



EPTIS Oracle database manual
Version of September 2005

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1 Introduction

1.1 Welcome

Welcome to this manual. It will help you to handle the EPTIS data input and maintenance tools. Your access to these tools is at <http://www.eptis.bam.de/coordinator>.

All information you need from a PT provider is contained in two different questionnaires that are provided on the EPTIS website at <http://www.eptis.bam.de/provider>.

1.2 Database structure

Two parts

EPTIS is split into two parts. Part I contains all basic information of a PT scheme (PTS), part II contains many details relating to the requirements of ISO Guide 43-1. Each PT provider completes one form for each part, making two forms in total. These forms are submitted to you in different ways: the completed questionnaire for part I is normally sent to you by e-mail, and the completed form for part II is automatically placed into the database, awaiting your definitive approval.

Consequently, the mechanisms for handling the information contained in these two forms are different. For part one, you must transfer all information contained in the form into the database by hand, thereby carefully checking the answers contained therein and replace them, if possible, with similar keywords that already exist in the database. Handling part II is much easier, since you only need to check the completed form for correctness and give your final approval.

Therefore, a large part of this manual is dedicated to the more difficult part I, and only the last chapter to the easier part II. It is planned to harmonise and integrate these two parts in future.

Oracle Forms

The PT scheme (PTS) information on EPTIS is stored in an Oracle database that allows virtually unlimited extension of the data, and offers extensive search options. Handling the datasets (one PTS is stored in one dataset) is done with the help of a standard software package called Oracle Forms. These have been adapted for our purposes.

Identification codes

Entering a new PTS in EPTIS starts with entering the information contained in part I. As soon as the name of the scheme, the provider and a contact person have been entered in the database, and a link between them established (this is what you actually do when you create a new dataset), the dataset receives a code from the server. This code is used to uniquely identify each PTS, and to link the external part II file to the corresponding part I. It is displayed at the bottom of the main data entry template (the "main form"), see fig. 3.

An example: the link provided to you is DEEPT864. DE stands for DEutschland (Germany) and 864 is the ID of the dataset. Why do you need this ID: (a) to couple a part II to the corresponding part I (see chapter 6), and (b) to link directly to specific datasets (e.g. in e-mail communication). Though (b) wasn't initially intended to enable you doing so, it works:

URL for part I:

http://www.eptis.bam.de/cgi-bin/eptis.exe?FNC=Uebersicht__Arv_list_html__864

URL for part II:

<http://www.eptis.bam.de/details/DEEPT864.HTML>

1.3 Scope of this manual

The first part of this manual deals with handling part I, only the last chapter with handling part II. We recommend to make yourself acquainted with the basic database techniques that are described in detail in chapter 2 **before starting** with part I, and to follow the chronology of actions in chapter 3 if you are new to EPTIS.

1.4 Technical requirements

What you need to run the EPTIS Oracle application is a password that is provided to you by the secretariat, and a normal office PC running at least Win95 plus internet connection and either Netscape (ver 4.5 or later) or Internet Explorer (ver 4.01 or later).

1.5 Responsibilities

National or regional EPTIS coordinators are expected to perform a plausibility check of the data provided by PT providers before feeding them into the database, and take care that the database is not polluted by outdated, redundant or erroneous keywords and datasets. Maintenance of the data is the responsibility of the coordinators. The coordinators operate under the joint EPTIS Protocol that describes their general tasks and the aims of their work.

The overall technical responsibility for EPTIS is in the hands of BAM. The EPTIS database and web servers are physically located and maintained at BAM. The secretariat welcomes every suggestion for improvement and helps in case of questions or problems. It is, however, restricted in its resources. The secretariat's contact details are given on the cover of this manual.

2 Fundamental techniques

2.1 Accessing the database

Access the EPTIS website for coordinators at <http://www.eptis.bam.de/coordinator> and click "Part I / Edit database". The first time you access the partone URL you will be asked to download JInitiator, a 9+ MB downloadable plug-in for your browser that enables you to run so-called Oracle Developer Forms. When you enter for the first time using JInitiator be patient, as it loads a Java applet which takes some time. Subsequent entries should go rather quickly. Enter your name and password in the logon screen (fig. 1, case insensitive, an entry in the "Database" field is not necessary). Then select "data maintain" on the welcome screen (fig. 2). What's the other option – "data read only"? Normally, each EPTIS coordinator has read and write access to his or her data only. Thus, only a subset of all available datasets is displayed in the "data maintain" mode. The entire database contents are shown in the "data read only" mode – where alterations are not possible.

