

PTA CAPABILITY STATEMENT

Proficiency Testing Australia (PTA) is one of Australia's largest and most experienced proficiency testing providers. PTA is a wholly owned subsidiary of the National Association of Testing Authorities, Australia (NATA) and was formed on 1 January 2006 to offer industry a choice of proficiency testing services for calibration, testing and inspection. PTA provides a diverse range of proficiency testing programs and measurement audits to a very broad range of industries. PTA delivers its proficiency testing, consultancy and training services internationally and nationally across Australia, with operations based in Sydney (head office) and Brisbane.

PTA is:

- a leading national and international provider of proficiency testing programs and measurement audits;
- a leading international provider of training and consultancy in proficiency testing;
- supported by industry groups and technical experts who assist PTA in the planning, conduct, analysis and review of proficiency testing programs and measurement audits;
- comprised of qualified and experienced staff offering friendly, customer-focussed service;
- readily accessible, with offices in Sydney and Brisbane;
- accredited for technical competence as a Proficiency Testing Provider by A2LA¹, ensuring that its operations remain in compliance with international practices, defined by ILAC² Guide 13:2007³; and
- a private not-for-profit company, governed by a Board that has representation from industry groups and proficiency testing experts.

WITHIN AUSTRALIA

PTA plays a key role in providing confidence to laboratories in their testing and measurement results. As a proficiency testing provider, PTA provides a means of assessing the ability of laboratories to competently perform specific tests and measurements.

PTA is continuously expanding and developing its range of proficiency testing programs, with numerous programs offered in the areas of Chemical Testing, Biological Testing, Construction Materials, Mechanical Testing, Non-Destructive Testing and Calibration. PTA is also able to develop customised programs for individual facilities or industry organisations.

PTA provides statistical consultation to DAFF⁴ via the National Residue Survey (NRS), which is an operational unit of the Food and Product Safety and Integrity Branch of the Product Integrity, Animal and Plant Health Division.

PTA also provides statistical consultation to BRI Research Pty Ltd, an independent centre of expertise in grains, grain processing, milling and baking.

INTERNATIONALLY

Internationally, PTA represents Australia through:

- the provision of proficiency testing programs to international participants from Austria, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, China, Croatia, Cyprus, El Salvador, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand, USA and Vietnam;
- the provision of attachment training on proficiency testing for staff from developing proficiency testing providers and accreditation bodies, which has included trainees from Papua New Guinea Laboratory Accreditation Scheme (PNGLAS), National Quality Control Laboratory of Drug & Food - Indonesia, International Accreditation Japan (IAJapan), Pakistan National Accreditation Council, BoA - Vietnam and Korea Water Resources Corporation (K Water);
- the provision of proficiency testing training courses in numerous countries, including Malaysia, Egypt, Austria and Vietnam;
- retaining associate membership of the Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (APLAC);
- its involvement in the preparation and presentation of APLAC Proficiency Testing training courses and workshops;
- representing APLAC at the ILAC Proficiency Testing Consultative Group meeting and at the European Accreditation Cooperation ILC Testing meeting;
- providing extensive input into a number of international committees, such as APLAC Proficiency Testing Committee (including the provision of the Chairman from 2002-2008 and Secretariat), ILAC Proficiency Testing

Consultative Group and the European Accreditation Interlaboratory Committee;

- extensive input into the revision of international standards and guidelines, such as the applicability of PT accreditation to ISO 17011⁵ for inclusion in the ILAC MRA⁶, ILAC P9⁷, as well as providing input into the development of ISO/IEC 17043⁸ and advice of the issue of the APLAC PT 006⁹ document.
- the provision of a training course and the development of a proficiency testing training manual for use by developing economies, as requested by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) Trade Capacity Building Branch;
- its agreement with Pasagrad Quality Pioneers (PQP Co.) (Iran), who act as a local agent for a range of PTA's proficiency testing programs;
- liaison with the International Committee of Analysis for the Steel and Iron Industry (ICASI) regarding the dissemination of Metallurgical proficiency testing program information throughout the Asia-Pacific region and Europe; and
- providing consultancy to Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt (PTB) Technical Cooperation Division in developing a proficiency testing workshop for the InterAmerican Accreditation Cooperation (IAAC).

CONSULTANCY SERVICES

PTA provides a range of consulting services designed to improve business performance and reduce exposure to risk. These consulting services are tailored to meet specific client needs and are provided across a range of disciplines including:

- Proficiency testing;
- Method validation;
- Data analysis;
- Reporting;
- Quality Management; and
- Specialised technical services.

Proficiency Testing Australia has conducted statistical consultancy services for Australian Commonwealth Government departments, industry associations, laboratory accreditation bodies and reference material producers.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

More information about PTA's proficiency testing programs, measurement audits, consultancy and training is available by contacting PTA on:

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F +61 2 9743 6664
E ptaenquiry@pta.asn.au

More information about all of PTA's activities can be found on the PTA website – www.pta.asn.au

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- ¹ American Association for Laboratory Accreditation
 - ² International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation
 - ³ ILAC Guide 13:2007 *Guidelines for the Requirements for the Competence of Providers of Proficiency Testing* (comprising ISO/IEC Guide 43-1:1997 as well as relevant elements of ISO/IEC 17025:2005 applicable to characterisation, homogeneity and stability testing of proficiency testing materials and relevant elements of ISO-9000:2005 relating to quality systems)
 - ⁴ Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
 - ⁵ ISO/IEC 17011:2004 *Conformity assessment - General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies*
 - ⁶ Mutual Recognition Agreement
 - ⁷ ILAC-P9:2005 *ILAC Policy for Participation in National and International Proficiency Testing Activities*
 - ⁸ ISO/IEC 17043 (under development) *Conformity Assessment – General requirements for proficiency testing*
 - ⁹ APLAC PT 006 *Proficiency Testing Frequency Benchmarks*