There have been lots of things happening since the last newsletter...

We are well underway to completing the preparation of specimens for 2013, although we do have a few challenging analytes we are still looking for including Hepatitis A IgM, Influenza A & B and Syphilis. If you think you might be able to help, please let us know. We are also busy collating and reviewing 2012 results and reports and have attended and presented at various conferences and meetings. See inside for reviews and photos from the APCMV, ASM, Zoonoses, VIM and NRL Workshop meetings.

In this issue, we outline the new Enrolment Process for 2013, which promises to streamline the process and is a very exciting development for the RCPA QAP. Ensure to enrol early to avoid disappointment!

Just a reminder for 2013, the Serology QAP offers Point of Care (POC) QA for the detection of RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus) and Influenza A & B antigens. Don’t forget to enrol for 2013!

Also, included are some new developments and changes to the Serology QAP for next year... Our moving day is getting closer, see below for the latest photos... Enjoy the read!

Please Note
- new fax numbers

As we progress closer to moving our physical location, there will be changes that you will need to note. At the beginning of the year we notified of our change in telephone number, which most participants are now using. (ph +61 2 9045 6070) thank you...

Our next change in contact details are fax numbers, please note the change. If you use a fax machine that has the information saved, please update this now.

Fax: 1300 78 29 21 (within Australia)
Fax: +61 2 9356 2003 (International)

The top floor of this building is the new ‘RCPA QAP - Centre of Excellence’... our new home
Enrolment Process for 2013

**Launch, September 2012** - A new system (Salesforce based) will be introduced for RCPA QAP enrolment, to increase the ease and efficiency of the enrolment process by making your enrolments simple, quick and convenient.

**Available for all Participants** - This system will be available for all participants, Australian and International, to enrol in all RCPA QA Programs for 2013.

**Improvements** - The developments include the move to a solid, reliable and user friendly platform with the option to enrol at an Organisation, Site or Laboratory level. This will provide transparency to those who oversee multiple laboratories. For example a Laboratory Manager who supervises both Chemistry and Haematology, or a Director or Quality Manager who manage all laboratories in all sites within their organisation. This system will also provide the opportunity to pay immediately via BPAY (Australia only) or Credit Card (Worldwide).

**New numbering system** - To facilitate the transition to a more automatic process, a new numbering system will be introduced which breaks away from the conventions that our new functionality no longer requires. This will begin with 2013 enrolment. Changes will be applied to all new participants but will only affect a very small number of current participants.

**How to Enrol** - Information including instructions on how to enrol will be sent to you via e-mail and available on the RCPA QAP website at [www.rcpaqap.com.au](http://www.rcpaqap.com.au).

We hope your satisfaction as a customer is improved by our efforts. As always, your feedback in regards to new developments is appreciated as it paves the way for future improvements.

[Contact The Enrolment Team, enrolment@rcpaqap.com.au; Ph: +61 2 9045 6010]

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Participant Folders 2013

For 2013, the Serology QAP will be ceasing to dispatch Participant (Red & Blue) Folders. Despite our very best efforts many of the folders are damaged in transit and are quite costly to re-dispatch. We will still be preparing and dispatching the Participation Handbook and all of the helpful information that we issue annually, but without the folder.

We currently have some stock of these red folders, so if you would like to purchase one or several for the future we can dispatch them to your laboratory. Please contact the enrolment office for details.

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Please note:
Participants will not receive a hard copy of the Enrolment Booklet for 2013. The book will be available via the new Salesforce software. Participants will be notified via email in September when Enrolment for 2013 is open and available for usage.

Module Changes 2013

You will notice a few differences with the Serology QA Program for 2013. The Bacterial Module will be increased from 4 to 6 surveys. This is to enable us to increase surveys for *Chlamydia pneumoniae* and Rickettsia from 1 to 2 surveys per year and to potentially include some other bacterial analytes in the future.
Import Permits - International Participants

Over the last few years we have noticed that customs in many countries are requiring import permits and/or other letters for Ministries of Health, in order to clear packages containing certain specimens.

It is the participant’s/agent’s responsibility to verify with their local authorities if they require an import permit.

It is important when your laboratory enrolls for a new year that these documents are in place so that we can ensure that your specimens can be dispatched to you without delay. This is especially important for dispatches that require dry ice, as any delay could result in the specimens thawing and becoming unfit for purpose.

If you are having difficulty obtaining a permit or require further information you MUST contact us, so we can ensure specimens are not sent prior to obtaining the appropriate documentation. Failure to inform us that you do not have a permit, which results in specimens being delayed at customs, will incur a replacement fee, including courier charges. If there is an additional fee to destroy the specimens this will also be charged to the participant.

It is also important to note that Import duties, taxes and charges are not included in the enrolment and shipping price. These charges are the participant’s responsibility.

Molecular Respiratory Module - Pilot 1

Following participant feedback and an opportunity to investigate specimens, the Serology QAP has dispatched the first pilot survey for the Molecular Respiratory module. There are 23 participants, mostly within Australia, testing the six specimens containing a variety of respiratory pathogens. The specimens are similar to those in the Molecular influenza module, however are accompanied by clinical notes to guide testing. The results and feedback from the first pilot survey will assist in the further development of the module.