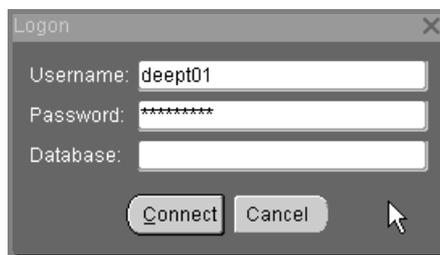


fig. 1— the logon screen

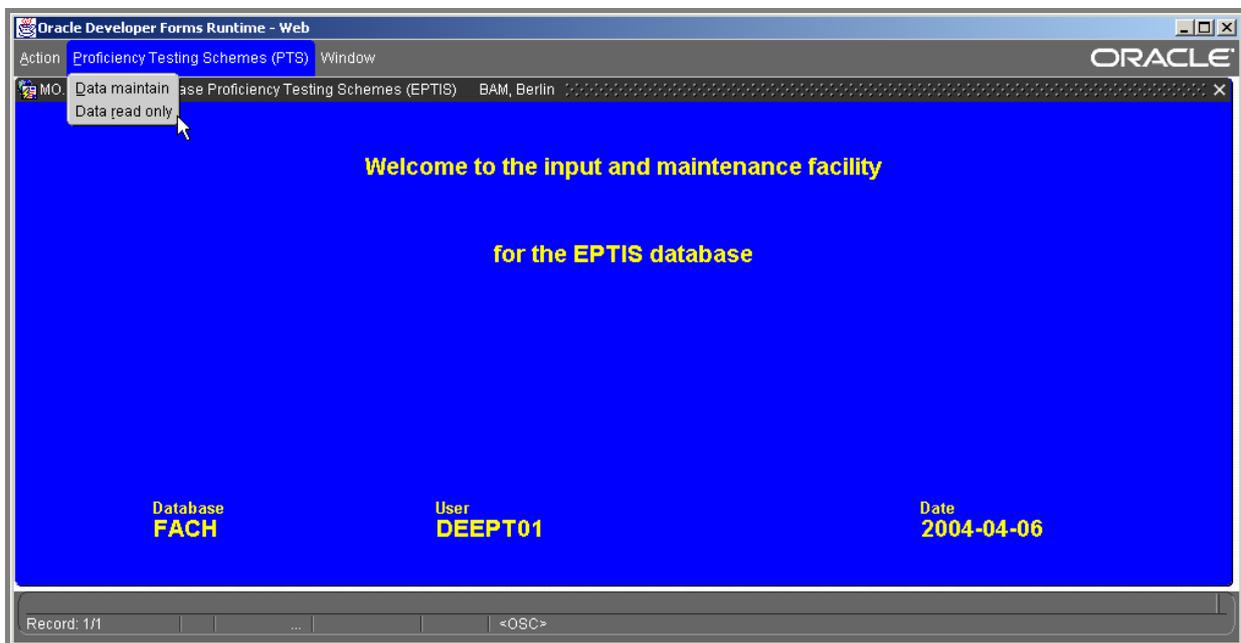


fig. 2 – the welcome screen

2.2 Database handling principles

2.2.1 Forms and tables

The main form

After selecting “data maintain” on the welcome screen (see the previous chapter) the following screen appears (see fig. 3). This is the central part I template called the “main form”. The main form is for composing, amending and deleting complete datasets or parts of it. All fields are numbered according to the corresponding questions in the questionnaire for PT providers.

The screenshot shows the Oracle Developer Forms Runtime - Web interface for Proficiency Testing Schemes (PTS). The window title is "Oracle Developer Forms Runtime - Web" and the application name is "MO.175.10 A Proficiency Testing Schemes (PTS)". The interface includes a menu bar (Action, Edit, Block, Field, Record, Query, Help, Window) and a toolbar with buttons for Query, Insert, Delete, Commit, and Exit. The "Goto form:" dropdown is set to "PTS".

The form contains several sections:

- Name of the PTS (2.1):** A text input field.
- Changed by / on:** Two text input fields.
- Validity checked on:** A text input field.
- Provider of the PTS (1.1):** A yellow text input field.
- Contact person for the PTS (1.6):** A yellow text input field.
- Commissioned by (1.10):** A yellow text input field.
- Testing fields (2.2):** A table with two columns and two rows of yellow text input fields.
- Product categories (2.4):** A table with two columns and two rows of yellow text input fields.
- Test item (2.6):** A green text input field with a "New" button.
- Tested property (2.7):** A green text input field with a "New" button.
- Testing method (2.8):** A green text input field with a "New" button.
- Standard series / guidelines (2.9):** A checkbox and a yellow text input field.
- Additional subsidiary aims of the PTS (2.10):** A yellow text input field.
- Performed regularly? (2.11):** A checkbox with associated frequency and year of first execution fields.
- Liability to pay the costs? (2.12):** A checkbox with associated participation fees and carried out on demand fields.
- Part-II filename:** A yellow text input field.

The bottom status bar shows "Record: 1/1" and "<OSC>".

fig. 3 – the EPTIS main form

The (sub) forms

How to enter keywords and texts in the main form? White fields must be completed by directly typing in the information by hand. The coloured fields work differently: their entries must be selected from underlying lists with keywords (or “values”). These keywords must be entered in the corresponding lists before you can select them in the main form. This is done in the subforms, or just forms for short. Maybe you or a colleague coordinator have already entered the keywords you need in the past, otherwise you must enter them before you can start or continue completing the main form. A detailed explanation of the field colours and list value handling (including editing) is given in the next paragraphs.

The tables - understanding the database

It is sensible to spend a few words on the database structure. It will help you to understand the different forms and colours. There is a “master table” containing the main elements of each PTS description, and “subtables” containing one value list each from which you can link specific keywords to the master table. The subforms give access to the subtables. The main form has

two functions: it displays the contents of the master table for your specific PTS plus the keywords in the subtables that you have linked to from the master table.

The master table contains all white fields in the main form, plus the fields for PT provider and contact person. The latter two fields are yellow, because there are lists of values behind them, which isn't the case with the white fields. All other coloured fields belong to specific subtables (one table for each field on the main form) that consist of value lists, too. It is good to have the principle of keyword linking between the master table and the subtables in mind when reading further.

Remember: the keywords you wish to use for your PTS must be entered into the subtables first (with the help of the corresponding subforms) before you can link them to the master table in the main form. Of course, there are already many keywords on all value lists which are ready to use – entered by your colleague coordinators or the secretariat. They are immediately available for selection in the main form.

An example

Say you are creating a new PTS dataset in the main form and you wish to insert a tested property in the corresponding field. First, check whether this property is already included in the corresponding value list. The list appears by double clicking in this field on the main form. If your keyword is already there, select it (see par. 2.2.2 how to do this). If it is not, you must enter your tested property on the list first. How to do this:

1. select the subform for tested properties (see fig. 4),
2. enter the desired tested property in the list (see fig. 5),
3. store this information in the database with the "Commit" button,
4. close the form with the "Close" button and (automatically) return to the main form.

Now your keyword has been included in the list and it is available for selection in the main form, following the steps described above. The procedure is identical for the fields "commissioned by", "test items", "tested properties", "testing methods" and "testing fields". The form "PTS" is the main form itself, whereas the "search" form provides detailed query options (see chapter 5 for a detailed explanation).

