


# Local implementation and optimization of rotavirus reverse genetics systems

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“ Sometimes the prize is not worth the costs. The means by which we achieve victory are as important as the victory itself. ”

- Brandon Sanderson, The Way of Kings

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## Summary

Reverse genetics (RG) is one of the most powerful tools for the study of viral replication, pathogenesis and for the generation of rationally designed vaccine candidates. The main bottleneck in rotavirus (RV) research has been the lack of a robust, traceable, helper-virus independent RV RG system (Desselberger, 2014). The first viral RG system was developed in 1976 to rescue the dsDNA virus,  $\lambda$ -phage, from cultured monkey kidney cells . In 1981 the first RNA virus, poliovirus, was rescued from cell culture through the transfection of viral genome transcripts generated *in vitro* from cDNA plasmids. In 2006, 25 years later, the first RV RG system was developed . It was a helper-virus based system that relied on the segmented genome of the RV to undergo reassortment during co-infection and depended on a selection system for the isolation of recombinant viral progeny. In 2017, 41 years since the development of the first viral RG system, a Japanese group (Kanai *et al.*, 2017) published the first, plasmid only, helper-virus independent, pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system. The pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system, and its subsequent adaptations and optimizations (Komoto *et al.*, 2018; Komoto *et al.*, 2019), has opened up a new era of targeted, rationally guided RV research opportunities.

The main goal of this project was to establish a plasmid-based, helper-virus independent RV RG system at the NWU. To accomplish this, the project had three main objectives, namely: 1) To obtain and implement the Japanese pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system, and to optimize it through the incorporation of insights gained from the bluetongue virus (BTV) and African horsesickness virus (AHSV) RG systems. 2) To finalize and implement the locally developed, consensus sequence-based pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system with all the optimizations used during the pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG systems implementation, and 3) to perform a comparative analysis of the pSmart\_SA11-N5 and pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG systems and their various optimizations throughout the project via TCID<sub>50</sub> assay. The original pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system was obtained from AddGene and implemented at the NWU with initial difficulty. Several aspects of the BTV and AHSV RG systems were incorporated into the original pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system.

These optimizations included: 1) The design and implementation of alternative capping and fusion enzyme expression plasmids, phCMVdream\_VV\_D1R, phCMVdream\_VV\_D12L and phCMVdream\_p10\_FAST. 2) Exchanging the transfection and co-seeding cell-lines from BHK-T7 and MA104 cells to BSR-T5/7 and ST cells respectively. 3) Using 3x more capping enzyme expression plasmids and the adaptation of an equi-molar transfection mixture approach. These optimizations significantly increased the pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG systems' repeatability and increased viral yield 10-fold from  $2.15 \times 10^2$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml to  $2.15 \times 10^3$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml. Rescue of the recombinant SA11-L2 strain from the pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system was verified through dsRNA extraction, cDNA synthesis and whole viral genome sequencing.

I finalized the locally developed pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system, as only 8 of the 11 SA11-N5 cDNA transcription plasmids were successfully sub-cloned by previous students. The three remaining transcription plasmids for GS8, GS9 and GS11 were sub-cloned using In-Fusion HD seamless cloning and were sequence-verified through next-generation sequencing (NGS). The full pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system was then successfully implemented with all the optimizations used in the pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system. Recombinant SA11-N5 was rescued from the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system, as verified by genome segment-specific, one-step RT-PCR and sequencing of GS4 (VP4).

Both the pSmart\_SA11-N5 and pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG systems were then further optimized by replacing the vaccinia virus (VV) capping enzyme expression plasmids with the phCMVdream\_C3P3 construct that expressed an African swine fever virus (ASFV) capping enzyme fused to a viral T7-RNA polymerase through a serine-glycine linker. This increased the viral titers of both systems 100-fold with the pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system going from  $2.15 \times 10^3$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml to  $1.0 \times 10^5$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml, and the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system going from  $2.15 \times 10^4$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml to  $3.16 \times 10^6$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml. The final optimization in this project entailed a 3x increase of the (GS8) NSP2 and (GS11) NSP5 transcription plasmids of both the pT7\_SA11-L2 and pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system to increase viroplasm formation. This increased viral yield another 100-fold in both systems with pT7\_SA11-L2 reaching  $3.16 \times 10^7$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml, and the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system reaching  $1.7 \times 10^8$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml.

To conclude: The initial rescue efficiency of both RV RG systems was very low and not suitable for research purposes. The titer of the rescued virus from the pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system was only  $2.15 \times 10^2$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml and from the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system only  $2.15 \times 10^4$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml. After optimization, both systems are now ready for robust experimentation. The pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system now reaches viral titers of  $3.16 \times 10^7$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml, with the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system reaching  $1.7 \times 10^8$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml. The pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system consistently yielded higher viral titers, thus was more efficient, than the pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system in every comparable experiment. This was most likely due to the reduction in plasmid backbone size, with pSmart (~2010bp) being roughly 1070bp smaller than the pCAG (~3080bp) backbone used in the pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system. This decreased overall plasmid load of the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system by up to 11770bp when compared to the pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system, and significantly increased transfection efficiency. Both the pT7\_SA11-L2 and pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG systems can now be used to further RV research and development goals, such as the elucidation of the many unclear aspects of RV replication, pathogenesis and correlates of protection, as well as providing a platform for the generation of rationally designed, next-generation, regionally specific, safe RV vaccine candidates.

## **Keywords**

Rotavirus (RV); reverse genetics (RG); rotavirus SA11 strain; consensus sequence; In-Fusion HD cloning; seamless cloning; transfection; viral rescue; Immuno-fluorescent staining; Immuno-fluorescent monolayer assay (IFMA); TCID<sub>50</sub>; TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml; viral titer; plasmid only reverse genetics; pSmart; phCMVdream; BHK-T7; BSR-T5/7; MA104; ST; cell culture monolayers.

## Opsomming

Tru-genetika (TG) is een van die kragtige instrumente vir die studie van virale replikasie, patogenese en vir die generering van rasioneel ontwerpte entstofkandidate. Tot onlangs was die grootste knelpunt in rotavirus (RV) navorsing tot onlangs was die gebrek aan 'n herhaalbare, naspeurbare, helper-virus-onafhanklike RV TG stelsel (Desselberger, 2014). Die eerste virale TG stelsel is in 1976 ontwikkel om die ddNS-virus, faag- $\lambda$ , van gekweekte aapnierselle te herwin (Goff & Berg, 1976). In 1981 is die eerste RNS-virus, poliovirus, uit selkultuur herwin deur die transfeksie van virusgenoomtranskripte wat *in vitro* gegenereer is vanaf kDNS-plasmiede. In 2006, 25 jaar later, is die eerste rotavirus (RV) TG stelsel ontwikkel (Komoto & Taniguchi, 2006). Dit was 'n helper-virus-gebaseerde stelsel wat berus het op die gesegmenteerde genoom van RV om tydens ko-infeksie te herrangskik, en afhanklik was van 'n seleksiestelsel vir die isolasie van rekombinante virus nageslagte. In 2017, 41 jaar sedert die ontwikkeling van die eerste virale TG stelsel, het 'n Japanese groep (Kanai et al., 2017) die eerste, uitsluitlike plasmied, helper-virus-onafhanklike, pT7\_SA11-L2 RV TG stelsel, gepubliseer. Die pT7\_SA11-L2 TG stelsel, en die daaropvolgende aanpassings en optimaliserings (Komoto et al., 2018; Komoto et al., 2019), het 'n nuwe era geopen vir geteikende, rasioneel geleide RV-navorsingsgeleenthede.

Die hoofdoel van hierdie projek was om 'n plasmied-gebaseerde, helper-virus-onafhanklike, RV TG stelsel aan die NWU te vestig. Om dit te bereik, het die projek drie hoofdoelwitte gehad, naamlik: 1) Om die Japanese pT7\_SA11-L2 RV TG stelsel te bekom, te implementeer, en om dit te optimaliseer deur die inkorporering van insigte wat verkry is uit die TG stelsels van bloutong virus (BTV) en die Afrika perdesiekte virus (APS). 2) Om die plaaslik ontwikkelde, konsensus-volgorde-gebaseerde pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG-stelsel te finaliseer en te implementeer met al die optimaliserings wat tydens die implementering van pT7\_SA11-L2 TV RG-stelsels gebruik is, en 3) om 'n vergelykende analise van die pSmart\_SA11-N5 en pT7\_SA11-L2 RV TG stelsels uit te voer met hul verskillende optimaliserings gedurende die projek deur die 50% selkultuur infektiewe doses (SKID<sub>50</sub>) meeting. Die oorspronklike pT7\_SA11-L2 RV TG stelsel is van AddGene verkry en met aanvanklike probleme by die NWU geïmplementeer. Verskeie aspekte van die BTV en APS TG stelsels is in die oorspronklike pT7\_SA11-L2 TG stelsel geïnkorporeer. Hierdie optimaliserings het die

volgende ingesluit: 1) Die ontwerp en implementering van alternatiewe uitdrukingsplasmiede, phCMVdream\_VV\_D1R, phCMVdream\_VV\_D12L en phCMVdream\_p10\_FAST. 2) Die uitruiling van die verskeie transfeksie en medesaai sel-lyne van BHK-T7 en MA104 na BSR-T5 / 7 en ST selle. 3) Die gebruik van 3x meer 5'-af rondings ensiem uitdrukingsplasmiede en die aanpassing van 'n gelyk-molêre transfeksiemengsel benadering. Hierdie optimaliserings het die herhaalbaarheid van die pT7\_SA11-L2 RV TG stelsels aansienlik verhoog en die virale opbrengs tienvoudig verhoog van  $2,15 \times 10^2$  SKID<sub>50</sub>/ml tot  $2,15 \times 10^3$  SKID<sub>50</sub>/ml. Die herwinning van die rekombinante SA11-L2 stam uit die pT7\_SA11-L2 TG stelsel is bevestig deur ddRNS-ekstraksie, kDNS-sintese en die volledige virale genoomvolgorde bepaling.

Ek het die plaaslik ontwikkelde pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV TG stelsel gefinaliseer, aangesien slegs 8 van die 11 SA11-N5 kDNS-transkripsieplasmiede suksesvol deur vorige studente gesubkloneer was. Die drie oorblywende transkripsieplasmiede vir GS8, GS9 en GS11 is gesubkloneer deur gebruik te maak van In-Fusion HD naatlose klonering, en is deur die volgende generasie volgordebepaling (NGS) geverifieer. Die volledige pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV TG stelsel is toe suksesvol geïmplementeer met al die optimaliserings wat in die pT7\_SA11-L2 RV TG stelsel gebruik is. Rekombinante SA11-N5 is herwin uit die pSmart\_SA11-N5 TG stelsel, soos bevestig deur genome segment-spesifieke, een-stap TT-PKR en volgordebepaling van GS4 (VP4). Beide die pSmart\_SA11-N5- en pT7\_SA11-L2 RV TG stelsels is daarna verder geoptimaliseer deur die 5'-af rondings ensiem plasmiede van die vaccinia virus (VV) te vervang met die phCMVdream\_C3P3-konstruk wat 'n Afrika-varkkoorsvirus (ASFV) af rondings ensiem uitdruk wat saamgesmelt is met 'n virale T7-RNA-polimerase deur 'n serien-glisien-skakelaar (Eaton et al., 2017). Dit verhoog die virale titers van albei stelsels 100-voudig met die pT7\_SA11-L2 TG stelsel wat van  $2.15 \times 10^3$  SKID<sub>50</sub>/ml na  $1.0 \times 10^5$  SKID<sub>50</sub>/ml gegaan het, en die pSmart\_SA11-N5 TG stelsel wat van  $2.15 \times 10^4$  SKID<sub>50</sub>/ml na  $3.16 \times 10^6$  SKID<sub>50</sub>/ml gegaan het. Die finale optimalisering in hierdie projek het 'n 3x toename in die (GS8) NSP2 en (GS11) NSP5 transkripsie plasmiede van beide die pT7\_SA11-L2 en pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG-stelsel behels om die vorming van die viroplasma te verhoog. Hierdie verhoogde virale opbrengs is 100-keer meer in albei stelsels, met die pT7\_SA11-L2 wat  $3,16 \times 10^7$  SKID<sub>50</sub>/ml bereik het, en die pSmart\_SA11-N5 TG stelsel wat  $1,7 \times 10^8$  SKID<sub>50</sub>/ml bereik het.

Om af te sluit: Die aanvanklike herwinning doeltreffendheid van beide RV TG stelsels was baie laag en was nie geskik vir navorsingsdoeleindes nie. Die titer van die herwinde virus vanaf die pT7\_SA11-L2 RG-stelsel was slegs  $2,15 \times 10^2$  SKID<sub>50</sub>/ml en van die pSmart\_SA11-N5 TG stelsel slegs  $2,15 \times 10^4$  SKID<sub>50</sub>/ml. Na optimalisering is albei stelsels nou gereed vir eksperimentering. Die pT7\_SA11-L2 TG stelsel bereik nou virale titers van  $3,16 \times 10^7$  SKID<sub>50</sub>/ml, met die pSmart\_SA11-N5 TG stelsel wat  $1,7 \times 10^8$  SKID<sub>50</sub>/ml bereik. Die pSmart\_SA11-N5 TG stelsel het deurgaans hoër virale titers gelewer, wat dus meer doeltreffend was as die pT7\_SA11-L2 TG stelsel in elke vergelykbare eksperiment. Dit was waarskynlik te danke aan die vermindering in die grootte van die plasmied-ruggraat, met pSmart (~2010bp) wat ongeveer 1070bp kleiner was as die pCAG (~3080bp) ruggraat wat in die pT7\_SA11-L2 TG stelsel gebruik is. Dit het die totale plasmied-lading van die pSmart\_SA11-N5 TG stelsel met tot 11770bp verminder het, in vergelyking met die pT7\_SA11-L2 TG stelsel, wat die transfeksie-doeltreffendheid aansienlik verhoog het. Beide die pT7\_SA11-L2 en pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV TG stelsels kan nou gebruik word om RV-navorsing en ontwikkelingsdoelwitte te bevorder, soos die opklaring van die vele onduidelike aspekte van RV-replikasie, patogenese en merkers van beskerming, sowel as om 'n platform te bied vir die ontwikkeling van rasioneel ontwerpte, volgende generasie, streekspesifieke, veilige RV-entstofkandidate.

## **Sleutelwoorde**

Rotavirus (RV); tru-genetika (TG); rotavirus SA11 stam; consensusvolgorde; In-Fusion HD klonering; naatlose cloning; transfeksie; virale herwinning; Immuno-fluoressensie kleuring; Immuno-fluoressensie monolaag prosedure (IFMP); selkultuur infektiewe doses (SKID<sub>50</sub>); SKID<sub>50</sub>/ml; virale titer; uitsluitlik plasmied gebaseerde tru-genetika; pSmart; phCMVdream; BHK-T7; BSR-T5/7; MA104; ST; selkultuur monolaag.

## List of abbreviations

[DNA]	: Concentration of DNA
aa	: Amino acid
AGE	: Agarose gel electrophoresis
AHSV	: African horsesickness virus
ASFV	: African swine fever virus
BHK	: Baby hamster kidney cells
bp	: Base pair (nucleic acids)
BTV	: Bluetongue virus
C3P3	: Chimeric cytoplasmic capping-prone phage polymerase
CPE	: Cytopathogenic effect
CAF	: Stellenbosch University's Central Analytical Facilities
DLP	: Double layered particle
DMEM	: Dulbecco's Modified Eagle Medium
DNA	: Deoxyribonucleic acid
dNTP	: Deoxyribonucleotide triphosphate
EDTA	: Ethylenediamine tetra-acetic acid
Em	: Emission range
EtBr	: Ethidium bromide
EtOH	: Ethanol or Ethel alcohol
Ex	: Excitation range
FAST	: Fusion-associated small transmembrane
FBS	: Fetal bovine serum
GS	: Genome segment
HDV	: Hepatitis Delta virus
IFMA	: Immuno-fluorescent monolayer assay
IgG	: Immunoglobulin G
IVIS	: In Vivo Imaging System
kDa	: Kilodaltons
LB	: Lysogeny broth, or Luria broth or Luria-Bertani broth
LPS	: Lipopolysaccharides
MA104	: African green monkey kidney cells
MCS	: Multiple cloning site
MEM	: Minimal essential medium
MMOH	: Methyl mercury hydroxide
MW	: Molecular weight
NBV	: Nelson-bay virus
NEAA	: Non-essential amino acid
NGS	: Next generation sequencing
NICD	: National Institute for Communal Diseases
NSP	: Non-structural protein (virology)
NWU	: North-West University
OD	: Optical density
ORF	: Open reading frame
PAGE	: Polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis
PBS	: Phosphate buffered saline
PCR	: Polymerase chain reaction
RG	: Reverse genetic or reverse genetics

RNA	: Ribonucleic acid
RNP	: Ribonucleoprotein complex
RSA	: South Africa
RV	: Rotavirus
SA11	: Simian agent 11 (RV)
SDS	: Sodium dodecyl sulphate
SG	: Sub-group (taxonomy)
SLP	: Single layered particle
ST	: Swine testes cells
SNP	: Single nucleotide polymorphism
SUV	: Sub-unit vaccine
TAE	: Tris-base, acetic acid and EDTA (buffer)
TBE	: Tris-base, boric acid and EDTA (buffer)
TCID <sub>50</sub>	: 50% of the Tissue culture infective dose
TLP	: Triple layered particle
U.K.	: United Kingdom
USA	: United States of America
UTR	: untranslated region
VLP	: Virus like particle
VP	: Viral protein (structural protein) (virology)
VV	: Vaccinia virus
w/v	: weight to volume (buffer preparation)
WT	: Wild type (virology)

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# Chapter 1

## Literature review

### 1.1 Background

Genetic research is at its very core the study of the correlation between an organism's genotype and its phenotype. It reveals the genes, or gene sequences, that produce specific enzymes or regulate various pathways, which in turn influence everything from cell differentiation during embryonic development to the metabolism and the immune response of the final organism. From beginning to end the genetic code inscribes an organism's life story, and we as geneticists aim to not only understand this story but also to understand how it is written, how it is read and how we can guide it to our advantage. This project utilized one of the most powerful tools in genetic research, namely reverse genetics (RG), as we implemented several RG systems for the generation and study of recombinant rotaviruses (RV).

One of the most definitive ways to study the role of specific genes or genetic elements in a viral genome is to modify its sequence and then generate infectious viruses through the process of RG. This can also be defined as the rescue of recombinant viruses from cell-culture based on modified transcripts or cDNA sequences . RG enables the targeted study of genetic changes in various viral genomes and can provide critical insights into viral replication, host range and the mechanisms that determine pathogenesis and virulence (Conradie *et al.*, 2016; Kanai *et al.*, 2017). This information is essential in the rationally guided combat of viral diseases, especially in terms of the highly adaptive and divergent RNA viruses, of which many are dangerous human pathogens. The impact of RNA virus RG systems on efforts to design effective and safe viral therapeutics and rationally guided vaccines is already enormous and will be even more significant in future.

For RVs, the lack of a robust and helper-virus independent RG system has until recently been the main bottleneck in progressive research and has left many elements of this virus's lifecycle and pathogenesis subject to speculation.

The recently developed, plasmid-only, pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system (Sen *et al.*, 2009) has opened up new avenues in research and promises to answer some of the most burning questions pertaining to RV replication, genome packaging, correlates of protection and virus-host interactions. However, to date mixed results have been obtained in regards to the recreation of the originally published RV RG results at various institutions (Potgieter, A.C. Deltamune. Personal communication). This clearly illustrated the need for further development and optimization of the initial Japanese pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system.

The plasmid-only pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system does not require the use of a helper-virus and is thus independent of any recombinant virus selection system, which has historically been one of the main limitations of RV RG systems. Kanai and associates recovered RV SA11-L2 after transfection of baby hamster kidney cells (BHK) constitutively expressing a viral T7-RNA polymerase (BHK-T7) with 11 RV cDNA transcription plasmids and expression plasmids encoding the fusion-associated small transmembrane (FAST) protein from the Nelson-bay virus (NBV), and the two subunits of the vaccinia virus (VV) capping enzyme. The system was made available to the scientific community through the AddGene service and was purchased and implemented at various institutions, including the NWU.

Although the initial pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system was quite difficult to repeat, its impact was clearly evident as publications on the various applications and optimizations of the system became available shortly after its release. Komoto and associates investigated RV replication using the pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system and found that NSP6 was not necessary for propagation in cell culture (Dormitzer *et al.*, 2004; Kobayashi *et al.*, 2007; McClain *et al.*, 2010; Patton, 2012; Pretorius *et al.*, 2015), and then further improved on the initial pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system by reducing the plasmid backbone size and increasing the ratios of viroplasm encoding gene sequences GS8 (NSP2) and GS11 (NSP5), threefold.

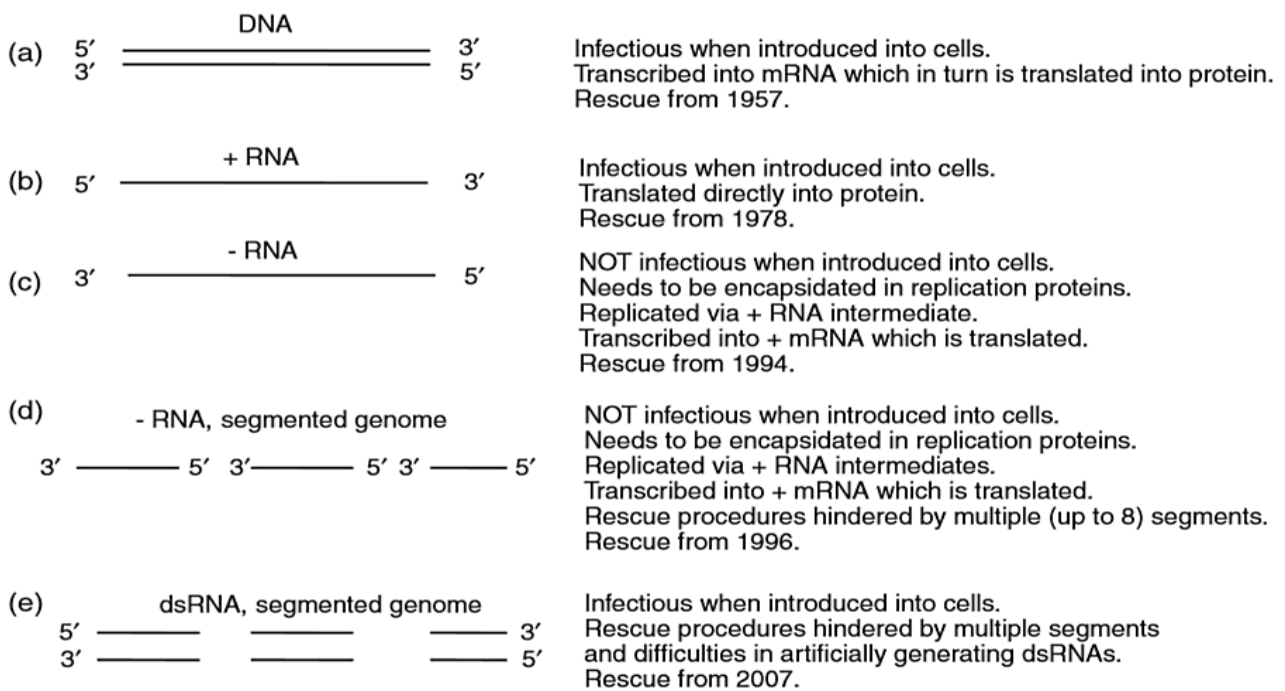
This increased the system's efficiency considerably and facilitated viral rescued without the use of the NBV FAST protein or the VV capping enzyme originally included in the pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system.

At the NWU we have been working on the development of a helper-virus independent RV RG system for several years. My project entailed the implementation of the initial Japanese pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system and the finalization and implementation of our own, locally developed, consensus sequence-based, plasmid only pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system. This will be followed by a comparative analysis between the Japanese and locally developed RV RG systems, as well as the rationally guided optimization of both. The optimizations considered in this project were based on the already established dsRNA virus RG systems of African horsesickness virus (AHSV) and bluetongue virus (BTV) .

## **1.2 Introduction to reverse genetics (RG)**

Conventional genetic research (forward genetics), describes the process by which a variation in the phenotype of an organism, be it naturally occurring or induced through mutagenesis, is correlated to a specific gene sequence. The process moves from the identification of a divergent, hereditary, phenotypic characteristic to the identification and isolation of the corresponding allele (through genome mapping) and finishes with DNA extraction, sequencing and mapping of the divergent gene against a normal or wild-type (WT) gene sequence. In essence, the researcher already knows the nature of the mutation, as it is observed, and therefore seeks the origin thereof. Although this system can be used for gene function assays and has been used therefor in the past, it is often difficult to precisely define a correlation between a specific gene and the observed mutant phenotype due to the massive interplay of various genes and regulatory elements in the presentation of a specific phenotypic characteristic . This approach is also limited to non-lethal mutations that are hereditary and phenotypically visible, requiring the generation of bi-allelic mutants which is a lengthy and expensive procedure. This concept is however turned around with RG as it moves from the genetic sequence through to the phenotypic trait, a seemingly semantic shift, but a fundamentally different approach. The main purpose of RG is therefore not to identify a gene responsible for a variant trait, but to elucidate the function of a specific gene, or genetic sequence, through guided mutagenesis followed by observation of the corresponding mutant phenotype.

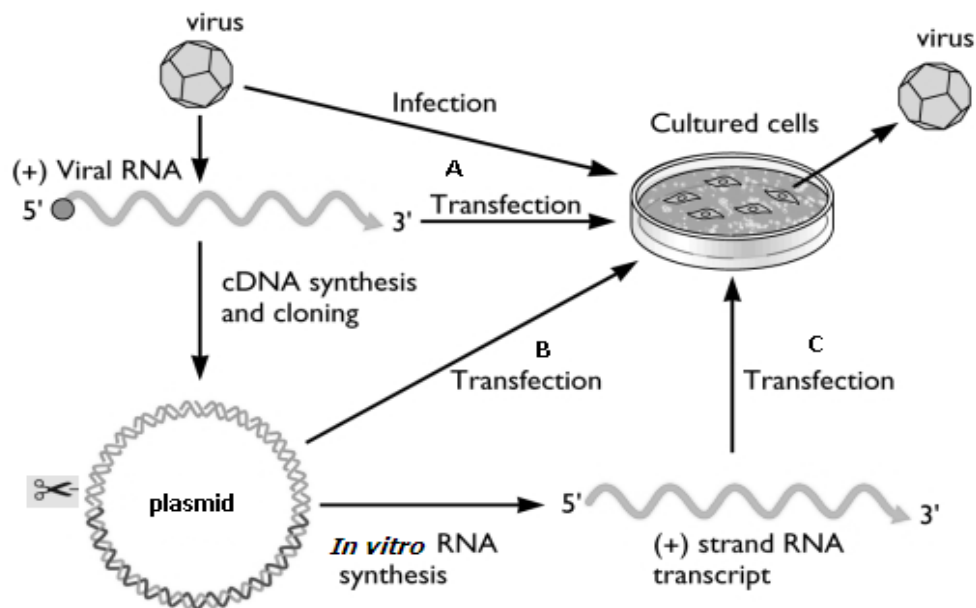
The use of RG more narrowly defines the specific function of the modified gene and directly correlates gene sequence to gene function through phenotypic evaluation. Currently, the majority of gene function assays are based on the rationally guided knock-out of specific genomic sequences through various means. These approaches have been used in various models, ranging from mouse to zebrafish, fruit flies and even various single-celled organisms (Argmann *et al.*, 2006; Bridgen, 2013; Goff & Berg, 1976; Racaniello & Baltimore, 1981). In terms of virology, RG is defined as the recovery, or rescue, of infectious viruses from cloned cDNA or mRNA that has been engineered to carry specific mutations or extra-genomic sequences (Baric & Sims, 2007; Sambrook & Russell, 2001; Wienholds *et al.*, 2002).



**Figure 1: Illustration of the most common viral genome configurations in chronological rescue order, including methods and challenges associated with each.** Image taken from Bridgen (2013) with permission.

Due to the diverse nature of viruses in terms of the replication cycle, genomic structure and host vectors, RG systems have to be adapted to the specific nature of the viral genome and correspondingly have very divergent techniques and strategies. Figure 1 illustrates and very briefly summarizes the basic variations of viral RG systems based on the most common viral genome configurations. The recovery of a dsDNA virus, for example, is more straightforward than that of a segmented dsRNA virus. The first published viral RG system was used to recover the dsDNA viruses,  $\lambda$ -phage, from

monkey kidney cells (Kao & Lee, 2013; van Gennip *et al.*, 2012). In this instance, the dsDNA used for transfection was deemed infectious as it was capable of producing infection viable viruses directly after transfection with no further adaptation or modification necessary. RNA viruses, however, require a bit more engineering to successfully rescue (Figure 2).



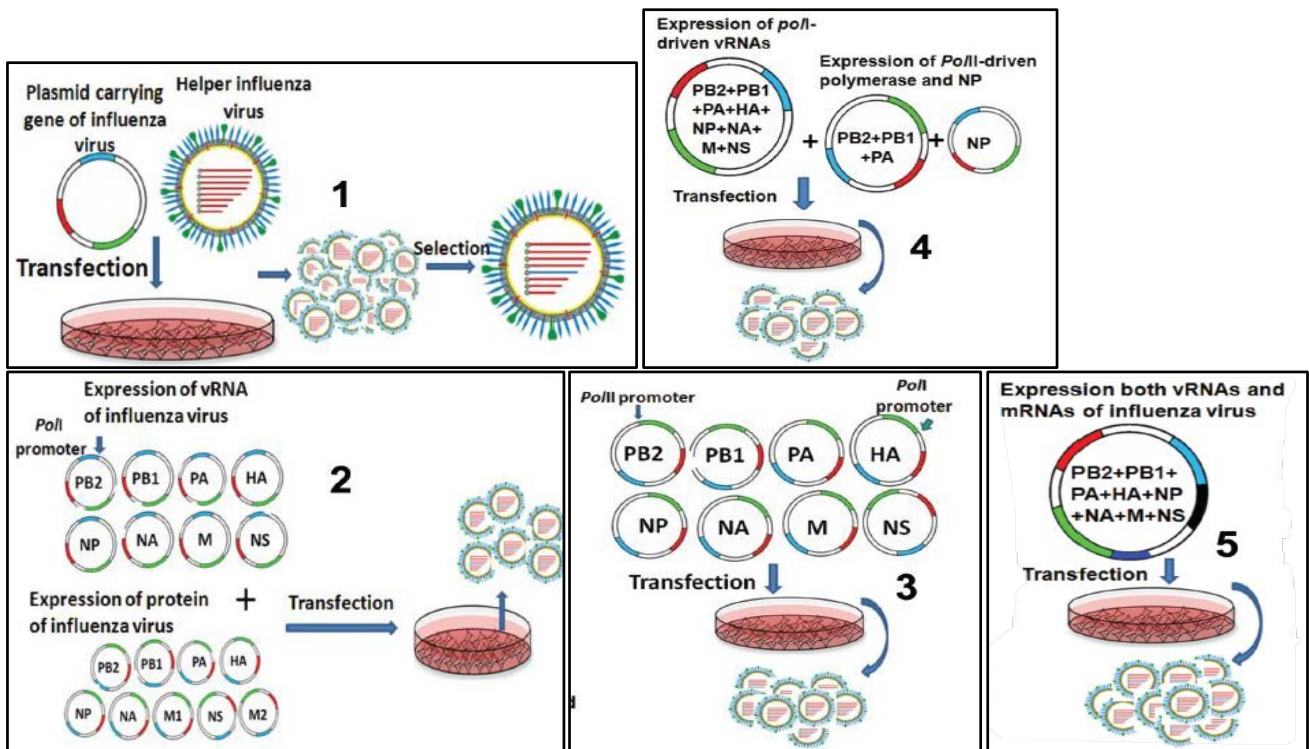
**Figure 2: Illustration of RG strategies for +sense RNA viruses.** **A:** Transfection of extracted wild-type viral transcripts into cells. **B:** Transfection of plasmids carrying cDNA copies of viral transcripts. **C:** *in vitro* transcription of cDNA followed by transfection

The first RNA virus to be rescued from a RG system was the poliomyelitis virus (poliovirus) in 1981. The positive-sense (+)RNA poliovirus was rescued by cloning a cDNA copy of the viral genome into the pBR322 plasmid, which was then used to generate transcripts that were transfected into cultured mammalian cells. The system was further developed to incorporate the SP6 polymerase promoter into the cDNA plasmid as a transcription regulatory factor. These transcription plasmids were then used to generate *in vitro* transcripts of the viral genome, which were then transfected into HeLa 3 cells to recover infectious recombinant poliovirus (Bhadauria *et al.*, 2009; Dickson, 2000). These strategies relied on the fact that the poliovirus has a (+)RNA genome which is deemed infectious once introduced into cells. Figure 2 illustrates the three main methods of rescuing (+)RNA viruses from cell-culture. **1)** Transfection of

viral mRNA derived from transcriptionally active viral particles. **2)** Transfection of cDNA carrying plasmids under the regulation of specific RNA-polymerase promoters into cells that express said RNA-polymerases. **3)** Transfection of *in vitro* generated transcripts from cDNA carrying plasmids. Each of these strategies generates positive-sense transcripts that mimic viral mRNAs and thus initiate viral replication.

In terms of negative-sense (-)RNA viruses, a lot of genetic engineering is required before a viable RG system can be implemented. The best example of this is most certainly the RG systems developed for influenza virus, as these systems had to cope with the fragility of ssRNA, the (-)sense nature of the viral genome and the need for ribonucleoprotein complexes (RNPs) formation before any virus could be rescued. The RNPs could be formed *in vitro* by adding viral genomic RNA to purified nucleoproteins and polymerase . Only through the formation of these complexes could the viral genome be stably carried into receptive cells and readily have available the various transcription and regulatory factors required for expression and replication. The influenza virus RG system is one of the most well-known and widespread viral RG systems to date and is used annually across the globe for the generation of rationally designed seasonal vaccines. The development of this system also closely mirrors the basic steps in the development and optimization of most viral RG systems, moving from a helper-virus based system to a solely plasmid-based system and finally to the incorporation of various genomic elements into a single plasmid.

Although not all viral RG systems follow this trajectory, the themes that guide its development and optimization are shared throughout viral RG. As illustrated by Figure 3, the first stage in the influenza RG system was based on the transfection of RNPs along with a cDNA transcription plasmid (carrying a cDNA copy of a single genome segment) into cultured eukaryotic cells. These cells were then later infected with a helper-virus (influenza A). This system relies on the propensity of the influenza virus to undergo reassortment, a process by which viral genome segments can be exchanged between related strains if co-infection occurs. Taking advantage of this naturally occurring phenomenon the RG system introduces numerous copies of a specific recombinant viral genome segment which will be incorporated into the genome of some of the viral progeny. This yields a viral population that is a mixture of unaltered helper-virus and recombinant influenza virus carrying the gene of interest.



**Figure 3: Illustration of the development and optimization of the influenza RG systems.** 1: Helper-virus based system where a single genome segment is exchanged. Most commonly an outer capsid protein associated with a cellular or humoral immune response. 2: Plasmid-based system that entails several expression plasmids encoding the various viral replication elements and transcription plasmids that produces precise viral mRNAs for viral genome packaging. 3: Plasmid-based system that consists solely of transcription plasmids each with various regulatory elements associated with viral replication. 4: The incorporation of various viral genome segments into single plasmids along with their various regulatory elements. 5: Single plasmid system that encodes the entire viral genome as well as all the regulatory factors required for its expression, translation and packaging. Image adapted from Bio-engineered 4:1; 9-14; January/February (2013) with permission.

The unaltered helper virus is then removed from the population through some or other selection system, yielding mostly recombinant virus. This is the first stage of the influenza RG system as the selection of unaltered helper virus is never 100% efficient and only single gene segment reassortment can be achieved. Over many years this system was redesigned, further developed and optimized (Matthijnssens *et al.*, 2008) as illustrated in Figure 3. A solely plasmid-based system comprising of 12 rescue plasmids was successfully implemented and quickly replaced by one comprising of only 8 (Braks *et al.*, 2006; Chinnery *et al.*, 2004). This trend continued until a 5 plasmid system was developed. Currently, the majority of the commercial influenza A RG systems comprise of a highly optimized single vector system that is annually used around the globe to generate rationally designed, seasonal influenza vaccines (Luytjes *et al.*, 1989).

Although not precisely, most RG systems follow a similar development approach as the influenza virus RG system, moving from a single substitution helper-virus based system to more advanced transcript-based and plasmid-based systems which are then optimized and fine-tuned over time. The ability to engineer recombinant viruses makes it possible to study the biology of the virus and also to generate rationally designed vaccine candidates.

## 1.3 Rotavirus

### 1.3.1 Rotavirus classification

When viewed under an electron microscope the rotavirus particle has a distinct wheel-and-spoke like structure, hence the use of the name “rota”, Latin for “wheel” . Taxonomically, rotaviruses belong to the genus *Rotavirus* which in turn belongs to the *Reoviridae* family which comprises of two subfamilies (*Sedoreovirinae* and *Spinareovirinae*) and a total of 15 genera (Table 1). This family is characterised by viruses with genomes consisting of 9 to 12 linear segments of dsRNA (Jansen *et al.*, 1997; Maclean *et al.*, 2017).

Historically RV classification was based on the use of monoclonal antibodies to identify the presence or lack of specific VP6 epitopes. More recently however rotaviruses were divided into eight serogroups (A through H) based on the amino-acid (aa) sequence and immunogenic properties of their structural protein VP6 . Group A rotaviruses are the major cause of diarrhoea in humans, with groups B and C contributing to a lesser extent.

Table 1: Classification of dsRNA viruses within the Reoviridae family

Subfamily	Genus	Number of genome-segments	Particle diameter and genome size	Selected examples of members of the virus species
Spinareovirinae	<i>Aquareovirus</i>	11	75 nm (30,500 bp)	Aquareovirus A (Chum Salmon reovirus CS)
	<i>Coltivirus</i>	12	60 – 80 nm (29, 000 bp)	Colorado tick fever virus (strain Florio)
	<i>Cypovirus</i>	10	65 nm (25, 000 bp)	<i>Lymantria dispar cypovirus 1</i>
	<i>Dinovemavirus</i>	9	49 – 50 nm (unknown)	<i>Aedes pseudoscutellaris reovirus</i>
	<i>Fijivirus</i>	10	65 – 70 nm (27, 000 – 30, 000 bp)	<i>Fiji disease virus</i>
	<i>Idnoreovirus</i>	10 – 11	70 nm (27, 000 – 30, 000 bp)	<i>Idnoreovirus 1: Diadromus pulchellus</i>
	<i>Mycoreovirus</i>	11 or 12	80 nm (~ 23, 000 bp)	<i>mycoreovirus 1: Cryphonectria parasitica mycoreovirus-1</i>
	<i>Orthoreovirus</i>	10	80 nm (~23, 500 bp)	<i>Mammalian orthoreovirus</i>
	<i>Oryzavirus</i>	10	70 nm (26, 000 bp)	<i>Rice ragged stunt virus</i>
	<i>Cardoreovirus</i>	11	55 nm (Not known)	<i>Eriocheir sinensis reovirus</i>
	<i>Orbivirus</i>	10	80 nm (19, 200 bp)	<i>African horseshickness virus; bluetongue virus</i>
	Sedoreovirinae	<i>Mimoreovirus</i>	11	90 nm – 95 nm (25, 400 bp)
<i>Phytoreovirus</i>		12	70 nm (26, 000 bp)	<i>Wound tumour virus</i>
<i>Rotavirus</i>		11	80 nm (~18, 500 bp)	<b>Rotavirus A</b>
<i>Seadornavirus</i>		11	60 nm – 70nm (~21, 000 bp)	<i>Banna virus</i>

Data in table extracted from (Goff & Berg, 1976). Genus used in this project, i.e. rotavirus, highlighted in blue.

RVs were also classified through RNA electrophoretic separation profiles (based on GS11). This technique divided RV into sub-groups (SG) namely SGI, SGII, SGI and II or non-SGI and II (Bridgen & Elliott, 1996). Additionally, RNA-RNA hybridization studies group RVs into various genogroups represented by the Wa, DS-1 and Au-1 prototype strains (Table 2). The Wa strain is the prototype of the Wa-like genogroup which contains SGII rotaviruses with a long electropherotype whilst the DS-1-like genogroup is represented by the prototype RV DS-1 strain which is classified in SGI, with a characteristic short electropherotype. The AU-1 strain is the prototype of AU-1-like strains which have a long electropherotype and are also placed into SGI (Ebihara *et al.*, 2005).

