

European Community Reference Laboratory for monitoring  
bacteriological and viral contamination of bivalve molluscs



CEFAS Laboratory, Weymouth, Dorset, DT4 8UB, UK

## **WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE CRL FOR BACTERIOLOGICAL AND VIRAL CONTAMINATION OF BIVALVE MOLLUSCS, 2004**

### **LEGAL FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES**

The functions and duties of the CRL are specified in Articles 3 and 4 of Council Decision 1999/313/EC (Official Journal of the European Communities No L 120 of 8.5.1999).

In the 2004 programme year another 10 countries (the Candidate Countries) are considered eligible for CRL assistance and to join ring trial programmes etc. Thus during 2004 the CRL programme has to consider 25 countries. This requires a commensurate increase in the necessary CRL activities and funding. This is particularly relevant given the additional training and assistance necessary for integration of Candidate Country laboratories within the European Union.

### **WORK PROGRAMME, 2004**

#### **1. Scientific advice and support**

- 1.1. Provide scientific assistance to DG Sanco towards further development of EU legislation for sanitation of bivalve molluscs (advice, participation in working groups, etc). During 2003/2004 the CRL will lead/assist a planned Commission WG on microbiological monitoring of shellfish harvesting areas (see resolution 24 and 25 of 2<sup>nd</sup> workshop).
- 1.2. Assist DG Sanco with negotiations on equivalence relating to bivalve molluscs for USA, Canada and New Zealand and with specialist assistance in relation to veterinary inspections of MS and Third Countries (on request).
- 1.3. Prepare for and participate in EU and International scientific fora/committees relating to contaminants and contamination of bivalve molluscs (EU SVC, WHO/FAO, ISO/CEN, etc). During 2004 the CRL is participating in ISO/CEN working groups to progress methods for E.coli, Salmonella and marine Vibrio's and will also be chairing a CEN working group on methods for detection of viruses in foodstuffs (including bivalve molluscs).
- 1.4. Undertake CRL missions in support of above. During 2004 missions are foreseen in relation to the ISO/CEN meeting in Parma, Italy, in April; CEN, Europe, in October; in relation to 2 probable meetings of the CEN TAG4 working group on Viruses in Food; participation in the 5<sup>th</sup> International ICMSS Conference, Galway, Ireland, in June; in addition up to 3 European missions are foreseen in support of NRLs and DG Sanco activities.



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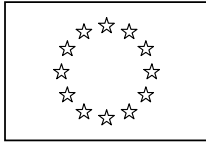
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## **2. Co-ordination of activities of NRL network and provision of technical assistance and training**

- 2.1. Participate in annual CRL Directors co-ordination meeting and other CRL co-ordination meetings/workshops as appropriate
- 2.2. Organise, host, and participate in, third annual NRL workshop and produce resolutions and other workshop outputs (April 2004, Rome). Including CRL administrative assistance.
- 2.3. Undertake CRL activities and commitments agreed in resolutions of 2003 and 2004 annual workshops (as posted on [www.crlcefas.org](http://www.crlcefas.org)).
- 2.4. Maintenance of CRL laboratory competence and expertise on analytical methods for monitoring bacteriological contaminants of bivalve molluscs (E.coli, Salmonella, FRNA bacteriophage, marine vibrio's). Supply information and specialist advice to NRLs (particularly CC NRLs), testing laboratories, and third county laboratories. Including assistance on implementation and accreditation of methods by development of CRL SOPs and other technical information.
- 2.5. Maintenance of CRL laboratory competence and expertise on analytical methods for monitoring virological contaminants of bivalve molluscs (Norovirus and hepatitis A virus). Supply information and specialist advice to NRLs, testing laboratories, and third county laboratories. Including assistance on implementation and accreditation of methods by development of CRL SOPs and other technical information.
- 2.6. Provide specialist training and/or training courses to NRLs and CC NRLs in relation to analysis of E.coli, Salmonella, FRNA bacteriophage, Norovirus and hepatitis A virus.
- 2.7. Conduct questionnaire among NRLs relating to shellfish production and classification practices, analyse returns and report via website (see resolution 8 of 2nd workshop and activity 1.1 above).
- 2.8. Compile a dossier of current methods in use among NRLs and CC NRLs for virus detection methods and disseminate via website (see resolution 29 of 2<sup>nd</sup> workshop).
- 2.9. Maintenance and further development of CRL website ([www.crlcefas.org](http://www.crlcefas.org)) as primary means of dissemination of information to NRLs and others. Incorporate 'web forum' page for better dissemination of information as requested by NRLs (resolutions 5 and 6 of 2<sup>nd</sup> workshop).