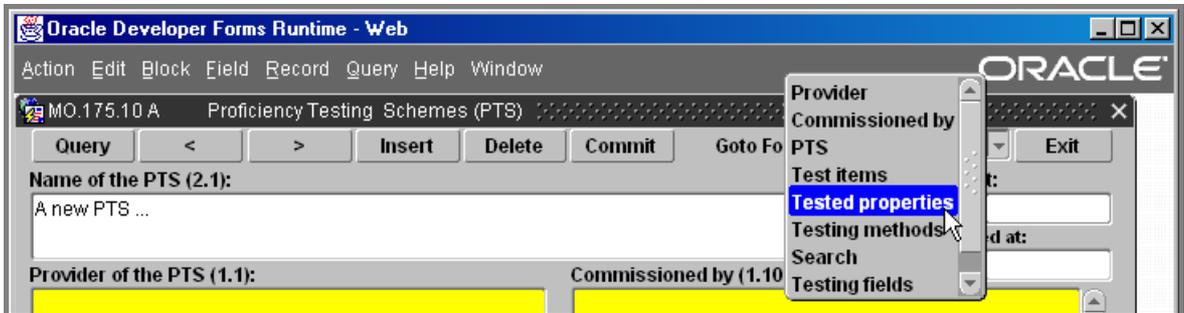


fig. 4 – selection of the "tested properties" form

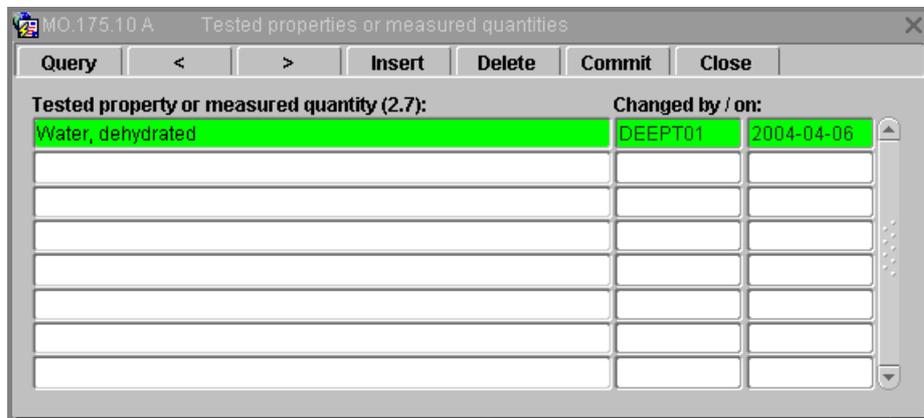


fig. 5 – the "tested properties" form

2.2.2 The keyword (or “value”) lists

The database consist of a “master table” containing the main elements of each PTS description, and “subtables” containing one value list each from which you can link specific keywords to the master table. These value lists are displayed for keyword selection by double clicking in the respective (yellow or orange) field on the main form. The lists can be edited in the respective subforms (only yellow fields).

Keyword selection on the main form

Once a value list is displayed after double clicking, you can either scroll the list values from a-z or, if you are looking for a specific entry, say water, type in w <return> - and then your list jumps to w. Several data fields (e.g. the PTS name, the first year of execution, the fee for participation) do not provide the option to call a list; these fields are white on the main form. In such fields you are expected to enter or alter a value by hand. You can (see chapter 5), but the EPTIS user cannot search in such fields.

Keyword input in the subform

If there is no keyword listed matching your wishes then you must enter it – either directly on the main form in the field itself (orange field), or in the corresponding subform (yellow and green fields). The appropriate form appears by either clicking the “new” button (above the test item / tested property / testing method fields) or making use of the “goto form” option on the top of the main form. Enter your new keyword in the subform. Commit will include this value in the respective list, and from then on it is available for use in the main form.

Editing keywords

If there is an existing keyword on a list that you wish to alter (e.g. because its description is not good enough, or because it does not obey the rules stated below) then you can edit it – if it is “yours”, i.e. has been created by you, either directly on the main form in the field itself (white and orange fields), or in the corresponding subform (yellow fields). Search for this list value using the query function (see chapter 5), alter the keyword where necessary, Commit (and Close if you are on a subform).

You cannot change any keywords that have been entered by your colleague coordinators. They will just not be shown to you in the subforms (exception: the orange fields), though they are, naturally, available for selection in the main form. Not available for both edit and use by other coordinators are the names and contact details of “your” PT providers.

Rules for entering keywords

1. Define new “list values” of more than one word in a way where the most relevant word is in front: Soil, contaminated rather than Contaminated soil.
2. Please use existing keywords if available and possible: Soil is as good as Soil sample, and Ethanol, concentration of can be written as just Ethanol (which already exists).
3. Please use a Capital as the first letter of a keyword.
4. Do not enter new keywords in the lists for testing fields and sets of products. The number of entries in these lists is limited. Instead, communicate your wishes with the secretariat.

2.2.3 The buttons

The standard Oracle Forms bar (Action - Edit - Block etc.) on the top can, but is not normally used for EPTIS. Instead, use the following buttons placed on the main (see fig. 6) and sub forms:

- **Query** is used to search a specific keyword, set of words, dataset or set of datasets. Clicking query will turn your form into the query mode. For detailed query instructions see chapter 5.
- **< and >** are for navigation between successive datasets within a subset resulting from a query.
- **Insert** is used to:
 - (a) start a new dataset in an empty main form. Place your cursor in the “name of the PTS” field and click Insert.
 - (b) insert a new line below an existing one. Most of the coloured fields in the main form display only two lines for your keywords by default (see e.g. the test item field, fig. 15), and if

these are not enough you may wish to insert additional lines. An alternative to clicking Insert is pressing the “down” arrow key on your keyboard.