**Table 2: Whole-genome genotype constellation of selected prototype RV strains**

Strain	Species	Genotype*											
		VP[7]	VP4	VP6	VP1	VP2	VP3	NSP1	NSP2	NSP3	NSP4	NSP5	
Wa	Hu	G1	P[8]	I1	R1	C1	M1	A1	N1	T1	E1	H1	
DS-1	Hu	G2	P[4]	I2	R2	C2	M2	A2	N2	T2	E2	H2	
Au-1	Hu	G3	P[9]	I3	R3	C3	M3	A3	N3	T3	E3	H3	
OSU	Po	G5	P[7]	I5	R1	C1	M1	A1	N1	T1	E1	H1	
PO-13	Av	G18	P[17]	I4	R4	C4	M4	A4	N4	T4	E4	H4	
SA11-H96	Si	G3	P[2]	I2	R2	C5	M5	A5	N5	T5	E2	H5	

Reassortants are visualised by a non-homogenous constellation colour. \*The colour scheme is used to enhance the visualisation of certain patterns or genome segment constellations. Green, red, and orange depict the human strains (Hu) Wa-like, DS-1-like, and AU-like genome segments, respectively. Yellow, blue, and purple respectively indicate the avian (Av) PO-13-like rotavirus genome segments; some typical porcine (Po) VP4, VP7, and VP6 genotypes; and the SA-11-like genome segments. Table taken from (Nakagomi *et al.*, 1985)(Kaplan *et al.*, 1985; Racaniello & Baltimore, 1981) with permission.

The great diversity observed among the RVs is thought to arise from the segmented nature of the viruses' genome and its propensity to undergo reassortment (Yu *et al.*, 2019). This makes classification difficult as zoonosis and reassortment frequently lead to novel strains.

To not only classify each specific strain fully, but also illustrate its genetic relationship to other strains, a full genome-based classification system was developed (Fodor *et al.*, 1999; Kaplan *et al.*, 1985). Sequence identity cut-off limits are used when comparing the sequences of each individual genome segment of a specific strain according to the following annotation: Gx-P[x]-Ix-Rx-Cx-Mx-Ax-Nx-Tx-Ex-Hx which respectively represents the genotype for genome segments encoding VP7-VP4-VP6-

VP1-VP2-VP3-NSP1-NSP2-NSP3-NSP4-NSP5/6. The capital letters in the genotype were derived from the function associated with the protein i.e., **g**lycoprotein, **p**rotease-sensitive, **i**nnner capsid, **R**NA-dependent RNA polymerase, **c**ore, **m**ethyltransferase, interferon **a**ntagonist, **N**Tase, **t**ranslation enhancer, **e**nterotoxin and **p**hosphoprotein (Table 3). As of April 2011 27 G, 35 P, 16 I, 9 R, 9 C, 8 M, 16 A, 9 N, 12 T, 14 E and 11 H genotypes varieties are known and this number is expected to rise as more whole-genome sequencing projects are undertaken globally (Neumann *et al.*, 2005).

The outer most layer of the RV TLP comprises of the **p**rotease-sensitive VP4 and the **g**lycoprotein VP7 which are also commonly used to classify various RV into G- and P-serotypes. Historically this was done using neutralizing antibodies against various VP4 and VP7s, however, this approach is limited due to the lack of a wide range of antibodies and various other technical difficulties . More recently, RT-PCR and sequencing have been used to determine the P and G genotypes based on genome sequence correlations (Attoui *et al.*, 2011).

Current nomenclature dictates that as much information about the strain as possible is included in its identification. The Rotavirus Classification Working Group recommends that strains be named using a notation that states the RV group, species of origin, country of identification, common name, year of identification and G- and P-types (Mertens, 2004). For instance, the strain used in this project (simian agent 11, SA11) originally isolated in 1958 is named: RVA/Simian-tc/ZAF/SA11-H96/1958-N5/G3P5B[2].

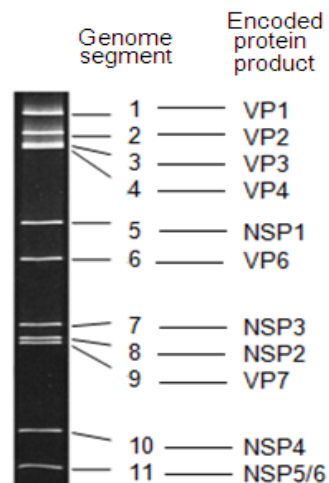
**Table 3: The rotavirus genome segments, encoded proteins and their known functions**

GS	Size (bp)	Protein	Size (kDa)	Location	Genotype*	Protein function
1	3302	VP1	125	Core	R	RNA-dependent RNA polymerase; 3'-mRNA binding; forms transcription complex with VP3
2	2690	VP2	102	Inner capsid	C	Inner capsid structural protein; non-specific ssRNA and dsRNA binding; myristoylated; required for replicase activity of VP1.
3	2591	VP3	98	Core	M	Guanylyltransferase and methyltransferase; non-specific ssRNA binding; part of transcription complex with VP1
4	2362	VP4	VP4: 88 VP5*: 60 VP8*: 28	Outer capsid	P	Outer capsid spike protein; P-type neutralization antigen; virulence determinant; cell-attachment protein; trypsin cleavage into VP5* and VP8* enhances infectivity; VP5* permeabilises membranes; VP8* contains the haemagglutinin domain (in some strains)
5	1611	NSP1	59	Cytoplasm	A	Associates with cytoskeleton; high degree of sequence variation; role in suppression of host interferon response
6	1356	VP6	48	Middle capsid	I	Major virion protein; middle capsid structural protein; homotrimeric structure; group- and subgroup-specific antigen
7	1105	NSP3	35	Cytoplasm	T	Homodimer; virus-specific 3'-mRNA binding; binds elongation factor eIF4G1 and circularises mRNA on translation initiation complex; involved in translational regulation and host shut-off
8	1059	NSP2	37	Cytoplasm	N	NTPase and helicase activity; non-specific ssRNA binding; a major component of the viroplasm; binds NSP5 and VP1; essential for dsRNA synthesis and formation of infectious viral progeny
9	1062	VP7	37	Outer capsid	G	Outer capsid structural glycoprotein; G-type neutralization antigen; N-linked high mannose glycosylation and trimming; RER transmembrane calcium-binding
10	751	NSP4	20	Cytoplasm	E	Viral enterotoxin; receptor for double-layer particle budding through ER membrane; N-linked high mannose glycosylation; modulates intracellular calcium levels essential for viral RNA replication and formation of infectious viral progeny
11	667	NSP5/6	NSP5: 22 NSP6: 11	Cytoplasm	H	NSP5: viroplasm formation; multimerizes; O-linked glycosylation; hyper-phosphorylated; autokinase activity; enhanced by NSP2 interaction; binds ssRNA; component of viroplasm NSP6: interacts with NSP5 and localises to viroplasms

\*Function-dependent genotype annotation adapted from (Mertens, 2004). The size data in the table is based on the rotavirus SA11 strain (Kohli *et al.*, 1992). GS: genome segment; ds: double-stranded; ss: single-stranded; ER: endoplasmic reticulum; R5ER: rough ER

### 1.3.2 Rotavirus genome structure and protein-coding assignment

The RV genome consists of 11 segments of dsRNA that range from 667bp to 3302bp in size, based of RV SA11 (Estes & Cohen, 1989; Ramig, 1997), which encode 6 structural and 6 nonstructural proteins (Table 3). Each genome segment (GS) is monocistronic (encodes a single protein) except for GS11 which is polycistronic and encodes NSP5 and NSP6 in two overlapping out of frame ORFs (Mitchell & Both, 1988). The viral dsRNA genomes can be extracted and fully visualized through polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis (PAGE) to produce a separation profile that is unique to specific RV strains (Figure 4).



**Figure 4: The rotavirus dsRNA genome segments resolved by SDS-PAGE along with encoded protein products.** Image taken from Patton (2012) with permission.

The structure of each of the 11 dsRNA genome segments has a similar design starting with a 5`-m<sup>7</sup>GpppG<sup>(m)</sup> cap (Imai *et al.*, 1983; Pizarro *et al.*, 1991) followed by the 5`-UTR (untranslated region) leading into the ORF and finally culminating in the UTR-3` of that segment (Patton, 1995). These UTRs vary in length and consensus-sequence and range from 9 to 49bp for the 5`- regions and 17 to 182bp for the -3` regions. Highly conserved, group-specific terminal sequences are present among the various serogroups, A through H, (Matthijnssens *et al.*, 2012), Table 4.

**Table 4: Variations between the 5'- and 3'-terminal end sequence of selected rotavirus strains of the different serogroups**

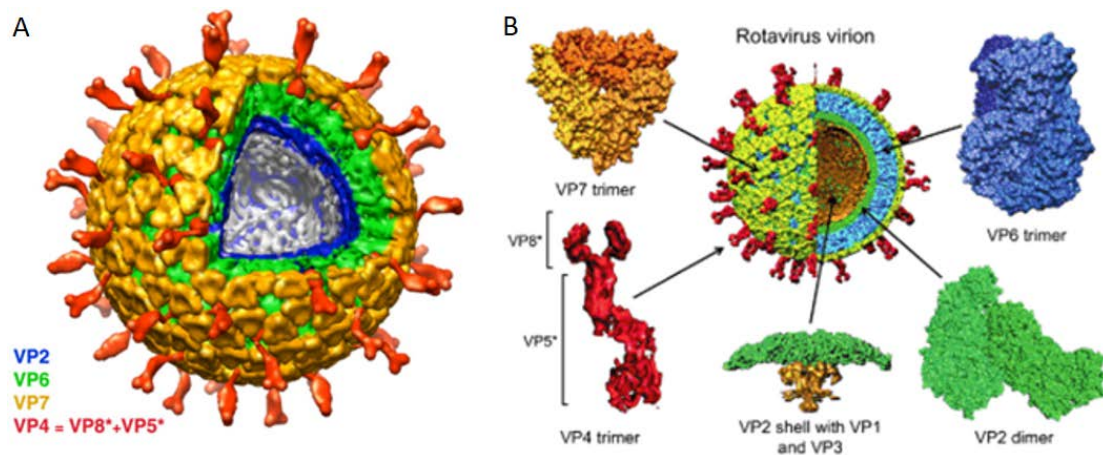
Group	Strain	5'-terminal sequence	3'-terminal sequence
A	SA11	5'-GGC(A/U) <sub>7</sub> -	-AUGUGACC-3' *
B	IDIR	5'-GGCC/U-	-ACCC-3'
C	Bristol	5'-GGCC(A/U) <sub>7</sub> -	-GGCU-3'
D	HS-58	5'-GG(U) <sub>5</sub> (A) <sub>3</sub> -	-GACC-3'
H	ADRV-N	5'-GGCACU-	-ACCCC-3'

(Matthijnssens *et al.*, 2008b), \*(Trojnar *et al.*, 2010)

With reference to RV\_SA11, each of the genome segments contain a 5`-GGC(A/U)<sub>7</sub>- and a 3`-AUGUGACC conserved terminal region (Chizhikov & Patton, 2000; Imai *et al.*, 1983; Patton, 1995; Tortorici *et al.*, 2006; Trojnar *et al.*, 2010; Wentz *et al.*, 1996). This characteristic of conserved 5` and 3` UTR sequences are observed among all RV strains although slight variations occur following the second G of the 5`-GGN sequence. These conserved regions are thought to play a critical role in genome packaging. For this reason, any RV RG system should be designed to generate very precise 5`- and -3` transcript termini to facilitate viral rescue.

### 1.3.3 Rotavirus particle structure

The mature RV particle, or virion, comprises of a triple-layered, non-enveloped, icosahedral capsid which encases the 11 dsRNA segments of the viral genome (Figure 5, A). Due to its structural properties, the mature virion is also referred to as the triple-layered particle or TLP and has a diameter of about 80 nm (Ludert *et al.*, 1986; McClain *et al.*, 2010). The interior of the capsid is comprised of mainly 60 VP2 dimers in a T = 2 icosahedral symmetry, where five dimers arrange in a fivefold axis to form a decamer which in turn is arranged into a uniform viral core particle of 12 decamers (thus 120 VP2 molecules in total). Small pores along the fivefold axis are left after core particle assembly to allow transcription of the viral genome by VP1 (viral RNA-dependent RNA polymerase) and VP3 (viral methyltransferase) (Desselberger, 2014; Matthijnssens *et al.*, 2008a).



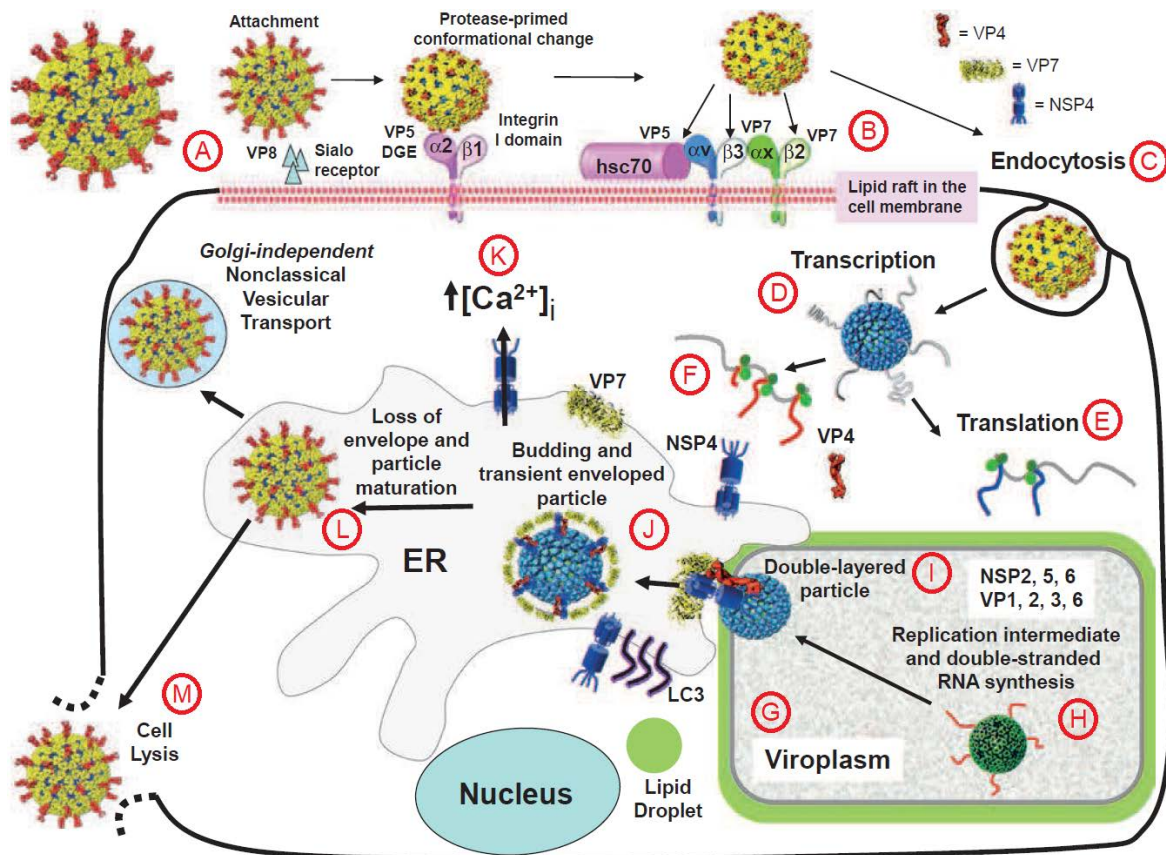
**Figure 5: 3D graphic representation of the rotavirus virion and particle architecture.** **A:** Cut-away model of a rotavirus triple-layered particle. The inner layer is composed of the structural protein VP2 (blue), the middle layer is composed of VP6 (green) and the outer layer is made up of VP4 (red) and VP7 (yellow-orange). **B:** Schematic illustration of rotavirus structure from cryoEM reconstruction, and the location of the structural protein components. Figure adapted from (Greenberg *et al.*, 1983), with permission.

VP1 and VP3, which together form the viral genome replication complex, are the remainder of the internal structure of the core particle and are arranged around the pores of the fivefold axis (Desselberger, 2014; Jere *et al.*, 2014; Kushnir *et al.*, 2012; Liu *et al.*, 2013; Pesavento *et al.*, 2006). The viral core is encased by VP6 in the form of 260 trimers arranged in a T= 13 icosahedral symmetry. VP6 forms the middle layer of the tVLP and interacts with the VP2 dimers as well as the outer layer VP7 and VP4 trimers. The outermost layer of the mature viral capsid is comprised of 260 VP7 trimers associated with 60 spikes of VP4 trimers in icosahedral symmetry. The virion also contains 132 channels along the fivefold axis used during viral genome transcription (capped mRNA exits through these channels and enters the cytoplasm without exposing the dsRNA genome to the intracellular environment).

#### 1.3.4 Rotavirus replication and life-cycle

Rotavirus is transmitted mainly through the faecal-oral pathway with villus cells of the small intestine being the primary target for infection. The replication cycle of RV (Figure 6) is a complex set of steps that can be summarised as attachment, entry and uncoating, viral genome transcription and translation, viroplasm formation, DLP

formation, TLP formation and maturation and finally release of fully matured viral particles (Desselberger *et al.*, 2009; Estes *et al.*, 1979a; Flewett & Woode, 1978a).

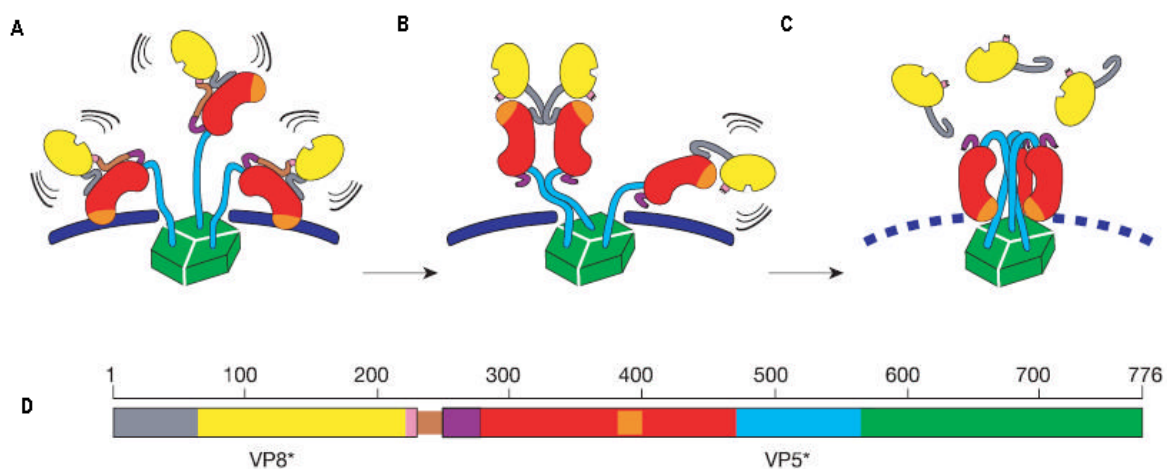


**Figure 6: Graphic representation of the rotavirus life-cycle.** **A:** Attachment of rotavirus to cell surface through sialo acid receptor mediated binding of VP8 (proteolytically cleaved subunit of VP4). **B:** Interaction of various integrin ligand motifs in VP5 and VP7 with integrins  $\alpha 2 \beta 1$ ,  $\alpha v \beta 3$  and  $\alpha x \beta 2$  facilitating viral attachment and initiation of viral entry through endocytosis. Interactions with heat shock protein 70 also illustrated. **C:** Viral entry via endocytosis and formation of endosome. During this step the viral particle also undergoes uncoating and sheds the outer VP4 and VP7 layer exposing the transcriptionally active DLP to the cytoplasm. **D:** Transcription of the viral genome. **F:** Translation of the viral mRNA resulting in viral protein synthesis leading to the formation of the viroplasm. The precise mechanisms regulating viroplasm formation are still unclear, however it is well known that GS8 (NSP2) and GS11 (NSP5) are key components in its formation. **E:** Transcription of viral mRNA for incorporation into newly formed replication intermediary. **G:** Recruitment of lipid droplets for the formation of the viroplasm. NSP2, 5 and 6 are strongly associated with the formation of the viroplasm along with the structural units of the newly formed DLP namely VP1, 2, 3 and 6. **H:** Formation of the replication intermediary during which one of each of the 11 genome segments are encased in the core particle in association with VP1, VP3 and VP2. **I:** Attachment of VP6 to the core particle and the synthesis of dsRNA within the core particle through the activity of VP1. **J:** Transferral of newly formed DLP to ER for attachment of outer layer of VP7 and VP4. **K:** During initial uncoating and later maturation of the TLP,  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ion concentrations play a critical role in the stabilization of VP7 trimers. Low concentrations of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  (such as those found in the endosome) destabilize VP7 trimers and initiate uncoating. Increased concentrations of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  (facilitated through NSP4 activity) are required for proper coating of the DLP and maturation of the TLP. **L:** Maturation of TLP following the disassociation of the envelope and non-vesicle transport of virions to cell surface for viral budding or shedding. This process is independent of the Golgi apparatus and is not fully understood as of yet. **M:** final release of matured viral particles through cell lysis or viral budding. Matured TLPs are now deemed infectious and spread to adjacent cells. Image taken from (Gouvea *et al.*, 1990; Komoto *et al.*, 2017; Matthijnssens *et al.*, 2011; Matthijnssens *et al.*, 2008b; Pesavento *et al.*, 2006) with permission.

As illustrated by Figure 6, many of the key mechanisms regulating RV replication are still unknown. The elucidation of these mechanisms and their interactions is one of the most anticipated outcomes of a robust, traceable, helper-virus independent RV RG system. For a complete list of possible RV RG outputs see Section 1.4.3.4.

### 1.3.4.1 Viral attachment and cell entry

Viral attachment is mainly mediated through VP4 (Ludert *et al.*, 1996a), although integrin ligand motifs in VP7 also contribute to stable binding and have been correlated to the initiation of endocytosis (Coulson *et al.*, 1997; Gutierrez *et al.*, 2010). The VP4 (GS4) spike is proteolytically cleaved into the two sub-units, VP5 and VP8 (Arias *et al.*, 1996; Espejo *et al.*, 1981; Estes *et al.*, 1981) which increases infectivity and might be essential for the propagation of some RV strains (Figure 7).



**Figure 7: Model showing the rearrangement of VP4 during trypsin cleavage and cell entry. A:** Non-cleaved (brown line) state with possible, flexible, free play indicated by wavy lines. **B:** Trypsin cleaved state. **C:** Folded-back state which exposes the hydrophobic regions during membrane penetration. **D:** Colour coded, linear VP4 indicating the location of amino acid regions in VP5\* and VP8\*. The head region is coloured in yellow (the VP8\* core), notched at the sialoside-binding cleft. The body includes the red domain (VP5\* antigenic region) and the orange cap (the potential membrane interaction loop), the purple appendage, and part of the grey and cyan tubes. The stalk is the lower part of the cyan tubes and the foot is shown in green. Image taken from (Matthijssens *et al.*, 2008a)(Neumann *et al.*, 2005) with permission

The VP5 and VP8 subunits remain in a non-covalent association with the viral particle (Ludert *et al.*, 1996b; Trask *et al.*, 2012), with VP8 interacting with sialic acids on various cellular glycans and VP5 (alongside VP7) acting as co-receptors following initial viral attachment (Ciarlet & Estes, 1999; Haselhorst *et al.*, 2011; Haselhorst *et al.*, 2009). As illustrated in Figure 7, the dissociation of VP8 following trypsin cleavage allows the trimeric coiled chains to zip together, resulting in the body folding back to expose hydrophobic regions within VP5 (Dormitzer *et al.*, 2004; Trask *et al.*, 2012; Yoder *et al.*, 2009).

These regions, especially aa139, are responsible for permeabilisation of the cell membrane (Kim *et al.*, 2010) and facilitate viral entry. Mutations in this region (V139D) reduced infectivity 10 000-fold (Kim *et al.*, 2010) and truncations (385–404) abolishes membrane permeability altogether (Dowling *et al.*, 2000).

Integrins  $\alpha 2\beta 1$  and  $\alpha 4\beta 1$  are associated with viral attachment and integrin  $\alpha v\beta 3$  with viral entry (Ciarlet *et al.*, 2002; Guerrero *et al.*, 2000; Hewish *et al.*, 2000; Londrigan *et al.*, 2000). When blocking integrin  $\alpha v\beta 3$  with monoclonal antibodies in MA104 cell-cultures RV infection was inhibited (Guerrero *et al.*, 2000), indicating that integrin  $\alpha v\beta 3$  plays a crucial role in viral entry. Integrin  $\alpha 2\beta 1$ , however, was later found to be non-essential for attachment, although it does promote cell entry. RV has also been shown to interact with heat shock protein 70 (Lopez & Arias, 2004). Following viral entry, low  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  levels in the endosome and cytoplasm cause destabilization of the VP7 trimers coating the TLP, resulting in the solubilisation and uncoating of the VP7 and VP4 outer layer, and exposure of the transcriptionally active DLP to the cytoplasm (Charpilienne *et al.*, 2002; Estes *et al.*, 1979b; Ruiz *et al.*, 2007; Ruiz *et al.*, 1996; Ruiz *et al.*, 2000; Ruiz *et al.*, 2005).

#### **1.3.4.2 Viral genome transcription and translation**

During viral entry, the outer most layer of the TLP (VP 4 & VP7) is shed due to low  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  concentrations within the endosome. This results in the exposure of the transcriptionally active DLP to the cytoplasm (Bican *et al.*, 1982). During this process it is thought that conformational changes within the DLP activate VP1 and VP3, initiating viral genome transcription (Dowling *et al.*, 2000; Gilbert *et al.*, 2001; Ruiz *et al.*

*al.*, 2000). The activation is thought to be mediated by VP6 through its interactions with the inner core (VP2) and outer capsid protein VP4 as it detaches. This is supported by the fact that VP2 core particles (lacking VP6) are not transcriptionally active (Sandino *et al.*, 1986). VP1 uses the negative strand of the dsRNA genome as template to synthesise, non-polyadenylated plus-sense (+)ssRNA which is then capped by VP3 before being transferred to the cytoplasm (Guglielmi *et al.*, 2010; Patton, 1986).

This is a rapid process as transcripts are detectable 1 hour post-infection (hpi) (Patton *et al.*, 2004). These (+)ssRNAs serve as both mRNA for viral protein synthesis and as template for dsRNA synthesis within the viroplasm (Chen *et al.*, 1994). Transcripts are not synthesized in equi-molar amounts as experiments with RNA interference have shown that smaller genome segments are synthesised more rapidly and at higher amounts than the larger ones (Ayala-Breton *et al.*, 2009). At 12 hpi the relative number of GS10 (NSP4, 751bp) transcripts is roughly 4.5 and 2 times greater than those of GS1 (VP1, 3302bp) and GS6 (VP6, 1356bp) respectively (Stacy-Phipps & Patton, 1987).

NSP3 has been shown to bind to the 3'-terminal end of RV transcripts and interact with eukaryotic initiation factor 2- $\alpha$  (eIF2- $\alpha$ ) (Piron *et al.*, 1999; Piron *et al.*, 1998) in a similar way to how poly-A binding protein (PABP) binds to native poly-A mRNA tails. This is thought to result in circularisation of the RV transcripts, leading to enhanced expression of these transcripts over native mRNAs (Vende *et al.*, 2000). NSP3 has also been shown to suppress or completely silence the expression of various host cell proteins (Montero *et al.*, 2006) further aiding in the selective expression of RV transcripts.

#### **1.3.4.3 Viroplasm formation and DLP assembly**

The viroplasm is an electron-dense, membrane-free, cytoplasmic inclusion that is formed by NSP2 and NSP5 (Contin *et al.*, 2010; Fabbretti *et al.*, 1999), within which (-)ssRNA synthesis, viral genome replication and packaging occurs. Viral intermediaries (DLPs) are formed within the viroplasm. Multiple viroplasms can form during early infection, which usually merges together to form larger structures during later stages

of infection. Besides NSP2 and NSP5, viroplasms are also strongly associated with VP1, VP3, VP2 and VP6 (structural components of DLPs). Viral (+)ssRNA segments are also present in high concentrations (Eichwald *et al.*, 2004). Cellular tubulin is sequestered to the viroplasm during its formation, through unknown means, where it is depolymerised by NSP2. This provides structure and also aids in the evasion of the host-cells antiviral mechanisms (Martin *et al.*, 2010).

The viroplasm co-localizes with cytoplasmic lipids and lipid droplets, as well as the lipid droplet-associated proteins perilipin A and ADRP, which are thought to recruit droplets to the viroplasm during its formation. Currently, it is thought that these lipid-droplets are essential for the formation of the viroplasm and the production of infectious viral particles (Cheung *et al.*, 2010). Genomic dsRNA can be detected 2 to 4 hpi (Patton *et al.*, 2004) within the viroplasm in equi-molar amounts (Ayala-Breton *et al.*, 2009), despite the various genome segments size variations and cytoplasmic expression levels. It is postulated that (+)ssRNA is used as template for (-)ssRNA synthesis and dsRNA genome packaging. It is not clear if these (+)ssRNAs are incorporated into the viroplasm during its formation, or recruited and shuttled into it after its completion (Carreno-Torres *et al.*, 2010; Silvestri *et al.*, 2004). The -UGUG-3' terminal sequence is essential for viral genome replication (Patton *et al.*, 1996; Trojnar *et al.*, 2010) and is selectively recognised by VP1 (Lu *et al.*, 2008) for packaging and dsRNA synthesis. The exact mechanism regulating the recruitment and packaging of (+)ssRNA into the DLP is not currently understood.

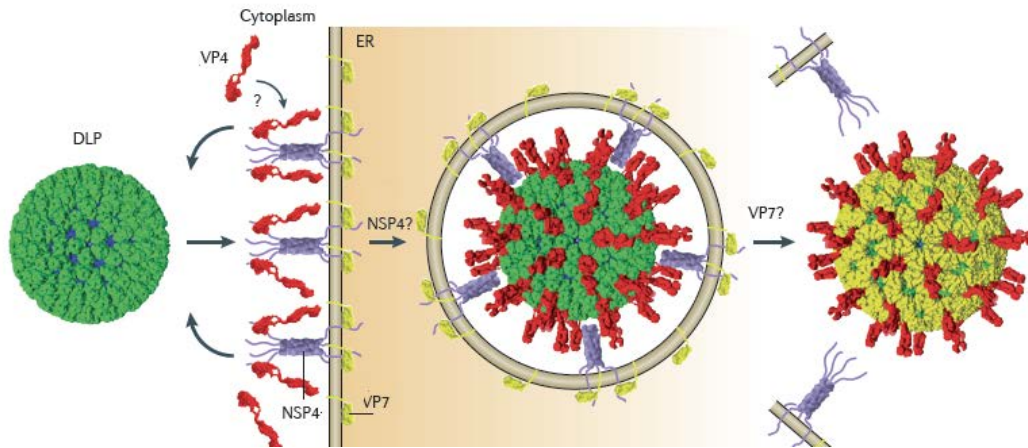
One packaging model, based on the observed equi-molar ratios of genome segments in mature virions, suggests a process during which each individual (+)ssRNA GS forms a hybridization complex with another in a sequential manner until all 11 GSs are associated with one another through RNA-RNA interactions. This complex is then bound to free VP1, which is known to have a high affinity for (+)ssRNA, to form a ssRNA-polymerase complex (McDonald & Patton, 2011). Following this, VP2 then binds to the ssRNA-polymerase complex, simultaneously forming the structural units for the SLP (core particle) and inducing a conformational change in VP1 which induces (-)ssRNA synthesis and genome replication (Patton *et al.*, 1997). This model is based on that of the packaging model observed in influenza (Hutchinson *et al.*, 2010). Many alternative packaging models are also proposed, however to date no concrete evidence has been found definitively identifying one as correct.

Whether or not genome packaging takes place before or after DLP completion, the stages of the DLP auto-assembly are as follows, the VP1\_VP3 polymerase complex binds to VP2 pentamers before the VP2 pentamers coalesce into a SLP (or core particle). The SLP is then coated by VP6 trimers to form the completed DLP viral intermediary. This process culminates in the transport of the DLP to the ER where NSP4 mediated coating of VP4 and VP7 takes place. The mechanism of transport between the viroplasm and ER is not fully understood, but it is clear that NSP4 plays a decisive role in its execution.

#### **1.3.4.4 TLP formation and virion maturation**

Viral maturation occurs in the ER and entails the coating of the DLP with VP4 (spikes) and VP7 to form a complete TLP. This process appears to be directly regulated by NSP4 (Hu *et al.*, 2012), as experiments wherein NSP4 was silenced through siRNAs in MA014 cells, the viral yield decreased with roughly 75% (Lopez *et al.*, 2005). NSP4 is a multi-functional, regulatory protein and exists in various forms in and around the infected cell. The majority of intracellular NSP4 is accumulated within the ER, with extracellular and cytoplasmic NSP4 also being present, but in lower concentrations. Trans-membrane intracellular NSP4 (iNSP4) is known to bind both DLPs budded from the viroplasm and VP4, in a chaperone-like manner (Trask *et al.*, 2012).

While the precise mechanism of DLP release from the viroplasm is unknown, it is evident that NSP4 recruits DLPs into the outer-capsid-assembly pathway (Au *et al.*, 1989; Berkova *et al.*, 2006; Trask *et al.*, 2012) whereby it mediates the binding of VP4 trimers onto the DLP (Figure 8). During this stage, the trans-membrane NSP4 is bound to both the DLP and VP4 and causes a deformation in the ER that results in encapsulation of the DLP and the formation of a VP7 containing envelope. The VP7 trimers comprising the envelope bind to the DLP and lock VP4 in place (Trask *et al.*, 2012). NSP4 also regulates the high  $Ca^{2+}$  concentration within the ER required for the formation of stable VP7 trimers and the proper coating of the DLP (Kuum *et al.*, 2012; Ruiz *et al.*, 2000; Waldron *et al.*, 1994).



**Figure 8: Illustration of NSP4 mediated DLP binding and ER penetration during outer capsid coating pathway.** NSP4 binding to both VP4 and the DLP causes ER membrane deformation and entry into the ER. During this stage VP4 associates with the DLP and a temporary envelope containing VP7 is formed. VP7 binds to the DLP, locking VP4 in place and the envelope is lost through unknown means. Figure taken from Trask et al., 2012b with permission.

After the enveloped TLP has bound both VP4 and VP7, the envelope is lost through unknown means and the mature TLP is released at the apical surface of the now polarised cells before cell lysis (Cuadras *et al.*, 2006).

### 1.3.5 Rotavirus pathogenesis and vaccines

#### 1.3.5.1 Burden of disease

Rotavirus was first described in the early 1940s as an “agent” causing “epidemic diarrhoea” in calves and infantile mice (Kraft, 1957; Light & Hodes, 1943). Its importance as a human pathogen was first identified in 1973 when RV particles were found in the duodenal mucosa (following electron microscopic examination) of nine infants presenting with severe diarrhoea (Bishop *et al.*, 1973; Davidson *et al.*, 1975). Viral particles similar to those described by Bishop and Davidson were subsequently identified and associated with individuals suffering from gastroenteritis (Flewett *et al.*, 1973; Flewett & Woode, 1978b).

Today RV is considered one of the major causes of severe gastroenteritis in both humans and animals and is responsible for roughly 125,000 deaths annually of children under the age of 5 (Clark *et al.*, 2017; WHO, 2016).

Although RV infections are ubiquitously spread across the globe, life-threatening dehydration due to diarrhoea mainly occurs in developing countries such as those in Africa and Asia, which contribute to upwards of 50% of the global mortality rate. RV also threatens food-stock security as it is a zoonotic virus capable of infecting rodents, several bird species and livestock.

As mentioned in Section 1.3.4, the target of rotavirus infection is the villus cells of the small intestine and is spread through the faecal-oral pathway. On a systemic level, following RV infection, necrosis of the epithelial cells of the small intestine is induced leading to villous atrophy (Desselberger *et al.*, 2009; Johnson *et al.*, 1986; Ramig, 2004). This is followed by enterocyte atrophy which in turn causes a loss of intestinal enzymes, low absorption capacity and increased osmotic pressure (Desselberger *et al.*, 2009). In addition to this damage to the endothelial cells result in crypt cells becoming hyperplastic which is also commonly accompanied by increased fluid secretion (Ramig, 2004), resulting in gastroenteritis and dehydration due to diarrhoea.

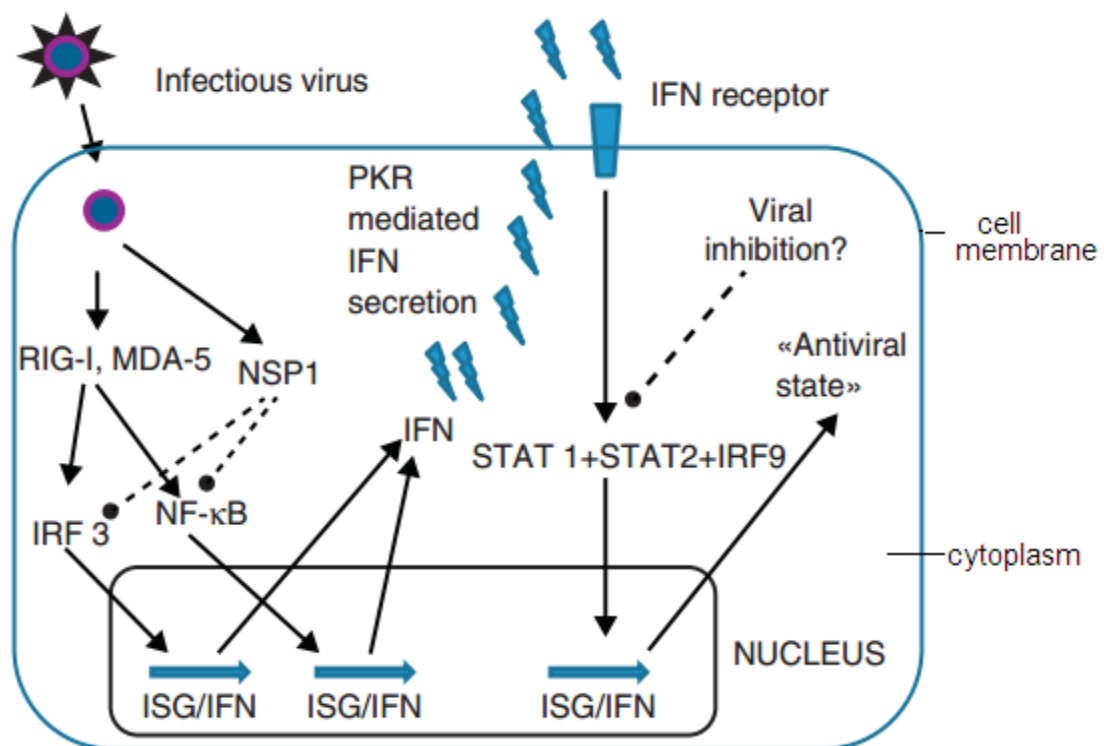
On a cellular level NSP4 (RV GS10) acts as an enterotoxin that disrupts the cellular electrolyte balance by directly stimulating the enteric nervous system, leading to an intracellular increase of  $Ca^{2+}$  levels (Ball *et al.*, 1996; Dong *et al.*, 1997; Lundgren *et al.*, 2000; Ramig, 2004). Other major contributors to cellular toxicity and viral pathogenesis are VP4, VP3, NSP1 and NSP2 (Desselberger *et al.*, 2009).

### **1.3.5.2 Immune response**

Rotavirus infections can elicit both an innate immune response and a cellular immune response depending on the specific strain and host cell type (Frias *et al.*, 2012; Sen *et al.*, 2011). In most cases, the innate immune response is the first line of defence against initial infection (García-Sastre & Biron, 2006) and comprises of various pattern recognition receptors (PRRs) (Levy *et al.*, 2011) and the production and secretion of cytokines such as type I (IFN- $\beta$ ) and type III interferon (IFN- $\lambda$ ) (Deal *et al.*, 2010; Frias *et al.*, 2012; Pott *et al.*, 2011; Sen *et al.*, 2011). The activation of the innate immune response initiates a cascade of cellular signals that ultimately establishes an anti-viral state within the cell and induces the activation of the cellular immune response (Angel *et al.*, 2012; Pott *et al.*, 2011; Pott *et al.*, 2012). The primary function of PRRs is the

detection of viral pathogen-associated molecular patterns (PAMPs) (Levy *et al.*, 2011), and include membrane-bound Toll-like receptors (TLRs), cytoplasmic retinoic acid-inducible gene I-like receptors (RLRs) and the cytoplasmic nucleotide oligomerisation domain (NOD)-like receptors (Akira *et al.*, 2006; Mogensen, 2009). One of the most common and strongly immunogenic PAMPs is dsRNA (Thompson & Locarnini, 2007), and various other viral replication intermediates. For this reason, RV has evolved various strategies to evade the innate immune response, some of which include the formation of the viroplasm, the transcriptionally active DLPs (no dsRNA exposed to cytoplasm) and the NSP1 mediated anti-interferon response, Figure 9, (Arnold & Patton, 2011; Barro & Patton, 2007; Sen *et al.*, 2009).