Due to the cost of developing this module (dispatch is on dry ice) we have restricted the number of participants performing the pilot studies, of which we are planning three. However, we are hoping that we will be able to offer two surveys to all participants late in 2013. Please stay tuned for future updates...

Conferences, Workshops and Meetings

AIMS National Scientific Meeting

2013

RCPA Pathology Update Meeting

ASM (Australian Society for Microbiology) Annual Conference
7 – 10 July 2013, Adelaide, SA. www.asm2013.org

NRL Annual Workshop
30 July – 2 August 2013, Cairns, Qld. www.nrl.gov.au

20th International Symposium on Hepatitis C Virus and Related Viruses
The 9th Asia-Pacific Congress of Medical Virology was held this year in Adelaide. The APCMV is a triennial international meeting focusing on diagnostic, public health, research and clinical virology, within the Asia and the Pacific regions. From the Serology QAP, Deane presented a poster ‘Quality Assurance for the Point of Care Detection of Influenza and RSV Antigen’ discussing the usefulness of the recently introduced POC surveys. The congress was very interesting with the presenters very passionate about their various research projects. Of particular interest were discussions involving the dual use of research (good vs bad), new developments in diagnosis and research involving the use of a bacteria in Dengue control strategies.

This year, the ASM was held at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre, featuring many distinguished local and international speakers. The meeting started with a PCR workshop, where David Whiley and Theo Sloots shared some tips about ‘issues to be aware of in PCR’ including sequence variation, quantitation, quality control, multiplexing and competitive inhibition. Ian Frazer presented the informative Rubbo Oration and other notable speakers included Amanda Leach, Johnson Mak, Jean-Paul Latge, Henry Bishop and Ralph Tripp. There were many interesting topics in the oral and poster sessions, ranging from diagnostics, epidemiology, food microbiology, virology, environmental to vaccines. The topics were so diverse and there was always something for everyone. From the Serology QAP, Ricky presented – ‘RCPA Serology QAP Clerical Errors: A Five Year Review’.

It was great to meet other scientists and to acquire knowledge, not only from the diagnostics field, but also from researchers and academia. The next ASM meeting will be held in Adelaide, 7–10 July 2013 and we look forward to seeing everyone there!
Meeting Review - Zoonoses 2012

The inaugural Zoonoses conference in 2012, had the aim of bringing together doctors, veterinarians and laboratory scientists with the theme of zoonoses and One Health in Australia. The two day event was held at Sydney University and topics presented included Q fever; Antimicrobial use; Food-borne zoonoses; Hendra virus; Infection control in veterinary settings; Animal bites and wound; Management of Zoonoses in environmental disaster; Emerging Zoonotic and related infections in Australia and many interesting posters and unique case scenarios. From the Serology QAP Shabeena presented her first poster titled ‘Toxoplasma: 2011 Quality Assurance Review’. This group is part of ASID; the next ASID conference will be held in Canberra 20-23 March 2013. www.asid.net.au/zoonoses

‘One interesting fact... A crocodile’s jaw pressure is 5000 pounds/square inch- the greatest of all species’.

Meeting Review - VIM 2012

Viruses in May 2012, in August, began with warm clear blue skies changing to blistery cold winds......and a few moments of delicate snow. Apart from the weather, the topics presented were also very interesting ....a lot was discussed on hepatitis A – E such as treatment, complications, vaccinations and laboratory testing. Other topics included HIV, HSV, MVE, Respiratory viruses, vaccination.....And of course two quiz sessions which had all of us scratching our heads.....with wine and chocolates to win. www.virusesinmay.com

Meeting Review - NRL 2012

The annual NRL workshop this year did not fail to promote interest and discussion, held in sunny but cool Melbourne. A highlight was the Gala Dinner held at the Eureka 89, with spectacular views, food and company.

The program was divided into different categories namely, Nucleic Acid Testing, Infectious Disease Testing, Point-of-Care Testing, Laboratory Capacity Building, In-house Validation, Hepatitis & HIV, Blood/Tissue Screening and STI/QA.

Invited speakers were from different institutions, local and international; sharing their work and knowledge in their respective areas (industry, laboratory and academia). There were also 17 posters from different institutions covering various topics.

From the Serology QAP, Deane presented ‘What happens when an expected Negative QA specimen returns a Reactive result?’ Catching up with fellow scientists and various people in the industry, whilst learning the latest techniques, issues and solutions; is always exciting. Next year’s workshop will be in Cairns, late July 2013 and we look forward to seeing you there.
Crossword Corner… (the answers)

How did you go?...
Here are the answers to the Crossword we provided in the last newsletter, congratulations if you successfully completed the challenge.

Enrolment Credit Voucher & Gift Voucher Values

Single donations of $\geq 50mL$ serum will receive a Credit Voucher for your laboratory of AUD $150$

Single donations of $\leq 50mL$ serum will receive a Credit Voucher for your laboratory of AUD $75$

The patient will receive a $\$100$ Gift Voucher, if the donation is $\geq 150$ mL the patient will receive a $\$150$ Gift Voucher

Pooled specimens of $\geq 50mL$ serum will receive a Credit Voucher for your laboratory of AUD $75$

Pooled specimens of $\leq 50mL$ serum will receive a Credit Voucher for your laboratory of AUD $30$

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