- **Delete** is used to: (a) remove a keyword or “value” from the form, and (b) remove the entire dataset.
It cannot be used to delete text in white fields. See chapter 4 for details.
- **Commit** is Oracle language for save. Though you can enter numerous datasets without saving, it is sensible to Commit after entering or amending each single dataset – or even more frequently.
- **Exit** is the proper way to leave the main form and return to the welcome screen.
- **Close** appears on the subforms and means, “close this subform window”.



fig. 6 – the main form's button bar

2.2.4 The colours

What is the meaning of the different field colours?

- **White:** data must be typed (or copied, if the text is in the clipboard) in by hand.
- **Yellow:** data cannot be typed in by hand (it can, because the field is not protected against doing so, but it will generate an error message). Instead, entries in a yellow field must be selected from the corresponding keyword list (for a detailed explanation see par. 2.2.2). If there is no suitable keyword then enter it by using the corresponding subform. Two fields however should be edited by the secretariat only: testing fields and sets of products. The number of entries in these lists is limited.
- **Orange:** double click for a list of already existing entries; new list entries can be directly typed into the orange fields without the need to do this in a special subform.
- **Green:** indicates which line is currently “active”. In the main form green lines appear only in the fields “test item”, “tested property” and “testing method”. It indicates which of these lines belong together - see par. 3.5 for further details.

2.2.5 The navigation keys

You can make use of the standard keyboard keys <tab> (for down) and <shift+tab> (for up) to navigate between “single line” fields (such as the provider field), though this doesn't work for “multi line” fields (such as “testing fields”). Use the cursor up and down keys to navigate between lines within a specific multi line field. You can use the cursor down key as an alternative to the “insert” button (see par. 2.2.3) if you wish to enter the next empty line in a multi line field (fig. 7). Just try it out. Please notice: there is no “undo” (<ctrl + z>) like in Windows.

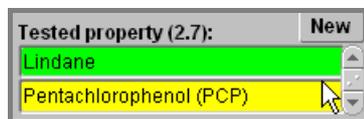


fig. 7 – how to enter a new line below PCP?

2.2.6 The status line

The status line (see e.g. fig. 22 and fig. 23) supports you during your activities.

2.3 Warning: multiple entries

Drawing from experience - a common mistake and a tricky problem is the creation of multiple entries for one PT provider. Say the provider “PT Company” is already available in the database but you enter it again (e.g. because you didn't find it listed somehow). As a result, two identical

or similar entries (fig. 8 left and middle) are available in the corresponding value list. One drawback: as soon as you need to alter a telephone number it will be changed in one dataset but not in the other, unless you alter it in both datasets. Another: it looks slovenly if the entries are only similar.

To unify these entries mark one provider *and* its contact person with the word “correct” (just a flag for you to discern which provider description you wish to retain) in the form “provider” and then Commit. Now search all PTS datasets (in the main form; see chapter 5 how to do this) related to this particular provider, delete the contact person and the name of the provider (in this order) where the word “correct” doesn’t appear, then select the “correct” name and contact person (in this order, fig. 8 right) and Commit. Repeat this for all datasets concerned. Return to the provider form, delete the “incorrect” provider and rename the “correct” one. That’s it.

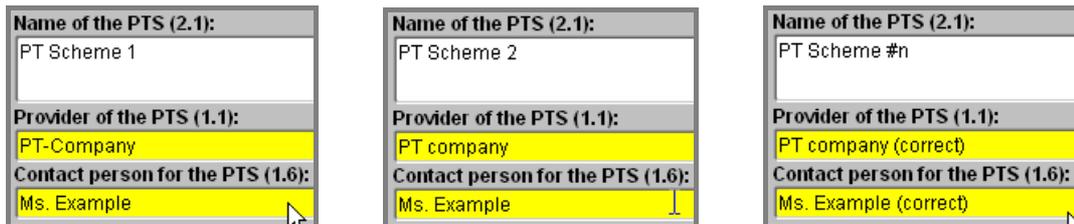


fig. 8 – left, middle: two entries for the same provider; right: one entry renamed

2.4 Availability and consistency check

Please make use of keyword list entries that are already available, be restrictive in the creation of new entries in keyword lists, and check your entries for consistency and plausibility. This will help to keep the database clean and efficient, and minimise list loading times for those with a slow internet connection.

3 Data entry and editing

3.1 Introduction

Once logged in, the empty main form is displayed. This is where you start entering the data from the questionnaire for PT providers, or can make most of your amendments to PT schemes.

If you wish to enter a new PTS then follow the procedure described below – in chronological order. If you wish to amend an existing PTS just jump directly to the corresponding paragraph(s). Deleting a complete PTS is described in chapter 4. The fields on the main form are numbered, and these numbers correspond with the numbers of the questions in the questionnaire for PT providers.

Though it is no obligation, it is recommended to save (commit) each dataset once you have entered its data or finalised its maintenance. Doing so more frequently is sensible if you have complicated PTS to enter or alter, since a computer or software crash could destroy your non-saved data. Oracle will ask you to save your data by the end of the Oracle session at the latest.

3.2 PTS name (field 2.1)

Add an entry

The PTS name field (fig. 9) must be completed first of all fields. Enter the name directly into this field. If no name has been given in the questionnaire, please contact the provider or give it a suitable name. Commit is not yet possible; the provider and its contact person must be selected in the next steps first. This is the minimum information required for each dataset.

Edit an entry

The PTS name field can be edited directly on the main form. Search the database to find the PTS you wish to amend (see chapter 5) and modify the PTS name where necessary. Do not use the Delete button on the form's button bar for any deletions, since it will delete the entire PTS (after a warning) – the PTS name field belongs to the master table (see chapter 4). Commit if you are ready.