The cellular immune response induced by RV infections is well documented in rat, rabbit, pig and mouse models (Conner *et al.*, 1993; Franco & Greenberg, 1997; Knipping *et al.*, 2011; Yuan *et al.*, 1998) with the focus being on B-cell and T-cell activation as well as the production of various rotavirus-specific antibodies. When



**Figure 9: Schematic depiction of the innate immune response and the NSP1 mediated anti-interferon response.** During initial infection IFN regulatory factor 3 (IRF3) or NF-κB is activated by the stimulation of various PRRs, MDA5 or RIG-I and PKRs by virus-specific ligands. The IFN regulatory factors then translocate to the nucleus and activate interferon stimulated genes (ISG) through the production of IFN. NSP1 inhibits IRF3 (Bridgen & Elliott, 1996; Falcone *et al.*, 1999; Gentsch *et al.*, 1992)(Komoto & Taniguchi, 2006)(Luytjes *et al.*, 1989; Neumann & Kawaoka, 2001; Neumann *et al.*, 1999), and in so doing circumvents the establishment of an anti-viral state. Figure from (Angel *et al.*, 2012) with permission.

infecting adult mice with the virus, no diarrheal symptoms develop, however viral shedding is observed. This viral shedding required IgA and IgG-producing B lymphocytes to clear (Franco & Greenberg, 1999). Viral clearance is observed in T-cell deficient mice (Franco & Greenberg, 1995; Franco & Greenberg, 1997), however, the process is very slow, indicating that the initial response to RV infection is based on B-cell activation and is T-cell independent (Blutt *et al.*, 2002). In gnotobiotic piglets, the use of milk supplemented with anti-RV (human Wa strain) IgY antibodies (raised in chickens) passively increased rates of protection against Wa strains in a dose-dependent manner (Vega *et al.*, 2012). Similarly, anti-VP6 antibodies (raised in llamas) provided broad neutralising activity *in vitro* and provided protection against diarrhoea in mice models (Garaicoechea *et al.*, 2008).

Although extensive animal model studies have been performed, their findings do not necessarily translate well to humans where initial RV infection elicits the production of intestinal and systemic antibodies which protect against severe diarrhoea upon re-infection (Davidson *et al.*, 1983; Velázquez *et al.*, 1996; Ward & Bernstein, 1994). The majority of human infections result in protection levels against re-infection of roughly 40%, 75% against any diarrhoea and 88% against severe diarrhoea (Gladstone *et al.*, 2011; Velázquez *et al.*, 1996). The precise correlates of protection are not currently known. However intestinal IgA antibodies against the outer capsid proteins VP4 and VP7 seem to provide neutralising protection (Desselberger & Huppertz, 2011; Desselberger *et al.*, 2009; Franco *et al.*, 2006; Franco & Greenberg, 1999). This theory is supported by the findings of Blatt *et al.* (2012) where mice lacking mucosal IgA did not develop protective immunity against repeat infections (Blatt *et al.*, 2012), and refuted by Angel *et al.* (2012), as it has been shown that rotavirus-specific IgA antibodies are not optimal correlates of protection following vaccination of children in developing countries (Angel *et al.*, 2012).

### **1.3.5.3 Live-attenuated vaccines**

The first two widely used commercial RV vaccines are, RotaTeq® (Merck) a pentavalent (G1, G2, G3, G4, G6: P[5], P[8]) live attenuated human-bovine reassortant vaccine, and Rotarix™ (GlaxoSmithKline), a live attenuated vaccine derived from a

human G1P[8] RV isolate (Vesikari *et al.*, 2006). The efficacy of an immune response to these vaccines are suboptimal in children in Africa and other developing countries (Clarke & Desselberger, 2015; Desselberger, 2014; Madhi *et al.*, 2010; Ruiz-Palacios *et al.*, 2006; WHO, 2016; Zaman *et al.*, 2010). Various reasons have been postulated for the reduced vaccine efficacy in these regions including interference of RV-specific antibodies acquired via breastfeeding, co-administration of the oral polio vaccine, malnutrition and co-infections such as HIV. It has also been speculated that the vaccines have a lower efficacy against the specific RV strains circulating in Africa and Asia, which are considerably more diverse than that of the other regions and countries. To devise suitable approaches towards local strain-based vaccine development it is important to gain a better understanding of the replication cycle of RVs and the extent of structural compatibility of proteins of various strains. Reverse genetics (RG) has been very useful to study this in many other viruses.

#### **1.3.5.4 Sub-unit and VLP vaccines**

Virus-like particles (VLPs) are comprised of several of the structural components of a virus without any of the viral genome, thus making the VLP immunogenic but eliminating the risk of reassortment and viral replication. This allows the VLP to elicit a humoral and cellular immune response without the risk of infection. However, VLPs are non-replicating meaning that repeated dosages of the antigen are required to elicit long term immunity. As a result of this, many studies have indicated that VLPs can be used as an immune booster that can provide extended immunity to that of the existing vaccines, in essence making VLPs complementary to attenuated vaccines instead of an alternative thereof (Jere *et al.* 2014; Shoja *et al.* 2013; Li *et al.* 2014; Petitpas *et al.* 1998; Azevedo *et al.*, 2010).

#### **1.3.6 Rotavirus SA11**

Simian agent 11 (SA11), was first isolated by Dr Hubert Malherbe in 1958 from a rectal swab of an overtly healthy vervet monkey (*Cercopithecus aethiops pygerythrus*) at the National Institute of Virology (Johannesburg, South Africa). SA11 is the first rotavirus ever described (Malherbe & Harwin, 1963; Malherbe & Strickland-Cholmley, 1967).

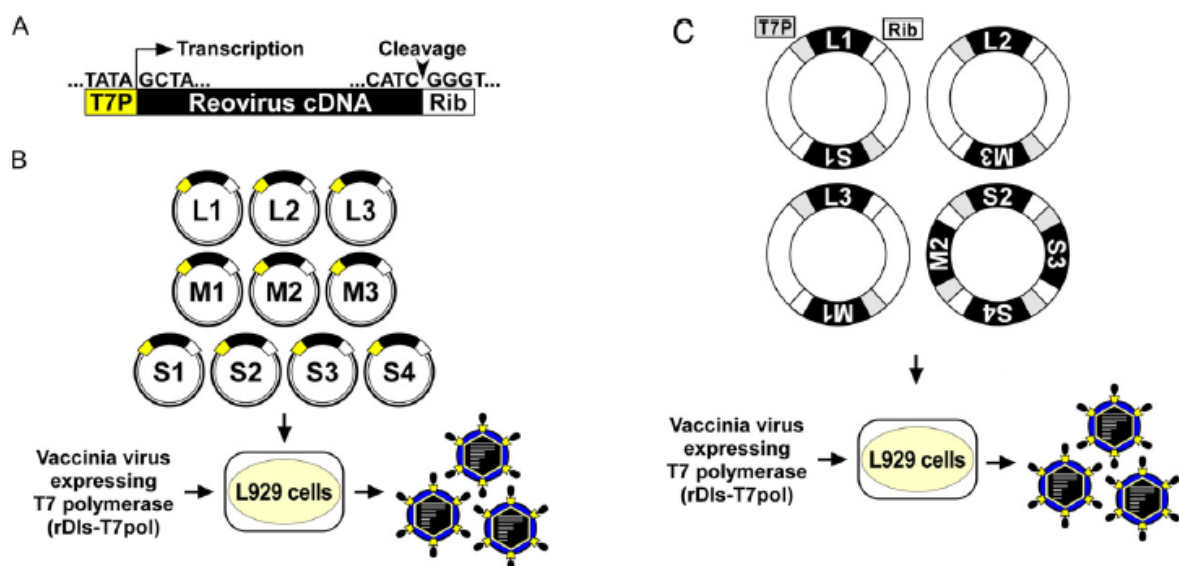
SA11 was selected for this project as it propagates very well in cell culture, has never caused any form of diarrhoea (or any other RV associated pathology) and is universally viewed as a prototype strain for RV research pertaining to viral replication and genome segment function (Estes *et al.*, 1979b; Matthijnssens *et al.*, 2010; Small *et al.*, 2007). The specific strain selected for this project is RVA/Simian-tc/ZAF/SA11-H96/1958-N5/G3P5B[2]. Its genotype is G3-P[2]-I2-R2-C5-M5-A5-N5-T5-E2-H5 (Mlera *et al.*, 2013)

## **1.4 Overview of RG systems for the *Reoviridae* family**

### **1.4.1 Reovirus RG**

The first member of the *Reoviridae* family to be rescued from a RG system was reovirus (Roner *et al.*, 1990). The reovirus RG system entailed the transfection of either ssRNA, dsRNA or a mixture of the two in association with a reticulocyte lysate in which ssRNA or dsRNA had been translated. Reovirus strain ST3 was selected for this experiment and transfections were done in murine fibroblast cells (L929). After transfection, a helper-virus (reovirus ST2 which propagated much slower than the ST3 strain) was used to infect the L929 cells and viruses were harvested after 24 to 48 hours. The recovered viruses were then passaged and as expected the ST3 strain formed plaques after roughly 5 days whereas the helper-virus ST2 strain only formed plaques after 12 days. This early system was helper-virus based and required a selection system and had very low efficiency, roughly 4% of transfected cells yielded recombinant virus (Roner *et al.*, 1990). This system was however used to incorporate on cDNA level a CAT reporter gene into the viral genome (Roner & Joklik, 2001).

As with most RG systems various attempts were made to either increase the sensitivity of the selection system or to entirely remove it through the development of a plasmid-based system. This was achieved in 2007 when plasmids carrying viral cDNA were constructed for each of the viral genome segments flanked by a T7 polymerase promoter at the 5` end and a hepatitis D virus (HDV) ribozyme (Rib) at the 3'-end (Kobayashi *et al.*, 2007). The use of the T7 promoter and the HDV Rib ensured that the mRNA transcripts of the plasmids carrying viral cDNA produced exact 5`- and 3` termini mimicking that of the actual viral transcripts. The viral rescue was achieved through transfection of plasmids into L929 cells followed by infection with a recombinant vaccinia virus (rDIs-T7pol) which provided the T7 polymerase for transcription and capping of reovirus transcripts. Recombinant reovirus was recovered after 5 days. The system was later optimized by incorporating multiple genome segments into single plasmids (Figure 10).



**Figure 10: Illustration of reovirus RG setup and rational.** **A:** Illustration of the layout of the cDNA carried in the transfection plasmid. Reovirus cDNA (in black) is flanked by the T7 polymerase promoter (in yellow) on the 5` end and by the HDV rib (in white) at the 3` end. **B:** Illustration of the 10 cDNA carrying plasmids representing the total viral genome being transfected into L929 cells expressing the T7 polymerase (derived from infection with recombinant VV-helper-virus), yielding recombinant reovirus. **C:** illustration of the improved reovirus RG system where multiple genome segments are carried in single plasmids. Image taken from (Matthijssens *et al.*, 2008c) with permission.

Although reovirus rescue has been achieved, the RG system has of yet not been widely applied for research or commercial purposes, indicating that it is technically difficult and requires optimization or further development. Boehme and associates

attempted to implement and recreate the system in 2011 and failed to rescue. According to the author, technical problems such as plasmid purity and concentration, transfection efficiency and T7 polymerase activity are most likely the cause of their failure, however, the occurrence of lethal mutations within the system cannot be ruled out (Boehme *et al.*, 2011). This illustrates the difficulty in the rescue of members of the *Reoviridae* family and underlies most of the technical challenges that RG systems for this family present.

#### **1.4.2 Orbivirus RG**

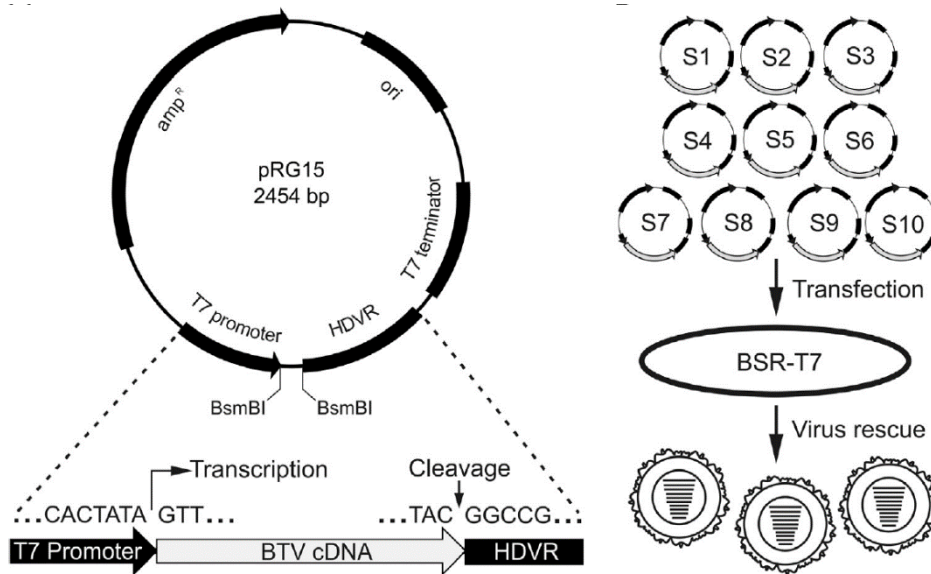
Another very important genus in the *Reoviridae* family that has been rescued with various RG system is the Orbiviruses, of which bluetongue virus (BTV) and African horsesickness virus (AHSV) will be discussed here. These RG systems also played a significant role in this project as the strategies used during their implementation and optimization were also used during the implementation and optimization of both the Japanese pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system and the locally developed pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system. Both the BTV and AHSV RG systems followed a similar development and optimization approach, starting with transfections of viral-core-derived transcripts, then moving on to run-off transcripts synthesised from cDNA plasmids, to expression plasmids along with run-off transcripts and culminating in the development of plasmid-only RG systems. The research findings and applications of both BTV and AHSV RG systems have been very important and have led to the elucidation of several key viral replication and virulence factors and will have an economic impact in terms of the development of various, rationally designed, recombinant vaccine candidates.

#### 1.4.2.1 BTV RG development and overview

BTM was first rescued in 2007 through the transfection of (+)ssRNA derived from transcriptionally active viral core particles (Boyce & Roy, 2007). This initial rescue proved that BTM can be produced from transfections of viral (+)ssRNA transcripts alone, and laid the foundations for rapid development and optimization of various BTM RG systems. In 2008 Boyce and associates rescued recombinant BTM containing both genome segments from serotype 1 and serotype 9 through transfection of core derived (+)ssRNA of both serotypes into BSR cells. This not only illustrated the capacity for recombinant viral engineering but also suggested that a similar approach could be used for the development of multi-serotype vaccine candidates. In the same year, transcription plasmids were constructed with cDNA copies of the entire viral genome under the control of a T7 viral RNA polymerase promoter (Boyce *et al.*, 2008a).

These plasmids were then used to generate *in vitro* transcripts, using a T7 viral RNA polymerase, which was used to successfully rescue recombinant BTM. This laid the foundations for further work in the field and resulted in the rescue of both virulent and non-virulent field strains of BTM (van Gennip *et al.*, 2012b). It was also reported that BTM can be rescued from *in vitro* reconstituted BTM sub-cores in a cell-free reverse genetics system (Lourenco & Roy, 2011). Further optimizations to the BTM RG system included the use of a two-step transfection protocol which entailed the transfection of expression plasmids, which express the viral replication complex (VP1 and NS2, and VP3 if the transcripts were not capped prior to transfection), followed by transfection of the 10 capped genome transcripts 18 hours later.

The initial transfection allows protein expression and initiates viral production and the second transfection is thought to provide transcripts for viral packaging and maturation (Boyce *et al.*, 2008b; Matsuo *et al.*, 2010; van Gennip *et al.*, 2012a). Following the success of the BTM transcript-based RG systems, a plasmid only RG approach was developed. This was achieved through the construction of transcription plasmids that flanked cDNA copies of the BTM genome segments with a 5'- T7 viral polymerase promoter and a 3'- HDV ribozyme (Figure 11).



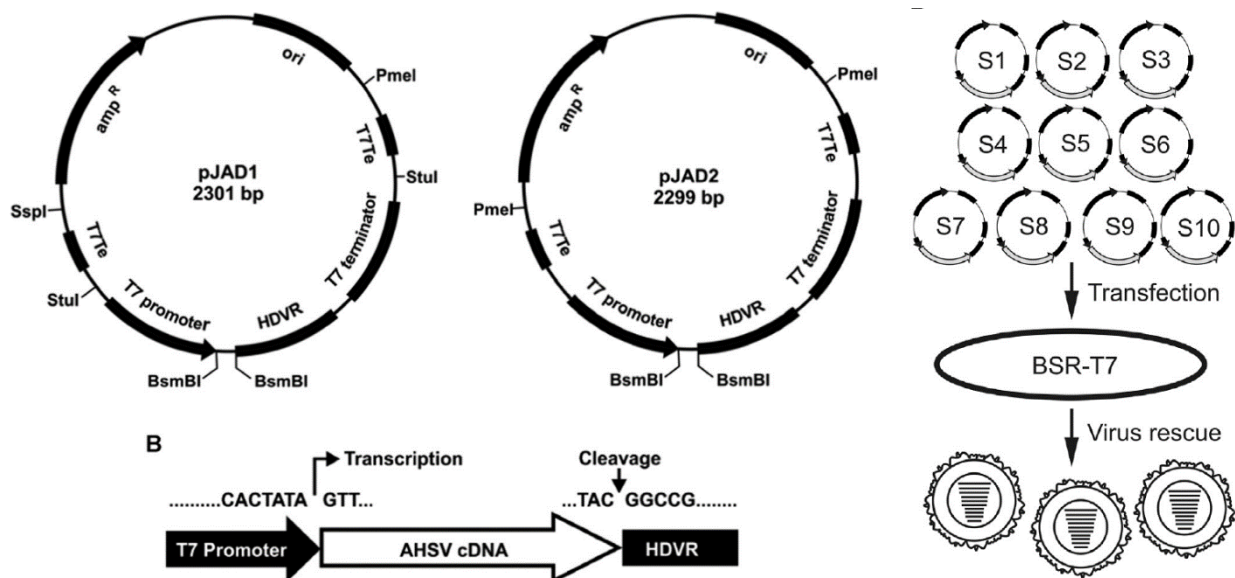
**Figure 11: Illustration of the construction and execution of the BTV plasmid only RG system.** The 10 transcription plasmids (left) were designed by incorporating a cDNA copy of each viral genome segment into the pRG15 plasmid (right) flanked by a 5'- T7 promoter and a 3'- HDV ribozyme. The plasmids are pooled and transfected into BSR-T7 cells. Recombinant virus is rescued after 3-5 days incubation. Image taken from [reference] with permission.

The plasmid only BTV RG system comprised of 10 transcription cassettes (similar to those used in the *in vitro* transcription model), each representing a single viral genome segment, and were transfected into BSR cells expressing the viral T7 polymerase. Recombinant BTV virus was rescued after 3-5 days from this system.

#### 1.4.2.2 AHSV RG development and overview

AHSV was first rescued in 2010 through the transfection of (+)ssRNA derived from transcriptionally active viral core particles (Matsuo *et al.*, 2010) similar to that of the first BTV RG system. This was also quickly followed by the construction of transcription plasmids carrying cDNA copies of the 10 AHSV genome segments under the control of a T7-RNA polymerase promoter. Similar to the progression of the BTV RG systems, these transcription cassettes were used for the *in vitro* synthesis of run-off transcripts that were capped and transfected into BSR cells. Within the AHSV RG system, the two-step transfection approach significantly increased viral yield.

It was also shown that although AHSV could be rescued from non-capped transcripts, the viral yield was significantly increased once the transcripts were capped (Conradie *et al.*, 2016; van de Water *et al.*, 2015). This was one of the optimizations used during the implementation of the Japanese pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG and locally developed pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG systems. Another key element of the BTV and AHSV RG systems that were incorporated into this project was the use of equi-molar amounts of transfection plasmids. AHSV RG systems also moved to a more plasmid-based approach over time. This started with the transfection of expression plasmids encoding the viral replication complex (VP1, VP3 and NS2, as well as VP4, VP6 and VP7 if transcripts were not capped prior to transfection), followed by the transfection of the 10 capped genome transcripts 18 hours later. Over time this model developed into a plasmid only version where expression plasmids were transfected first followed by transcription plasmids 18 hours later (Conradie *et al.*, 2016; van de Water *et al.*, 2015; van Rijn *et al.*, 2016). These transcription plasmids were designed similarly to those used in the BTV plasmid only RG system and entailed the cDNA copy of the AHSV genome segment being flanked by a 5`- viral T7 RNA polymerase promoter and a -3` HDV ribozyme, ensuring precise 5`- and -3` transcript termini (Figure 12).



**Figure 12: Illustration of the construction and execution of the AHSV plasmid only RG system.** The 10 transcription plasmids (left) were designed by incorporating a cDNA copy of each viral genome segment into the pJAD1 and pJAD2 plasmids (right) flanked by a 5`- T7 promoter and a 3`- HDV ribozyme. The plasmids are pooled and transfected into BSR-T7 cells. Recombinant virus is rescued after 3-5 days incubation. Image taken from with permission

### 1.4.2.3 Orbivirus RG findings and applications

Both the AHSV and BTV RG systems have significant commercial applications. The most important research findings thus far are the elucidation of the function of NS3 and NS4 in both BTV and AHSV, the generation of Disabled Infectious Single Cycle/Cell (DISC) and Disabled Infectious Single Animal (DISA) vaccine candidates for both BTV and AHSV, the generation of multi-serotype (transcapsidation) vaccine candidates and the development of diagnostic strategies for the detection of variations between WT BTV and AHSV infection and the immune response to their respective recombinant vaccines.

For both AHSV and BTV the non-structural proteins NS3 and NS4 have long been suspected to be associated with virulence, however, their precise functions remained unknown until the development of the AHSV and BTV RG systems. It has now been shown that NS3 is required for viral egress from insect cells (during the midge vector part of the viral life cycle) and is cytotoxic in mammalian cells. NS3 also suppresses the interferon response in mammalian cells and is a key target in the development of DISA vaccines. DISA vaccines are rationally attenuated, recombinant vaccines that lack the NS3 genome segment and as such cannot be spread from mammalian hosts via insect vectors, as viral egress is inhibited (Feenstra *et al.*, 2014; Feenstra *et al.*, 2015; Ruiz *et al.*, 2007; van de Water *et al.*, 2015; van Rijn *et al.*, 2017; van Rijn *et al.*, 2018a; van Rijn *et al.*, 2018b).

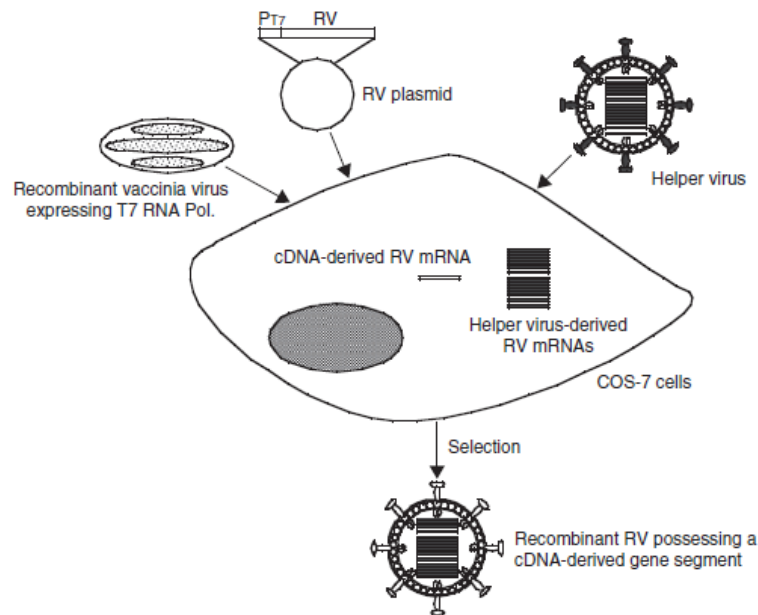
NS4 has also been shown to interfere with the mammalian immune response and is a very important virulence factor. Recombinant BTV and AHSV lacking NS4 have been shown to elicit a strong immune response without the development of severe disease symptoms. Additionally, DISC vaccines are recombinant BTV and AHSV strains that lack the essential VP6 genome segment and can thus not replicate within the host. DISC vaccines are viewed as safe vaccines that can elicit an immune response but cannot replicate within the host. DISC vaccines are produced by using a RG system that lacks the VP6 genome segment (that also contains the NS4 ORF), transfected into specialized cell-lines that express the required VP6 protein. This produces a recombinant infectious virus that cannot replicate (van Gennip *et al.*, 2012a; van Rijn *et al.*, 2016).

BTV and AHSV RG systems have also been used to generate multi-serotype vaccines by using a universal core particle and exchanging the VP2 from different serotypes. For AHSV all 9 serotypes can be rescued with a single universal core, whereas BTV requires the use of two core particles to facilitate the expression of every serotype (Conradie *et al.*, 2016; Potgieter *et al.*, 2003; van de Water *et al.*, 2015). Another very important research output and practical application of the BTV and AHSV RG systems was the development of diagnostic tests to distinguish between the presence of WT virus and vaccine virus in the blood and bodily fluids. In summary, the development of RG systems for BTV and AHSV have already provided much insight into viral replication, virus-host cell interactions and the correlation between protein structure and serotype-specific immunogenicity (Bishop, 2016). It can be safely assumed that the optimization of a robust helper-virus independent RV RG system will do the same.

### **1.4.3 Rotavirus RG**

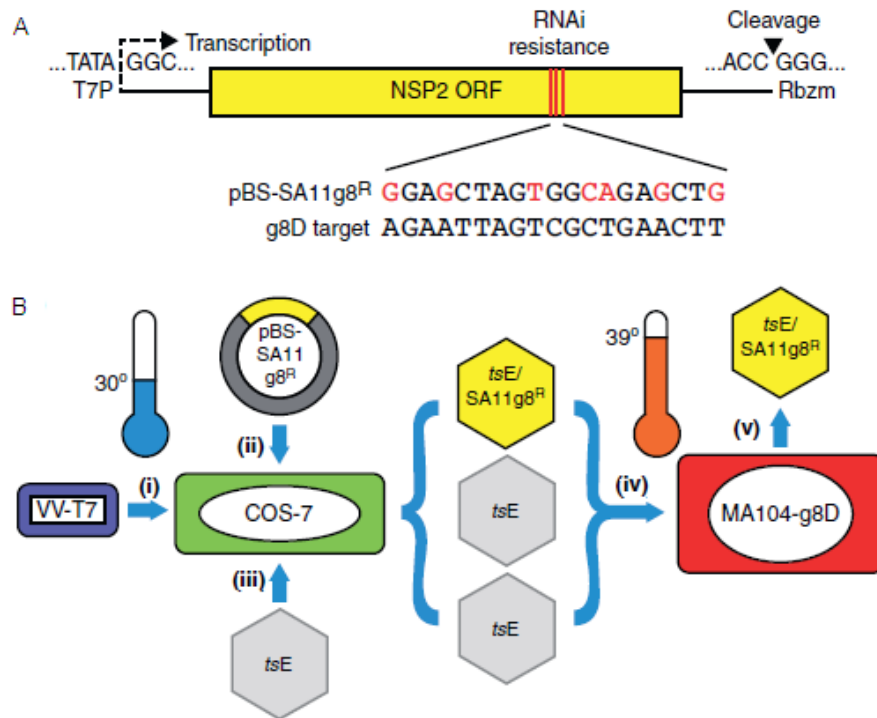
#### **1.4.3.1 Helper-virus based RV RGs**

The first RV RG systems (Figure 13) was mainly based on the ability of the viral genome segments to undergo reassortment (Komoto & Taniguchi, 2006). These early RG systems for RV primarily focused on single-segment replacement methods relying on infection of an appropriate cell-line with a helper virus that carries a specific selection property and the transfection of a plasmid carrying a cDNA copy of the recombinant genome segment. These systems mainly utilized RV SA11 as backbone due to its non-pathogenic nature, or RRV due to the wide range of temperature-sensitive mutants that are available (Johne *et al.*, 2015; Mansell *et al.*, 1994; Ramig & Gombold, 1991; Trask *et al.*, 2010). The majority of the early studies also focused on the exchange of the outer capsid protein VP4 as it elicits neutralizing antibodies. For RV RGs the efficiency of recovery is almost entirely dependent on the strength of the selection system used to isolate the single-segment recombinant RV from the unmodified helper virus population (Trask *et al.*, 2013).



**Figure 13: Illustration of the simplified helper-virus based RV RG system.** The system entails the transfection of COS-7 cells with a transcription plasmid containing the selected recombinant RV cDNA genome segment under the regulation of a 5`-T7 promoter. The cells are then infected with a recombinant VV expressing the T7 RNA polymerase. This is then followed by infection of the cells with the helper virus. Following incubation and reassortment, recombinant viruses are screened and propagated further. Image taken from (Ramig, 1997) with permission.

As previously mentioned, the RV RG system relies on the T7-mediated transcription of cDNA containing plasmids followed by either antibody-, short interfering RNA (siRNA)- or temperature-sensitive mutation-based selection RV systems (Figure 14) for the selection of reassortants (Komoto & Taniguchi, 2006; Trask *et al.*, 2010). A recent adaptation of the temperature-sensitive selection technique was published by Johne *et al.* (2015) and entails the plasmid-based replacement of RNA genome segment 4 of the SA11 strain with that of an avian RV strain. The technique requires the transfection of a plasmid carrying the cDNA RV genome segment 4 (of the avian strain) into BSR-T5/7 cells. The BSR-T5/7 cells were selected due to their relative ease of transfection and their expression of the T7 polymerase (required for the expression of the previously mentioned recombinant plasmid under the regulation of the T7 promoter). The transfected cells were then infected with a temperature-sensitive RV SA11 strain (tsSA11) and allowed to proliferate. Rescued viruses (a mixture of reassortants and the original tsSA11) were then transferred to MA104 cells for temperature selection and recovery since reassorted viruses would be more temperature tolerant than the original unmodified tsSA11 helper virus (Johne *et al.*, 2015).



**Figure 14: Graphic representation of various helper-virus based RV RG selection systems. A:** RNAi selection system. During this type of selection, the helper virus contains an antagonist sequence in the gene of interest that is not present in the recombinant version. Following reassortment, the viral population is passaged and treated with interfering RNA specific to the unaltered helper-virus, thus selecting for recombinant strains. **B:** Temperature selection system. During this type of selection, the helper-virus selected contains mutations that inhibit its growth at 39°C. Following reassortment the viral population is passaged and grown at the higher temperature, thus selecting recombinant viruses. Image taken from [source] with permission.

### 1.4.3.2 Transcript-based RV RGs

Before the advent of any helper-virus based RV RG systems, an attempt was made at rescuing recombinant RV based on the initial approaches of the BTV and AHSV RG systems, namely the generation of transcripts from viral cores (Chen *et al.*, 1999; Patton, 1986; Patton & Chen, 1999; Stacy-Phipps & Patton, 1987; van Rijn *et al.*, 2016). It was shown that RV transcripts can be synthesised *in vitro* if isolated RV particles are un-coated (outer capsid proteins VP4 and VP7 are removed) to expose the DLP. Early work was aimed at isolation of these transcripts followed by transfection into appropriate cells along with a transcript of a recombinant RV genome segment. This recombinant GS contained specific restriction sites not present in the core-derived transcripts, which allowed for screening of recombinant RV after reassortment.

This approach did yield successful reassortment, however, the technique was not fully implemented due to limitations in the screening process and the lack of an adequate selection system. The premise of the transcript based model remained a viable RV RG model, however, and was later attempted at various institutions (Potgieter, A.C. Deltamune. Personal communication), including the NWU. The development and implementation of a robust RV RG system have long been a goal of our research group at the NWU. In the past several attempts have been made to generate both a transcript based and plasmid-based RG system, and although significant insights have been gained through this process, no fully functional RV RG was obtained.

These systems were based on the work of Dr L. Mlera (Mlera, 2012), and Dr JF. Wentzel (Wentzel, 2014). In his PhD, Dr Mlera performed whole genome amplification and 454 pyrosequencing of the prototype DS1-like RV strain and derived the consensus sequence thereof. Dr Mlera did the same for the African SA11 strain, which is used throughout this project, and performed a molecular clock phylogenetic analysis thereon. Dr Mlera not only determined the SA11 consensus sequence but also characterized the sample obtained from the Diarrhoeal Pathogens Research Unit (DPRU), University of Limpopo (Pretoria, South Africa) and determined that the SA11 was the product of a mixed infection of the SA11-N5 and a bovine “O-agent” RV strains (Mlera *et al.*, 2013). Over time, and consecutive passages, the O-agent reassorted with the SA11-N5 strain to produce a small population of SA11-N2 reassortants. The SA11-N2 strain outcompeted the predominant SA11-N5 strain over time as evaluated by various whole genome sequencing experiments on the viral culture. Dr Mlera also designed a transcript based RV RG system that relied on the transfection of *in vitro* generated transcripts. Although the system could not rescue recombinant virus, it did illustrate the innate immune response elicited by RV transcripts, which heavily impacted later work on RV RG at the NWU.

For his PhD, Dr Wentzel developed a more plasmid-based approach to the RV RG system, designing four multi-genome segment encoding plasmids: **1)** pAlpha held GS1 (VP1), GS8 (NSP2) and GS11 (NSP5/6), **2)** pBeta held GS2 (VP2) and GS3 (VP3), **3)** pDelta (held GS7 (NSP3), GS10 (NSP4) and GS9 (VP7), and finally, **4)** pGamma held GS4 (VP4), GS6 (VP6) and GS5 (NSP1), Figure 51. These transcription plasmids (Appendix C) carried the consensus sequence cDNA of the SA11-N5 genome segments each flanked by a 5` - viral T7-RNA polymerase promoter and a -3` HDV

ribozyme. He used these plasmids to generate viral mRNA with exact 5`- and -3` termini which would be used in conjunction with several expression plasmids to attempt RV rescue. The four transcription plasmids were used for the construction of the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG rescue plasmid set by L. Geldenhuys and myself.

The expression plasmids encoded the ORFs of the viral replication complex (VP1, VP2, VP3, VP6, NSP2 and NSP5), codon-optimized for expression in MA104 cells. Similar to the AHSV RG system, these expression plasmids would be transfected first to initiate the formation of the viroplasm and viral replication complexes, followed by a later transfection of the viral mRNA transcripts for viral genome packaging and replication. Although many valuable insights were gain from Dr Wentzel's project, a coding error in his initial plasmid constructs resulted in the formation of incorrect non-coding regions in the viral mRNAs 5`- termini, which made viral genome packaging impossible. The 5`-GGGN sequence, although very beneficial for transcription, could not be packaged, and resulted in failed viral rescue and propagation. Later attempts at the NWU were aimed at correcting the 5`- sequence to the consensus 5`-GGN version and reattempting the transcription model approach (Section 3.1). He did, however, show that viral mRNA can be transfected into cells and could be expressed to generate viral proteins and that precise 5`- and 3`- termini are essential for viral genome packaging and viral replication (Wentzel, 2014).

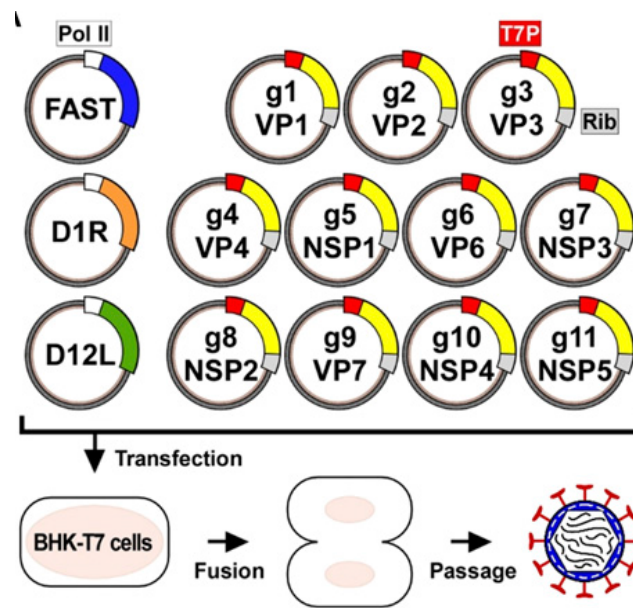
#### **1.4.3.3 Plasmid-based RV RGs**

The long-awaited goal of a true selection-free, RV RG system which we and others globally worked towards has recently been achieved. The lack thereof was the main bottleneck of major progress in important basic and applied research on rotaviruses the past two decades. During early 2017, a Japanese group published their results that they succeeded in developing a plasmid-based reverse genetics system that is free from helper viruses and independent of any selection for the rotavirus simian agent 11, strain L2 (Kanai *et al.*, 2017). Their success was based on a very similar approach that our research group at the NWU were following for SA11-N5, but they incorporated two additional enzymes which significantly increased the efficiency of rescue. This is undoubtedly the most significant breakthrough in the field in the past

few decades. Although the introduction of the commercial vaccines, RotaTeq and Rotarix, in 2006 has reduced RV infections and mortality rates globally, their efficiency in developing countries such as South Africa has been shown to be much lower than countries such as Europe and USA (Madhi *et al.*, 2010). It is postulated that reassortment and interspecies transmission (zoonosis) along with the differences in the circulating field strains of Africa in comparison to that in Europe and America might explain the reduced efficiency of the vaccine. It is for this reason that the advent of the plasmid only RG system is so important. This could allow the generation of rationally designed, regionally specific RV vaccine candidates and answer some of the most burning questions pertaining to RV replication and pathogenesis.

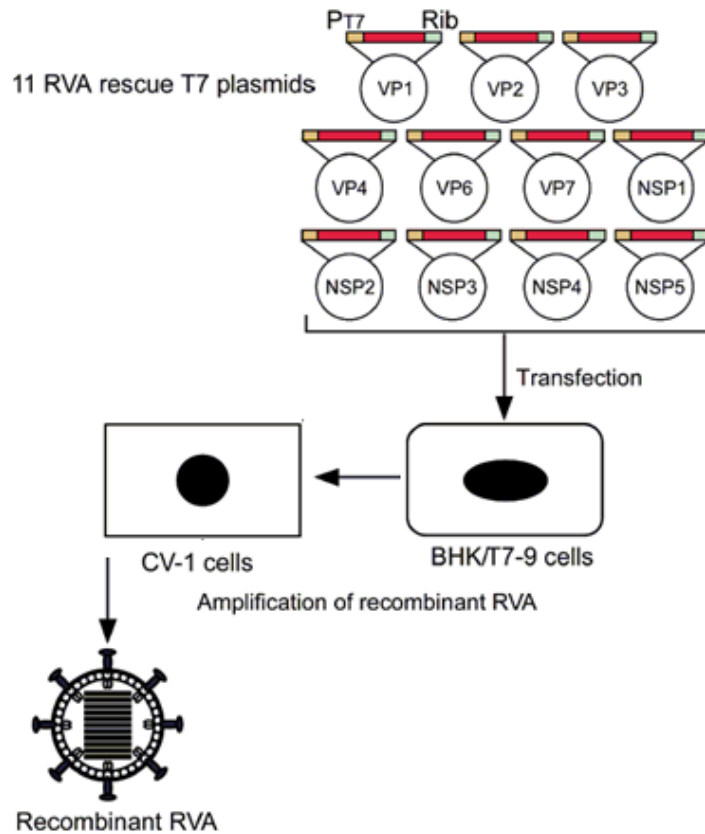
The first fully plasmid-based RV RG system (pT7\_SA11-L2) is illustrated in Figure 15 below. The system comprises of 14 plasmids, 11 of which carry cDNA copies of the RV genome segments, 2 of which encode the VV capping enzyme sub-units and the last encoding the NBV FAST protein (Section 2.1). The 11 cDNA RV genome segments are carried in transcription plasmids designed to flank each GS with a 5'-viral T7-promoter, and a 3'-HDV ribozyme. These additions to the GS ensured precise transcription and the generation of exact 5'- and 3'- ends, something that is known to be essential for viral genome packaging and replication. For rescue, the plasmids are extracted and mixed together in equi-ug amounts and transfected into BHK-T7 cells. The transfected cells are then incubated and co-seeded with MA104 cells to facilitate an increase in titer for any rescued virus. The co-seeded culture is incubated until CPE is visible, after which the culture is lysed and passaged for visualization. The initial pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system was made available to the scientific community through the AddGene service and was acquired and implemented at various institutions across the globe. This system was then further developed through the incorporation of an eGFP flag system for quick visualization of viral rescue (Kanai *et al.*, 2017).

Shortly after the publication of the Kanai RV RG system another Japanese (Komoto *et al.*, 2017) group adapted the model and published their findings pertaining to the replication of RV in cell culture. This was one of the first practical applications of the plasmid only RV RG system and illustrated its potential for furthering RV research. Their findings suggested that NSP6 is non-essential for RV replication in cell culture.



