



Case Study:

Enhanced Commercial Services – Proficiency Testing

InterAct was established in 2005 as a unique partnership between four leading UK government research agencies: Central Science Laboratory (CSL); Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl); Health Protection Agency (HPA) and Veterinary Laboratories Agency (VLA). Funded by the Department for Innovation Universities and Skills (DIUS) under the PSRE Exploitation Fund Second Round the partnership was established to capture the synergies derived through combining the intellectual property, know-how and R&D services of these world class institutes.

In 2008 the partnership secured a further three years of funding and expanded to include two additional partners: Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas) and the Health and Safety Laboratory (HSL).

Five of the partners (Cefas, CSL, HPA, HSL and VLA) provide a wide range of commercial services to both public sector and commercial clients. InterAct has been helping the partners assess and enhance these services by building synergies in common business fields and/or around common services. An example of this is the work InterAct has carried out with proficiency testing services.

Proficiency testing (PT) is an essential tool in demonstrating the effectiveness of a quality assurance system. The InterAct Partners provide well-established PT schemes for laboratory services to both public and private sector clients in the fields of:

- Food and Water Microbiology
- GMO Analysis
- Food, Water and Effluent Chemistry
- Parasitology
- Veterinary and Aquaculture Laboratory Diagnosis
- Public Health and Safety
- Equipment Monitoring



InterAct has helped the partners to increase revenues from PT services by providing support in the following areas:

Marketing

- Funding for coordinated marketing at international conferences
- Identification and use of shared agents to access overseas markets
- Staff training

Sales support

- Providing additional resources to support the sales functions within the partners' PT teams
- Providing market intelligence to identify new clients
- Staff training

Best practice sharing

- Providing a format to exchange information and experiences of running PT services from within public sector organisations