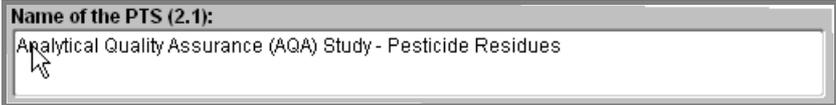


fig. 9 – the PTS name field

3.3 Provider details (fields 1.1 – 1.11)

Add an entry

Select the provider first and then its contact person (in this order) from the value lists that appear by double clicking in the corresponding field (fig. 10) of the main form. The use of value lists is explained in par. 2.2.2.

If the provider, its contact person and contact details have not yet been included in the value lists this must be done first. Activate the provider form (fig. 11) and enter the information provided in the questionnaire. Though more than one contact person for one PT provider can be entered (which makes sense e.g. if the provider operates several schemes each having its own contact person), only one contact person can be linked to each PTS, even if the provider would like you to do so. Please use an international telephone and fax number format, e.g. +49-30-81043748. Selecting the wrong country will shift this provider dataset to the corresponding EPTIS coordinator. The accreditation status should also be entered here; see par. 2.2.4 on how to handle orange coloured data entry fields. Commit, Close. The information is now available for selection in the main form. Select the provider and then its contact person from the corresponding value lists that appear by double clicking in the corresponding field of the main form. The use of value lists is explained in par. 2.2.2.

Edit an entry

If you wish to attribute the PTS to another provider, simply overwrite the entry by placing your cursor in the provider field and selecting another provider from the value list. Then select the corresponding contact person in the same way.

If you wish to edit the name of the PT provider and / or the contact person please do so in the provider subform. Activate the provider form (fig. 11). Search and display the provider entry with the help of the query function (see chapter 5). Enter or modify where necessary. If you wish to delete the entire provider, first delete all contact persons by placing the cursor in one of the green fields and then clicking the Delete button on the provider form; do not use your keyboard's delete functions for this. Commit, and repeat this procedure with the "name of the provider" field. Commit, Close.

If the contact person for the PTS has changed and you wish to alter this field on the main form, be sure you have entered the new contact person on the provider subform first. Then place your cursor on the contact person field and select the new contact person from the value list that appears by double clicking. You do not need to delete the existing entry first.

fig. 10 – the provider fields on the main form

PTS providers and contact persons			
Name of the provider (1.1): Institut für Eignungsprüfung			
Street (1.2): Langenbochumerstr. 310		Post-office box (1.2):	
Town (1.2): Herten	Postcode (1.2): 45701	Country (1.2): Germany	
Telephone-No. (1.3): +49 (0)2366 1810855	Telefax-No. (1.4): +49 (0)2366-1810984	WWW-Address (1.5): http://www.eignungspruefung.de	
Independent review (1.11):			
Type: Accredited	by (body, authority, ...): DAP	on the basis of (standard, document, ...): ISO/IEC 17020, ISO Guide 43-1, ILAC G13	
Contact person			
Title (1.6): Prof. Dr.-Ing	Surname (1.6): Frenz	First name (1.6): Holger	
Department / section (1.1):	Telephone-No. (1.7): +49 (0)2366 1810855	Telefax-No. (1.8): +49 (0)2366-1810984	E-mail address (1.9): frenz@eignungspruefung.de
Title (1.6):	Surname (1.6):	First name (1.6):	
Department / section (1.1):	Telephone-No. (1.7):	Telefax-No. (1.8):	E-mail address (1.9):

fig. 11 – the provider form

3.4 Commissioning organisations (field 1.10)

Add an entry

Select the commissioning organisation from the value list that appears by double clicking in the corresponding field (fig. 12) of the main form. The use of value lists is explained in par. 2.2.2.

If the commissioning organisation has not yet been included in the value list you must do so first. Activate the commissioning organisation form (fig. 13) and enter the information provided in the questionnaire. Commit, Close. This organisation is now available for selection in the main form from the value list that appears by double clicking in the commissioning organisations field. The use of value lists is explained in par. 2.2.2.

Delete an entry

A commissioning organisation can be deleted directly on the main form. First, search the database (see chapter 5) to find the PTS of interest. Place your cursor on the line you wish to delete and click the Delete button on the form's button bar. Do not use your keyboard's delete buttons for this since they will only delete the characters in this field, and not the link between the master and sub tables. Commit.

Once you have deleted a commissioning organisation from the main form it is still available on the corresponding value list for later selection. Delete it from this list, too if this value is "yours" (not generated by another coordinator) and if you do not expect to use it later. This will help to keep the database lean and clean.

Edit an entry

Use the subform (see fig. 13) (not the main form) to make any alterations to commissioning organisations if these entries have been generated by you. Altering list values that have been generated by other EPTIS coordinators is not possible.