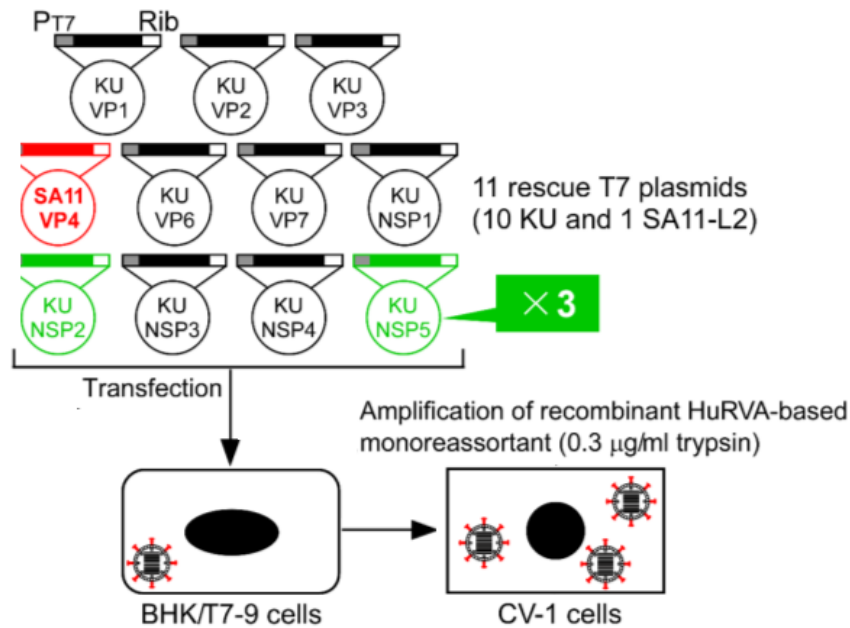
**Figure 15: Illustration of the basic rescue procedure of the pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system.** Equi-ug amounts of the 14 rescue plasmids are mixed together and transfected into BHK cells expressing the viral T7 RNA polymerase. NSB FAST protein expression results in cellular fusion. Cell lysates are passed after which rescued virus is visualized. Image adapted from (Matthijnsens et al., 2011) with permission.

Later the same group further developed the initial pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system by reducing the size of the plasmid backbone and increasing the relative amounts of viroplasm forming genome segments NSP2 and NSP5. The primary co-seeding and propagation cell lines were also changed from MA104 to CV1 cells (Figure 16). These adaptations significantly improved viral recovery and also showed that the VV capping enzyme and NBV FAST protein was non-essential for viral rescue (Komoto *et al.*, 2018). Later the same group used the optimized system to incorporate a full-length GFP reporter into the ORF of the NSP1 gene segment (Komoto *et al.*, 2018). The NSP1 protein was supplied in these experiments through the incorporation of a NSP1 expression plasmid containing only the NSP1 ORF (no UTRs).



**Figure 16: Illustration of the Komoto-optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system rescue procedure.** Equi-ug amounts of the 11 rescue plasmids (with 3x more NSP2 and NSP5) are mixed together and transfected into BHK cells expressing the viral T7 RNA polymerase. Cell lysates are passaged onto CV-1 cells, after which rescued virus is visualized. Image adapted from (Matthijssens et al., 2012) with permission.

The main focuses of the major research entities using RV RG currently are the elucidation of viral packaging and pathogenesis mechanisms as well as the development of human chimeric strains. To date no published human chimaera system has been developed that utilizes the SA11 DLP, however, there are several successful recombinations with the SA11 TLP that carries a single VP4 or VP7 reassortment. The Komoto research group also developed a human-SA11 hybrid (Komoto *et al.*, 2019) that had a KU TLP with a SA11 VP4 (Figure 17).



**Figure 17: Illustration of the simplified rescue protocol for the KU-SA11 chimera RV RG system.** Equi-ug amounts of the 10 KU rescue plasmids (with 3x more NSP2 and NSP5) are mixed together with an equi-ug amount of the SA11-VP4 rescue plasmid, and transfected into BHK cells expressing the viral T7 RNA polymerase. Cell lysates are passaged onto CV-1 cells, after which rescued virus is visualized. Image adapted from (Komoto et al., 2019) with permission.

#### 1.4.3.4 Anticipated outcomes of a fully established, traceable, helper-virus independent RV RG system

The major bottleneck in terms of RV genetic research has until recently been the lack of a robust, traceable, helper-virus independent RG system. Although RV has been extensively studied *in vitro*, many elements pertaining to its replication cycle are still unclear. It is the general consensus that a robust, helper-virus independent RG system for RV will aid in the elucidation of several key mechanisms that initiate, regulate and guide interactions between the virus and the host cell (Desselberger, 2014). The following is a list of subjects proposed by Desselberger in 2014 that are of particular note in terms of RV research, and questions that can potentially be answered through the guided application of the newly developed plasmid-only RV RG systems:

- The precise structure, orientation and interaction of dsRNA within the RV core particle, with a specific focus on RNA-RNA interactions and the interactions between dsRNA and VP2.

- Identification and characterization of the different receptors for various RV strains, as well as the mechanisms used by various strains during infection that add to strain specificity.
- The precise mechanism used during viroplasm formation for lipid droplet recruitment as well as the regulatory elements thereof.
- The regulatory mechanisms controlling assortment and reassortment, as well as the elements that limit reassortment of the 11 dsRNA segments during viral replication.
- Details pertaining to RNA-RNA interactions during viral genome packaging as well as RNA-protein interactions.
- Details pertaining to the formation and loss of the temporary enveloped RV particles in the ER during viral maturation, with a specific focus on the mechanisms involved in signalling and transportation.
- Development of intestinal organoid cell cultures to study and evaluate RV replication in a more native/natural environment.
- The elements that determine RV pathogenicity and virulence, with a specific focus on acquired mutations that increase or decrease host range and disease progression.
- Elucidation of the molecular basis that determines host range and more specifically organ- or cell-specific viral replication.
- The exact role that the various immune responses (innate, cellular and humoral) play in establishing protection against RV infection and disease.
- Elucidation of the precise correlates of protection against RV infection and disease.
- The factors determining and regulating the spread of RV through various communities and populations.
- The reasons for the apparent decreased efficiency of commercial RV vaccines in developing countries and areas of low socioeconomic status.
- The potential impact of universal mass vaccination against RV disease on the evolution and diversification of RV strains.
- The potential for the development of rationally attenuated or non-living RV vaccine candidates.

- The identification of various stages during viral replication that can be targeted by viral therapeutics, as well as the identification of various small molecules that can act as antiviral agents.

## 1.5 Problem identification

Rotavirus reverse genetics offers a powerful new way to research RV replication and pathogenesis, the applications of which can be significant and far-reaching. The first workable RV RG is now available, but its effectiveness and robustness still needs to be improved.

## 1.6 Aims and Objectives

This project entails the finalization, implementation and optimization of a plasmid-only pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system based on the Kanai (2017) plasmid-only pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system but with several key adaptations.

Elements unique to this system include but are not limited to, the use of rotavirus-SA11 consensus sequence genome segments, codon optimization for increased expression in cell culture and the incorporation of various elements of both the BTV and AHSV RG systems (van Gennip *et al.*, 2012a; van Rijn *et al.*, 2016) such as increased amounts of capping enzymes and the use of equi-molar transfection mixtures

This pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG platform will be established alongside that of the initial pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system and compared throughout the development and implementation process (allowing a comparative analysis of both techniques).

**The primary objectives of the project were:**

- 1)** To acquire and implement the Japanese, plasmid-only, pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system at the NWU, and to increase the efficiency thereof through the incorporation of insights from the AHSV and BTV RG systems.
  
- 2)** To finalize plasmid construction and implement the locally designed, plasmid-only, consensus sequence-based, pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system with all optimizations used throughout the implementation and optimization of the Japanese SA11-L2 RV RG system.
  
- 3)** To compare the various optimizations of the Japanese pT7\_SA11-L2 and locally developed pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG systems throughout the project via TCID<sub>50</sub> assay.

## Chapter 2

### Local implementation and optimization of plasmid only pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system

#### 2.1 Introduction

The pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system was developed in 2017 by a Japanese group (Kanai *et al.*, 2017), and made available to the scientific community through the AddGene service. The system, comprising of 14 plasmids, was acquired by various institutions across the globe, including the NWU. In this chapter I will be presenting my findings in terms of the implementation and rationally guided optimization of the pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system, outlining the approaches utilized and the rationale behind each.

Initial attempts to implement the Japanese pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system to obtain the results originally published by the group proved to be more difficult than anticipated. Although rescue was possible, repeatability was a major concern. Through communication with other institutions that were also in the process of implementing the system, it became apparent that we were not the only group that was struggling to implement the original pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system (Prof. A.C. Potgieter, Deltamune, personal communication). This illustrated the need for further development and optimization of the Japanese, plasmid-based RV RG approach.

My approach was to improve the system through the incorporation of techniques and strategies relating to two other dsRNA RG systems, namely the AHSV and BTV RG systems (Section 1.4). I also designed and incorporated several alternative expression plasmids encoding different capping and fusion proteins into the system, and incorporated newly published findings pertaining to this RG system throughout its implementation (Komoto *et al.*, 2018). This accumulative approach was successful and allowed me to significantly optimize both the repeatability and overall efficiency of the system in terms of the rescued virus yield.

I used the implementation and optimization of the pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system for testing and to familiarize myself fully with the techniques involved in the RG system, for the later implementation of our own locally developed, consensus sequence-based, pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system and performed comparative analyses throughout the entire process (Chapter 3).

## **2.2 Materials and Methods**

### **2.2.1 Transformation of chemically competent cells**

The protocol used for the transformation of chemically competent cells during this project is based on the original calcium-based DNA transformation protocol published in 1970 (Mandel & Higa, 1970). The underlying biochemical principles of the technique rely on the treatment of bacterial cells with calcium ions ( $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ ) to neutralise charges on the cell surface, eliminating electrostatic repulsion and allowing binding of foreign DNA to the cell membrane. The cell-DNA mixture is then exposed to an increase in temperature that facilitates the formation of pores in the cell membrane and creates a pressure differential that results in the cell taking up foreign DNA in its immediate surroundings. The temperature is then lowered so that the cell membranes can stabilize and the cells are incubated in media that is selective for transformed cells (Sambrook & Russell, 2001).

For this project, chemically competent DH5 $\alpha$  (Novagen, Merck Biosciences, Darmstadt, Germany) and Stellar cells (Takara Bio, Separations, Johannesburg, RSA) were purchased and transformed using the heat-shock protocol. Cells were thawed on wet ice for roughly 15min after which 50ul was transferred to a pre-chilled 15ml round bottom Falcon tube. Between 1ng and 100ng of plasmid DNA was added to the cells keeping the volume of DNA less than 5% of the volume of the cells. The cells and DNA were gently mixed through swirling and incubated on ice for 30min. This was followed by heat shock for 45sec in a pre-heated water bath at 42°C. Directly after heat shock, the cells were incubated on ice for 2min after which 950ul of pre-warmed recovery medium was added.

The transformation mixture was then incubated for 60min at 37°C in a shaking incubator at 250rpm. Finally, 50ul of the transformation mixture was spread out onto pre-warmed nutrient agar plates containing the appropriate antibiotic selection and incubated at 37°C overnight.

### **2.2.2 Preparation of bacterial glycerol stocks**

The preparation of glycerol stocks allows the long-term storage of bacterial samples at extremely low temperatures (-80°C). The biochemical principles that underlie this practice is called cryo-protection and is based on glycerol's membrane permeability and its ability to prevent cell shrinkage, prevent ice crystal formation and its ability to regulate isotonic pressure (Sambrook & Russell, 2001). For this project glycerol stocks were prepared from overnight bacterial cultures to which glycerol was added to a final concentration of 15%. The samples were then labelled, frozen and stored at -80°C.

### **2.2.3 Colony selection and master-plate preparation**

Following transformation and plating, bacterial colonies were evaluated, isolated and transferred to a master-plate for further use. The basic premise of plating is that the bacterial culture is diluted and spread over a large surface area to isolate individual bacterial cells (Sambrook & Russell, 2001). During overnight incubation, these individual cells will replicate and form mono-clonal colonies that can be propagated for further use. During colony selection, it is important to identify and avoid non-desirable colonies such as satellite colonies, colonies arising from clumps of cells or cells that were not properly separate during plating. Once a properly isolated monoclonal colony was selected it was aseptically transferred to a pre-labelled agar master-plate containing the appropriate antibiotic selection for the desired experiment. The plate was then incubated overnight and then stored at 4°C until needed.

## 2.2.4 Miniprep plasmid extraction

In this project, the QIAprep Spin Miniprep kit (Qiagen, Whitehead Scientific, Johannesburg, RSA) was used for all plasmid extractions except for when endotoxin-free plasmid extraction was specifically required. The kit is designed for the small-scale isolation of plasmid DNA from bacterial cultures using a simple bind-wash-elute method. The biochemical principles underlying this technique are the alkaline denaturing of high molecular weight chromosomal DNA (Birnboim & Doly, 1979) and the binding of DNA to a silica membrane in the presence of a high salt concentration (Sambrook & Russell, 2001). Very briefly, the technique takes advantage of the very narrow range of pH (between 12.0 and 12.5) where chromosomal DNA is denatured but closed-circular plasmid DNA remains double-stranded (ds). This high pH is achieved through the addition of NaOH and is neutralised through the addition of sodium acetate. During neutralization the chromosomal DNA partially re-natures and forms an insoluble clot along with various proteins while the plasmid DNA remains in suspension. The insoluble genomic DNA and proteins are then separated from the plasmid DNA through centrifugation and the plasmid DNA (present in the supernatant) is then bound to a silica membrane in the presence of a high salinity solution. The membrane is then washed with 70% ethanol through centrifugation and the plasmid DNA is eluted with a low salinity solution such as molecular grade water or elution buffer. Directly prior to the use of this kit the LyseBlue reagent was added to Buffer P1 along with an RNase-A solution (1:1000 ratio). Buffer P1 was correspondingly labelled and stored at 4°C as per the manufacturers' protocol. LyseBlue is a colour indicator that will visualize optimal mixing and pH during the procedure. Additionally, 220µl of 100% ethanol was added to Buffer PE and correspondingly labelled. Extraction was performed as per the manufacturers' guidelines.

Overnight bacterial cultures of 5ml LB in a 15ml Falcon tube, were pelleted at room temperature through centrifugation at 6000g for 5 minutes. The supernatant was carefully decanted, and the pellet was dried for roughly 10min by leaving the tubes upside down on a paper towel. After drying, the pellet was re-suspended in 250ul buffer P1 (containing EDTA, Tris, RNase-A and glucose) and homogenised through pipetting.

The EDTA serves to chelate divalent cations such as magnesium ( $Mg^{2+}$ ) and calcium ( $Ca^{2+}$ ) that are required by DNases to function. In doing so the EDTA not only prevents damage to plasmids but also helps to destabilise the cell walls of the bacteria aiding in lysis. RNase-A degrades any RNAs released after cell lysis, a necessary step as RNA will also bind to the silica membrane and contaminate the extracted plasmids after elution. Glucose functions as an osmotic pressure buffer and increases the overall plasmid yield.

The homogenate was then moved to a sterile 2ml microcentrifuge tube and 250ul of chilled Buffer P2 was added and thoroughly mixed by inverting the tube six times. The reaction should turn blue due to the LyseBlue reagent indicating a pH of between 12.0 and 12.5. If no colour change was observed additional NaOH was added until a colour change was clearly visible. Buffer P2 is the lysis buffer and contains sodium hydroxide (NaOH) and sodium dodecyl sulphate (SDS).

The SDS will solubilise the cell membrane while the NaOH breaks down the cell wall and causes denaturing of proteins and genomic DNA. The lysis reaction should not exceed 5 minutes. Following lysis, 350ul of neutralizing buffer N3 was added to the solution and mixed through inverting the tube six times. Buffer N3 contains potassium acetate ( $CH_3COOK$ ) which decreases the alkalinity of the solution and turns it from blue to clear (colour-less or a milky opaque). The solution was then centrifuged at 16 000g for 10 minutes to pellet the insoluble genomic DNA-protein complex along with cellular debris and other insoluble components. The supernatant was then carefully transferred to a QIAprep 2.0 spin column through pipetting and centrifuged at 13 000g for 60sec, after which the flow-through was discarded.

The membrane was then washed by adding 750ul PE buffer and centrifuged again for 60 seconds. If it was suspected that the sample might have a very high salt content, this washing buffer was incubated on the membrane at room temperature for 5min before centrifugation. Following the wash step, the flow-through was discarded and the membrane was again centrifuged without the addition of any buffers for 60sec to remove any residual buffer from the membrane and prepare it for elution. The QIAprep spin column was then transferred to a sterile 1.5ml Low-Bind micro-centrifuge tube and the plasmid DNA was eluted from the membrane by adding 50ul of preheated ( $75^{\circ}C$ ) nuclease-free  $H_2O$  (Ion torrent nuclease-free  $H_2O$ , ThermoFisher), allowed to

incubate for 60 seconds and then centrifuged at 13 000g for 60sec. The flow-through (containing the DNA) was collected, evaluated through AGE (Section 2.2.7) and quantified through spectrophotometry (Section 2.2.6). All centrifugation steps were carried out in an Eppendorf 2J20 bench centrifuge.

### **2.2.5 Endotoxin-free maxiprep plasmid extraction**

The most common and commercially available bacterial cells used for transformations are gram-negative bacilli such as *E. coli*. This is due to the nature and structure of their thin, double-layered, cell walls that lack the thick peptidoglycan layer more commonly associated with gram-positive bacteria. The thick peptidoglycan layer makes transformation much more difficult. However, gram-negative bacteria have an abundance of highly variable cell membrane components known as lipopolysaccharides (LPS). LPSs are molecules that contain various hydrophobic, hydrophilic, and charged regions and are biologically active as cell membrane receptors, structural components and even facilitate intracellular communication. Due to the unique composition of LPSs, they can have various unanticipated and unwanted interactions with other molecules. It is for this reason that LPSs are also known as endotoxins and are known to dramatically reduce transfection efficiency and increase cellular toxicity (Butash *et al.*, 2000). Especially when transfecting DNA into mammalian cells the levels of endotoxins must be reduced as far as possible. Therefore, all plasmids and DNA constructs that would be transfected in this project were first purified with the EndoFree® Plasmid Maxi kit (Qiagen, Whitehead Scientific).

The kit is based on the same biochemical principles as that of the miniprep kits (Section 2.2.4) but with the addition of a wash step designed to specifically remove LPSs from the sample. Endotoxin-free plasmid extraction was performed as per the manufacturer's guidelines from an overnight bacterial culture of 100ml which was separated into two 50ml Falcon tubes and pelleted through centrifugation at 6000g for 15-30 minutes at 4°C. The supernatant was decanted and both pellets were each resuspended in 2ml of buffer P1. The re-suspended pellets were homogenized through pipetting and added together. Additional buffer P1 was added to the suspension to a final volume of 10ml.

After re-suspension, 10ml of lysis buffer P2 was added and mixed by inverting the tube 6 times during which the suspension should turn blue due to the LyseBlue reagent. The lysis reaction was incubated at room temperature for 5min after which 10ml of chilled Buffer P3 (neutralizing buffer) was added and mixed through inverting the tube six times. During this step, the suspension should change colour from blue to clear (transparent with a milky/opaque cloud suspended within). The suspension was then transferred to a provided QAI-filter cartridge and incubated for 10 minutes at room temperature.

The cell lysate was filtered into the 50ml Falcon collection tube after which 2.5ml ER Buffer was added and incubated on ice for 30min. The ER buffer is designed to remove endotoxins (LPSs) from the sample through the formation of various binding complexes and as a result, will change the filtrate from clear to slightly opaque over time. During this incubation, a QAI-tip column was equilibrated with 10ml of QBT buffer. The buffer was added to the column and allowed to empty by means of gravity flow. Following the 30min filtrate incubation and the column equilibration, the filtrate was added to the column and allowed to enter the resin by means of gravity flow. The flow-through was discarded and the column was washed with 60ml of QC buffer (done in two sessions as the column can only hold 30ml at a time).

The QAI-tip column was then moved to a 50ml endotoxin-free tube for elution. DNA was eluted by adding 15ml of QN buffer to the column and allowed to drain by means of gravity flow. The DNA was precipitated by the addition of 10.5ml of isopropanol and incubated for 10min. The DNA was pelleted through centrifugation at 15 000g for 30min, the supernatant was carefully removed and the pellet was washed with 5ml of a 70% endotoxin-free ethanol solution.

The sample was again centrifuged for 30min at 15 000g after which the ethanol was carefully removed and the pellet was air-dried for 5-10min. Finally, the dried pellet was dissolved in 100ul endotoxin-free TE buffer or nuclease-free H<sub>2</sub>O (Ion Torrent nuclease-free H<sub>2</sub>O, ThermoFisher). The plasmid DNA was evaluated through AGE (Section 2.2.7) and quantified through spectrophotometry (Section 2.2.6).

### **2.2.6 Spectrophotometric evaluation of nucleic acids**

All spectrophotometric evaluations of nucleic acids were performed using a NanoDrop One (Thermo Scientific, Waltham, MA, USA) in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines. The NanoDrop was cleaned with molecular grade water before and after each sample read and was calibrated and blanked using the same buffer the sample was suspended in. The concentration of DNA samples was measured at 260nm and RNA samples at 280nm. The purity of DNA samples were determined by the  $OD_{260/280}$  nm values, with pure DNA expected to have a ratio of 1.8. Any  $OD_{260/280}$  ratios lower than 1.8 were taken as indicative of protein contamination and ratios higher than 2.0 of RNA contamination. Sample volumes of 1ul were used for each evaluation.

### **2.2.7 Agarose gel electrophoresis (AGE)**

The primary analysis of all nucleic acids was performed through separation and visualization via agarose gel electrophoresis (AGE). Standard 1% (w/v) agarose gels were used with 0.5ug/ml ethidium bromide (EtBr) as intercalating and visualization agent. Gels were prepared by adding agar powder to either a 1x TAE buffer (Tris-acetate and EDTA) or a 0.5x TBE buffer (Tris base, boric acid and EDTA). An agarose gel concentration of 1% was used as it is the optimal concentration to study DNA fragments varying in size from 250bp to 12000bp (Sambrook & Russell, 2001). TAE based gels were used for higher resolution of larger nucleic acids, whereas TBE based gels provided better ionic strength and buffering capacity in addition to the increased resolution of smaller nucleic acids. The agarose was dissolved in the selected buffer through heating and cooled to about 45°C before adding the EtBr and casting the gel into a 10cm x 7cm x 1cm casting tray, yielding a gel of roughly 10cm x 7cm x 0.7cm. The gels were then left to cool to room temperature for about an hour before being cured at 4°C for 30min. All gels were freshly prepared directly prior to each AGE step. The gels were electrophoresed at between 10 and 15 volts per cm of gel (70V - 100V) for roughly an hour or until samples were sufficiently separated.

All AGE steps were performed in a BioRad system and voltage was kept constant throughout the electrophoresis process. The gels were then visualised under fluorescent light in a ChemiDoc™ MP Imaging System from Bio-Rad laboratories. All gels and accompanying buffers were made in accordance with standard molecular procedures (Sambrook & Russell, 2001). All nucleic acid samples were mixed in a 5:1 (nucleic acid: loading dye) ratio with a 6x mass ruler DNA loading dye prior to being loaded into the wells. Each AGE step also included a gene ruler sample (GeneRuler™ 1kb DNA Ladder) that acted as an internal standard and DNA fragment size reference.

### 2.2.8 Cell-cultures

In this project baby hamster kidney cells constitutively expressing the T7-RNA polymerase (BHK-T7 and BSR-T5/7) were selected as transfection cell-lines and African green monkey kidney (MA104) and swine testes (ST) cells were selected for co-seeding and propagation cell-lines. Although RV does not propagate well in either BHK-T7 or BSR-T5/7 cell-lines, these cells transfect much more efficiently than MA104 and ST cells. RV can, however, propagate well in both MA104 (Desselberger, 2017; Estes *et al.*, 1979a; Gutierrez *et al.*, 2010; Londrigan *et al.*, 2000; Teimoori *et al.*, 2014) and ST (Welter *et al.*, 1991) cells with MA104 cells being the industry standard (Estes *et al.*, 1979a) for RV propagation.

Complete media, for the growth of each cell-line except ST cells (Table 5), consists of Dulbecco's Modified Eagle Medium (DMEM, Gibco) supplemented with the following to a final concentration of 5% fetal bovine serum (FBS, Gibco), 100 units/mL penicillin, 100 µg/mL streptomycin and 0.25 µg/mL amphotericin B (Anti-Anti, Gibco) and 1% (v/v) non-essential amino acids (1mM of each amino acid) (NEAA, Gibco). Incomplete media, or splitting media, is the same as complete media but without any FBS. Table 6 and Table 7 show the composition of the NEAA and Anti-Anti respectively.

BHK-T7 cells were grown in complete media supplemented with hygromycin (Gibco, Thermo scientific, MA, USA) to a final concentration of 600µg/ml, every third passage to ensure T7-RNA polymerase expression. BSR-T5/7 cells were grown in complete media supplemented with geneticin (Gibco) to a final concentration of 1mg/ml, with each passage to ensure T7-RNA polymerase expression.

MA104 cells were grown in complete media. ST cells were grown in minimal essential medium (MEM) supplemented with 10% FBS, 100 units/mL penicillin, 100 µg/mL streptomycin, 0.25 µg/mL amphotericin B, 1% (v/v) sodium pyruvate (1mM) (Gibco) and 1% (v/v) non-essential amino acids (NEAA). All cell cultures were incubated at 37°C in a humidified incubator with 5% CO<sub>2</sub>.

**Table 5: Composition of complete media for each selected cell-line**

Cell-line	DMEM	MEM	FBS	Anti-Anti	S. Pyruvate	NEAA
BHK-T7	✓	N/A	5%	1%	N/A	1% (optional)
BSR-T5/7	✓	N/A	5%	1%	N/A	1% (optional)
MA104	✓	N/A	5%	1%	N/A	1%
ST	N/A	✓	10%	1%	1%	1%

**Table 6: Composition of 100x NEAA**

Amino-acid	mg/L	mM
Glycine	750.0	10.0
L-Alanine	890.0	10.0
L-Asparagine	1320.0	10.0
L-Aspartic acid	1330.0	10.0
L-Glutamic Acid	1470.0	10.0
L-Proline	1150.0	10.0
L-Serine	1050.0	10.0
Each diluted to 0.1mM in complete media		

**Table 7: Composition of 1% Anti-Anti**

Penicillin	100 units/mL
Streptomycin	100 µg/mL
Amphotericin B	0.25 µg/mL
Final concentration in complete media	

The BHK-T7 and BSR-T5/7 cells were grown in 25cm<sup>2</sup> tissue culture flasks (Nunc, Thermo Scientific, MA, USA) to roughly 95% confluence before being split 1:5 for further propagation. MA104 and ST cell-lines were split 1:3 for propagation. However MA104 cells reached confluence faster (2-3 days) than ST cells (3-5 days). MA104 cells were split once monolayers reached roughly 95% confluency, whereas ST cells were split upon reaching 80% confluency. If ST cells were grown past 80% confluency, their trypsinization efficiency dramatically reduced.

All cell lines were split according to the following procedure. Upon reaching the desired confluence the media was removed and the monolayers were washed twice with 1% sterile phosphate-buffered saline (PBS, Gibco) solution at room temperature. The monolayers were then treated with room temperature 0.05% trypsin EDTA (Gibco) and incubated in a humidified incubator at 37°C until the cells started to detach, at which

point any residual trypsin was removed and the cells were manually re-suspended in 100% fetal bovine serum (FBS) through pipetting. The re-suspended cells were then aliquoted into new flasks containing the appropriate volume of media (without FBS). Trypsin incubation times for BHK-T7 cells ranged from 2-3min and BSR-T5/7 cells ranging from 1.5-2min. MA104 cells required a consistent 4 min incubation and ST cells ranged from 4-12min. The ST cells seemed to become more resilient to the trypsin treatment with increasing confluence, with a roughly 75% confluent culture requiring 4 min of trypsin incubation to start to detach and a 95% confluent culture requiring up to 12min. 100% confluent ST monolayers could not be fully detached without damaging the cells even with extended incubation times.

### 2.2.9 Plasmid design

The following five expression plasmids were designed *in silico* using the SnapGene gene editing and visualization software: 1) phCMVdream\_VV\_D1R, 2) phCMVdream\_VV\_D12L, 3) phCMVdream\_p10\_FAST, 4) phCMVdream\_ASFV and 5) phCMVdream\_C3P3. Refer to Appendix A for plasmid maps (Figure 42 and Figure 43) and sequences. The vector selected for each of these constructs is the phCMVdream plasmid (2558 bp) and is based on the pSmart plasmid. This backbone was selected due to its successful use in the development and optimization of bluetongue virus (BTV) (van Gennip *et al.*, 2012a; van Rijn *et al.*, 2016) and African horsesickness virus (AHSV) (van de Water *et al.*, 2015; van Rijn *et al.*, 2016) RG systems as well as its relatively small size. Each of the constructs were designed by using the ORF of the gene of interest and placing it in the multiple cloning site (MCS) of the pdCMVdream plasmid under the CMV promoter.

The construct designs were then sent through to GenScript for *Cricetinae* (hamster embryonic cell) codon optimization and synthesis. The vaccinia virus (VV) capping enzyme has two subunits encoded by ORFs, D1R and D12L. The coding regions of these two subunits were obtained from GenBank (NC006998.1) and used to construct phCMVdream\_VV\_D1R and phCMVdream\_VV\_D12L (Figure 42) respectively. The Nelson bay orthoreovirus (NBV) p10 fusion-associated small transmembrane (FAST) protein-coding region (GenBank no. AB908284) was used to design the

phCMVdream\_p10\_FAST plasmid (Figure 43). The phCMVdream\_ASFV capping plasmid (Figure 42) was designed to carry the coding region of the African swine fever virus (ASFV) capping enzyme (GenBank no. NP868R). This sequence was also used to design the phCMVdream\_C3P3 construct (Eaton *et al.*, 2017) which contained both the ORFs of the ASFV capping enzyme and a synthetic viral T7-RNA polymerase (GenBank no. KY446063.1) fused together through a serine-glycine linker (Figure 42).

### 2.2.10 Preparation of transfection mixtures

For the various plasmid-only RV RG systems in this project multiple transcription plasmids along with expression plasmids encoding the various capping and FAST proteins needed to be transfected into cells in very specific ratios. These plasmids were prepared through Endotoxin-free MaxiPreps (Section 2.2.5) and mixed together to form either a 1) equi-ug or 2) equi-molar transfection mixture. In both scenarios, the concentration of the final transfection mixture was determined through spectrophotometry (Section 2.2.6) to calculate what volume of the transfection mixture will be used during each transfection (Equation 1 and Equation 2). Optimal transfection and rescue efficiency required 30ug of total DNA per 25cm<sup>2</sup> transfection reaction. An equi-ug transfection mixture means that an equal amount (in terms of ug weight) of each plasmid is mixed together. This does not, however, result in an equal number of each plasmid being present in the mixture. Due to the large distribution of RV genome segment sizes (from GS1: 3302bp to GS11: 667bp), the plasmids vary largely in size. This type of transfection mixture contains more copies of the smaller plasmids than that of the larger ones, roughly 5 times more GS11 (NSP5/6) than GS1 (VP1).

For calculation purposes, the specific amount of plasmid selected in this instance is quite arbitrary as long as it remains the same for each plasmid (p = 10ug was selected for this project) (see equation 1 and Table 8 for details). It is also important to mention that this equi-ug ratio was not applied to the p10 FAST plasmids. Adding too much of the FAST coding plasmid will result in massive cellular trans-membrane fusion after transfection and will negatively impact viral rescue.

An equi-molar transfection mixture is prepared by calculating the molecular weight (MW) of each plasmid and correlating it to its concentration. An equal molar amount of each plasmid is then mixed together to ensure that the mix contains the DNA equivalent of one copy of each genome segment, similar to that of a natural virion. This results in larger plasmids contributing more than smaller plasmids to the overall weight (in ug) of the DNA in the mixture. This was however not applied to the FAST plasmid as a mere 40ng per 25cm<sup>2</sup> reaction was necessary and too much of it will cause the reverse genetic system to fail. The MW of each plasmid was calculated based on its sequence *in silico* using DNAMAN gene editing and visualization software and shown in Table 8. Table 8 illustrates the steps involved in the construction of either an equi-ug or equi-molar transfection mixture based on the implementation of the unaltered pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system. The equations that were used are annotated as equation 1 and equation 2. The Table was constructed in Excel and used to determine the amounts (ul) of each plasmid required based on their concentration. In the table the labels p=10ug and p=1x10<sup>-9</sup> mol refer to the amounts selected for this first experiment with p=10ug referring to 10ug of each plasmid involved in the mix and p=1x10<sup>-9</sup> mol referring to 1x10<sup>-9</sup> mol of each plasmid in the mix. These were arbitrary amounts selected solely to ensure equal amounts of each plasmid.

**Table 8: Calculations for the preparation of equi-ug and equi-molar transfection mixtures**

Plasmid name	plasmid size (bp)	Plasmid weight (kDa)	Working stock (ng/ul)	Equi-ug	Equi-molar
				Plasmid required (ul)	Plasmid required (ul)
pT7-VP1SA11	6387	3930,31	2064	4,8	1,9
pT7-VP2SA11	5777	3554,32	1950	5,1	1,8
pT7-VP3SA11	5675	3491,35	1274	7,8	2,7
pT7-VP4SA11	5447	3350,98	2103	4,8	1,6
pT7-VP6SA11	4441	2730,98	2603	3,8	1,0
pT7-VP7SA11	4147	2549,74	740	13,5	3,4
pT7-NSP1SA11	4695	2887,43	1075	9,3	2,7
pT7-NSP2SA11	4144	2576,21	2241	4,5	1,1
pT7-NSP3SA11	4190	2547,87	2089	4,8	1,2
pT7-NSP4SA11	3836	2358,08	987	10,1	2,4
pT7-NSP5-6SA11	3751	2305,68	2040	4,9	1,1
pCAG-FAST	6012	3907,3	720	13,9	5,4
pCAG-D1R	8258	5084,84	2574	3,9	2,0
pCAG-D12L	6586	4054,97	2301	4,3	1,8
Total				95,6	30,3
				p=10ug stock	p=1x10 <sup>-9</sup> mol stock

Total DNA per transfection (ug)	Concentration of Equi-ug plasmid mix (ng/ul)	Concentration of Equi-molar plasmid mix (ng/ul)	Volume of equi-ug plasmid mix per transfection (ul)	Volume of equi-molar plasmid mix per transfection (ul)
30	1125	1409	26,67	21,29

**Equation 1: Calculation of the volume of plasmid (ul) required to yield a specific amount of DNA (ug)**

For the construction of the  $p = 10\text{ug}$  plasmid stock the following equation was used:

$p$  is defined as: The standard amount of DNA (in ug) selected for each plasmid.

$[\text{DNA}]$  is defined as: The concentration of plasmid DNA (in ng/ul).

$V$  is defined as: The volume (in ul) of plasmid required to obtain a specific amount (in ug) of DNA ( $p$ ).

Thus  $[\text{DNA}] = \frac{\text{ng}}{\text{ul}}$  and  $V = \frac{p}{[\text{DNA}]}$  where  $p = 10\text{ug}$  of DNA.

**Equation 2: Calculation of the volume of plasmid (ul) required to yield a specific amount of DNA (mol)**

For the construction of the  $p = 1 \times 10^{-9}$  mol stock the following equations were used:

$\text{mol}_{(\text{DNA})}$  is defined as: The amount of DNA (in g) divided by the molecular weight (MW) of the DNA (in Dalton).

$[\text{DNA}]_{\text{ng}}$  is defined as: The concentration of plasmid DNA (in ng/ul).

$[\text{DNA}]_{\text{g}}$  is defined as: The concentration of plasmid DNA (in g/ul). Conversion is  $\text{ng}_{(\text{DNA})} \times 10^{-9} = \text{g}_{(\text{DNA})}$

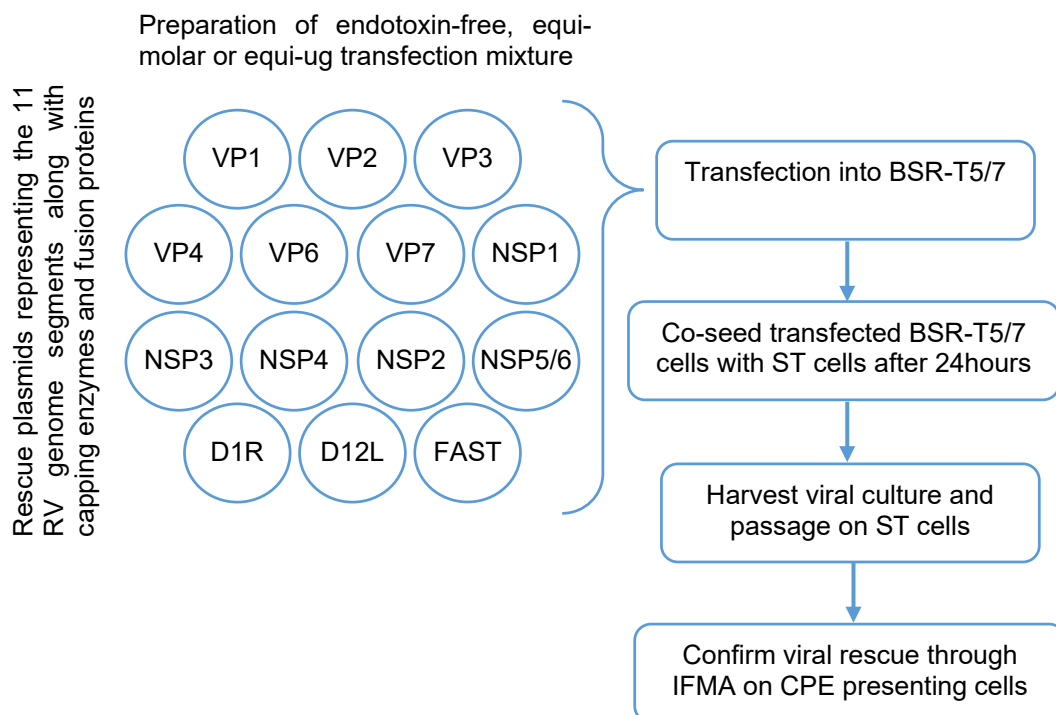
Meaning  $\text{mol}_{(\text{DNA})} = \frac{\text{g}_{(\text{DNA})}}{\text{MW}_{(\text{DNA in Da})}}$  and  $[\text{DNA}]_{\text{g}} = \frac{\text{ng}_{(\text{DNA})} \times 10^{-9}}{\text{ul}}$  thus

$\text{g}_{(\text{DNA})} = [\text{DNA}]_{\text{g}} \times \text{ul}$  and  $\text{mol}_{(\text{DNA})} = \frac{[\text{DNA}]_{\text{g}} \times \text{ul}}{\text{MW}_{(\text{DNA in Da})}}$  meaning

$\text{mol}_{(\text{DNA})} \times \text{MW}_{(\text{DNA in Da})} = [\text{DNA}]_{\text{g}} \times \text{ul}$  and  $\text{ul} = \frac{\text{mol}_{(\text{DNA})} \times \text{MW}_{(\text{DNA in Da})}}{[\text{DNA}]_{\text{g}}}$

### 2.2.11 Rescue protocol

All transfections were performed in 25cm<sup>2</sup> tissue culture flasks (Nunc, Thermo Scientific, MA, USA) on either BHK-T7 or BSR-T5/7 cell monolayers of roughly 80% confluence. This was done due to the fact that optimal transfection requires actively growing monolayers that are between 75% and 85% confluent. Monolayers that have reached 100% confluence reduce metabolic activity and have a lower overall transfection efficiency and viral yield. Once the desired cell-line reached 80% confluence the growth media was removed and the monolayer was washed with 5ml of sterile, room temperature, 1x PBS. This was done to remove excess FBS and residual antibiotics that might interact with the transfection reagent and adversely influence transfection efficiency. The monolayer was then covered in 1.5ml OptiMEM (Gibco) containing no antibiotics or FBS. The monolayer was then transfected with the desired transfection plasmid mix (Figure 18) using TransIT-LT transfection reagent.



**Figure 18: Diagram depicting the simplified rescue protocol used throughout this project for both the pT7\_SA11-L2 and pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG systems**

transfection of DNA and proteins into a variety of commercial and primary cell-lines. The reagent is well known for its low toxicity and high transfection efficiency and was

used for all transfections in this project. Although the transfection reagent is tolerant to FBS, it is inhibited by various antibiotics and is thus used in conjunction with un-supplemented Opti-MEM throughout the transfection process. All transfections were carried out in accordance with the manufacturers' guidelines and followed the same basic protocol.