## **3. Ring trials, comparative testing and quality assurance**

- 3.1. Continue to work with UK HPA on shellfish EQA scheme as the primary means of comparative testing among NRLs for E.coli and Salmonella in bivalve molluscs. Work with scheme co-ordinators to achieve target of 3 distributions per year (see resolution 12 of 2<sup>nd</sup> workshop), analysis results (with HPA) and produce report and recommendations.
- 3.2. Complete hepatitis A virus ring trials for method sensitivity and detection of HAV in naturally contaminated material (see resolution 15 of second workshop). Analyse



results and produce report and recommendations (by April 04).

- 3.3. Complete pilot Norovirus ring trial (see resolution 17 of 2<sup>nd</sup> workshop) with 3 planned distributions during 2003/04. Analyse results and produce report and recommendations (by April 04).
- 3.4. Ring trial programme for April – Dec 2004 as agreed in Resolutions of the 3<sup>rd</sup> workshop in April 2004 (may include among further ring trials for E.coli shellfish homogenate, FRNA bacteriophage, HAV and Norovirus).

#### **4. Confirmatory testing**

- 4.1. Contribution to costs for maintenance of CRL ISO 17025 (EN 45000) accreditation for tests for E.coli, Salmonella spp, and FRNA bacteriophage in bivalve molluscs.
- 4.2. Contribution to costs for maintenance of CRL capability to perform analysis of Norovirus and hepatitis A virus in bivalve molluscs.
- 4.3. Contribution to costs for maintenance of CRL capability to perform analysis for marine vibrio's in bivalve molluscs.
- 4.4. Performance of above tests on outbreak material or on occasion of disputed test results (on request of DG Sanco).

#### **5. Development of analytical methods (undertaken at CRL)**

- 5.1. The CRL will co-ordinate and participate in laboratory studies to support progression of the CRL-recommended reference method for E. coli (Donovan) being progressed as an ISO standard method (see resolutions 3 and 4 of 1<sup>st</sup> workshop and 48 of 2<sup>nd</sup> workshop).
- 5.2. The CRL will co-ordinate and participate in studies to generate additional data to assist in the progression of the proposed horizontal ISO standard methods for detection of Vibrio spp. of human significance other than V. cholerae (ISO 21872 parts 1 and 3).
- 5.3. The CRL will undertake limited comparisons of present CRL standard method for detection of Salmonella spp. and the proposed -ISO 6579 - Microbiology of food and animal feeding stuffs-horizontal method for the detection of Salmonella spp..
- 5.4. Further development of hepatitis A virus ring trail reference material to facilitate future ring trials. In particular the evaluation of freeze-drying to facilitate reference material stability, storage, and transport.
- 5.5. Further development of material and approaches for conducting Norovirus ring trials (see resolution 17 of second workshop).

Dr David Lees  
CRL Director, November 2003



## Appendix

# Proposal for CRL Web site “Web Forum”

### 1. Introduction

At the 2<sup>nd</sup> workshop of NRLs it was proposed that the CRL website be expanded to incorporate a ‘web forum’ to facilitate exchange of information among NRLs (see resolutions 5 and 6 of 2<sup>nd</sup> workshop – available on [www.crlcefafas.org](http://www.crlcefafas.org)). The CRL has investigated this possibility with the designers of the CRL website, Digital Design Ltd. This document describes proposals by Digital Design to add a forum subsystem to the CRL Web site <http://www.crlcefafas.org>. The CRL recommends to the European Commission that this developmental work be funded as a ‘one-off’ addition to the CRL budget in order to add this useful functionality to the CRL website. The total actual cost is 6,819 Euros (see below).

### 2. Requirements

**The forum subsystem must satisfy the following requirements:**

1. Only registered users can use the forum.
2. The forum message includes subject (short text entered by the user), body (long text entered by the user), post date (current date generated automatically) and user information (First Name, Last Name and email of registered user generated automatically).
3. Forum messages are organised into a tree-view structure.
4. Any registered user can add new topic (a top level message) to the forum.
5. Topics are ordered by post date.
6. Any registered user can reply or add a new message to any existing message.
7. Any registered user can search messages in the forum using keywords (like searching documents in existing web site).
8. Site administrator can search messages in the forum using keywords and post date.
9. Site administrator can delete any message with submessages or any topic as a whole.

**Additional requirements for forum subsystem are the following:**

1. This forum is developed for CRL Web site and uses the same design and database (MS Access 2000).
2. Link to the forum is located within "Information Centre" section submenu.
3. Subsystem must provide paging feature for list of messages ie 10 messages to a page.
4. HTML tags are not supported in messages

### 3. Schedule

#	Work	Duration (working days)	Result
1.	Design and development of the Forum subsystem	13	Approval design and finished development
2.	Bug-fixing period	5	Fixed issues and accepted Forum subsystem
3.	Publishing Forum Subsystem on Web site	2	Updated Web site <a href="http://www.crlcefafas.org">http://www.crlcefafas.org</a>

#### Total duration 20 working days

The demo version of the Forum subsystem will be available on a development section of the Digital Design Web site. We test the Forum subsystem and send any issues to Digital Design during the bug-fixing period.