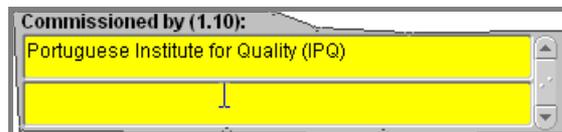


fig. 12 – the commissioning organisations field on the main form

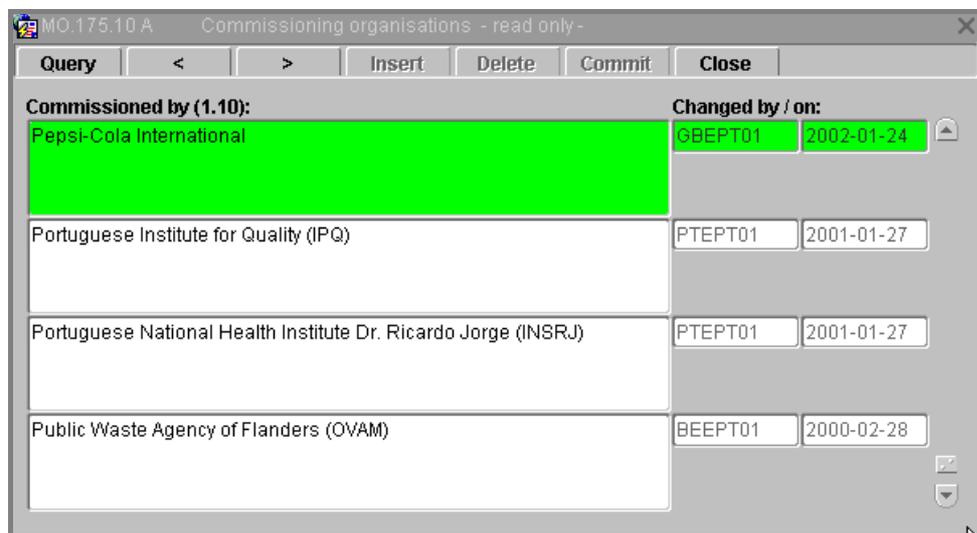


fig. 13 – the commissioning organisations form

3.5 Testing fields – Product categories (fields 2.2 – 2.5)

Add an entry

Keywords are entered into the fields by double clicking on a free line and subsequent selection from the keyword list that appears. The use of these keyword or value lists is explained in par. 2.2.2. New lines below the existing ones (displayed are only two) are added by placing the cursor on the last line and either clicking the Insert button (button bar) or pressing the cursor down key on the keyboard.

Please do not edit or extend the value lists, although the respective forms are not protected against doing so. Instead, communicate your wishes for amendment or extension with the secretariat. Providers can indicate their wishes in questions 2.3 and 2.5 of the questionnaire.

Delete an entry

A testing field or product category can be deleted directly on the main form. First, search the database (see chapter 5) to find the PTS of interest. Place your cursor on the line you wish to delete and click the Delete button on the form's button bar. Do not use your keyboard's delete buttons for this since they will only delete the characters in this field, and not the link between the master and sub tables. Commit.

Edit an entry

Editing is not possible, neither in the fields on the main form, nor in the corresponding forms. Instead, communicate your wishes for amendment or extension with the secretariat.

Testing fields (2.2):		Sets of products (2.4):	
A9	Environmental conditions	B3	Air
A10	Environmental protection	B59	Hazardous substances

fig. 14 – the testing fields / sets of products fields on the main form

3.6 Test item – Tested property – Testing method (fields 2.6 – 2.8)

Three interrelated fields

The three fields are logically interrelated, as is also reflected in the questionnaire. The green colour indicates which three lines of the three fields are currently active and belong together.

In the example below, the test items are *Water* and *Milk*. The former is active, and two of its properties are obviously tested in the PTS: *Metals* and *Pesticides*. Pesticides are obviously measured by *HPLC* and *GC/MS*. The methods for the property *Metals* are not displayed, because the entry *Metals* is not active. The same holds for *Milk*: this test item is currently not active, and neither of its tested properties or testing methods is shown. If you activate this entry by clicking on the *Milk* line, its tested properties and testing methods would be displayed, valid for the *Milk* entry only. All combinations of green cells that you define are recognised by Oracle as being valid and will be displayed to the user when he or she views the PTS datasheet.

Test item (2.6):	Tested property (2.7):	Testing method (2.8):
Water	Metals	HPLC
Milk	Pesticides	GC/MS

fig. 15 – the combination Water / Pesticides / GC/MS

Rules for entering new keywords

1. Define new "list values" of more than one word in a way where the most relevant word is in front: *Soil, contaminated* rather than *Contaminated soil*.
2. Please use existing keywords if available and possible: *Soil* is as good as *Soil sample*, and *Ethanol, concentration of* can be written as just *Ethanol* (which already exists).
3. Please use a Capital as the first letter of a keyword.

Add an entry

All three fields are interrelated. From a logical point of view, it is sensible to complete the fields in the order from left to right, starting with one test item, then the first of its tested properties and then all of the testing methods that belong to that specific tested property. This is followed by the next tested property with all of its testing methods, etc; and then the next test item. However, the main form accepts many other input orders.

Keywords are entered by double clicking on a line and subsequent keyword selection from the value list that appears. The use of these lists is explained in par. 2.2.2. New lines below the ex-

isting ones are added by placing the cursor on the last line and either clicking Insert on the button bar, or pressing your keyboard's cursor down key. Repeatedly, Oracle may ask you to save the changes you have made, and you should confirm this.

Delete an entry

All three fields can be deleted directly on the main form. First, search the database (see chapter 5) to find the PTS of interest. Place your cursor on the line you wish to delete and click the Delete button on the form's button bar. Do not use your keyboard's delete buttons for this since they will only delete the characters in this field, and not the link between the master and sub tables. Commit.

Very convenient: deleting a specific test item will also delete the related tested properties and testing methods; deleting a specific tested property will also delete the related testing methods. You will be asked to confirm your decision before.

Edit an entry

Use the corresponding subforms (not the main form) to make any alterations to the keywords, if these entries have been generated by you. Altering list values that have been generated by other EPTIS coordinators is not possible.

3.7 Standard series / guidelines (field 2.9)

Add an entry

Tick the checkbox if the PTS relates to specific standard series or guidelines, and see if these are already included in the value list by double clicking on one of the orange lines. This procedure is similar to the one described for the yellow coloured cells (see par. 2.2.2). However, there is no separate form for editing the listing. Just select the appropriate value from the list, or type in the relating standard series or guideline(s). New cells below the existing ones are added by placing the cursor in the last cell and either clicking Insert on the button bar, or pressing the keyboard's cursor down key.

Delete an entry

The standard series / guidelines field can be deleted directly on the main form. First, search the database (see chapter 5) to find the PTS of interest. Place your cursor on the line you wish to delete and click the Delete button on the form's button bar. Do not use your keyboard's delete buttons for this since they will only delete the characters in this field, and not the link between the master and sub tables. Commit.

Edit an entry

The standard series / guidelines field can be edited directly on the main form. Search the database (see chapter 5) to find the PTS of interest. Edit any entries directly in the orange field; these altered entries will be included in the value list and disappear from it when they are no longer used. New lines below the existing ones are added by placing the cursor on the last line and clicking either the Insert button (on the button bar) or the keyboard's cursor down key.