The selected transfection plasmids were freshly mixed as described in Table 8, and its concentration measured through spectrophotometry (Section 2.2.6). Dilute 30ug of the plasmid mixture in 500ul of un-supplemented Opti-MEM in a 5ml round bottom polystyrene tube and mix gently through pipetting. Next, gently mix the TransIT-LT reagent through flicking the tube and then transfer 90ul of the reagent to the diluted DNA tube being careful not to let the reagent touch the sides of the tube. Optimal results were obtained by using 3ul of transfection reagent per ug of DNA. Introduce the reagent directly into the 500ul of diluted DNA and mix through pipetting. Let the transfection mix incubate at room temperature for 15-30min so that the DNA-lipid complex can form.

During this incubation, the growth media was removed from the BHK-T7 or BRS5-T7 monolayers and replaced with Opti-MEM. The transfection complex was not incubated for more than 30 minutes. The total volume of the transfection complex was added drop-wise to the prepared monolayers making sure that the complex directly interacts with the cells. The cells were then incubated with the transfection complex for 12-16 hours at 37°C in a humidified CO<sub>2</sub> (5%) incubator, where-after the transfection complex was removed and replaced with complete media for a further 12-16 hour incubation. It was found that even though the TransIT-LT transfection reagent has low toxicity, the 16-hour incubation did damage a significant portion of the cells and better results were obtained when this damage was counteracted with the second 12-16 hour incubation in complete media.

Following this recovery incubation, the co-seeding cells (MA104 or ST cells were grown to confluence beforehand) were prepared and introduced to the transfected monolayer. The co-seeding cells were washed twice with 1% PBS and treated with 0.05% trypsin EDTA (as per splitting procedure). The cells were then re-suspended in 500ul of FBS and added directly to the transfected monolayer in complete media. The co-seeded culture was then incubated for 1-3 hours to facilitate attachment of the co-

seeding cells. After attachment the complete media was removed and labelled as co-seeding supernatant, it was replaced with maintenance media, growth media lacking FBS and supplemented with either 0.5 ug/ml (for MA104 cells), or 0.3 µg/ml (for ST cells) porcine trypsin (catalogue no. T0303-1G, Merck) and incubated for 2-3 days or until CPE is clearly visible. The addition of MA104 or ST cells was designed to significantly increase the viral titer as both these cell-lines are known to propagate rotavirus very well.

The rescue protocol was concluded by viral harvest, passaged on either MA104 or ST monolayers and viral visualization through an immuno-fluorescent monolayer assay (IFMA), as depicted in Appendix D.

### **2.2.12 Immuno-fluorescent monolayer assay (IFMA)**

Initial verification and visualization of viral recovery were done through an immuno-fluorescent monolayer assay, IFMA (Bishop, 2016; van Gennip *et al.*, 2012). The primary antibody used was either a polyclonal rabbit anti-RV VP2/6 DLP IgG (serum generously provided by Prof. A.C. Potgieter, Deltamune, RSA), a polyclonal rabbit anti-RV NSP4 IgG or a polyclonal rabbit anti-RV VP7 peptide IgG (provided by Prof. A.C. Potgieter, Deltamune, RSA, in association with Prof. H.G. O'Neill, University of the Free State, RSA). The secondary antibody used was a fluorescently labelled (Alexa Fluor 488) goat anti-rabbit IgG conjugate (ThermoFisher).

The basic premise of this technique is that during the organic solvent fixing step the cell monolayer is fixed to the bottom of the flask and all proteins including any viral particles are precipitated. This step also enhances membrane permeability and allows the primary antibodies to interact with the precipitated proteins. The primary antibody is then introduced to the monolayer and binds to specific antigenic epitopes on any viral particles present. All excessive antibody is washed off and the secondary antibody is introduced. The second antibody binds specifically to the constant region (long-chain end) of the rabbit antibodies and is conjugated with an Alexa Fluor® 488 fluorescent complex.

This fluorescent complex has an excitation range of Ex: 495nm and emission range of Em: 519nm. Finally, the excess conjugate was washed off and the monolayer viewed under a fluorescent microscope (conjugate will emit green light). IFMA was performed on cell-culture monolayers that had presented with cytopathogenic effects (CPE) indicating viral growth. The cells were fixed by removal of any media and addition of 5mL of ice-cold fixing solution (1:1 methanol: acetone) followed by incubation at -20°C for 30min. The media removed in this step was labelled and stored at 4°C. If the IFMA results indicated viral rescue, this media was used as primary viral stock (P1 stock) or used for dsRNA (viral genome) extraction. The fixed cells were washed with washing buffer (1x PBS with 0.05% Tween-20), after which the blocking buffer (1x PBS, 0.05% Tween-20 and 1% (w/v) tryptone) was added and incubated at 37°C for 60 min. Organic solvent fixation, such as methanol/acetone, does not require a permeabilisation step as it is capable of removing lipids from the cell membranes, dehydrating the cells and causing precipitation of proteins in the cellular structure (Jamur & Oliver, 2010a; Jamur & Oliver, 2010b).

The blocking buffer prevents unspecific binding of the various antibodies through the coating of the exposed areas of the tissue flask with tryptone. The blocking buffer was then replaced with the primary antibody solution (serum-containing above-mentioned rabbit anti-RV IgG diluted 1:2000 in blocking buffer) and allowed to incubate for 60min at 37°C. After this incubation, the primary antibody solution was removed and the fixed cells were washed three times with washing buffer. The secondary antibody solution (anti-rabbit goat IgG conjugated diluted 1:2000 in blocking buffer) was then added and incubated for 60min at 37°C followed by two washes with 1x PBS. The cells were then immediately viewed under a fluorescent microscope (Nikon eclipse TE2000-S, Nikon Instruments Inc. Melville, NY, USA) and photos were taken.

### **2.2.13 Viral propagation**

After obtaining the primary viral stock (P1 stock), propagation of the virus is required for dsRNA extraction, TCID<sub>(50)</sub> assays or serial passaging. For each of these, the viral stock must first be activated and then used to infect new cells. As described in Section 1.3.4, rotavirus outer capsid protein VP4 must first be proteolytically cleaved into VP5

and VP8 before it can interact with cell receptors and initiate infection. The cleavage of the VP4 spike is referred to as activating the virus and is achieved through the addition of porcine trypsin (Merck) to a final concentration of 10ug/ml, and incubation of the P1 stock at 37°C for 30min. Viral propagation was carried out in either MA104 or ST cells grown in 75cm<sup>2</sup> tissue culture flasks at 90% confluence. The growth media was removed and the monolayer washed with 1x sterile PBS to remove FBS.

To 1ml inoculum 1ml of growth media without any antibiotics or FBS was added and poured over the monolayer and incubated for one hour at 37°C with slight agitation. The inoculum was removed after 60min and fresh propagation media is added to the cells. Propagation media simply refers to the cells' standard growth media without any FBS and with the addition of porcine trypsin to a final concentration of 0.3ug/ml.

Monolayers were then incubated at 37°C in a humidified, 5% CO<sub>2</sub> incubator for 3-5 days or until CPE developed to more than 75%. At this stage, the cells were either harvested or the supernatant was removed and stored as a viral stock (P<sub>n+1</sub>) whereafter the CPE presenting cells were fixed for IFMA (Section 2.2.12). When harvesting viruses from CPE presenting cultures, the cells must first be detached from the tissue culture flask through scraping or pipetting. The entire content of the flask is then transferred to a centrifugation tube and homogenised through pipetting. From here on two distinct options were considered, namely the preparation of a supernatant stock or a whole lysate stock. In general supernatant, stocks were preferred as cellular debris can contain various cytotoxic components which could interfere with infection. However, in this project, the initial passage (from P<sub>0</sub> stock to P<sub>1</sub> for IFMA) was done using a whole-cell lysate. For a supernatant stock, the homogenised cell suspension was centrifuged to pellet out all intact cells and cellular debris after which the stock was activated.

Whole lysate stocks were simply activated directly after homogenization. After activation, the standard viral propagation protocol was followed.

### **2.2.14 Sequencing**

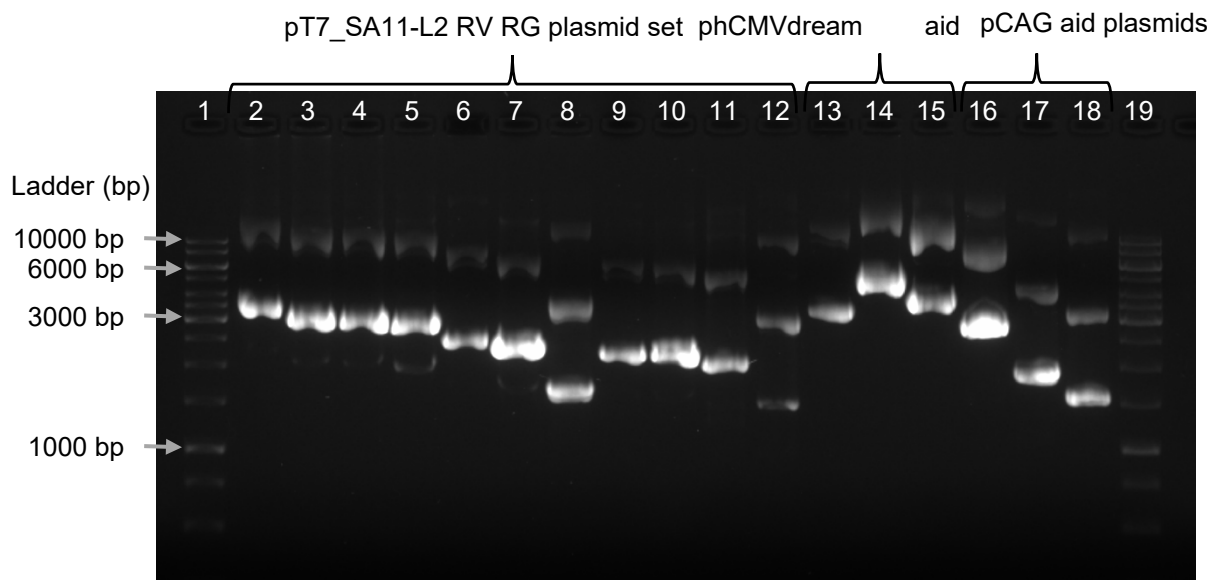
All transcription plasmids used throughout this project were sent for sequence verification via Sanger sequencing at Stellenbosch University's Central Analytical Facility (CAF), DNA Sequencing Unit, using the standard T7 promoter forward- and T7 terminator reverse-sequencing primers (supplied by CAF sequencing unit). The standard miniprep plasmid extraction protocol was followed for samples sent for Sanger sequencing.

Plasmids used for transfection and cDNA derived from rescued viral genomes were sent for next-generation sequencing (NGS). Plasmids sent for NGS were extracted and purified using the endotoxin-free maxiprep protocol. All NGS was done by Dr Arshad Ismail at the National Institute for Communal Diseases (NICD) with the Illumina MySeq instrument. Sequence analyses were performed with the use of the CLC Genomic workbench software.

## 2.3 Results and Discussion

### 2.3.1 Plasmid extraction and sequence verification of the pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system

This step of the project entailed the extraction of the Japanese pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG plasmid set from bacterial cultures and validation of their sequences through NGS. The plasmids arrived in the form of 14 bacterial stab cultures each harbouring a single plasmid. The cultures were received from AddGene and immediately used to inoculate 14 overnight cultures for endotoxin-free plasmid extraction to be transfection ready (Section 2.2.5), glycerol stock preparation (Section 2.2.2) and sequencing (Section 2.2.14). The overnight cultures comprised of 100ml standard LB medium (Melford Laboratories Ltd. Bideston Road, Suffolk, U.K) supplemented with carbenicillin (Melford, U.K) to a final concentration of 100µg/ml, and were inoculated with one of the 14 bacterial stab cultures. Following the 16hour incubation at 37°C with shaking at 250rpm, plasmids were extracted and a 2ul sample of each was visualised through AGE (Section 2.2.7), Figure 19.



**Figure 19: Agarose gel of pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG plasmid set.** Lane 1 & 19: dsDNA ladder (O'GeneRuler 1 kb DNA Ladder, ThermoFisher). Lanes 2 to 12: pT7 plasmids carrying the RV\_SA11-L2 genome segments cDNA in order (from GS1 in lane 2 through to GS11 in lane 12). Lane 16: pCAG\_FAST plasmid. Lanes 17 & 18: the pCAG expression plasmids encoding the two subunits of the VV capping enzyme. Lanes 13 & 15: the two phCMVdream\_VV-capping expression plasmids. Lane 14: phCMVdream\_FAST expression plasmid.

Plasmid extractions yielded concentrations between 200ng/ul and 700ng/ul (Table 9), and as a result slightly distorted the gel, as evident by the bowing and slight smudging of the plasmids in the gel. This AGE was however purely to confirm and visualize plasmid extraction. Final confirmation would be done through sequence verification.

Aliquots of the 11 pT7\_SA11-L2 cDNA transcription plasmids were pooled and sent for NGS, which was much more affordable than sequencing each plasmid alone. Pooling the plasmids allowed single reaction sequencing of the entire plasmid set but had the disadvantage of not correlating the backbone sequence to each individual RV genome segment sequence (see Appendix B for sequence alignments and NGS reads mapped to reference genomes). The sequences of the 11 RV genome segments could, however, be fully verified, as well as the consensus sequence of the pT7 plasmid backbone. Only the 5'- and -3' flanking regions between the plasmid backbone and the individual genome segments could not be directly verified. The NGS reads were mapped against the SA11-L2 reference genome (LC333802 - LC333812) and the *in silico* constructs for each plasmid.

The consensus sequence (cs) obtained from the NGS as compared to the SA11-L2 reference genome showed no mutations or sequence errors. The backbone cs also aligned perfectly. Based on these results the plasmid sequences were deemed correct and ready for use in the implementation of the pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system.

### **2.3.2 Implementation of the original, equi-ug pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system and comparison to an equi-molar approach**

This experiment entailed the implementation of the exact pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system as described by Kanai (2017) alongside an equi-molar variation thereof. This was done in an attempt to recreate the original RV rescue results (Kanai *et al.*, 2017) and to test if the system could be improved using the equi-molar approach as used in the AHSV and BTV RG systems (Section 1.4.2). The exact experimental approach as used by Kanai (2017) was followed with the only modification being the use of 25cm<sup>2</sup> tissue culture flasks for transfections instead of the 96-well plates used during the original experiment.

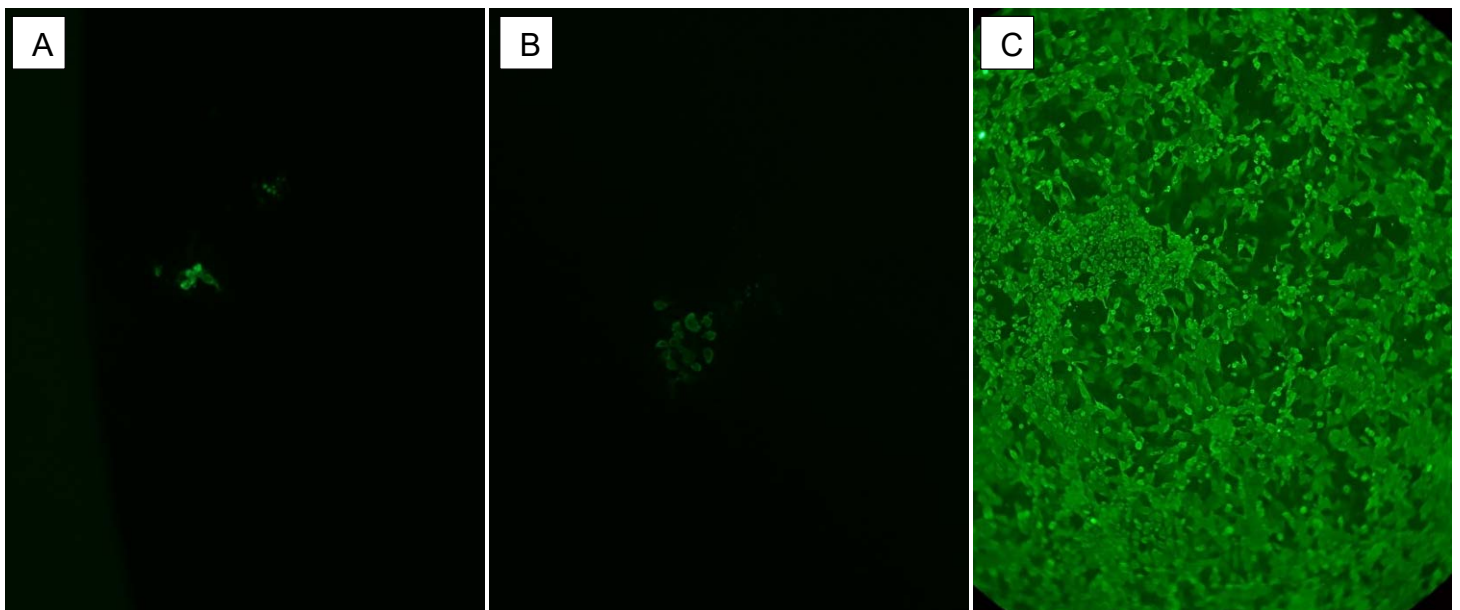
In short, the 14 rescue plasmids were extracted, purified and mixed together to form both an equi-ug and equi-molar, endotoxin-free, transfection mixture (Section 2.2.10) as shown in Table 9. For each of the systems a negative control was also constructed following the same procedure as the original but without the inclusion of an essential component, the plasmid encoding the viral RNA-dependent RNA-polymerase (GS1, VP1). Following this, the transfection protocol (Section 2.2.11) was followed for each system and its corresponding negative control, and rescue was verified through IFMA (Section 2.2.12). In addition to this SA11-N2 (our WT) was passaged on MA104 cells and visualized through IFMA as a positive control for the IFMA.

**Table 9: Calculations for the preparation of equi-ug and equi-molar pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG transfection mixtures**

Plasmid name	plasmid size (bp)	Plasmid weight (kDa)	Working stock (ng/ul)	Equi-ug	Equi-molar
				Plasmid required (ul)	Plasmid required (ul)
pT7-VP1SA11	6387	3930,31	2064	4,8	1,9
pT7-VP2SA11	5777	3554,32	1950	5,1	1,8
pT7-VP3SA11	5675	3491,35	1274	7,8	2,7
pT7-VP4SA11	5447	3350,98	2103	4,8	1,6
pT7-VP6SA11	4441	2730,98	2603	3,8	1,0
pT7-VP7SA11	4147	2549,74	740	13,5	3,4
pT7-NSP1SA11	4695	2887,43	1075	9,3	2,7
pT7-NSP2SA11	4144	2576,21	2241	4,5	1,1
pT7-NSP3SA11	4190	2547,87	2089	4,8	1,2
pT7-NSP4SA11	3836	2358,08	987	10,1	2,4
pT7-NSP5-6SA11	3751	2305,68	2040	4,9	1,1
pCAG-FAST	6012	3907,3	720	13,9	5,4
pCAG-D1R	8258	5084,84	2574	3,9	2,0
pCAG-D12L	6586	4054,97	2301	4,3	1,8
Total				95,6	30,3

Total DNA per transfection (ug)	p=10ug stock		p=1x10 <sup>-9</sup> mol stock	
	Equi-ug mixture (ng/ul)	Equi-molar mixture (ng/ul)	Volume equi-ug mixture / transfection (ul)	Volume equi-molar mixture / transfection (ul)
30	1125	1409	26,67	21,29

The experiment was carried out several times with every attempt yielding very few, and very faint fluorescent foci, indicative of low viral titer, or weak viral growth. Viral rescue, as evaluated by IFMA of the P1 passage at 5 to 7 days post-infection, could only be visually confirmed once with the original equi-ug pT7\_SA11-L2 system (Figure 20, A) and twice with the equi-molar approach (Figure 20, B). IFMA results of the WT SA11 infection (Figure 20, C) serves as an example of high levels of infection in MA104 cells compared to the viral rescue. For each reiteration of the experiment the negative controls never showed fluorescence following IFMA, the results of which are not shown. The system was also tried at various other institutions globally, and similar difficulties were experienced (personal communication). Since no significant differences could be seen between the equi-ug and equi-molar approaches it was arbitrarily decided to use the equi-molar approach for follow-up experiments as it was considered the standard approach in both the AHSV and BTV RG systems.



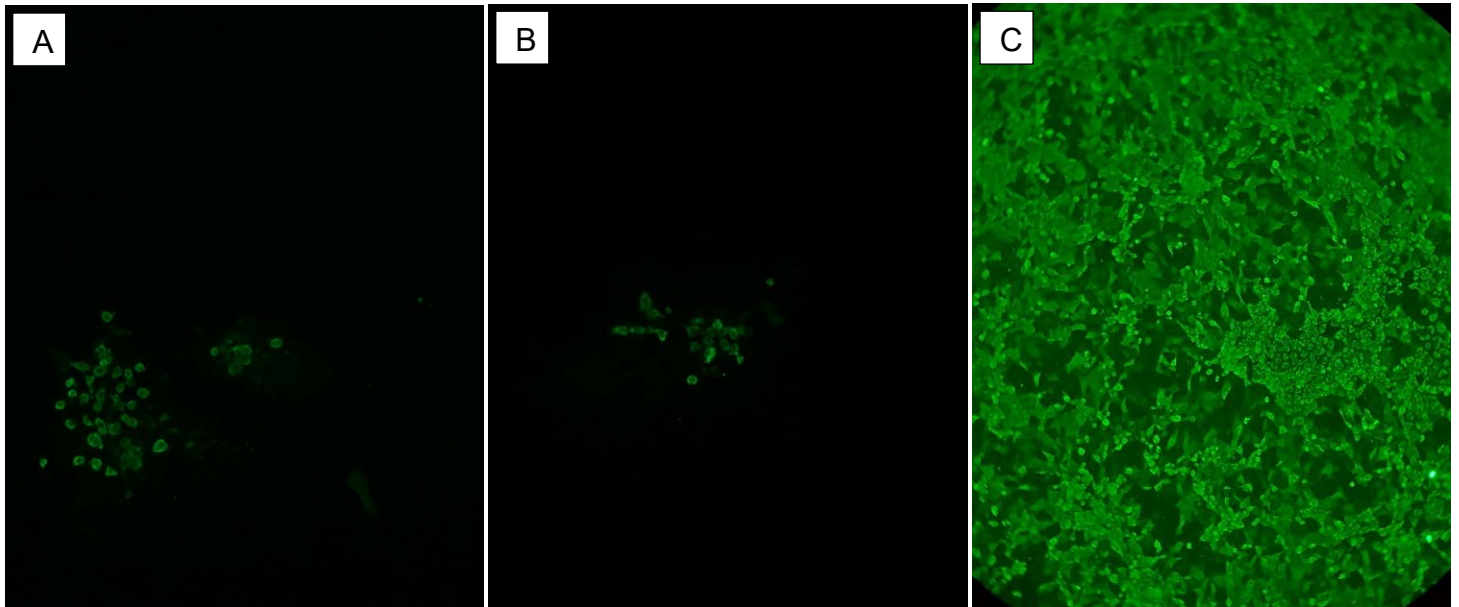
**Figure 20: IFMA of equi-ug (A), equi-molar (B) transfections of the original pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system and infection with SA11-N2 (C).** IFMAs were done on MA104 monolayers following the final 7 day incubation step (no CPE was visible for A and B). 400x magnification

When compared to the RG systems for AHSV and BTV RG, the reasons for the low efficacy of the pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system could include a large number of plasmid (14 plasmids ranging from 6387bp to 3751bp) that needed to be transfected into a single cell and the total plasmid load. To address this it was decided to 1) Reduce the

plasmid load with roughly 3000bp by replacing the pCAG backbone (~3080bp) with the phCMVdream backbone (~2010bp) for the two capping enzyme and fusion protein expression plasmids. **2)** Replace the VV capping enzyme with a single subunit capping enzyme, such as the ASFV capping enzyme (which is a key element of the BTV RG system), and **3)** Codon optimize each of the aid plasmids for expression in BSR-T5/7 cells. These optimizations were investigated in follow-up experiments.

### **2.3.3 Replacement of pCAG capping and fusion expression plasmids with *Cricetinae* codon-optimized phCMVdream versions**

This experiment entailed the exchange of the original pT7 capping and FAST plasmids with plasmids of our own design, phCMVdream\_VV\_D1R, phCMVdream\_D12L and phCMVdream\_p10-FAST (Figure 42 and Figure 43, Appendix A). The reasoning behind this was that although the pT7\_SA11-L2 rescue plasmids were producing exact mRNA copies of the viral genome, these RNAs might not have been properly capped and thus were not being translated efficiently. The VV capping enzyme subunits (D1R and D12L) used in our plasmids were codon-optimized for expression in BSR-T5/7 cells (Chinese hamster ovary, *Cricetinae*, codon optimization) and were carried in the much smaller phCMVdream plasmids backbone. In theory, the smaller backbone would result in more copies of the plasmids being transfected into cells and the codon optimizations would lead to increased expression of the capping and fusion enzymes which in turn would increase capping efficiency and trans-membrane fusion. Similar to the previous experiment both an equi-ug and equi-molar transfection mixture was prepared, but this time with the phCMVdream based capping and FAST plasmids. For each version of the system a negative control was included (not adding VP1 coding plasmid). The standard rescue protocol (Section 2.2.11) was followed and viral recovery was confirmed through IFMA (Figure 21).



**Figure 21: IFMA of equi-molar (A), equi-ug (B) transfection of the pT7\_SA11-L2 system using phCMVdream based capping and FAST plasmids and infection with SA11-N2 (C).** IFMAs were done on MA104 monolayers following a 7 day incubation with the P1 stock recovered from the co-seeded culture. No CPE was visible for A or B. 400x magnification.

In both the equi-molar and equi-ug systems cellular fusion was visibly increased, however, only a slight increase in efficiency was visible as indicated by fluorescent response following IFMA (Figure 21). Repeatability remained a major concern with multiple rescue attempts confirmed through IFMA, but no consecutive rescues obtained from P1 passages.

Following the transfection and co-seeding steps of the rescue protocol (Section 2.2.11), both systems' monolayers were monitored and various signs of viral propagation were observed during each reiteration of the experiment. These possible viral indicators however rarely translated into positive IFMA results, implying that: **1)** The signs of viral propagation were the result of plasmid carry-over, meaning viral proteins were being expressed, but no actual rescued virus was present to propagate. **2)** The recombinant virus is being rescued but not propagating efficiently enough in MA104 cells, thus making visualization through IFMA difficult. **3)** The signs of viral propagation were the result of trypsin toxicity and/or the carry-over of cytotoxic elements from the P1 stock.

Due to the nature of the rescue protocol, it was difficult to eliminate carry-over of plasmids and cytotoxic elements from the transfected culture to the propagation monolayer. For this reason, it was decided that the focus of the next experiments would be to ensure viral replication before P1 passage instead of trying to reduce carry-over and cellular toxicity. It was decided to change the co-seeding and propagation cell-line from MA104 to ST cells, which are known to be capable of propagating RV at lower (non-toxic) trypsin levels and to be highly susceptible to RV infection (Estes *et al.*, 1979; Welter *et al.*, 1991).

As with the previous experiment, no significant difference in visual viral yield was observed between the equi-molar and equi-ug approaches. It was thus decided that all follow-up experiments would only be based on an equi-molar approach as it more closely represents natural viral infection (Section 2.2.10).

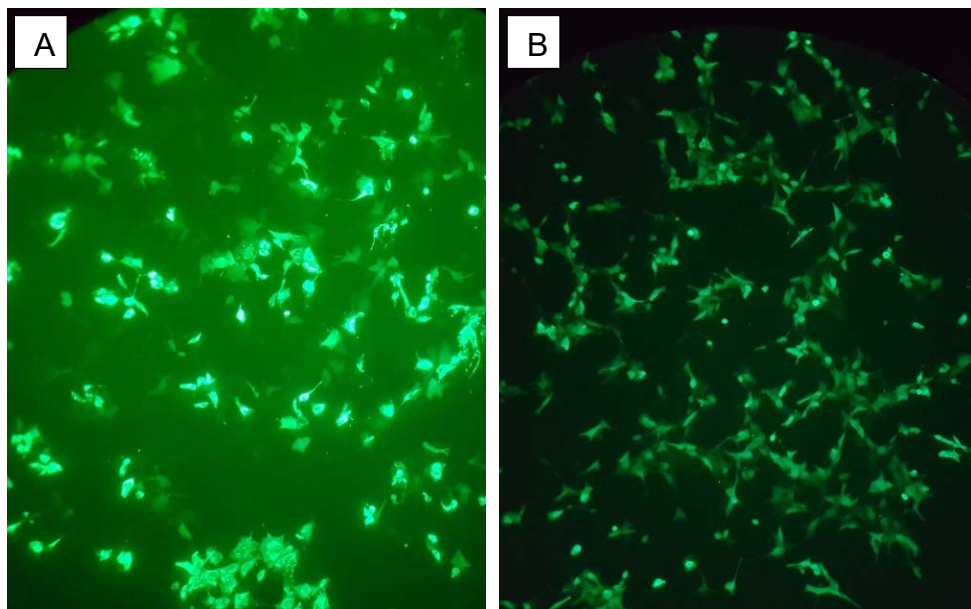
#### **2.3.4 Use of ST cells for co-seeding and as propagation cell line instead of MA104s**

This experiment entailed the use of ST cells as co-seeding and propagation cell-line along with the increase of the relative amounts of plasmids encoding the sub-units of the VV capping enzyme. The reasoning behind the use of ST cells was based on the ability of ST cells to propagate RV at lower trypsin concentrations (possibly reducing toxicity) and the high susceptibility of ST cells to RV infection (Welter *et al.*, 1991). Additionally, concerns were raised about the high passage number of our MA104 cells and their continued susceptibility to RV infection. MA104 cells are the industry standard for RV propagation (Estes *et al.*, 1979; Gutierrez *et al.*, 2010; Londrigan *et al.*, 2000; Teimoori *et al.*, 2014) as they are a simian cell line and SA11 is also a simian virus. However, at Deltamune ST cells are also used for propagating non-porcine viruses (including SA11) and seem to be more susceptible to RV infection than MA104 cells (Potgieter, A.C. Deltamune, Personal communication). It should be noted that SA11 reaches much higher viral titers when passaged on MA104 cells than in ST cells. For this experimental approach it was decided that during the initial infection, following co-seeding, susceptibility to infection was more important than generating very high viral titers.

The suggested increase of the capping enzymes was based on experience with the AHSV RG system where increased capping of the viral transcripts directly resulted in increased viral yield. Based on these factors two equi-molar transfection mixtures were prepared, one containing the standard 1:1 ratio of phCMVdream based capping plasmids to pT7\_SA11-L2 rescue plasmids, and the other containing three times as much (1:3 ratio), see Table 10 below for precise composition. Negative controls for each of the systems were constructed (lacking the VP1 transcription plasmid) followed by standard rescue protocol (Section 2.2.11), and verification of viral recovery through IFMA (Section 2.2.12).

**Table 10: Construction of equi-molar transfection mixtures with increased ratios of capping enzyme encoding plasmids**

	1:1 Ratio	1:3 Ratio	Total DNA
Rescue plasmids	25.8ug	20.2ug	30ug
Capping plasmids	4.2ug	9.8ug	30ug



**Figure 22: IFMA of equi-molar transfections of the pT7\_SA11-L2 system using ST cells for co-seeding and propagation and varying the ratio of capping plasmids to rescue plasmids (A) 1:1 and (B) 1:3. IFMAs were done on CPE presenting ST cells 3-5 days after P1 passage. 400x magnification.**

The results of the IFMA (Figure 22) clearly show high levels of viral infection and indicate definitive viral rescue. There was a clear distinction between infected cells and back-ground fluorescent interference. Although the majority of ST cells were infected, some cells remain un-infected and non-fluorescent. Repeatability dramatically increased with viral rescue visually confirmed 4 out of 5 times via IFMA.

It is noteworthy that the ST cells did not survive as well as MA104 in the presence of the propagation media. This is most likely due to the presence of porcine trypsin in the propagation media, a protease required for RV propagation that is toxic to ST cells even at levels that are considered non-toxic to MA104 cells (0.3ug/ml). Additionally, the use of ST cells instead of MA104 cells reduced incubation times to see CPE, from 7 days to between 3-5 days. CPE was also clearly visible in ST monolayers whereas MA104 monolayers did not present with clear CPE even after 7 days. This apparent discrepancy in CPE is thought to be due to the increased susceptibility of ST cells to infection as compared to MA104 cells. It was thus decided that ST cells would form the bases for further experiments with MA104 cells only being used for serial passages and TCID<sub>50</sub> assays.

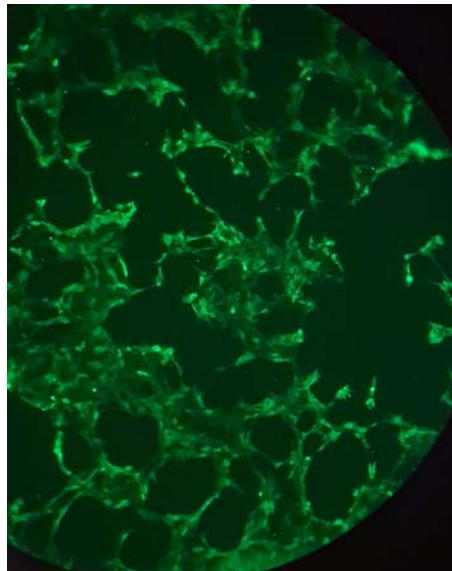
Visual IFMA evaluation of the results also suggested a slight increase in efficiency for the system that provided more capping enzyme, further supporting the notion that the capping of the RV mRNA transcripts is essential for viral rescue. Another hypothesis for improving the efficiency of translation, and by extension viral rescue, was to use a more stringent selection system for the regulation of viral T7-RNA polymerase expression. This would not only increase the amount of T7-RNA polymerase available in each cell but also increase the number of cells actively expressing the enzyme.

### **2.3.5 Replacing BHK-T7 cells with BSR-T5/7 cells as transfection cell-line**

In BHK-T7 cells hygromycin is used for the selection of the plasmid carrying the T7-RNA polymerase (Ito *et al.*, 2003). Due to its toxicity, hygromycin pressure is only applied to the cells every third passage. In contrast, BSR-T5/7 cells have a different T7-RNA polymerase expression plasmid that requires geneticin selection, which can be applied continuously (Liu *et al.*, 2005).

This experiment entailed the exchange of the initial transfection cell-line (BHK-T7) with BSR-T5/7 cells that more stringently selects for the expression of the viral T7-RNA polymerase. The hypothesis was that more stringent T7-RNA polymerase selection would increase the number of cells expressing the viral T7-RNA polymerase, which in turn would increase transcription of the rescue plasmids, providing more mRNA for translation and increasing overall rescue efficiency. The exact same experimental approach as the previous experiment (Section 2.3.4) was followed with the exception of BSR-T5/7 cells being used as primary transfection cell-line.

The combination of increased T7-RNA polymerase expression and the increased amounts of capping and fusion plasmids yielded a repeatable and consistent viral rescue system (Figure 23). Not only did this configuration of the RG system dramatically increase repeatability (rescue confirmed 5 out of 5 times), but it also increased viral titer as evidenced by the advanced CPE visible after only three to four days (whereas the unmodified system showed no CPE after 7 days). From this point forward the final incubation step, visual CPE formation was reduced to between 3 to 5 days.



**Figure 23: IFMA of equi-molar transfections of the pT7\_SA11-L2 system into BSR-T5/7 cells, using ST cells for co-seeding and propagation.** IFMAs were done on CPE presenting ST cells 3-5 days after P1 passage. 400x magnification.

## 2.4 Summary

The pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system was made available to the scientific community through the AddGene service in 2017. The system was acquired by the NWU and was implemented with initial difficulty. Communication with various other groups also using the original system proved that the initial system required further development and optimization. The system proved to be very hard to consistently repeat and viral yields were very low (roughly  $2 \times 10^2$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml, see Chapter 3, Section 3.3.5). Based on the strategies used during the implementation and optimization of the BTV and AHSV RG systems, it was decided to incorporate the following modifications to the initial pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system.

- 1) Using equi-molar transfection mixtures instead of equi-ug mixtures. This was the standard approach in both the AHSV and BTV RG systems and more closely replicated the actual conditions during viral infection and replication.
- 2) Reducing the plasmid load with roughly 3000bp by exchanging the two pCAG capping and pCAG FAST expression plasmids (3010bp backbone) with phCMVdream versions (2080bp backbone) I designed.
- 3) The phCMVdream capping and FAST plasmids were also codon-optimized for expression in hamster cells (primary transfection cell-lines) which in theory would increase capping and fusion efficiency.
- 4) Using ST cells instead of MA104 cells for co-seeding and propagation cell-line. Not only did this significantly increase repeatability of the pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system, but also reduced reporting time with 2-3 days.
- 5) Increasing the ratio of capping to rescue plasmids from 1:1 to 3:1. In the AHSV RG system, the increase in capping efficiency directly resulted in increased viral yield.
- 6) Using BSR-T5/7 cells instead of BHK-T7 cells as primary transfection cell-line. This increased the availability of the viral T7-RNA polymerase and increased the number of cells actively expressing the enzyme.

Through the incorporation of these modifications, I was able to greatly improve both the overall repeatability of the pT7\_SA11-L2 system and its efficiency as evaluated

through relative viral yield. The optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 system served to fully familiarize me with the basic methods involved in viral rescue and as a useful reference for the implementation of our own consensus sequence-based, plasmid only pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system (Chapter 3). Following the implementation of the NWU developed pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system, side-by-side comparisons were done with the pT7\_SA11-L2 system also incorporating all the optimizations implemented in order to perform a comparative analysis between the different RG systems.

Evaluation of viral titers, sequencing results and comparative analysis of the pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system is presented and discussed in Chapter 3 as it pertains to the implementation and evaluation of the locally developed, pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system.

## Chapter 3

# Implementation, optimization and comparative analysis of our pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system against the Japanese pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system

### 3.1 Introduction

As mentioned in Section 1.4.3.2, the development and implementation of a robust RV RG system have long been a goal of our research group at the NWU. Before the 2017 publication of the Japanese pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system, the NWU research group was in the process of developing our own RV RG systems based on the work of Dr L. Mlera (Mlera, 2012), and Dr JF. Wentzel (Wentzel, 2014). This chapter entails the finalization and implementation of the locally developed, consensus sequence-based, plasmid only pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system as well as the comparative analysis of it to the Japanese pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system. Further improvements and optimizations were introduced to both systems and again compared via TCID<sub>50</sub> assay.

Following the work of Dr Wentzel (2014), another member of the NWU research group, L. Geldenhuys, focused on the construction of a fully plasmid-based RV RG system that would not rely on *in vitro* transcription, but rather on the transfection of transcription plasmids alone. Geldenhuys amplified the 11, consensus sequence, genome segments of RV SA11-N5 from the plasmids designed by Dr Wentzel (Figure 51, Appendix C) using the primers listed in Table 12. Each of these cDNA amplicons was then sub-cloned into the pSmart backbone, through the use of In-Fusion and fast cloning techniques, to generate the basis of the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system. The primers used by Geldenhuys were also designed to correct the 5'-GGGN sequence that inhibited viral genome packaging in the Dr Wentzel transcription-based RV RG system. The plasmid only approach followed by Geldenhuys was also heavily influenced by the techniques and strategies used during the development of the AHSV and BTV RG systems.

The pSmart backbone used throughout this project was obtained from Prof. A.C. Potgieter (Deltamune, RSA) where it was being used as the backbone for the plasmid only AHSV RG system (van Rijn, *et al.*, 2016). Each of the pSmart\_SA11-N5 constructs was designed to carry a single genome segment flanked by a 5'- T7-RNA polymerase promoter and a 3'- HDV ribozyme for the generation of precise viral transcript termini following transfection. Geldenhuys correctly generated and sequence-verified 8 of the 11 pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG constructs during her MSc, with only GS3 (VP3), GS9 (VP7) and GS11 (NSP5/6) not being finalized. The final part of Geldenhuys's MSc and the initial part of my MSc overlapped, with the main goal of both being the implementation of a plasmid only RV RG system. As a result of this, many of the primers and constructs used during Geldenhuys's MSc are also used in mine.

Upon the publication of the pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system in 2017 the focus of our research group at the NWU temporarily shifted from further fine-tuning the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system to the implementation of the Japanese pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system (Chapter 2). Upon successfully rescuing recombinant RV from the optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system, the focus again shifted to the finalization of the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system and its implementation with the newly discovered optimizations (Section 2.4) in mind. This was initiated through the correction of the last three pSmart\_SA11-N5 plasmids (GS3, GS9 and GS11) through In-Fusion HD cloning. Additionally, the phCMVdream capping and fusion encoding plasmids designed for the optimization of the Japanese pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system (Figure 42 and Figure 43, Appendix A) were also incorporated into the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system.

