

5 September 2006

Ms Maggie Eibisch
Administration Officer
Standards & Accreditation Study
Productivity Commission
PO Box 80
Belconnen ACT 2616

Dear Ms Eibisch

Re: Draft Report on Standard Setting and Laboratory Accreditation

Thank you for giving the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (the College) the opportunity to comment on this draft report. The College is generally supportive of the findings in the report and agrees with maintaining the monopoly role of NATA in the accreditation.

The College also supports the separation of accreditation and proficiency test provision, and notes that Proficiency Testing Australia is already a separate company to NATA.

The College considers that laboratories should have reasonable access to quality proficiency testing programmes for all of their tests. In this context, it is vital that the Australian Government fund proficiency testing programmes that bring significant public good but are not commercially viable. Proficiency testing for tests used for rare and/or emerging infections will not be available commercially, are difficult, expensive and only performed in a small number of laboratories yet there is a clear public benefit to ensuring that accurate testing is available.

Once again, thank you for providing the draft report for the College to review.

Yours sincerely



Dr Tamsin Waterhouse
Deputy CEO