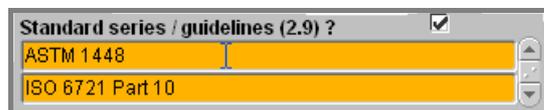


fig. 16 – the standard series / guidelines field (with checkbox) on the main form

3.8 Additional subsidiary aims (field 2.10)

EPTIS is for proficiency tests. If a PTS serves additional aims these should be mentioned here. Keywords are entered into the cells by double clicking in a cell and subsequent selection from the value list. The use of these lists is explained in par. 2.2.2. Use the Delete button on the top of the main form to delete an entry. Alterations to the list values are not possible, and there is no subform for this.

fig. 17 – additional aims field on the main form

3.9 Frequency of operation (field 2.11)

Add an entry

Tick the checkbox if the PTS is carried out regularly, and complete the two upper fields by hand. There is no list of values to choose from. Leave the checkbox empty if the PTS is irregular, but then complete the two lower fields. What type of answers is expected? (a-1): something like “two times a year”, and (b-2) could be e.g. “yes, if there are >10 requests”.

Delete / Edit an entry

Delete entries directly on the main form. Use the keyboard for this but not the Delete button on the form’s button bar, since this field is part of the master table and Oracle would assume you wish to delete the entire PTS (after a warning). Edit entries directly on the main form. There is no list of values to choose from.

fig. 18 – frequency of operation field on the main form

3.10 Costs (field 2.12)

Add an entry

Tick the checkbox if the PTS participants are liable to pay a fee, and enter the fee in the box. Your description may contain something like “ ... depending on the selected parameters”. Please do not use the Euro (or other currency) signs, as these are not always displayed properly worldwide. Use Euro instead. The Dollar sign however is an exception as it is part of the ASCII standard character set used by most computers.

Delete / Edit an entry

Delete entries directly on the main form. Use the keyboard for this but not the Delete button on the form’s button bar, since this field is part of the master table and Oracle would assume you wish to delete the entire PTS (after a warning). Edit entries directly on the main form. There is no list of values to choose from.

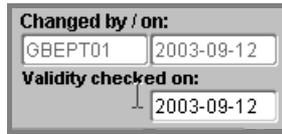
fig. 19 – cost field on the main form

3.11 Setting the current date

As soon as you send the first data to the server it will also store your user name and the current date. These are then displayed in the main form (fig. 20, top) and will stay unchanged until the next time you commit any changes. The date is also displayed to the EPTIS user on the PTS datasheet. It is an indication whether the EPTIS entry is still up to date.

If there is nothing to change and the PTS data are still valid (say you have been checking them for validity in the frame of an annual update action), you can show this to the EPTIS user by double clicking in the “validity checked” field (fig. 20, bottom). This date will then be displayed to

the EPTIS user instead of the dataset creation or last amendment date (as displayed in fig. 20, top).



Changed by / on:	
GBEPT01	2003-09-12
Validity checked on:	
	2003-09-12

fig. 20 – the validity check field on the main form

3.12 The link to part II

Once you have started the creation of a new PTS dataset, the server will automatically generate an obligatory filename for part II (see par. 1.2 for a description and fig. 21 for an impression) after your first Commit. This filename is displayed in the “Part II filename” field.

This part II file contains detailed additional information on each specific PTS. The file must be given the name stated and placed on the EPTIS server by the coordinator. The secretariat will provide separate instructions for handling this file.



Part-II filename: GBEPT352.HTML

fig. 21 – the part II filename field on the main form

4 Deleting keywords and PT schemes

4.1 Introduction

Please remember: the white fields on the main form plus the two fields for the PT provider and contact person belong to the master table (see par. 2.2.1). All other coloured fields belong to specific subtables. There are different mechanisms for:

- deleting text in a white field,
- deleting a keyword (or "list value") in a coloured field, and
- deleting a complete PTS.

4.2 Deleting text in a white field

Use the "Del" or backward buttons of your keyboard to delete. Do not use the Delete button of the button bar on your Oracle form because Oracle would assume that you wish to delete the entire entry in that specific table, e.g. the entire PTS (if you are on the main form), or e.g. the entire provider description (if you are on the provider subform).

4.3 Deleting a keyword in a coloured field

Use the Delete button on the button bar, and do not use the "Del" or backward buttons of your keyboard.

This doesn't work for the two fields "name of the provider" and "contact person", although they are coloured, since they belong to the master table just like the white fields. Pressing the Delete button with the cursor in one of these fields will have the same effect as doing so in one of the white fields. There is no option to delete the texts in these two fields since they belong to the basic data of the PTS. They can, however, be altered, see par. 3.3.

A special arrangement has been made for the triad "test item" – "tested property" – "testing method": deleting a specific test item will also delete the related tested properties and testing methods; deleting a specific tested property will also delete the related testing methods. You will be asked to confirm your decision before.

4.4 Deleting a complete PTS

Open the main form and search the PTS you wish to delete (see chapter 5). Place your cursor on one of the white fields and press the Delete button on the button bar. You will be asked to confirm your decision. The entire PTS will be deleted. Made a mistake? Select "Rollback" from the "Action" menu on the Oracle main bar to undo your deletion, and negate the following request for saving your changes.

Your PTS has now been deleted from the database, but the keywords (or "list values") you used for it are still available in the database for the following fields:

- the "Provider of the PTS",
- the "Contact person of the PTS",
- the "Organisation commissioning the PTS",
- the "Test item(s)",
- the "Tested property(ies) or measured quantity(ies)" and
- the "Testing method(s)"

Thus, these keywords can be used e.g. for later composition of a new PTS dataset, but they also bear the danger of database pollution if they are no longer used. Their deletion is described below.