## 3.2 Materials and methods

### 3.2.1 dsRNA extraction

The protocol for dsRNA extraction and sequence-independent primer ligation was basically the same as that described by Potgieter and associates (Potgieter *et al.*, 2009). Following IFMA confirmation of viral rescue, the corresponding P1 stock was used to infect confluent monolayers of MA104 or ST cells in a 75cm<sup>2</sup> tissue culture flask for viral propagation (Section 2.2.13). After infection the monolayer was incubated at 37°C in a humidified, 5% CO<sub>2</sub> incubator for 3-5 days or until CPE progressed to more than 75%, at which stage the cells were harvested. All remaining cells were detached from the bottom of the tissue culture flask through scraping or pipetting and the total content of the flask was emptied into a 15ml Falcon tube. The cells were pelleted through centrifugation at room temperature for 10min at 2500 x g. The supernatant was decanted into a new 15ml Falcon tube, labelled as the P2 viral stock and stored at 4°C. The pellet was then used for Tri-reagent mediated viral dsRNA genome extraction.

TRIzol, also known as Tri-reagent, is a monophasic solution of phenol and guanidinium isothiocyanate that is commercially available for the solubilisation, extraction and deproteinizing of RNA (Rio *et al.*, 2010). The reagent maintains RNA integrity during tissue homogenizing whilst simultaneously solubilizing biological material and denaturing proteins. It is especially useful in protecting RNAs from endogenous RNases during cell breakdown and homogenizing. It is used in conjunction with chloroform to perform organic-phase:aqueous-phase extraction during which proteins are extracted to the organic phase, DNA resolves at the interface, and RNA remains in the aqueous phase.

For RNA extraction the cell-pellet was re-suspended in 750µL TRIzol® (Invitrogen, Carlsbad, California, USA), followed by the addition of 200µL chloroform. The sample was vortexed and incubated at room temperature for 5min, after which the sample was centrifuged for 15 - 30min at 16 000g at 4°C. The aqueous phase containing the RNA was carefully removed, after which an equivalent volume of isopropanol was added to it, thoroughly mixed and allowed to stand for 5-10min to facilitate RNA precipitation.

RNA is pelleted through centrifugation at 16 000g for 15-30min followed by removal of supernatant and drying of the pellet through another 10min centrifugation at 16 000g. Any remaining supernatant was carefully removed via pipetting and the pellet was air-dried for 5min. The RNA pellet was then dissolved in 100µl elution buffer (EB; Qiagen) for 15-30min at room temperature with intermittent mixing.

ssRNA was precipitated by adding lithium chloride (LiCl) to a final concentration of 2M to the sample, followed by overnight incubation at 4°C. ssRNA was pelleted through centrifugation at 16 000g at 4°C for 15 - 30min, after which the supernatant containing the dsRNA was moved to a new sterile PCR tube. The dsRNA could not be visualised through AGE at this stage as the LiCl in the sample distorts the gel and results in smears during separation. Before being visualized and used for sequence-independent primer ligation and cDNA synthesis the dsRNA was first purified using the MEGAclean™ kit (Invitrogen).

Before first use of the kit 20ml of 100% ethanol was added to the washing buffer and correspondingly labelled. The LiCl containing dsRNA sample was brought up to 100ul with elution buffer and transferred to a sterile, low-bind 1,5ml Eppendorf micro-centrifuge tube. Following this, 350µl of the provided binding solution concentrate was added and mixed through pipetting after which 250µl of 100% ethanol was added and again thoroughly mixed through pipetting. The solution was then transferred to the provided binding column which in turn was then placed into a 2ml collection tube. The sample was centrifuged at 13 000rpm for 60 seconds during which the RNA was bound to the membrane. The flow-through was discarded and the membrane was washed twice with 500ul of washing solution through centrifugation for 60 seconds, after which the flow-through was discarded. The sample was centrifuged again without the addition of any buffers for 60 seconds to remove any residual buffers from the membrane and to prepare it for elution.

RNA was eluted from the membrane by adding 30ul of 95°C nuclease-free H<sub>2</sub>O to the column and incubating it for 5min after which it was centrifuged for 60 seconds at 13 000rpm. This elution step was repeated twice yielding 60ul of purified dsRNA of which 3ul was used for visualization through AGE (Section 2.2.7).

The purity and concentration of the dsRNA were determined by spectrophotometry (Section 2.2.6). All centrifugation steps were performed in an Eppendorf 2J20 bench centrifuge.

### **3.2.2 Polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis (PAGE)**

For higher resolution evaluation of dsRNA, either from viral genome extraction or from various dsRNA ligation reactions, RNA-PAGE was used instead of the standard AGE approach. Although reducing PAGE techniques (such as sodium dodecyl sulphate polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis, SDS-PAGE) is traditionally used for the separation of proteins, the technique can be applied to the separation of nucleic acids, especially RNA. The basic principles of AGE and PAGE are the same with charged molecules moving through a matrix with various pores. The larger the molecule, the more resistance is provided by the matrix and the less it moves, correspondingly the smaller the molecule the less resistance is experienced and the further along with the gel it moves, thus causing separation. In RNA-PAGE the pores are formed by cross-linking various polyacrylamide chains together using bifunctional agents such as N, N'-methylene-bis-acrylamide. The concentrations and ratios of these base reagents determine the density of the gel and the pore size.

For this experiment, the separation of dsRNA was done with a 5% stacking, and 12% resolving gel at 130V. The standard Laemmli (1970) method, as described in Sambrook and Russell (2001), was used to construct and run the PAGE gel. The resolving gel was prepared first (Table 11) and cast into an assembled 0.75mm Bio-Rad Mini Protean gel casting apparatus (BIORAD). The gel was then covered with H<sub>2</sub>O-saturated isobutanol to prevent the diffusion of O<sub>2</sub> into the gel (which would inhibit polymerization) and allowed to fully polymerize at room temperature for 30-60 min. Following this, the H<sub>2</sub>O-saturated isobutanol is removed and the top of the gel is washed with deionized H<sub>2</sub>O to remove any unpolymerized acrylamide. Any remaining H<sub>2</sub>O is removed with Whattman filter paper, and the stacking gel is prepared (Table 11) and cast onto the resolving gel.

**Table 11: Preparation of resolving and stacking gel for RNA-PAGE**

Stock reagent	12% Resolving gel		5% Stacking Gel	
	Volume (ml)	Final concentration	Volume (ml)	Final concentration
40% Acrylamide mix	4.5	12%	0.75	5%
1.5 M Tris (pH 8.8)	3.8	0.38 M	N/A	N/A
1.0 M Tris (pH 6.8)	N/A	N/A	0.75	0.125 M
10% SDS	0.15	0.1%	0.06	0.1%
10% APS	0.15	0.1%	0.06	0.1%
TEMED	0.006	0.04 %	0.006	0.1%
H <sub>2</sub> O	6.4 ml	-	4.35	-
<b>Total</b>	15 ml	-	6 ml	-

The acrylamide mixture and Ammonium persulfate (APS) reagents were obtained from Sigma, whilst the tetramethylethylenediamine (TEMED) was obtained from Merck.

The comb is inserted into the electrophoresis apparatus directly after the stacking gel has been cast, making sure not to trap any air bubbles, and left to fully polymerize at room temperature for 30-60min. After polymerization has occurred, the comb was gently removed and the wells are washed with deionized H<sub>2</sub>O. The gel was then mounted into a Bio-Rad electrophoresis apparatus and placed into the running tank filled with TGS buffer (25 mM Tris, 250 mM Glycine, 0.1% (m/v) SDS, pH 8.3). Samples were electrophoresed at 130V for 60min after which gels were fixed and stained.

### 3.2.3 Silver staining

Silver staining of RNA-PAGE gels was selected for this project as the technique is more sensitive to low concentration nucleic acids than conventional ethidium bromide (EtBr) staining methods, and could more clearly visualize experiments with low RNA yields (such as ligation reactions and RNA purification steps). The Silver Stain Plus (Bio-Rad) staining kit was used throughout the project. This kit is based on the original Gottlieb and Chavko method (Gottlieb & Chavko, 1987), and entails the fixation of the RNA, followed by staining through the use of carrier-complex chemistry, and finally development of the stain and stopping of the resolving (visualization) reaction.

Following electrophoresis, gels were fixed by submersion in the fixing solution (50% v/v reaction grade methanol, 10% v/v glacial acetic acid, 10% v/v Silver Stain Plus

fixative enhancer concentrate, and 30% v/v deionized distilled water). For two standard RNA-PAGE mini gels, 400ml of this solution was sufficient. Gels were submerged and incubated at room temperature with slight agitation for 20min, after which the fixing solution was removed and the gels were rinsed twice with 400ml of deionized water for a further 20min.

Preparation of the staining and developing reagents took place no more than 5min before staining and all staining steps took place in a pre-prepared glass staining vessel. The staining reaction mixture was prepared by adding 5ml of each of the following Silver Stain Plus reagents to 35ml of deionized water directly prior to each reaction; silver complex solution, reduction moderator solution and image developing reagent. To this mixture directly before use 50ml of Silver Stain Plus, development accelerator solution was added, mixed well through swirling and added to the fixed gels. Gels were incubated at room temperature for 20min with slight agitation.

The staining and development reactions took place simultaneously and were stopped after 20min with a 5% acetic acid incubation step. The staining and development reaction solution was removed from the gel and 400ml of the stopping solution (5% glacial acetic acid v/v in deionized distilled water) was added. This reaction was incubated at room temperature for 15min with slight agitation. Finally, the stopping solution was rinsed off with 400ml of high purity water for 5min and the gels were photographed.

### **3.2.4 Sequence-independent cDNA synthesis and genome amplification**

For sequence-independent cDNA synthesis and viral genome amplification and sequencing, 12 $\mu$ l of the MEGAclear purified dsRNA (Section 2.2.14) was used in the PC3-T7 oligonucleotide ligation reaction (Potgieter *et al.*, 2009). The ligation reaction contained the following: 300ng PC3-T7 loop oligonucleotide (5'-p-GGATCCCGGAATTCGGTAATACGACTCACTATATTTTTATAGTGAGTCGTATTA-OH-3', TIB MOLBIOL, Berlin, Germany), 12 $\mu$ l purified dsRNA, 50 mM HEPES/NaOH (pH 8.8; Sigma), 18mM MgCl<sub>2</sub>, (Sigma, St. Louis, Missouri, United States), 0.01% bovine serum albumin (BSA; TaKaRa, Kusatsu, Shiga Prefecture, Japan), 1 mM ATP (Roche, Basel, Switzerland), 3 mM DTT (Roche), 10% DMSO (Sigma), 20% PEG<sub>6000</sub>

(Calbiochem, Sigma), and 30 U T4 RNA ligase (TaKaRa). The reaction was thoroughly mixed and incubated at 37°C overnight. The ligated RNA was then purified using the MEGAclean kit and yielded 30µl purified PC3-T7 loop-ligated dsRNA which was used for cDNA synthesis.

Directly prior to cDNA synthesis 15µl of the PC3-T7 loop-ligated dsRNA was denatured through the addition of 1µl methyl mercury hydroxide (MMOH; Alfa Aesar, Haverhill, Massachusetts, USA) to a final concentration of 30mM, and incubation at room temperature for 30min in a fume hood. This denaturing step was directly followed by a reverse transcription reaction that contained: 1mM dNTPs, 1X Transcriptor High Fidelity buffer (Roche), 30mM 2-mercaptoethanol, 0.5U RNase inhibitor (Roche) and 10U Transcriptor High Fidelity Reverse Transcriptase (Roche). The reaction was mixed well and incubated for 45min at 42°C, immediately followed by a 15min incubation at 55°C. During the initial 42°C incubation, the mercaptoethanol reduced the methyl mercury hydroxide and allowed the reverse transcriptase to synthesise cDNA from ssRNA. The final 55°C incubation step de-activated the reverse transcriptase and prepared the sample for the next step.

The excess dsRNA was removed through the addition of 1M NaOH to the sample to a final concentration of 0.1 M, followed by incubation at 65°C for 30min. This was followed by addition of 1M HCl to a final concentration of 0.1 M and 1 M Tris/HCl (pH 7.5) to a final concentration of 0.1 M, and incubation at 65°C for 60min. The viral genomic cDNA was then amplified through polymerase chain reaction (PCR) using the PC2 primer (5'-p-CCGAATTCCCGGGATCC-3' from TIB MOLBIOL). The PCR reaction mixture contained: 5µl TaKaRa Ex Taq 10x reaction buffer, 4µl 25mM TaKaRa Ultrapure dNTPs, 1µl PC2 primer (50pmol/ul), 0.6µl TaKaRa Ex-Taq High Fidelity DNA polymerase (5 units/µl) and 10µl of the cDNA synthesised in the previous step. The reaction was brought to a final volume of 50µl with nuclease-free H<sub>2</sub>O and placed in a thermocycler (T100 Thermal Cycler, Biorad, California, USA). All TaKaRa products were purchased from Clontech (Clontech, TaKaRa, Kusatsu, Shiga Prefecture, Japan).

PCR conditions were as follows: initial incubation at 72°C for 1 minute to fill in cDNA ends to ensure amplification of the entire cDNA segment. This was followed by the initial denaturation at 94°C for 2 minutes followed by 25 - 30 cycles of denaturation at

94°C for 30 seconds, annealing at 65°C for 30 seconds and extension at 72°C for 4 minutes. Lastly, the final elongation step was 72°C for 5min and then storage at 4°C until retrieved. The PCR product was then analysed through AGE (Section 2.2.7) before being sent through for NGS (Section 2.2.14).

### **3.2.5 Genome segment-specific cDNA synthesis using SuperScript One-step RT-PCR kit**

Genome segment-specific (gs-specific) cDNA synthesis and PCR amplification were done in one step with the SuperScript III One-step RT-PCR Platinum kit (Invitrogen, Carlsbad, California, USA) using gs-specific primers. The kit was optimized for the amplification of RNA fragments between 200 and 4500bp from a starting concentration of as little as 0.1pg. The One-step reaction mixture was set up on ice in a PCR tube and contained: 25ul of the 2x reaction buffer, 1ul of both the sense and anti-sense primers (0.2 uM), 10ul of purified template RNA (between 0.2ug and 1ug) and 2ul of the SuperScript RT: Platinum Tac enzyme mix. The reaction volume was adjusted to 50ul using nuclease-free H<sub>2</sub>O and placed into a thermocycler.

The cycling conditions were as follows: 1 cycle of cDNA synthesis and pre-denaturation for 30min at 50°C followed by 2min at 94°C. Next, 40 cycles of denaturing at 94°C for 30 seconds followed by annealing at 60°C for 30 seconds and extension at 68°C for 4min. The last step was 1 cycle at 68°C for 10min for the final extension. The PCR product was then analysed through AGE (Section 2.2.7) and sent for NGS (Section 2.2.14).

### **3.2.6 Gel extraction and PCR clean-up**

All gel extraction steps in this project were performed using the MiniElute® Gel extraction kit (Qiagen, Whitehead Scientific). Gel extraction was only required for procedures involving In-Fusion®HD cloning reactions. Before the first use of the kit 24ml of 100% pure ethanol was added to the EP buffer and correspondingly labelled. Following AGE (Section 2.2.7) the gel is viewed on a Dark reader and the desired

band is excised from the gel using a sterile scalpel blade and placed in a pre-weighed 2ml RNase, DNase free micro-centrifuge tube. It is important that the gel not be exposed to the high-intensity light that visualizers such as the ChemiDoc use as these wavelengths will damage the DNA during visualization. During excision of the desired band, it is also important to remove as much as possible of the agarose gel from the sample as the reaction volume for the following steps is based on the weight of the gel fragment.

QC buffer is added to the fragment to a volume three times more than its weight (3ul of buffer per ug of gel). The sample is then incubated in a heating block at 50°C for an hour (extended incubations have been correlated with increased yield) with vortexing every 10-15min to ensure complete homogenization. The QC buffer is a chaotropic salt buffer that aids in the breakdown of the agarose gel and provides the high salinity environment that is required for binding of the DNA to the silica membrane. The QC buffer also contains a pH indicator that will change from orange to violet if the pH is too high. Optimal pH for binding of the DNA to the membrane is 7.5.

After the gel fragment is completely dissolved a volume of isopropanol is added to the mixture equal to the weight of the gel and mixed thoroughly. The entire sample volume is then transferred to a MiniElute column which in turn is placed in a collection tube. The sample is then centrifuged for 60 seconds to bind the DNA to the membrane. The flow-through is discarded and an additional 500ul of QC buffer is added to the column and again centrifuged for 30 seconds to remove any traces of the agarose gel. After this, the sample is washed with 750ul of PE buffer and again centrifuged for 30 seconds. The flow-through is discarded and the column is again centrifuged without the addition of any buffers to remove any residual buffers from the membrane and prepare it for elution.

Finally, the column is moved to a new sterile low-bind micro-centrifuge tube and the DNA is eluted with 30ul of pre-heated nuclease-free water. The 75°C water is placed on the membrane and incubated for 60 seconds after which it is centrifuged at 11 000g for one minute. The extracted DNA was evaluated through AGE (Section 2.2.7) and quantified through spectrophotometry (Section 2.2.6). All centrifugation steps were carried out in an Eppendorf 2J20 bench centrifuge.

All PCR clean-up steps in this project were performed using the MiniElute® PCR clean-up kit (Qiagen, Whitehead Scientific). This kit is designed for the purification of PCR products ranging from 70bp to 4000bp. The kit removes extraneous nucleotides, primers and polymerases from the sample and is based on the same principles than that of gel extraction. The procedure is however only recommended for PCR products that show a clear/well-defined band with very little to no background or non-specific amplification. If the sample meets these requirements its volume is adjusted to 100ul with nuclease-free water and 300ul of QC buffer is added to it and mixed through light vortexing. The rest of the procedure is the same as that for gel extraction.

### **3.2.7 In-Fusion® HD cloning**

In-Fusion® HD cloning is a commercial cloning system based on the FastCloning protocol (Li *et al.*, 2011). In-Fusion can be described as a directional, ligation-independent cloning method that allows fast, single-tube cloning with high cloning accuracy. The system requires the linearization of both the insert and backbone through either restriction enzymes digest or through PCR amplification using primers designed to have overlapping complementary regions. In this project, PCR was selected for the linearization of both the inserts and plasmid backbone.

All In-Fusion cloning reactions were set-up in accordance with the manufacturer's (Clontech, Takara) specifications and only PCR linearized and gel-extracted amplicons were used to reduce the likelihood of off-target results. The standard In-Fusion reaction contains 200ng of insert DNA, 100ng of backbone DNA and 2ul of the 5x In-Fusion HD enzyme premix. The reaction volume is then adjusted to 10ul using nuclease-free water and mixed through pipetting.

The reaction mixture is incubated in a thermocycler (T100 Thermal Cycler, Biorad, California, USA) at 50°C for 15min and then placed on ice until the transformation step. Extended incubation times will not increase efficiency and could, in fact, lead to a reduction in overall yield. After the 15min incubation the inserts and backbones should be hybridised and in the form of closed, circular plasmids with nicks in the phosphate backbone. The In-Fusion HD enzyme premix contains 3'-exonucleases that digest the PCR products yielding long single-stranded regions that can hybridise

with their complementary sequences. Upon transformation, the nicks in the plasmid backbone are repaired by the bacterial cells in the presence of selective pressure. Provided with the In-Fusion HD cloning kit are chemically competent Stellar cells which were meant to be used after In-Fusion. Optimal transformation efficiency requires the use of 5ul of the In-Fusion reaction along with 50ul of the Stellar cells. Standard transformation protocol is followed with the Stellar cells instead of DH5 $\alpha$  (Section 2.2.1).

### **3.2.8 TCID<sub>50</sub> assay**

The purpose of the TCID<sub>50</sub> assay is to determine the infective dose at which 50% of the cell-culture would die. This is achieved through serial dilution of the selected viral stock and passage onto prepared cell monolayers in a 96-well plate. The viral stock is incubated to facilitate viral attachment and then replaced with propagation media (Sections 2.2.8 and 2.2.13). The 96-well plate is then incubated for a set time after which viral propagation is visualized through IFMA.

For further detail and illustrations of the equations used see Appendix D. For each TCID<sub>(50)</sub> MA104 cells were grown in a 96-well plate (LabTec, Nunc, Thermo scientific) to roughly 85% confluence. The viral stock in question was then diluted in serial 10-fold dilutions from 10<sup>0</sup> through to 10<sup>-7</sup>. The growth media of the MA104 cells was removed and the serial dilution of the viral stock was used to infect the cells with each dilution being represented by 6 adjacent wells.

After an hour incubation, the viral dilution was removed and 100ul of propagation media was added to each well.

The 96-well plate was incubated for 5 days and viral propagation was investigated through IFMA (Section 2.2.12). The relative viral titers were expressed as 50% of the tissue culture infective dose (TCID<sub>50</sub>) as per methods described by Reed and Muench (REED & MUENCH, 1938).

**Equation 3: Calculation of relative TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml from 96-well IFMA results**

$$\text{Proportionate Distance (PD)} = \frac{(\text{Next \% higher than 50}) - 50\%}{(\text{Next \% higher than 50}) - (\text{Next \% lower than 50})}$$

$$\text{End-point dilution (EP)} = \text{Log}_{10}(\text{lowest positive dilution})$$

$$\text{Log}_{10}(\text{TCID}_{50}) = (\text{PD} + \text{EP}) \text{ thus } \text{TCID}_{50} = \frac{1}{10^{(\text{PD} + \text{EP})}}$$

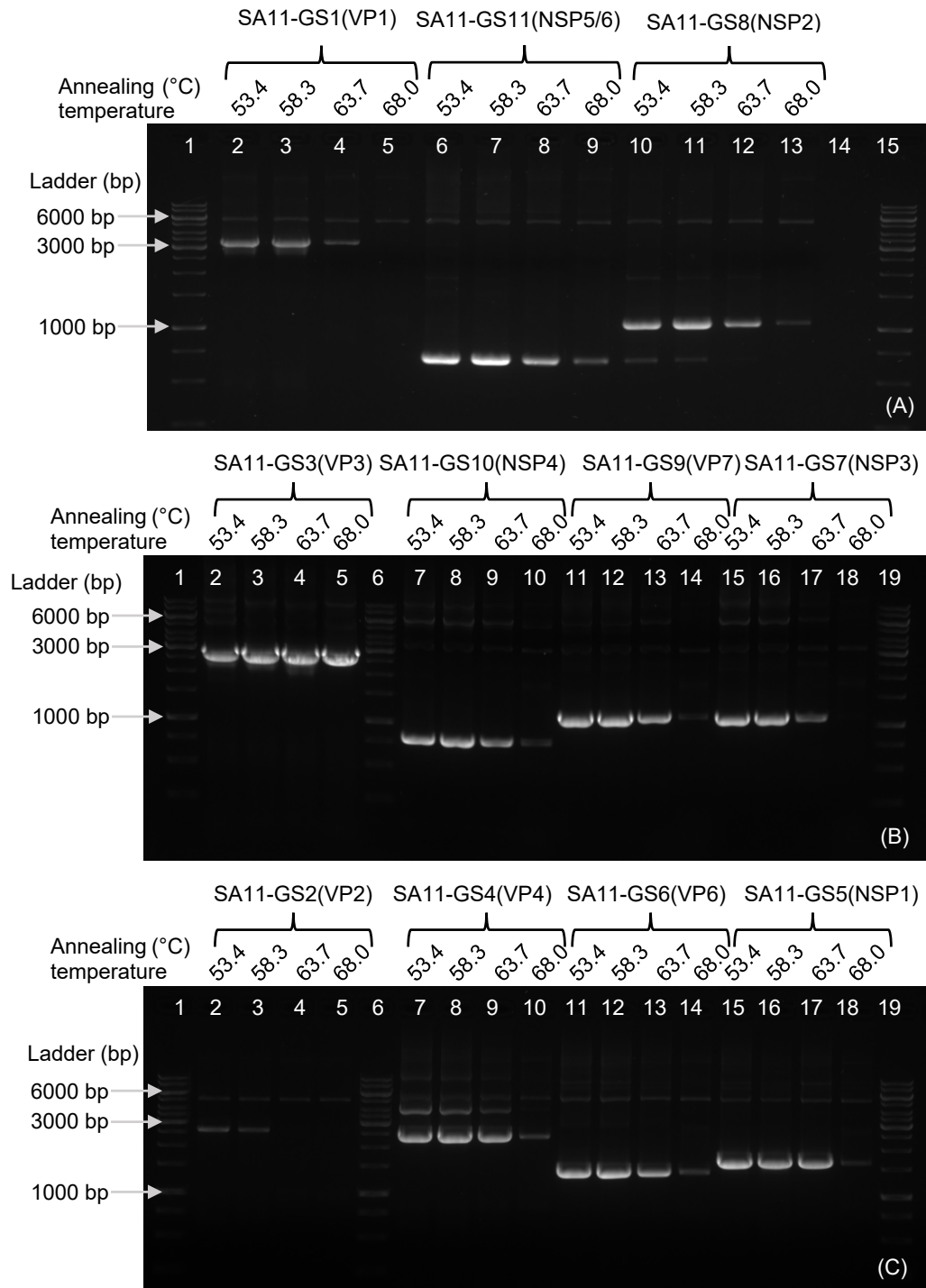
### 3.3 Results and Discussion

#### 3.3.1 PCR amplification of SA11-N5 genome segments for pSmart In-Fusion

As mentioned in the introduction, my MSc overlapped with the last part of that of L. Geldenhuys resulting in us working in parallel to generate a complete set of pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG rescue plasmids. To familiarize myself with the techniques involved in In-Fusion sub-cloning, and to serve as a control for the work done by Geldenhuys, I decided to generate my own complete set of pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG rescue plasmids. The first step of this process was the amplification of the 11 SA11-N5 genome segments from the consensus sequences, cDNA transcription plasmids designed by Dr Wentzel (Figure 51, Appendix C). The primers designed by Geldenhuys for this purpose had a wide range of proposed annealing temperatures and several of the primer pairs had very different annealing temperatures. For this reason, I decided to first perform a temperature gradient PCR amplification (Figure 24) of each of the 11 SA11-N5 genome segments using the primers listed in Table 12. The temperatures selected were 53.4, 58.3, 63.7 and 68.0°C, based on the average annealing temperatures proposed for the primers, and 50°C selected for amplification of the pSmart backbone.

**Table 12: Optimal annealing temperature and primers for pSmart, SA11-N5 In-Fusion reaction**

SA11-N5 GS	Amplicon size (bp)	Forward primer	Reverse primer	optimal annealing temp. (°C)
GS1	3334	5'-TAATACGACTCACTATAGGCTATTTAAAGCTG-3'	5'-GGGACCATGCCGCGGTCA CATCTAAGCG-3'	63,7
GS2	2687	5'-TAATACGACTCACTATAGGCTATTTAAAGGCTC-3'	5'-GGGACCATGCCGCGGTCA TATCTCCAC-3'	58,3
GS3	2585	5'-TAATACGACTCACTATAGGCTATTTAAAGCAG-3'	5'-GGGACCATGCCGCGGTCA CATCATGACTAG-3'	53,4
GS4	2356	5'-TAATACGACTCACTATAGGCTATAAAATGGC-3'	5'-GGGACCATGCCGCGGTCA CATCCTCTAG-3'	68,0
GS5	1608	5'-TAATACGACTCACTATAGGCTTTTTTTTGGAAAAG-3'	5'-GGGACCATGCCGCGGTCA CATCCTCTAG-3'	58,3
GS6	1350	5'-TAATACGACTCACTATAGGCTTTTAAACGAAG-3'	5'-GGGACCATGCCGCGGTCA CATCCTCTAC-3'	63,7
GS7	1099	5'-TAATACGACTCACTATAGGCATTTAATGC-3'	5'-GGGACCATGCCGCGGTCA CATAACGCC-3'	58,3
GS8	1053	5'-TAATACGACTCACTATAGGCTTTTAAAGCG-3'	5'-GGGACCATGCCGCGGTCA CATAAGCGC-3'	58,3
GS9	1057	5'-TAATACGACTCACTATAGGCTTTAAAAAGAG-3'	5'-GGGACCATGCCGCGGTCA CATCATACAATTC-3'	58,3
GS10	745	5'-TAATACGACTCACTATAGGCTTTTAAAGTTC-3'	5'-GGGACCATGCCGCGGTCA CATTAAAGACC-3'	58,3
GS11	660	5'-TAATACGACTCACTATAGCTTTTAAAGCGC-3'	5'-GGGACCATGCCGCGGTCA CAAAACGGGAG-3'	63,7
pSmart	2018	5'-GGCCGGCATGGTCCCAGCCTCCTCGC-3'	5'-TATAGTGAGTCGTATTAGATATC-3'	50,0



**Figure 24: Agarose gels of temperature gradient PCR amplicons from pAlpha (A), pBeta (lanes 2-5, B and C), pDelta (lanes 7-18, B) and pGamma (lanes 7-18, C). A) Lanes 1 & 15: Ladder, 2-5: GS1 (VP1), 6-9: GS11 (NSP5/6), 10-14: GS8 (NSP2). B) Lanes 1, 6 & 19: Ladder, 2-5: GS3 (VP3), 7-10: GS10 (NSP4), 11-14: GS9 (VP7), 15-18: GS7 (NSP3). C) Lanes 1, 6 & 19: Ladder, 2-5: GS2 (VP2), 7-10: GS4 (VP4), 11-14: GS6 (VP6), 15-18: GS5 (NSP1).**

Figure 24 illustrates the agarose gels of the temperature gradient PCR amplicons from the SA11-N5 cDNA genome segment carrying pAlpha (A), pBeta (lanes 2-5 in B and C), pDelta (lanes 7-18, B) and pGamma (lanes 7-18, C) plasmids. Optimal annealing temperatures (Table 12) were determined as the temperature at which both the highest amplicon yield was generated and the lowest amount of non-specific amplification was detected. Faint non-specific amplification can be seen in every reaction (Figure 24, A-C C) irrelevant of annealing temperature, indicating consistent and conserved interactions between the genome segment-specific primers and the pAlpha, pBeta, pDelta and pGamma plasmid backbones. This hypothesis is further supported by the fact that the majority of the non-specific amplification is consistent across each reaction and of a similar size (roughly 6000bp). Considering the variations in the pAlpha, pBeta, pDelta and pGamma plasmids, as well as that of the genome segment-specific primers, the non-specific binding must have occurred in conserved regions shared by each of the cDNA carrying plasmids (ergo the backbone) and in conserved regions shared by each of the primers (In-Fusion specific tails required for pSmart hybridization during sub-cloning). This is a necessary design flaw that is required for later In-Fusion sub-cloning and cannot be removed. This also accounts for the wide range in annealing temperatures amongst the In-Fusion primers and also necessitates agarose gel extraction and purification of the specific SA11-N5 genome segment amplicons prior to In-Fusion.

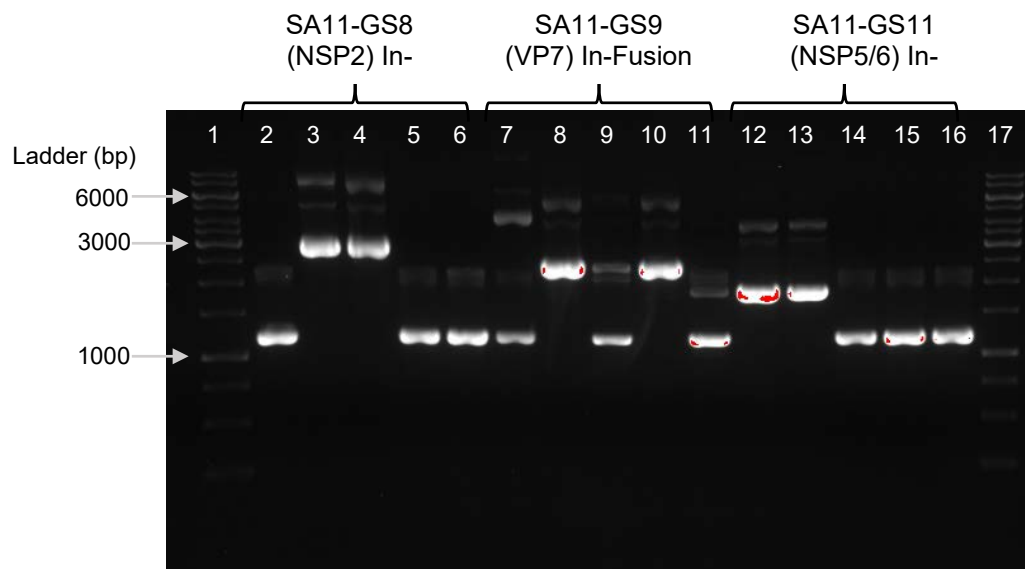
As expected, the lower the annealing temperature, the higher the yield of the genome segment amplicons, and the higher the non-specific amplification. Correspondingly less amplification was observed as the annealing temperature increases. This was true for each genome segment amplification, except for GS2, GS3, GS4 and GS8, which each show slight irregularities. For GS2 (VP2), Figure 24, C (lanes 2-5): Very low amplification was observed even at the lowest annealing temperatures. This is most likely due to the significant differences in melting point between the forward (59.2 °C) and reverse (64.1 °C) primers. Additionally, the low yield could be contributed to primer decay, however, each of the In-Fusion primer sets was ordered at the same time and kept under the same conditions, and no other primer set shows this kind of discrepancy. For GS3 (VP3), Figure 24, B (lanes 2-5): No distinctive difference was observed between the various annealing temperatures, indicating a high level of specificity and low efficient annealing temperature.

For GS4 (VP4), Figure 24, C (lanes 7-10): Unexpectedly high levels of non-specific amplification present at lower temperatures, with only the highest (68.0 °C) indicating a decrease. The non-specific amplicon at roughly 4000bp is most likely due to off-target binding of the GS4 In-Fusion primer in addition to the expected background amplification at roughly 6000bp. This off-target binding was eliminated at 68.0°C. For GS8 (NSP2), Figure 24, A (lanes 10-13): Unintentional amplification of GS11 (NSP5/6) present at lower temperatures (53.4 and 58.3°C). This is most likely due to off-target binding of the GS8 In-Fusion primers to the NSP5/6 genome segment at low temperatures. This off-target binding was eliminated at 63.7°C. Overall the amplifications were successful and the optimal annealing temperatures were recorded in Table 12.

### **3.3.2 Completion of the GS8 (NSP2), GS9 (VP7) and GS11 (NSP5/6) pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG plasmids through In-Fusion HD cloning**

As mentioned in the introduction this part of my MSc overlapped with that of L. Geldenhuys's MSc as we were working in parallel to complete the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG plasmid set. At this stage I have already amplified, gel extracted and purified each of the SA11-N5 consensus sequence genome segments in preparation for In-Fusion HD cloning. During this stage of my MSc however, the sequencing results of the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG rescue plasmids constructed by Geldenhuys were returned. The sequencing results indicated that Geldenhuys successfully sub-cloned SA11-N5 GS1 through GS7, and GS10 into the pSmart backbone with only GS8, GS9 and GS11 containing incorrect sequences. As a result of this, it was decided that my efforts should be focused on the finalization of these three constructs instead of the construction (and sequence verification) of my own entire pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG plasmid set. This experiment, therefore, entails the correction of the 5'-GGG-, and -CC-3' ends of the pSmart\_SA11\_GS11 (NSP5/6) construct, as well as the reconstruction of the pSmart\_SA11\_GS8 (NSP2) and pSmart\_SA11\_GS9 (VP7), constructs using the In-Fusion HD cloning technique (Section 3.2.5).

For GS11 (NSP5/6) new In-Fusion seamless cloning primers were designed to amplify the GS from the pAlpha (Figure 51) plasmid whilst also correcting the 5`- and -3` termini (Table 12). For GS8 (NSP2) and GS9 (VP7), the standard In-Fusion primers designed by L. Geldenhuys was used for amplification. In all three instances, the pSmart backbone was amplified using the corresponding In-Fusion primers and each amplicon was visualized through AGE (using a Dark reader) and gel extracted before In-Fusion. Following the standard In-Fusion protocol (Section 3.2.5) overnight plates were evaluated for colony formation and five random colonies were selected (Section 2.2.3) for propagation and endotoxin-free plasmid extraction (Section 2.2.4).



**Figure 25: Agarose gel of plasmids extracted following In-Fusion HD cloning colony selection.** Lanes 1 & 17: Ladder. Colonies selected from In-Fusion reactions for GS8: lanes 2-6, GS9: lanes 7-11 and GS11: lanes 12-16.

Figure 25 shows the agarose gel of the extracted plasmids from the selected In-Fusion reaction colonies. Based purely on the electrophoretic patterns of the supercoiled plasmid bands 4 distinct groups can be identified. Group I contains the bands present in lanes 2, 5-7, 9, 11 and 14-16, each appearing to be of the same size and having a similar electrophoretic pattern, suggesting a similar composition. As lanes 2-6, 7-11 and 12-16, represent three distinct In-Fusion reactions, the only explanation of group I plasmids being similar is that group I represents the empty pSmart backbone resulting from the linearized backbone closing onto itself without incorporating any of the amplified SA11-N5 genome segments during In-Fusion.

The bands present in lanes 3 and 4 are similar and form group II. Lanes 8 and 10 together from group III and group IV is represented by the plasmids present in lanes 12 and 13. Again based purely on the electrophoretic patterns of these plasmids it was determined that group II represented plasmids that potentially incorporated GS8 (NSP2) into the pSmart backbone, group III represented the incorporation of GS9 (VP7) and group IV represented the incorporation of GS11 (NSP5/6). Comparison of the relative positions of groups II, III and IV to one another and to group I further supported this hypothesis as group II is the largest and contains the largest of the inserts, GS8 (NSP2). Correspondingly group III is slightly lower as it contains GS9 (VP7), and group IV is the lowest (except for group I that is presumed to be the empty backbone) and contains the smallest insert, GS11 (NSP5/6). The colonies that represented groups II, III and IV were cultured overnight for endotoxin-free plasmid extraction (to be transfection ready), glycerol stock preparation and plasmid sequence verification.

The apparent low efficiency of this experiment (9 out of 15 reactions returning an empty plasmid backbone) can be attributed to parental plasmid carry-over, non-optimal In-Fusion ratios or non-representative colony selection. Parental plasmid carry-over refers to the presence of template plasmid (used during PCR linearization in preparation for In-Fusion) in the In-Fusion reaction. The template plasmid would then be transfected along with the In-Fusion products and could outcompete the In-Fusion product over the incubation period. This can be addressed through the incorporation of a DpnI restriction enzyme digestion step before the In-Fusion reaction to eliminate the methylated parental plasmids from the reaction. Non-optimal In-Fusion ratios refers to the ratio of the vector (backbone) to insert during the In-Fusion reaction. This ratio is based on the relative molar amounts of both the vector and inserts and is influenced by GC-content, bp length and the hybridization regions in both the vector and insert (Section 3.2.6). These ratios can be experimentally optimized for each reaction, however, this would have been an unnecessary expenditure during this experiment and was thus not attempted.

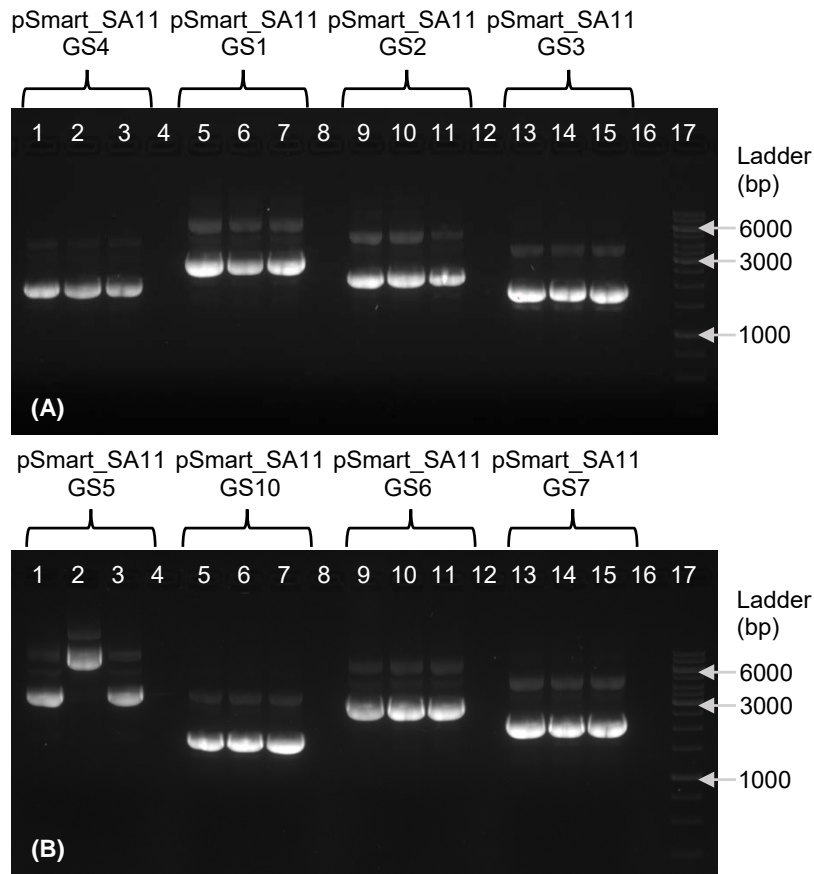
Finally, the apparent low efficiency of the experiment could have been due to the random selection of colonies that did not fully represent the total experimental results. Due to time and financial restraints, not all of the resulting In-Fusion colonies were tested and only 5 colonies were selected for evaluation.

