma interferon testing and solid culture before joining VETQAS in July.

I am looking forward to an exciting new challenge and putting my years of experience to good use helping to push forward the future of VETQAS proficiency testing.