Please do not forget to remove the corresponding part II from the database as well. This is done on the coordinator's website at <http://www.eptis.bam.de/coordinator>. You will need the part II filename for this, which is given in the corresponding field on the main form (see par. 3.12). Please take notice of it before deletion.

4.5 Deleting the underlying entries in the value lists

Use the subforms to delete the underlying entries in the value lists. Select the respective form, search for the keyword you wish to delete (see chapter 5), and delete it with the Delete button in the button bar. Commit if you are ready with each form. Potential problems include:

- If you search a keyword in a form that has not been entered by you but by a colleague coordinator, you will not find it and not be able to delete it.
- If the Commit order is not accepted, there is obviously still a correlation between the keyword and at least one of the PT schemes in the database. The status bar (fig. 22) will inform you of this. Maybe this PTS is exactly the one you have just deleted – in this case, maybe you forgot to commit the deleted entries in the main form. Otherwise your colleague coordinators have also used this keyword for their PTS.



fig. 22 – the status bar showing a correlation between the keyword (“master record”) and a dataset (“detail record”) which prevents you from deleting it

5 Searching keywords and PT schemes

Where to search

Coordinators can search the database in three contexts:

1. in the main form
2. in one of the subforms
3. in the search form

Where to search depends on what you intend:

- if you wish to search only a specific keyword or phrase for amendment or deletion then do so in the corresponding subform (context 2);
- if you wish to search a specific or all PTS that fulfill a certain criterion then do so either in the main form (context 1) or with the help of the special search form (context 3). Use the former for your query in fields that are white on the main form (no underlying value lists), and the latter for fields that are coloured on the main form (these have underlying value lists).

The principles of all search operations are, however, the same, and even appear to be logical once you are used to them.

How to search

Clicking Query will turn each form and all of your operations from the data **entry mode** into the **query mode**, from which you can escape with F4. You will automatically return to the entry mode when a query result is found and displayed, but stay in the query mode if there was no result. The status bar at the bottom of the screen (fig. 23) will help you.



fig. 23 – the status bar in the query mode

Click the Query button and place your cursor in the field of interest (even if there is already text in this field – remember: you have changed to the query mode and the text already there stems from the entry mode and is irrelevant). Then either:

- click Query again for a query with no restrictions, or
- type in the exact keyword or phrase and then click Query for an exact search, or
- use the wildcard % if you search a specific text block (e.g. in the form: %text%, or text%) and then click Query.

Use the < and > arrows (see par. 2.2.3) to navigate between the query results. See the status bar for the number of datasets found. Keywords and PTS entries that have been entered by colleague coordinators and not by you will not appear among the results if you operate the entire application in the “data maintain” mode but will be displayed if you operate in the data read only mode (see fig. 2 to see where you can switch between them).

One word on the special search form, which is used for searching PT schemes that fulfill a certain criterion in fields with underlying value lists (these fields are coloured in the main form), see fig. 24. This form offers the option to (1) search, (2) navigate between the query results, and (3) **display any PTS of interest in the main form** where you can start making your amendments. For the latter option click the “Display this PTS in the main form” button. After viewing or amending this PTS in the main form you can revert to your query form and continue your navigation between the query results, which appear to have been stored.

MO.175.10 A Search in the subtables

Query < > Display this PTS in the main form Close

Name of the PTS:
Accreditation Service / Water Flowmeters

Provider of the PTS:
Portuguese Institute for Quality (IPQ)

Commissioned by:
[Empty field]

Testing field:
[Empty field]

Product category:
[Empty field]

Test item:
water%

Tested property:
[Empty field]

Testing method:
[Empty field]

Standard serie / guideline:
[Empty field]

Aim:
[Empty field]

Changed by / on:
PTEPT01 2001-01-27

fig. 24 – the search form displaying a query result after a query for water%

6 Handling part II

Once you have entered the information on part I into the database, you can proceed with part II - provided, the corresponding form has already been submitted to you by the PT provider.

Principle

The PT provider completes a part II on the provider website (<http://www.eptis.bam.de/provider>) and sends it directly to the EPTIS server by a simple click. The EPTIS server stores this information in a database under a temporary name until you pick it up, consider its correctness and couple that entry with one or more specific part Is. Of course you can also complete and submit the part II form yourself. The EPTIS server gives you a notification when a new part II is submitted to you. The PT provider receives a confirmation.

Practice

Go to <http://www.eptis.bam.de/coordinator> and check the new data for correctness. Use your part I username and password to access the site. Click the "Approve new entry" button and select the new temporary entry that was mentioned in your e-mail notification. Check this entry, and see whether it is satisfactory. If so, you can directly couple it to the corresponding part I. For this purpose, all part Is in your EPTIS account are listed. They are characterised by ID numbers. You can find these numbers in the part I Oracle mask in the field "part II filename":



fig. 21 – the part II filename field on the main form

but they are also included in the links that are displayed to you after a query on the EPTIS website (see below). CEPI for example has the ID 107, which you find by rolling over that link with your mouse:

EPTIS HOME HELP NEW SEARCH FEEDBACK CONTACT				
Results for your query				
The following 8 datasets were found:				
Refine now				
Designation of the PTS		Provider		
CEPI- Comparative Testing Service		Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI), Comparative Testing Service (CEPT-CTS)		
Intercomparison for Solid board, Papers and		Österreichisches Institut für Verpackungswesen		

fig. 25 - PT schemes displayed to the EPTIS user after a query

If there are any mistakes or typos, you can edit the submitted part II before coupling it, or even reject the whole entry. You can also couple one part II to several part Is, e.g., if the same part II applies to a whole set of similar part Is from the same provider. You may wish to delete the temporary datasets after the coupling procedure to keep your account clean.

What to do if you wish to edit a part II after some time, e.g. during a regular data update? Visit the coordinators' site again and select "Edit existing entry". Now edit (or delete) the corresponding part II. You can also couple it to further (e.g., new) part Is. That's it. Please log out when you're ready.