### 3.3.3 NGS sequence verification of our pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG plasmid set

This step of the project entailed the endotoxin-free extraction of the locally developed, pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG plasmid set followed by sequence verification through NGS (Section 2.2.14). Eight of the 11 pSmart\_SA11-N5 rescue plasmids (GS1 through GS7, and GS10) were designed by L. Geldenhuys and stored as bacterial glycerol stocks. Three separate glycerol stock samples were selected for each of these eight constructs and used to inoculate 24 overnight cultures for endotoxin-free plasmid extraction (for NGS and to be transfection ready). I was in the process of constructing the remaining three plasmids (GS8, GS9 and GS11), and used the overnight cultures described in Section 3.3.2 for endotoxin-free plasmid extractions of the selected (group II, III and IV) In-Fusion colonies.

The overnight cultures comprised of 100ml standard LB medium (Melford Laboratories Ltd. Bildeston Road, Suffolk, U.K) supplemented with carbenicillin (Melford, U.K) to a final concentration of 100µg/ml, and incubated at 37°C with shaking at 250rpm for 16hours. Plasmids were extracted (Section 2.2.5), concentration determined (Table 13) through NanoDrop spectrophotometry (Section 2.2.6) and a 2ul sample of each was visualised through AGE (Section 2.2.7). The plasmid extracts yielded between 630.3ng/ul and 2314.4ng/ul and had acceptable OD<sub>260/280</sub> readings (between 1.7 and 1.9).

Figure 26 illustrates the agarose gels of the endotoxin-free plasmid extractions from the glycerol stocks of the eight pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG constructs designed by Geldenhuys. The gels showed very clear bands representing the various configurations that plasmids can take (relaxed, supercoiled, etc.) and had homologous electrophoretic separation profiles for each of the selected glycerol stocks, except for lane 2 in gel B, which showed an unexpectedly high electrophoretotype. Even though this divergent electrophoretic separation profile does not definitively confirm a plasmid miss-match, the sample represented in lane 2, gel B was excluded from further testing. Endotoxin-free plasmid extractions were also made from the overnight cultures obtained from the GS8 (NSP2), GS9 (VP7) and GS11 (NSP5/6) In-Fusion HD cloning colonies discussed in Section 3.3.2 and illustrated in Figure 26.



**Figure 26: Agarose gels of endotoxin-free plasmid extractions of pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG plasmids. (A & B)**  
 Lane 17: Ladder. Lanes 4,8,12 & 16 : Empty. **(A)** Lanes 1-3: pSmart\_SA11\_GS4 (VP4). Lanes 5-7: pSmart\_SA11\_GS1 (VP1). Lanes 9-11: pSmart\_SA11\_GS2 (VP2). Lanes 13-15: pSmart\_SA11\_GS3 (VP3). **(B)** Lanes 1-3: pSmart\_SA11\_GS5 (NSP1). Lanes 5-7: pSmart\_SA11\_GS10 (NSP4). Lanes 9-10: pSmart\_SA11\_GS6 (VP6). Lanes 13-15: pSmart\_SA11\_GS7 (NSP3).

Following plasmid extraction and visualization, a 30ul sample of 100ng/ul was prepared from one of each of the 11 endotoxin-free plasmid extractions (eight from the Geldenhuys glycerol stocks, and three from the In-Fusion HD cloning experiment) and sent for individual NGS (Section 2.2.14). Although this approach was much more expensive than the mixed sample approach used during the NGS of the Japanese pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG plasmid set, it would allow a much more comprehensive analysis of the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG transcription plasmids. This individual plasmid sequencing approach allowed the precise evaluation of the 5'- and -3' termini of each individual plasmid (Section 1.4.3.3). The sequencing results were analysed on CLC-Bio workbench and fully annotated (Appendix C). Sample reads were mapped against *in silico* constructs and the consensus sequence was extracted and again aligned with the *in silico* plasmid references.

No statistically relevant deviations were obtained from the mapping and the consensus sequence of each of the plasmids aligned perfectly against the *in silico* plasmids constructs (Appendix C).

### **3.3.4 Implementation of pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system**

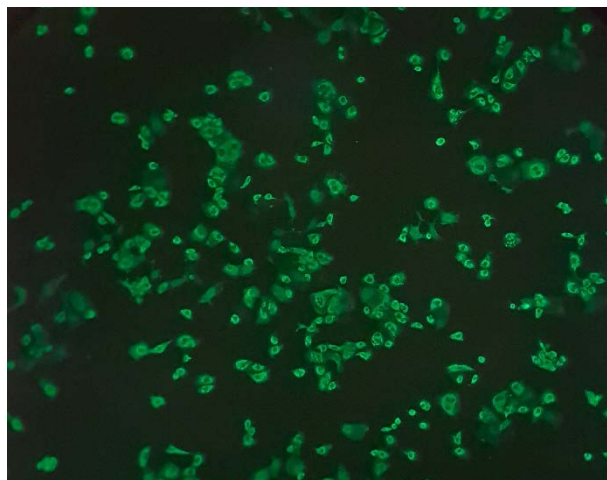
This experiment entailed the implementation of our full, locally developed, consensus sequence-based, plasmid only pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system. This experiment followed the initial optimization of the pT7\_SA11-L2 system (Section 2.3.5) and the finalization and sequence verification of the corrected pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG constructs (Sections 3.3.2 and 3.3.3). The exact same plasmid preparation (Section 2.2.10) and transfection (Section 2.2.11) protocols used in the pT7\_SA11-L2 optimized system were followed.

This system comprised of the 11 pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG transcription plasmids, harbouring the 11 RV cDNA genome segments, as well as the two phCMVdream\_VV capping enzyme expression plasmids and the phCMVdream\_p10\_FAST expression plasmid, for a total of 14 plasmids. The plasmids were each extracted and purified (Section 2.2.5) and then mixed together in equi-molar ratios with 3x higher relative amounts of the capping enzyme expression plasmids, the precise composition is annotated in Table 13 below. The negative control used in this experiment was an exact copy of the pSmart\_SA11-N5 system but without the incorporation of the viral RNA-dependent-RNA-polymerase, GS1 (VP1), transcription plasmid. The rescue was confirmed through IFMA (Section 2.2.12). As illustrated in Figure 27, recombinant RV was indeed recovered from the system. Rescue from this system proved to be much easier and more reliable due to the implementation of the various optimizations tested and verified with the pT7\_SA11-L2 system. The system seemed to be quite efficient as evaluated through visual indications of high viral titer. Upon confirmation of viral rescue, a comparative analysis between this system and the optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system was preformed through TCID<sub>50</sub> assay (Section 3.3.5), and the supernatant saved from the IFMA culture was propagated on MA104 cells for viral genome extraction (Section 3.2.1).

**Table 13: Composition of equi-ug and equi-molar transfection mixtures**

Plasmid name	Plasmid size (bp)	Plasmid weight (kDa)	Working stock (ng/ul)	Equi-ug	Equi-molar
				Plasmid required (ul)	Plasmid required (ul)
pSmart_SA11_GS1 (VP1)	5320	3930,31	1146,9	8,7	3,4
pSmart_SA11_GS2 (VP2)	4712	3554,32	1329,7	7,5	2,7
pSmart_SA11_GS3 (VP3)	4609	3491,35	1198,8	8,3	2,9
pSmart_SA11_GS4 (VP4)	4380	3350,98	1050,9	9,5	3,2
pSmart_SA11_GS5 (NSP1)	3632	2887,43	630,3	15,9	4,6
pSmart_SA11_GS6 (VP6)	3372	2730,98	2314,4	4,3	1,2
pSmart_SA11_GS7 (NSP3)	3123	2547,87	852	11,7	3,0
pSmart_SA11_GS8 (NSP2)	3125	2576,21	713,8	14,0	3,6
pSmart_SA11_GS9 (VP7)	3096	2549,74	1286,9	7,8	2,0
pSmart_SA11_GS10 (NSP4)	2769	2358,08	750	13,3	3,1
pSmart_SA11_GS11 (NSP5/6)	2684	2305,68	658,9	15,2	3,5
phCMVdream_p10_FATS	2843	3700,00	519,9	19,2	7,1
phCMVdream_VV_D1R	5090	3138,19	1352	7,4	2,3
phCMVdream_VV_D12L	3419	2107,88	1054	9,5	2,0
Total				152,4	44,6

Total DNA per transformation (ug)	Equi-ug mixture (ng/ul)	Equi-molar mixture (ng/ul)	p=10ug stock	
			Volume equi-ug mixture / transformation (ul)	Volume equi-molar mixture / transformation (ul)
30	1125	1409	26,67	21,29



**Figure 27: IFMA of equi-molar transfection of pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system in BSR-T5/7 cells with the pDream\_VV capping plasmids, co-seeded and propagated with ST cells. IFMAs done on CPE presenting cells 3 days after P1 passage. 400x magnification.**

The incubation time between the initial passage and IFMA was shortened from roughly 5 days to 3, due to the excessive CPE formed in the pT7\_SA11-L2 experiment where BSR-T5/7 cells were used as primary transfection cell line (Section 2.3.5). In that experiment, the advanced CPE made IFMA visualization of initial infection and propagation difficult.

### **3.3.5 TCID<sub>50</sub> comparison of basic pSmart\_SA11-N5, original pT7\_SA11-L2 and optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG systems**

In this experiment, the relative viral titer of each of the selected RV RG systems was evaluated through TCID<sub>50</sub> assay directly after confirmation of viral rescue via IFMA. As stated in Section 2.2.12, the supernatant of a CPE presenting culture is stored as a P1 viral stock prior to IFMA. These P1 stocks were then used for the construction of a dilution series as described in Section 3.2.6. MA104 cells were seeded into a 96-well plate for the TCID<sub>50</sub>, infected with the viral dilution series (see Appendix D for a more detailed description of the preparation process) and incubated for 3 to 5 days. Following this incubation viral propagation was evaluated via IFMA and annotated in a calculation table such as Table 14, Table 15, and Table 16 below. Any fluorescent signal obtained from a well was viewed as viral propagation and annotated as "+". Correspondingly if no fluorescent signal was found in a well it was deemed virus free and annotated as "-". Calculations of TCID<sub>50</sub> and TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml were done in Excel using the equations annotated in Equation 1. The relative TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml obtained were used to construct Figure 28, a bar chart used for visual analysis and comparison of the various RG systems.

**Table 14: TCID<sub>50</sub> calculation table for optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system**

Jap_NWU-opti	pT7_SA11-L2 with NWU capping & FAST equi-molar set						No. infected wells	No. non-infected wells	Σno. Infected wells (lowest to highest dilution)	ΣNo. Non-infected wells (highest to lowest dilution)	% of ΣNo. infected wells / ΣNo. Non-infected wells	Dilution factor
	IFMA results											
Dilution	1	2	3	4	5	6						
10 <sup>0</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	11	0	100	1,E+00
10 <sup>-1</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	7	0	100	1,E-01
10 <sup>-2</sup>	+	-	+	+			3	1	3	1	75	1,E-02
10 <sup>-3</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	5	0	1,E-03
10 <sup>-4</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	9	0	1,E-04
10 <sup>-5</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	13	0	1,E-05
10 <sup>-6</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	17	0	1,E-06
10 <sup>-7</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	21	0	1,E-07
10 <sup>-8</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	25	0	1,E-08
10 <sup>-9</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	29	0	1,E-09

TCID<sub>50</sub> 2,15E+02  
 TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml 2,15E+03

**Table 15: TCID<sub>50</sub> calculation table for original pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system**

NWU_Ori	Full pSmart_SA11-N5 equi-molar set						No. infected wells	No. non-infected wells	Σno. Infected wells (lowest to highest dilution)	ΣNo. Non-infected wells (highest to lowest dilution)	% of ΣNo. infected wells / ΣNo. Non-infected wells	Dilution factor
	IFMA results											
Dilution	1	2	3	4	5	6						
10 <sup>0</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	15	0	100	1,E+00
10 <sup>-1</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	11	0	100	1,E-01
10 <sup>-2</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	7	0	100	1,E-02
10 <sup>-3</sup>	+	-	+	+			3	1	3	1	75	1,E-03
10 <sup>-4</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	5	0	1,E-04
10 <sup>-5</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	9	0	1,E-05
10 <sup>-6</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	13	0	1,E-06
10 <sup>-7</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	17	0	1,E-07
10 <sup>-8</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	21	0	1,E-08
10 <sup>-9</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	25	0	1,E-09

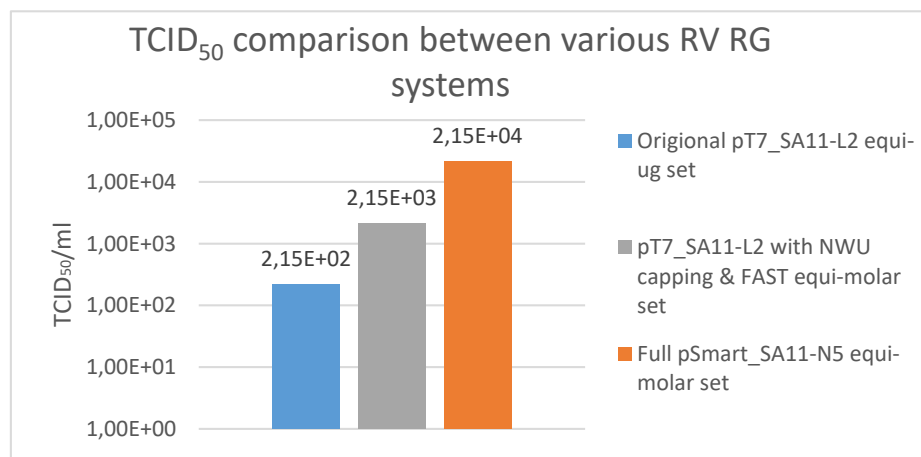
TCID<sub>50</sub> 2,15E+03  
 TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml 2,15E+04

**Table 16: TCID<sub>50</sub> calculation table for original pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system**

Jap_Ori	Original pT7_SA11-L2 equi-ug set						No. infected wells	No. non-infected wells	Σno. Infected wells (lowest to highest dilution)	ΣNo. Non-infected wells (highest to lowest dilution)	% of ΣNo. infected wells / ΣNo. Non-infected wells	Dilution factor
	IFMA results											
Dilution	1	2	3	4	5	6						
10 <sup>0</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	7	0	100	1,E+00
10 <sup>-1</sup>	+	+	+	-			3	1	3	1	75	1,E-01
10 <sup>-2</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	5	0	1,E-02
10 <sup>-3</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	9	0	1,E-03
10 <sup>-4</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	13	0	1,E-04
10 <sup>-5</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	17	0	1,E-05
10 <sup>-6</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	21	0	1,E-06
10 <sup>-7</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	25	0	1,E-07
10 <sup>-8</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	29	0	1,E-08
10 <sup>-9</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	33	0	1,E-09

TCID<sub>50</sub> 2,15E+01  
 TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml 2,15E+02

The results annotated in Table 14 were obtained from the optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system (Section 2.3.5). This was compared to the original (unmodified) pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system (Section 2.3.2, Table 16) and to the NWU developed pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system (Section 3.3.4, Table 14) under the same conditions (using the same 96well plate). For each RG system, the P1 stock (saved prior to IFMA confirmation of rescue) was used for the construction of the dilution series (Section 3.2.7). Standard IFMA was used for visualization of viral propagation.



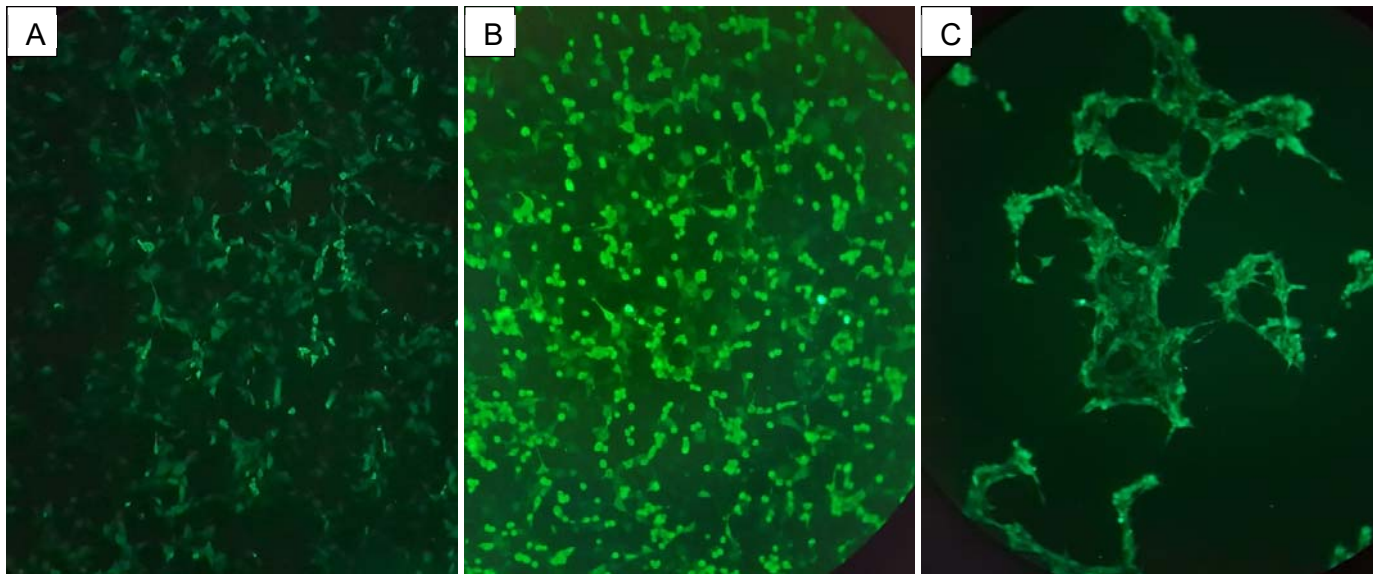
**Figure 28: TCID<sub>50</sub> comparison of original pT7\_SA11-L2, optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 and original pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG systems**

As illustrated by Figure 28, the original pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system (blue) yielded a viral titer of  $2.15 \times 10^2$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml. This is very low yield and might not be representative of a fully functional RV RG system, however, these results were obtained from the use of the P1 stock of the only rescue attempt that yielded a visible fluorescent response (Section 2.3.2). During the implementation of the original pT7\_SA11-L2 system, several attempts at rescue were made with only one yielding a positive result. It was concluded that the system required further optimization and thus no further rescue attempts were made. The TCID<sub>50</sub> results of this experiment were included to evaluate the relative increase in rescue efficiency resulting from the implementation of the various optimizations discussed in Chapter 2. As expected the optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system (grey) performed better than the original, reaching a viral titer of  $2.15 \times 10^3$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml, a 10-fold increase. Although this is still a relatively low yield, it is indicative that the optimizations implemented, based on experience with the BTV and AHSV RV RG systems did, in fact, increase repeatability and overall viral yield.

Finally, the two pT7\_SA11-L2 systems were compared with the locally developed, pSmart\_SA11-N5 system (orange). Viral titers of approximately  $2.15 \times 10^4$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml were obtained from the pSmart system, again increasing the yield 10-fold as compared with the optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 system and a 100-fold (two log rise) increase when compared to the unmodified pT7\_SA11-L2 system. This increase might be due to the reduced backbone size and increased transfection efficiency of the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system as compared to the optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system (Section 3.3.9).

### **3.3.6 Incorporation of ASFV capping constructs and TCID<sub>50</sub> comparison of pSmart\_SA11-N5 and pT7\_SA11-L2 RG systems**

This experiment entails the exchange of the VV capping subunits (D1R & D12L) carried in the phCMVdream plasmid with the single subunit African swine-fever virus (ASFV) capping enzyme alone (phCMVdream\_ASFV, Figure 42, Appendix A), and fused to a viral T7-polymerase through a serine-glycine linker (phCMVdream\_C3P3, Figure 42, Appendix A). This was done to reduce the plasmid load being transfected and also to increase the transcription and capping efficiency of the system. Standard rescue protocol (Section 2.2.11) was followed with the addition of negative controls (plasmid mixtures lacking VP1 representation) and rescue was confirmed through IFMA (Section 2.2.12). Initial experiments with the exchange of the VV capping plasmids with the pDream\_ASFV capping plasmid (not fused with the viral T7-polymerase) did not yield any significant improvements, with IFMA results of the VV based and ASFV based RG systems being visually identical (Figure 29, A & B). The incorporation of the C3P3 construct, however, yielded much higher viral titers as evaluated in terms of the progression of CPE over a set time of 3 days. As illustrated by Figure 29 (C), not only was rescue consistent but CPE progressed to more than 60% within only 3 days indicating an increased viral load and therefore increased viral titer.



**Figure 29: IFMA results of pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG systems using (A) VV capping plasmids, (B) the ASFV capping plasmid and (C) the C3P3 capping-polymerase construct. Transfected into BSR-T5/7 cells and co-seeded and propagated in ST cells. IFMAs done on CPE presenting cells 3 days after P1 passage. 400x magnification**

Confirmation of viral rescue was also done through dsRNA extraction and visualization, the results of which are discussed in Section 3.3.7. The dsRNA was then converted to cDNA and sent for sequence verification at the NICD through NGS, results of which are discussed in Section 3.3.7. Following the rescue of the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system with the C3P3 construct, the same was done with the pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system, yielding similar results. To compare these systems a TCID<sub>50</sub> assay was constructed for each under the same conditions and annotated in the tables below.

**Table 17: TCID<sub>50</sub> calculation table for original pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system**

NWU_Ori	Full pSmart_SA11-N5 equi-molar set						No. infected wells	No. non-infected wells	Σno. Infected wells (lowest to highest dilution)	ΣNo. Non-infected wells (highest to lowest dilution)	% of ΣNo. infected wells / ΣNo. Non-infected wells	0,1 Dilution factor
	IFMA results											
Dilution	1	2	3	4	5	6						
10 <sup>0</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	15	0	100	1,E+00
10 <sup>-1</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	11	0	100	1,E-01
10 <sup>-2</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	7	0	100	1,E-02
10 <sup>-3</sup>	+	-	+	+			3	1	3	1	75	1,E-03
10 <sup>-4</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	5	0	1,E-04
10 <sup>-5</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	9	0	1,E-05
10 <sup>-6</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	13	0	1,E-06
10 <sup>-7</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	17	0	1,E-07
10 <sup>-8</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	21	0	1,E-08
10 <sup>-9</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	25	0	1,E-09
TCID <sub>50</sub>	2,15E+03											
TCID <sub>50</sub> /ml	2,15E+04											

**Table 18: TCID<sub>50</sub> calculation table for pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system with ASFV capping plasmid**

NWU_ASF V	pSmart_SA11-N5 with 3x ASFV- capping and NWU-FAST, equi-molar						No. infected wells	No. non- infected wells	Σno. Infected wells (lowest to highest dilution)	ΣNo. Non- infected wells (highest to lowest dilution)	% of ΣNo. infected wells / ΣNo. Non- infected wells	0,1
	IFMA results											Dilution factor
Dilution	1	2	3	4	5	6						
10 <sup>0</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	16	0	100	1,E+00
10 <sup>-1</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	12	0	100	1,E-01
10 <sup>-2</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	8	0	100	1,E-02
10 <sup>-3</sup>	+	+	+	-			3	1	4	1	80	1,E-03
10 <sup>-4</sup>	-	+	-	-			1	3	1	4	20	1,E-04
10 <sup>-5</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	8	0	1,E-05
10 <sup>-6</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	12	0	1,E-06
10 <sup>-7</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	16	0	1,E-07
10 <sup>-8</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	20	0	1,E-08
10 <sup>-9</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	24	0	1,E-09

TCID<sub>50</sub> 3,16E+04

TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml 3,16E+05

**Table 19: TCID<sub>50</sub> calculation table for pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system with C3P3**

NWU_C3P3	pSmart_SA11-N5 with 3x C3P3- capping and NWU-FAST, equi-molar						No. infected wells	No. non- infected wells	Σno. Infected wells (lowest to highest dilution)	ΣNo. Non- infected wells (highest to lowest dilution)	% of ΣNo. infected wells / ΣNo. Non- infected wells	0,1
	IFMA results											Dilution factor
Dilution	1	2	3	4	5	6						
10 <sup>0</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	20	0	100	1,E+00
10 <sup>-1</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	16	0	100	1,E-01
10 <sup>-2</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	12	0	100	1,E-02
10 <sup>-3</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	8	0	100	1,E-03
10 <sup>-4</sup>	+	+	+	-			3	1	4	1	80	1,E-04
10 <sup>-5</sup>	+	-	-	-			1	3	1	4	20	1,E-05
10 <sup>-6</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	8	0	1,E-06
10 <sup>-7</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	12	0	1,E-07
10 <sup>-8</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	16	0	1,E-08
10 <sup>-9</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	20	0	1,E-09

TCID<sub>50</sub> 3,16E+05

TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml 3,16E+06

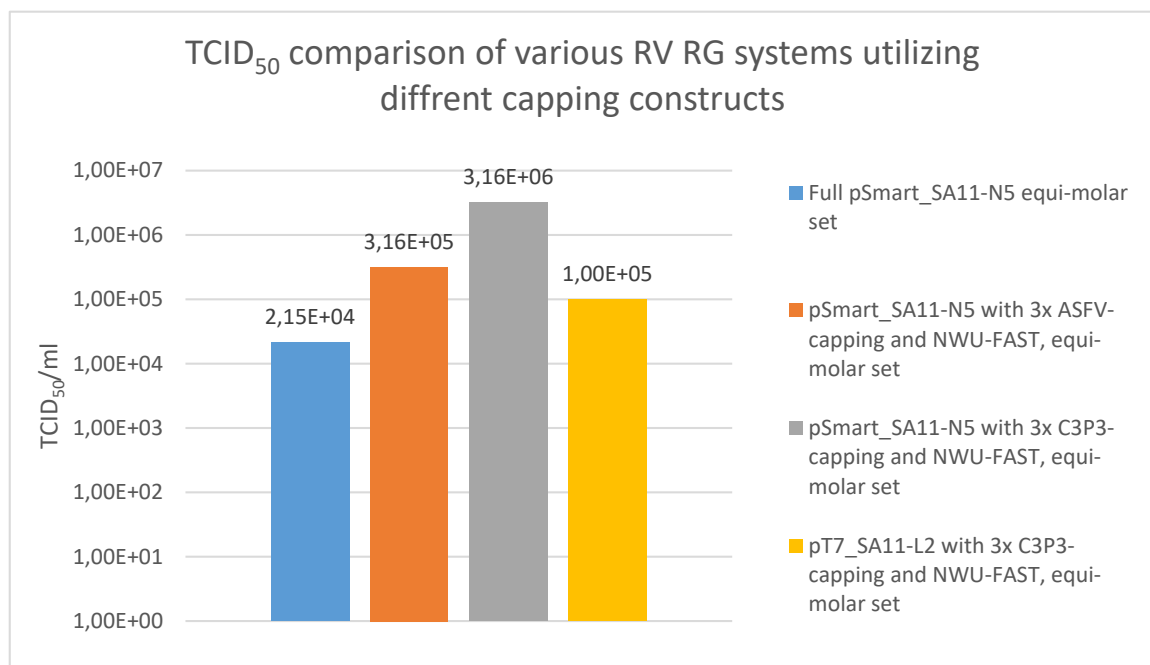
**Table 20: TCID<sub>50</sub> calculation table for pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system with C3P3**

Jap_C3P3	pT7_SA11-L2 with 3x C3P3-capping and NWU-FAST, equi-molar set						No. infected wells	No. non- infected wells	Σno. Infected wells (lowest to highest dilution)	ΣNo. Non- infected wells (highest to lowest dilution)	% of ΣNo. infected wells / ΣNo. Non- infected wells	0,1
	IFMA results											Dilution factor
Dilution	1	2	3	4	5	6						
10 <sup>0</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	18	0	100	1,E+00
10 <sup>-1</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	14	0	100	1,E-01
10 <sup>-2</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	10	0	100	1,E-02
10 <sup>-3</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	6	0	100	1,E-03
10 <sup>-4</sup>	+	+	-	-			2	2	2	2	50	1,E-04
10 <sup>-5</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	6	0	1,E-05
10 <sup>-6</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	10	0	1,E-06
10 <sup>-7</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	14	0	1,E-07
10 <sup>-8</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	18	0	1,E-08
10 <sup>-9</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	22	0	1,E-09

TCID<sub>50</sub> 1,00E+04

TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml 1,00E+05

The results annotated in Table 17 were obtained from the original pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system (Section 3.3.4) and was included to evaluate the efficacy of the ASFV and C3P3 constructs on base-line pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG rescue. This was compared to the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system utilizing the ASFV capping plasmid (Table 18), the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system utilizing the C3P3 construct (Table 19) and the optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system utilizing the C3P3 construct (Table 20), under the same conditions (using the same 96 well plate). For each RG system, the P1 stock (saved directly prior to IFMA confirmation of rescue) was used for the construction of the dilution series (Section 3.2.7). Standard IFMA was used for visualization of viral propagation.



**Figure 30: TCID<sub>50</sub> comparison of pT7\_SA11-L2 and pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG systems utilizing various capping constructs.**

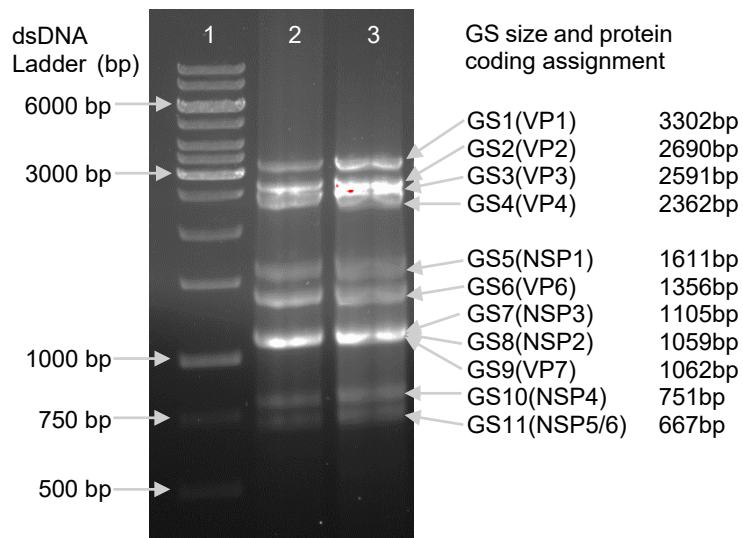
As illustrated by Figure 30, the original pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system (blue) yielded a viral titer of  $2.15 \times 10^4$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml, and served as the benchmark against which the performance of the different RG systems including the various capping constructs would be measured. Contrary to the visual evaluation (where no significant difference was evident), the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system utilizing the ASFV capping plasmid (orange) did perform better than the benchmark, reaching a viral titer of  $3.16 \times 10^5$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml, a roughly 10-fold increase.

The pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system utilizing the C3P3 construct (grey) performed even better with a viral titer of  $3.16 \times 10^6$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml. And finally, the optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system utilizing the C3P3 construct (yellow) reached a viral titer of  $1.0 \times 10^5$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml, not as high as the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system using the phCMVdream\_C3P3 construct, but significantly higher than the pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system that utilized the VV capping plasmids ( $\sim 2.15 \times 10^3$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml, Section 3.3.5). These results indicate that the capping of viral transcripts and the abundance of the viral T7 polymerase play a decisive role in the efficacy of a RV RG system.

### **3.3.7 dsRNA extraction, cDNA synthesis and viral genome sequencing for both optimized pSmart\_SA11-N5 and pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG systems**

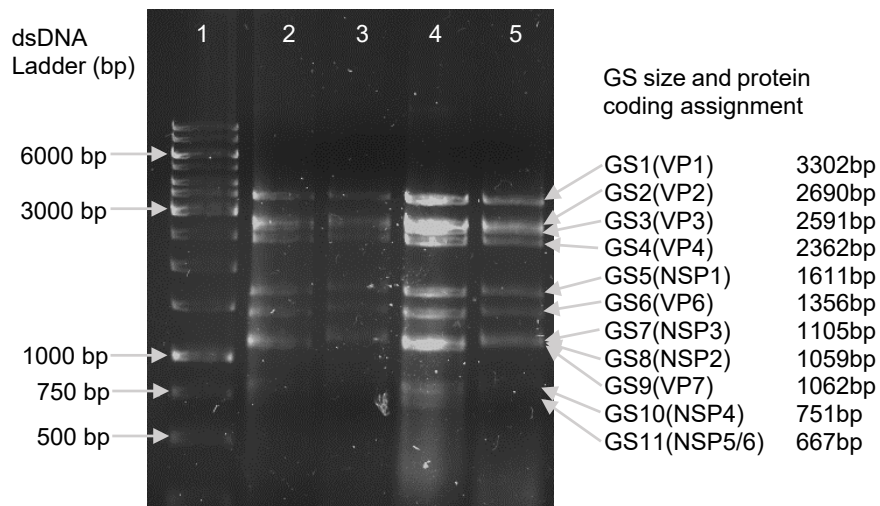
Although IFMA confirmed viral recovery and propagation, viral genome extraction and sequencing was required for definitive confirmation of rescue of recombinant RV strains. The dsRNA extraction protocol (Section 3.2.1) was followed after successful viral rescue and dsRNA was visualised through AGE (Section 2.2.7) and RNA-PAGE (Section 3.2.2). Both rescued SA11-L2 and SA11-N5, as well as a SA11-N2 WT control, were propagated (Section 2.2.13) for dsRNA extraction followed by cDNA synthesis.

Because the optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system (Section 2.3.5) was fully implemented and SA11-L2 was rescued first (before the finalization of the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system, Section 3.3.4), the dsRNA of rescued SA11-L2 was isolated and compared to that of our WT SA11-N5 first. This was done to familiarize myself with the techniques involved in dsRNA extraction and cDNA synthesis and to definitively prove that recombinant SA11-L2 was rescued from the optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system. Figure 31 illustrates dsRNA isolated from both our SA11-N2 WT RV and the recovered SA11-L2 RV from the optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system. The electrophoresis pattern of both samples correlates to the expected pattern for RV. The size of the dsRNA genome segments ranged from 3302bp (GS1, VP1) to 667bp (GS11, NSP5/6).



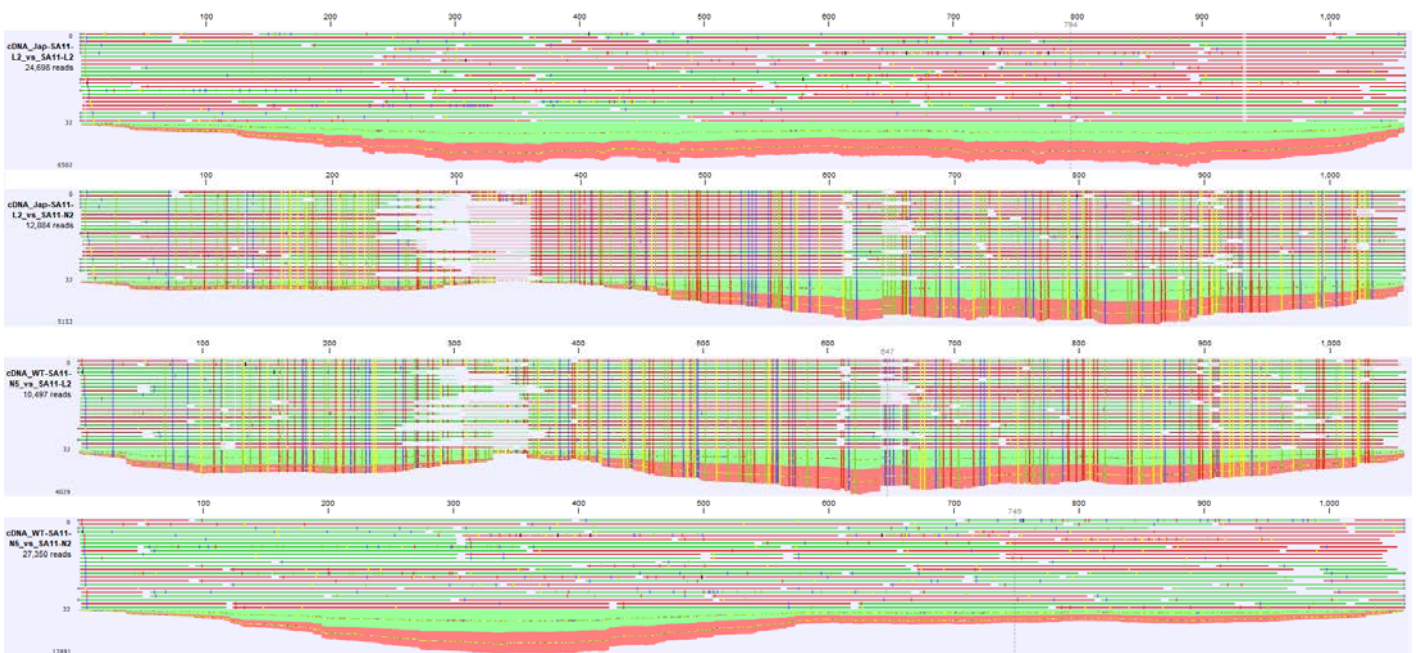
**Figure 31: Agarose gel of RV dsRNA.** Lane 1: dsDNA Ladder. Lane 2: dsRNA extracted from MA104 cells infected with RV SA11-N2. Lane 3: dsRNA extracted from ST cells infected with P1 stock of optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system.

Following dsRNA extraction and visualization, sequence-independent primer ligation (Section 3.2.4) was performed and visualised through AGE (Figure 32). The ligation of the sequencing primers was visible as a very slight increase in genome segment size, which corresponds to the size of the ligated primers (2x 55bp). The increase is a bit more apparent for the smaller genome segments than the largest ones.



**Figure 32: Agarose gel of primer ligated and non-ligated RV dsRNA.** Lane 1: dsDNA Ladder. Lane 2: dsRNA extracted from MA104 cells infected with RV SA11-N2. Lane 3: Sequence independent primer ligated dsRNA of SA11-N2. Lane 4: dsRNA extracted from ST cells infected with P1 stock of optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system. Lane 5: Sequence independent primer ligated dsRNA of SA11-L2.

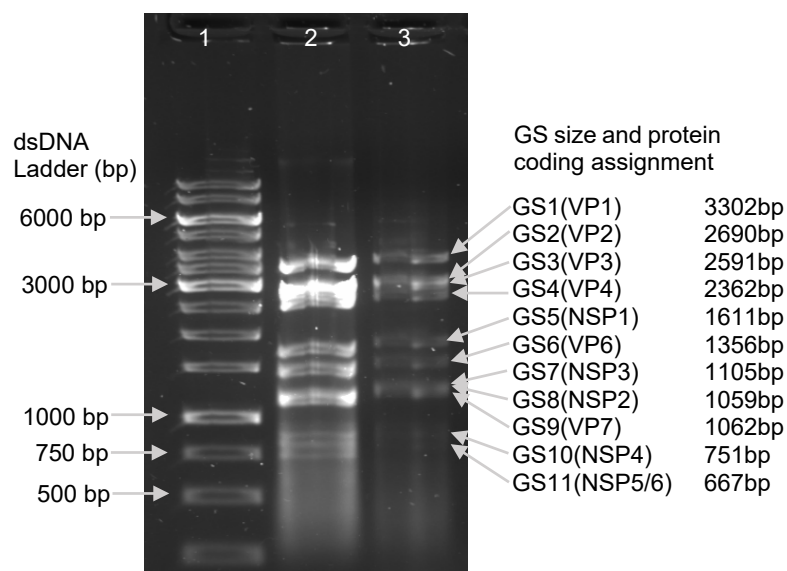
The oligo-ligated dsRNA was used for cDNA synthesis (Section 3.2.4). The cDNA was then purified (Section 3.2.6) and PCR amplified for sequencing. The resulting NGS reads were mapped against both the RV SA11-L2 reference genome (LC333802-LC333812) and the RV SA11-N2 reference genome (JN827244-JN827250 and JN827252- JN827255). The same was done with dsRNA extracted from the RV SA11-N2 and compared to that of the pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system. For all mapped reads and sequence alignments of each of the 11 GS, see Appendix B. The results for GS8 (NSP2) are shown in Figure 33, as it most clearly illustrates the differences between the SA11-L2 and SA11-N2 genotypes. The sequences of GS8 for the SA11-L2 and SA11-N2 references only share a 79.79% identity and therefore best visually illustrate the corresponding strains without showing the actual sequences (available in Appendix B).



