Supplemental file 1

**Modified VRE PFGE protocol**

VRE*fm* colonies on blood agar were suspended in 2ml TEN buffer (10 mM Tris, 1mM EDTA, 150mM NaCl, pH 7.5) 100mM Tris, 100mM EDTA, 150mM NaCl, pH 8.0) to an optical density (OD) at 600 nm of 1.0. Aliquots (1ml) were centrifuged at 14000rpm for 10s and pellets washed with 500l TEN and re-suspensed in 200l TEN. The suspension was pre-incubated at 55oC. An equal volume of molten 2% SeaKem®agarose in TE buffer (10 mM Tris, 1mM EDTA, pH 8.0) was mixed with the bacterial suspension and suspensions were dispensed into plug moulds. Solidified plugs were lysed overnight in 1 ml EC buffer (6 mM Tris, 100mM EDTA, 1M NaCl, 0.5% Brij, 0.5% Sarcosyl, 0.2% Desoxycholic acid pH 7.5-8.0) containing 100l lysozyme (4mg/ml) at 37oC in a shaking incubator (Gallenkamp, Leicester, UK) at 200 rpm. The buffer was replaced with 2 ml cell suspension buffer (CSB) (100mM Tris, 100mM EDTA, pH 7.5-8.0) and incubated at 55oC for 45 min. CSB was replaced with fresh CSB containing Proteinase K (100 g/ml) and was incubated at 55oC for 1h. Plugs were washed 4 times with CSB. Gel plug slices (2.5 mm) were incubated in 200 l TE buffer at 25oC for 15 min followed by restriction with Sma1 enzyme (30U) in CutSmart® buffer (New England Biolabs) for 4 h at 25oC. The enzyme/buffer combination was replaced with fresh 0.5M Tris Borate EDTA (TBE). In addition to a Lambda ladder (Sigma, Aldrich), the reference strain H9812, *Salmonella enteric subsp. enterica* serovar *Braendurup* was used as asize reference. Agarose plugs of this strain were restricted with Xba1 according to the PulseNet standardised protocol for *E. coli*.9 PFGE was carried out in 1 % Seakem agarose gel using a CHEF-DR™II electrophoresis system (Bio-Rad Laboratories, CA). PFGE was performed over 20 h, using an initial switch time of 3.5 s, a final switch time of 25s for 12 h at 200 V, followed by a second cycle of initial switch time 1s and final switch time 5s, for 8h at 200V. Both cycles were carried out at 14oC with an inclusion angle of 45o. Gels were stained with ethidium bromide (10mg/ml) for 30min. Gels were photographed using GeneSys gel documentation system and a G:BOX transilluminator (Syngene, Cambridge, UK). Banding patterns were compared and analysed using GelCompar®II software (Version. 6.5, Applied Maths). The extent of variability was determined by the Dice coefficient using a tolerance of 1% and strains were clustered according to the Unweighted Pair Group Method with Arithmetic Mean (UPGMA). Clonal groups were assigned based on a similarity of ≥80%.