**Figure 33: NGS reads of GS8 (NSP2) from rescued SA11-L2 and SA11-N2 cDNA mapped against GS8 (NSP2) of SA11-L2 (LC333809) and SA11-N2 (JN827252) reference genomes.** cDNA of SA11-L2 (from optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system) mapped against, GS8 of the SA11-L2 reference genome (LC333809), and B: GS8 of the SA11-N2 reference genome (JN827252). C: cDNA of SA11-N5 (WT control) mapped against, GS8 of the SA11-L2 reference genome, and D: GS8 of the SA11-N2 reference genome. Mismatches illustrated by blue, red, yellow and green vertical lines (in B & C). A & B mapped without incongruities.

As illustrated by Figure 33 (A & B), the virus recovered from the optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system is clearly RV SA11-L2 and not the WT RV SA11-N2, as (A) mapped perfectly to the SA11-L2 reference sequence, whilst (B) could not.

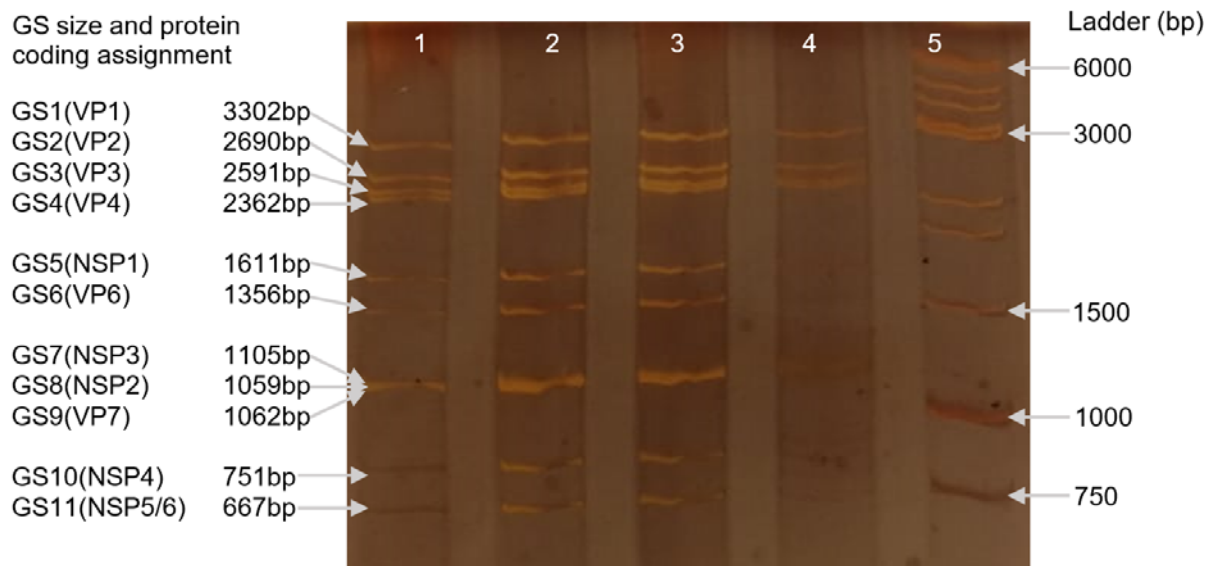
Correspondingly the WT reads did not map against the SA11-L2 reference genome Figure 33 (C) but did map perfectly against the SA11-N2 reference genome Figure 33 (D). This along with the sequence alignments in Appendix B definitively confirm the rescue of the intended RV SA11-L2 strain from the optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system and eliminates the possibility that results could arise from SA11-N2 WT cross-contamination. This same process was followed for the dsRNA extraction, cDNA synthesis and NGS whole-genome sequencing for the RV SA11-N5 rescued from the optimized pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system (Section 3.3.6). Figure 34 (Lane 2) depicts the agarose gel of the dsRNA extracted from ST cells infected with the P1 stock of the optimized pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system. The electrophoretic separation pattern is that expected of RV SA11. Figure 34 (Lane 3) shows the corresponding sequence-independent primer ligated dsRNA of the rescued SA11-N5 genome.



**Figure 34: Agarose gel visualizing the 11 segments of the RV SA11-N5 genome adjacent the primer ligated dsRNA of SA11-N5.** Lane 1: dsDNA Ladder. Lane 2: dsRNA extracted from ST cells infected with P1 stock of optimized pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system. Lane 3: sequence independent primer ligated dsRNA from SA11-N5.

dsRNA was successfully isolated from ST cells infected with the P1 stock of the optimized pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system (Figure 34), confirming viral propagation. Due to the very slight increase in the corresponding primer ligated dsRNA (Figure 34, Lane 3), especially visible for the smallest genome segments, it was assumed that the sequence-independent primer ligation step (Section 3.2.4) was successful. The primer ligated dsRNA from this experiment could however not be converted to cDNA (Section

3.2.4) as was done for the pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system. I then repeated the experiment with both the dsRNA from the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system and that of the pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system as control. I then separated the extracted and primer ligated dsRNA from both the recovered SA11-L2 (Figure 35, lanes 2 and 3) and SA11-N5 (Figure 35, lanes 4 and 5) on a RNA-PAGE gel which was visualized through silver staining which is more sensitive than EtBr staining, to verify if primer ligation had occurred.



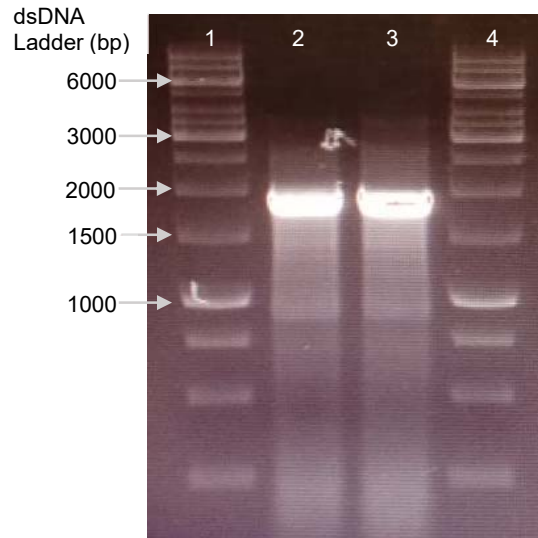
**Figure 35: RNA-PAGE gel of dsRNA extracted from MA104 cells infected with SA11-N2 WT (2) and ST cells infected with P1 stock from the optimized pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system, next to their sequence independent primer ligated dsRNA genome segments.** Lane 5: dsDNA Ladder. Lane 1: dsRNA extracted from MA104 cells infected with SA11-N2 WT. Lane 2: sequence independent primer ligated dsRNA from SA11-N2 WT. Lane 3: dsRNA extracted from ST cells infected with P1 stock of optimized pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system. Lane 4: sequence independent primer ligated dsRNA from SA11-N5.

Based on the results obtained from the RNA-PAGE it was concluded that the primer ligation step prior to the reverse transcriptase reaction was not successful. The primary goal of the whole genome amplification and NGS steps in this project was to verify the identity of the recovered virus and definitively indicate that the intended recombinant virus was rescued from the specific RG system, and that recovered virus was not the result of cross-contamination from another strain. This was achieved for the SA11-L2 strain through sequence-independent primer ligation, whole genome amplification and NGS.

This entire process was however not strictly required for definitive verification of rescue and viral identification. Only a single genome segment that is distinct enough to distinguish between the SA11-L2 and SA11-N5 strains was required. During the implementation and optimization of the pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system, our in-house SA11-N2 WT was used as a control, and as such the virus recovered from the pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system needed to be distinguished from that of the SA11-N2 WT. During the implementation and optimization of the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system, the pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system served as control and no SA11-N2 WT was ever used. For this reason, the recovered virus from the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system needed to be distinguished from that of the SA11-L2 strain.

Due to time constraints at this stage of the project, it was decided that instead of troubleshooting and re-optimizing the entire sequence-independent primer ligation and cDNA synthesis workflow for the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system, a genome segment-specific approach would be followed to isolate, reverse transcribe and PCR amplify a single GS which would then be sent for sequencing. GS4 (VP4) was selected for this purpose and GS4 specific primers were designed that would amplify both the SA11-L2 GS4 and the SA11-N5 GS4. The primer set: Forward, 5'-GGCTATAAAATGGCTTCGC-3', and Reverse, 5'-GCCGCTGAAATATCATCAAATTCATACC-3' was designed to amplify a variable region that could be used to distinguish between the SA11-L2 and SA11-N5 RV strains.

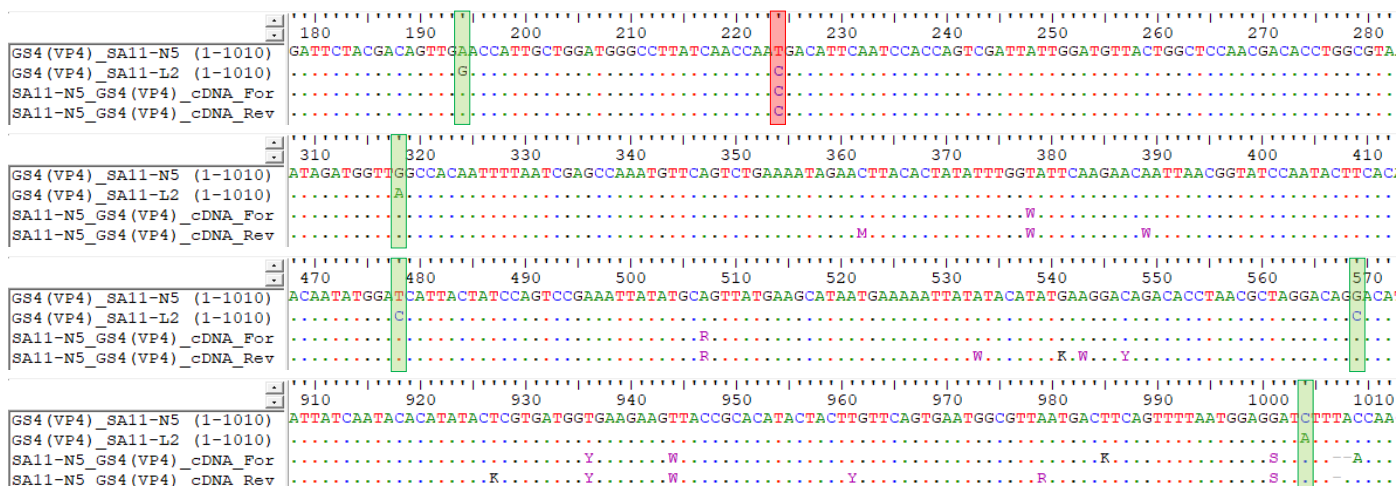
Standard SuperScript III One-step RT-PCR Platinum kit (Invitrogen) protocol (Section 3.2.5) was followed for the GS4 (VP4) cDNA and PCR amplification steps, results of which are illustrated in Figure 36. Both the recovered SA11-L2 (Figure 36, lane 2) and SA11-N5 (Figure 36, lane 3) dsRNA (GS4, VP4) was successfully reverse transcribed and PCR amplified. The resulting amplicons were of the expected size (1926bp), were purified (Section 3.2.6) and were sent for Sanger sequencing (Section 2.2.14).



**Figure 36: Agarose gel of GS4 specific cDNA synthesis for (2) SA11-L2 and (3) SA11-N5 rescued virus.** Lanes 1 & 4: dsDNA Ladder. Lanes 2 & 3: SuperScript One-step RT-PCR product from dsRNA extracted from ST cells infected with (2) P1 stock from the optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system, and (3) P1 stock from the optimized pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system, using GS4 specific primers.

Figure 37 illustrates the GS4 (VP4) cDNA sequences of SA11-N5 aligned to both the SA11-N5 (1<sup>st</sup> row) and SA11-L2 (2<sup>nd</sup> row) GS4 (VP4) reference sequences. The highlighted nucleotides represent the 6 nucleic acid sequence differences used for differentiation of the SA11-N5 and SA11-L2 GS4 sequences. These are 194 (A to G), 224 (T to C), 318 (G to A), 478 (T to C), 569 (G to C) and 1004 (C to A) with the first being the SA11-N5 consensus sequence and the second being the SA11-L2 variation. Of the 6 selected sequence differences, 5 correlated to the SA11-N5 reference (highlighted in green) and one correlated to the SA11-L2 reference (highlighted in red).

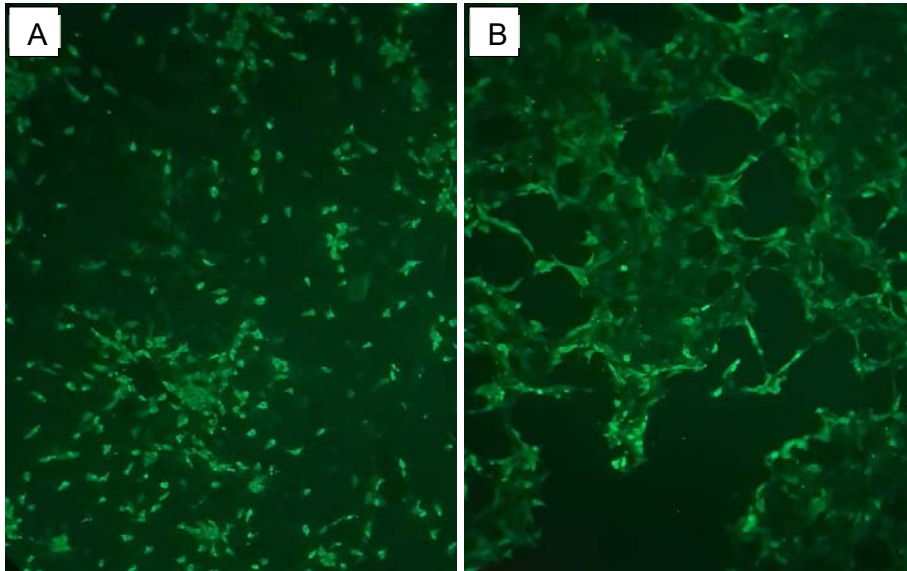
Based on these findings it was confirmed that the rescued virus from the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system was indeed the intended SA11-N5, even though a single SNP (224: T to C) resembled the SA11-L2 strain. This can be further validated with additional genome segment-specific amplifications, however, for the purposes of this MSc, this confirmation was deemed sufficient and additional genome segment-specific amplifications were not attempted. Additionally, the 224 T in the SA11-N5 reference is based on the consensus sequence and might not be retained in the actual viral genome during rescue and passage, and might be a naturally occurring mutation. This will have to be confirmed through NGS.



**Figure 37: Sanger sequencing alignments of GS4(VP4) cDNA from recovered SA11-N5 aligned against both SA11-N5 and SA11-L2 GS4(VP4) reference sequences.** Figure depicts 100bp segments of the full alignment that contain the conserved sequence variations used to distinguish between SA11-N5 and SA11-L2. These are: 194 (A to G), 224 (T to C), 318 (G to A), 478 (T to C), 569 (G to C) and 1004 (C to A). Of the 6 selected nucleic acid sequence differences, 5 correlated to the SA11-N5 reference (highlighted in green) and one correlated to the SA11-L2 reference (highlighted in red).

### 3.3.8 Effect of a 3x increase of NSP2 and NSP5 transcription plasmids on both optimized pSmart\_SA11-N5 and pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG systems

This experiment was based on the 2018 Komoto publication that indicated that recovery of recombinant RV from the pT7\_SA11-L2 system could be greatly improved by increasing the number of transcription plasmids encoding the genome segments responsible for viroplasm formation, GS8 (NSP2) and GS11 (NSP5). In addition to this, I wanted to compare the relative efficiency of the equi-molar based system that we were using against the equi-ug based system that Komoto and associates were using. The optimised pT7\_SA11-L2 system comprised of the standard 11 pT7\_SA11-L2 rescue plasmids in equi-molar amounts along with our pDream\_p10\_FAST expression plasmid, and 3x molar amounts of the phCMVdream\_C3P3 expression plasmid. In parallel, an equi-ug mixture was prepared that simply mixed equivalent amounts of each of the plasmids of the system with the addition of 3x the relative amounts of NSP2 and NSP5 transcription plasmids and 3x the relative amount of the phCMVdream\_C3P3 expression plasmid. Standard rescue protocol was followed for both systems with the inclusion of negative controls for each (lacking VP1 representation). BSR-T5/7 cells were used as primary transfection cell-line and ST cells for co-seeding and propagation cell-lines.



**Figure 38: IFMA of the optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system using (A), an equi-molar approach with 3x phCMVdream\_C3P3 expression plasmid, compared to (B), an equi-ug approach using 3x NSP2 and NSP5 transcription plasmids and 3x phCMVdream\_C3P3 expression plasmid. Transfected into BSR-T5/7 cells and co-seeded and propagated in ST cells. IFMAs were done on CPE presenting cells 3 days after P1 passage. 400x magnification.**

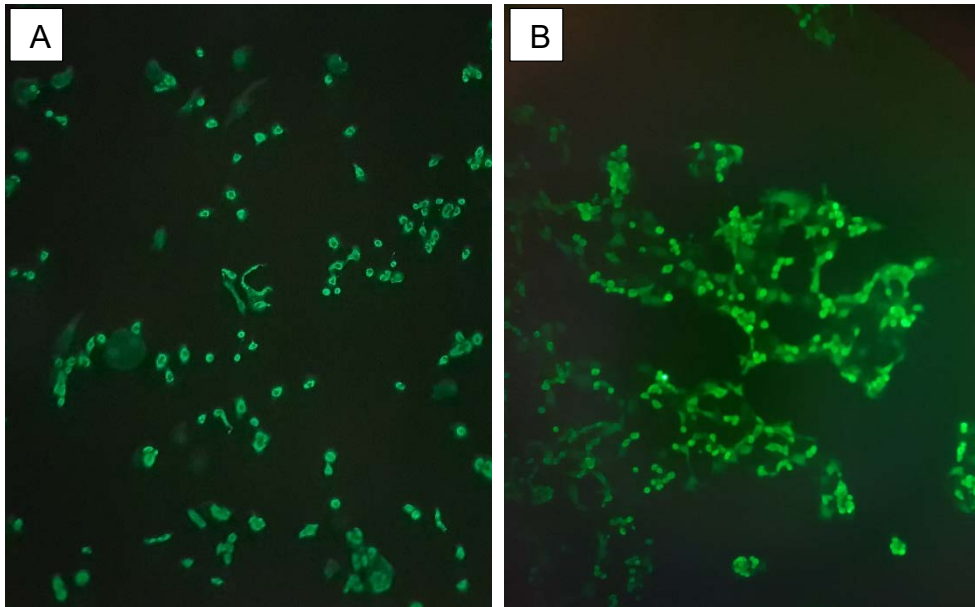
Confirmation of rescue and visual comparison was done through IFMA (Figure 38). With both approaches, it was possible to consistently rescue recombinant RV. However, the equi-ug approach consistently formed more CPE than the equi-molar approach. A visual comparison was done following each IFMA with the assumption that greater CPE represents higher viral titer and thus represents the more efficient system. This was a qualitative evaluation and not a quantitative one. The exact relative efficiencies of the two different approaches were determined through TCID<sub>50</sub> comparison (Section 3.3.9). These results were unexpected because the experiments described in Section 2.3.2 and Section 2.3.3 indicated either a negligible difference between the equi-molar and equi-ug approaches or a slight increase of efficiency for the equi-molar approach.

This difference could be due to the very nature of the equi-ug approach, which has more copies of the relatively small NSP2 and NSP5 transcription plasmids, than the equi-molar approach. This suggests that it might be possible to overcome the difference in efficiency between the equi-ug and equi-molar systems by increasing the NSP2 and NSP5 transcription plasmids in the equi-molar system even more.

The reason my initial experiments did not indicate a significant difference between the two approaches might be due to the overall low efficiency of both the equi-molar and equi-ug systems at that stage. To accurately monitor the effects of our optimizations to the initial system would have required each experiment to have both the equi-molar and equi-ug versions with their respective negative controls and each of the specific optimizations. This duel approach was not followed due to financial and time constraints and that is why, based on early experiments, the equi-molar approach was selected for further investigation. It is however noteworthy that both the equi-molar and equi-ug systems containing the various optimizations incorporated from the AHSV and BTV RG systems, resulted in the reliable rescue of the virus, illustrating that the optimizations were indeed effective and improved the recovery capacity of the initial pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system significantly. Table 20 summarises the various adaptations and optimizations made to the optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system as compared to the original unmodified system and our locally developed pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system.

**Table 20: Summary of optimizations made to the original pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system as compared to our pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system**

<b>RV RG system</b>	<b>pT7_SA11-L2 (Original)</b>	<b>pT7_SA11-L2 (NWU adapted)</b>	<b>pT7_SA11-L2 (NWU optimized)</b>	<b>pSmart_SA11-N5 (NWU optimised)</b>
<b>Transfected cells</b>	BHK-T7	BSR-T5/7	BSR-T5/7	BSR-T5/7
<b>Co-seeding cells</b>	MA104	ST	ST	ST
<b>Capping enzyme</b>	VV (D1R & D12L)	VV (D1R & D12L)	C3P3	C3P3
<b>Additional T7pol</b>	No	No	Yes	Yes
<b>SA11 strain</b>	L2	L2	L2	N5
<b>Detection system</b>	IVIS	IFMA	IFMA	IFMA
<b>Ribozyme</b>	Genomic HDV	Genomic HDV	Anti-genomic HDV	Anti-genomic HDV
<b>Backbone</b>	pT7 (~3080bp)	pT7 (~3080bp)	pT7 (~3080bp)	pSmart (~2010bp)
<b>Plasmid mix</b>	Equi- $\mu$ g	Equi-molar & - $\mu$ g	Equi- $\mu$ g	Equi- $\mu$ g
<b>Capping : cDNA</b>	1:1	2:1	3:1	3:1
<b>Fusion protein</b>	NBV p10 FAST	NBV p10 FAST	NBV p10 FAST	NBV p10 FAST
<b>Additional NSP2/5</b>	No	No	Yes	Yes



**Figure 39: IFMA of the optimized pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system using (A), an equi-molar approach with 3x phCMVdream\_C3P3 expression plasmid, compared to (B), an equi-ug approach using 3x NSP2 and NSP5 transcription plasmids and 3x phCMVdream\_C3P3 expression plasmid. Transfected into BSR-T5/7 cells and co-seeded and propagated in ST cells. IFMA was done on CPE presenting cells 3 days after P1 passage. 400x magnification**

The exact same approach used for the evaluation of the pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG systems was also applied to the NWU developed pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system, with one being the optimized equi-molar (Figure 39, A) and the other being an equi-ug (Figure 39, B) version with 3x more NSP2, NSP5 transcription plasmids and 3x more phCMVdream\_C3P3 expression plasmid. Following IFMA confirmation of viral rescue, a TCID<sub>50</sub> comparison was performed on each of the RG versions as described in Sections 3.3.5 and 3.2.8. As with the results of the pT7\_SA11-L2 experiment, both the equi-molar and equi-ug systems repeatedly and consistently rescued, with the equi-ug version consistently outperforming the equi-molar one in terms of relative viral titer, evaluated visually following IFMA. Precise comparison of relative viral titers was done through TCID<sub>50</sub> assay and annotated in Section 3.3.9, Tables 22 - 25.

### **3.3.9 TCID<sub>50</sub> evaluation of optimized pSmart\_SA11-N5 and pT7\_SA11-L2 RG systems using an equi-molar approach as compared to an equi-ug approach with 3x more NSP2 and NSP5 transcription plasmids**

In this experiment, the impact of increasing the relative amounts of viroplasm forming GS8 (NSP2) and GS11 (NSP5) transcription plasmids on viral titer was evaluated through TCID<sub>50</sub> assays. As stated in Section 2.2.12, the supernatant of a CPE presenting culture is stored as a P1 viral stock prior to IFMA. The P1 stocks of the various RG systems described in Section 3.3.8, were used for the construction of several dilution series as described in Section 3.2.8. MA104 cells were seeded into a 96-well plate for the TCID<sub>50</sub>, infected with the viral dilution series and incubated for 3 to 5 days. Following this incubation viral propagation was evaluated via IFMA. Any fluorescent signal obtained from a well was viewed as viral propagation and annotated as "+". Correspondingly if no fluorescent signal was found in a well it was deemed virus free and annotated as "-". Calculations of TCID<sub>50</sub> and TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml were done in Excel using the equations annotated in Equation 2.

Results shown in Table 21 were obtained from the optimized, equi-molar pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system (Section 3.3.6), and were included to be compared to the optimized, equi-molar pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system that utilized the phCMVdream\_C3P3 construct (Table 22). These two equi-molar RG systems were used as a benchmark to evaluate the efficiency of the equi-ug RG systems that increased the amount of NSP2 and NSP3 transcription plasmids (Table 23). This was compared to the equi-ug pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system with 3x NSP2 and NSP5 transcription plasmids (Table 24) and the equi-ug pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system with 3x NSP2 and NSP5 transcription plasmids (Table 24), under the same conditions (using the same 96 well plate).

**Table 21: TCID<sub>50</sub> calculation table for optimized, equi-molar pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system with 3x phCMVdream\_C3P3 expression plasmid.**

Dilution	pSmart_SA11-N5 with 3x C3P3-capping and NWU-FAST, equi-molar						No. infected wells	No. non-infected wells	ΣNo. Infected wells (lowest to highest dilution)	ΣNo. Non-infected wells (highest to lowest dilution)	% of ΣNo. infected wells / ΣNo. Non-infected wells	0,1
	IFMA results											Dilution factor
	1	2	3	4	5	6						
10 <sup>0</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	20	0	100	1,E+00
10 <sup>-1</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	16	0	100	1,E-01
10 <sup>-2</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	12	0	100	1,E-02
10 <sup>-3</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	8	0	100	1,E-03
10 <sup>-4</sup>	+	+	+	-			3	1	4	1	80	1,E-04
10 <sup>-5</sup>	+	-	-	-			1	3	1	4	20	1,E-05
10 <sup>-6</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	8	0	1,E-06
10 <sup>-7</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	12	0	1,E-07
10 <sup>-8</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	16	0	1,E-08
10 <sup>-9</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	20	0	1,E-09

TCID<sub>50</sub> 3,16E+05

TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml 3,16E+06

**Table 22: TCID<sub>50</sub> calculation table for equi-ug pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system with 3x NSP2 and NSP5 transcription plasmids and 3x phCMVdream\_C3P3 expression plasmid.**

Dilution	pT7_SA11-L2 original with 3x NSP2/5, equi-ug set						No. infected wells	No. non-infected wells	ΣNo. Infected wells (lowest to highest dilution)	ΣNo. Non-infected wells (highest to lowest dilution)	% of ΣNo. infected wells / ΣNo. Non-infected wells	0,1
	IFMA results											Dilution factor
	1	2	3	4	5	6						
10 <sup>0</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	24	0	100	1,E+00
10 <sup>-1</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	20	0	100	1,E-01
10 <sup>-2</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	16	0	100	1,E-02
10 <sup>-3</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	12	0	100	1,E-03
10 <sup>-4</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	8	0	100	1,E-04
10 <sup>-5</sup>	+	+	+	-			3	1	4	1	80	1,E-05
10 <sup>-6</sup>	-	-	+	-			1	3	1	4	20	1,E-06
10 <sup>-7</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	8	0	1,E-07
10 <sup>-8</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	12	0	1,E-08
10 <sup>-9</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	16	0	1,E-09

TCID<sub>50</sub> 3,16E+06

TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml

3,16E+07

**Table 23: TCID<sub>50</sub> calculation table for optimized equi-molar pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system with 3x phCMVdream\_C3P3 expression plasmid.**

Dilution	pT7_SA11-L2 with 3x C3P3-capping and NWU-FAST, equi-molar set						No. infected wells	No. non-infected wells	ΣNo. Infected wells (lowest to highest dilution)	ΣNo. Non-infected wells (highest to lowest dilution)	% of ΣNo. infected wells / ΣNo. Non-infected wells	0,1
	IFMA results											Dilution factor
	1	2	3	4	5	6						
10 <sup>0</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	18	0	100	1,E+00
10 <sup>-1</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	14	0	100	1,E-01
10 <sup>-2</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	10	0	100	1,E-02
10 <sup>-3</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	6	0	100	1,E-03
10 <sup>-4</sup>	+	+	-	-			2	2	2	2	50	1,E-04
10 <sup>-5</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	6	0	1,E-05
10 <sup>-6</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	10	0	1,E-06
10 <sup>-7</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	14	0	1,E-07
10 <sup>-8</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	18	0	1,E-08
10 <sup>-9</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	22	0	1,E-09

TCID<sub>50</sub> 1,00E+04

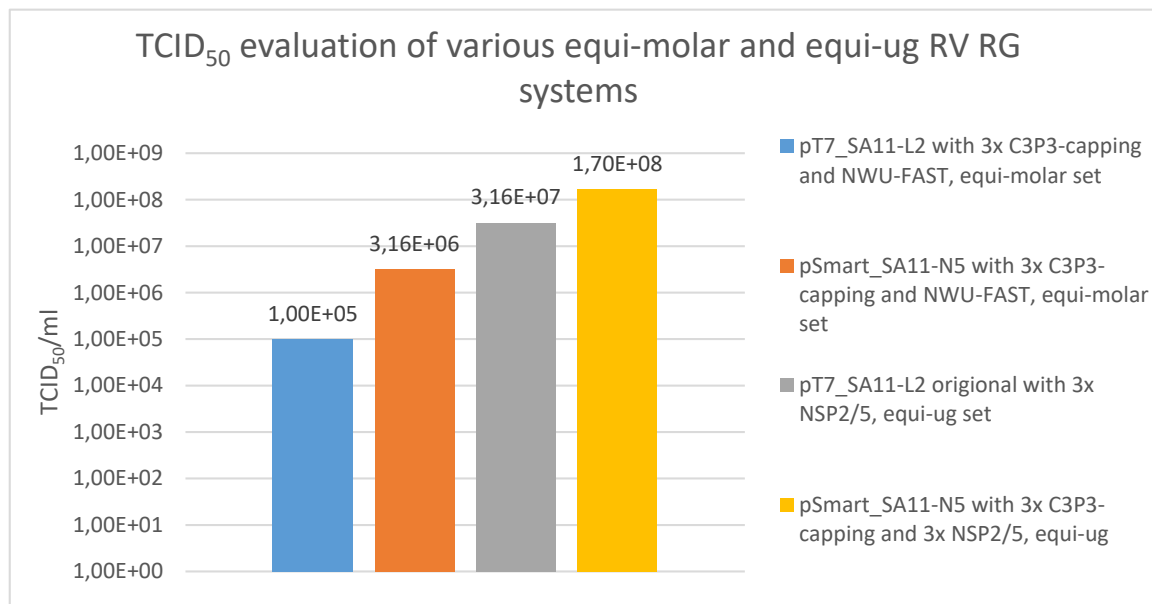
TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml

1,00E+05

**Table 24: TCID<sub>50</sub> calculation table for equi-ug pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system with 3x NSP2 and NSP5 transcription plasmids and 3x phCMVdream\_C3P3 expression plasmid.**

NWU_3x NSP2/5	pSmart_SA11-N5 with 3x C3P3-capping and 3x NSP2/5, equi-ug						No. infected wells	No. non-infected wells	Σno. Infected wells (lowest to highest dilution)	ΣNo. Non-infected wells (highest to lowest dilution)	% of ΣNo. infected wells / ΣNo. Non-infected wells	0,1
	IFMA results											Dilution factor
Dilution	1	2	3	4	5	6						
10 <sup>0</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	27	0	100	1,E+00
10 <sup>-1</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	23	0	100	1,E-01
10 <sup>-2</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	19	0	100	1,E-02
10 <sup>-3</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	15	0	100	1,E-03
10 <sup>-4</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	11	0	100	1,E-04
10 <sup>-5</sup>	+	+	+	+			4	0	7	0	100	1,E-05
10 <sup>-6</sup>	-	+	+	-			2	2	3	2	60	1,E-06
10 <sup>-7</sup>	-	+	-	-			1	3	1	5	17	1,E-07
10 <sup>-8</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	9	0	1,E-08
10 <sup>-9</sup>	-	-	-	-			0	4	0	13	0	1,E-09

TCID<sub>50</sub> 1,70E+07 TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml 1,70E+08



**Figure 40: TCID<sub>50</sub> comparison of both equi-molar and equi-ug approaches of the pT7\_SA11-L2 and pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG systems, with the equi-ug approach using 3x NSP2 and NSP5 transcription plasmids.**

As illustrated by Figure 40, the optimized, equi-molar pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system (blue) yielded a titer of  $1.0 \times 10^5$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml, and the optimized, equi-molar pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system (orange) yielded a titer of  $3.16 \times 10^6$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml. This comparison not only provided a benchmark against which the performance of the equi-ug RG systems with increased NSP2 and NSP5 constructs would be measured but also confirms that the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system is more efficient than the pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system in every comparable experiment thus far.

The equi-ug pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system with 3x NSP2 and NSP5 transcription plasmids (grey) reached a viral titer of  $3.17 \times 10^7$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml, a 10-fold increase of that of the optimized, equi-molar pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system, and a 100-fold (two logs higher) increase of that of the optimized, equi-molar pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system. This substantial increase in efficiency clearly highlights the importance of the viroplasm forming GS8 (NSP2) and GS11 (NSP5) during viral replication (Desselberger, 2014; Desselberger, 2017; Desselberger, 2019; Estes & Cohen, 1989).

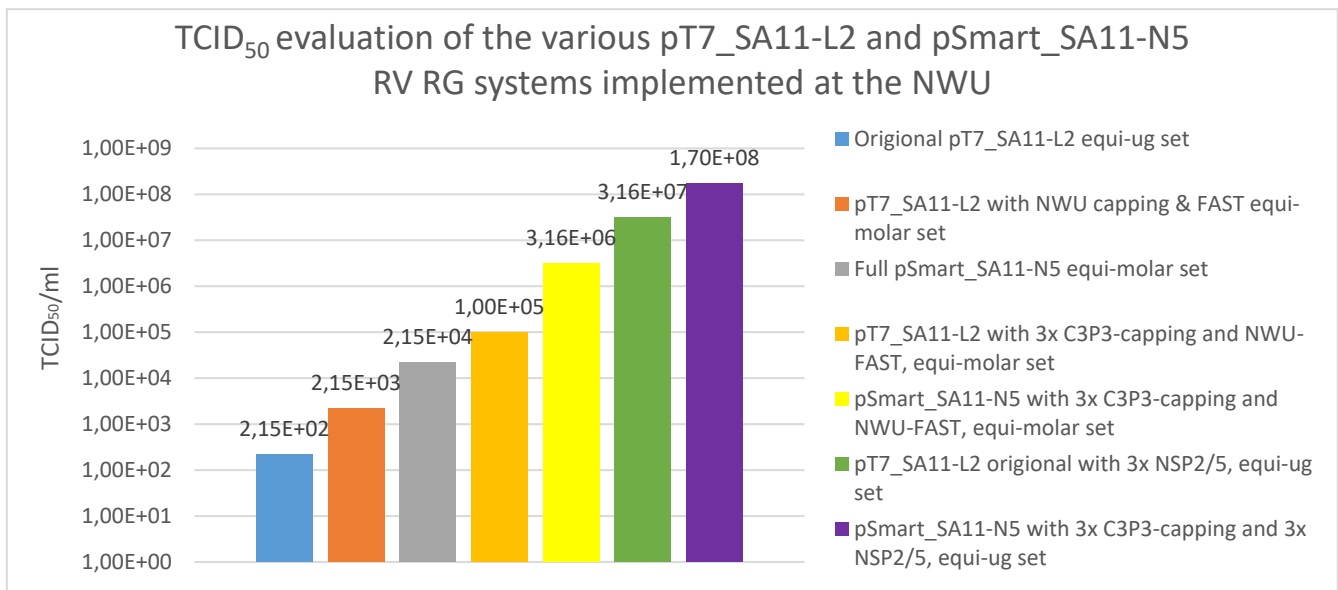
As mentioned previously, initial experiments where the equi-molar and equi-ug approaches were compared through IFMA, did not indicate a significant difference between the two systems and suggested (based purely on visual evaluation) that the equi-molar approach might be slightly more efficient. This is in sharp contrast to the findings of this experiment. If we, however, take into consideration the substantial effect of the increased viroplasm forming GSs had on rescue, we can infer that the equi-ug approach only outperformed the equi-molar approach because it would provide even more copies of the relatively small GS8 (NSP2) and GS11 (NSP5) transcription plasmids than the equi-molar approach. This notion is further supported by the equi-ug pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system reaching the highest viral titer of  $1.7 \times 10^8$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml. In this experiment, the reduced size of the pSmart plasmid backbone would further increase the number of small plasmids represented in an equi-ug transfection mixture and therefore would further support the formation of the viroplasm.

This comparison also illustrates that the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system consistently outperforms the pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system in every comparable experiment. This again (as stated in Section 3.3.5) can most likely be attributed to the smaller plasmid backbone size of the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system (~2010bp) as compared to that of the pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system (~3080bp). The smaller backbone allowed higher transfection efficiency and decreases plasmid load by roughly 11700bp, resulting in higher transcription levels and an increase in over-all rescue efficiency.

### 3.4 Summary

The NWU research team has long been working towards a robust, helper-virus independent RV RG system. Work towards this goal was primarily based on the work done by Dr L. Mlera and Dr J.F. Wentzel who determined the SA11-N5 consensus sequence and generated several transcription plasmids carrying the SA11-N5 cDNA genome segments respectively. Prior to the start of this project, the bases of the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system was already being worked on by various members of the NWU research team, with L. Geldenhuys generating 8 of the 11 SA11-N5 cDNA rescue plasmids by the end of 2017. I took over the project and constructed the remaining 3 SA11-N5 cDNA rescue plasmids (GS8: NSP2, GS9: VP7 and GS11: NSP5/6) in addition to the various capping and fusion expression plasmids used with both the pSmart\_SA11-N5 and pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG systems.

The various optimizations used during the implementation of the Japanese pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system (Section 2.4) were also incorporated into the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system, which was successfully implemented and used for the rescue of recombinant RV SA11-N5 (Section 3.3.7). The pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system was compared to the pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system at various stages during the optimization process and consistently outperformed the pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system in comparable experiments (Figure 41). The original pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system was further optimized through the incorporation of the single-subunit capping enzyme expression plasmid, phCMVdream\_ASFV and phCMVdream\_C3P3 (Section 3.3.6) and the 3x increase of the viroplasm forming NSP2 and NSP5 transcription plasmids (Section 3.3.8). Each of these optimizations increased the relative viral titer obtained from the system roughly 10-fold (on average) and were also incorporated into the pT7\_SA11-L2 system and again compared to the pSmart\_SA11-N5 system via TCID<sub>50</sub> assay (Figure 41).



**Figure 41: TCID<sub>50</sub> evaluation of each of the various pT7\_SA11-L2 and pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG systems throughout their implementation and optimization processes.**

As illustrated in Figure 41, the initial (unmodified) Japanese pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system was successfully implemented at the NWU and was used to rescue recombinant RV SA11-L2. Consistently rescuing from the initial system proved very difficult and the only IFMA confirmed rescue only yielded a viral titer of  $2.15 \times 10^2$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml (blue). The initial pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system was then optimized through the incorporation of various insights gained from the BTV and AHSV RG systems to form the optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system, which yielded a viral titer of  $2.15 \times 10^3$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml (orange). This 10-fold increase indicated successful optimization and concluded the first objective of this project.

The locally developed pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system was then finalized and implemented with all the optimizations used during the pT7\_SA11-L2 optimization process, including the use of the pHCMVdream capping and fusion expression plasmids I designed as well as the use of BSR-T5/7 cells for transfections and ST cells for co-seeding and propagation cells. The full pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system yielded a viral titer of  $2.15 \times 10^4$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml (grey), a 10-fold increase from the optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system and a 100-fold increase from the initial pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system. This completed the second objective of this project and established two working, plasmid-based RV RG systems at the NWU.

Further optimizations to both the pT7\_SA11-L2 and pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG systems included the use of the phCMVdream\_C3P3 construct that expressed the ASFV capping enzyme linked to a viral T7-RNA polymerase. This construct replaced the phCMVdream\_VV\_D1R and phCMVdream\_VV\_D12L VV capping enzyme expression plasmids in both systems. This yielded a viral titer of  $1.00 \times 10^5$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml (gold) for the pT7\_SA11-L2<sub>C3P3</sub> RG system and a viral titer of  $3.16 \times 10^6$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml (yellow) for the pSmart\_SA11-N5<sub>C3P3</sub> RG system. The pT7\_SA11-L2<sub>C3P3</sub> RG system showed a 100-fold increase in viral yield as compared to the optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system, as did the pSmart\_SA11-N5<sub>C3P3</sub> RG system when compared to the initial pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system. This substantial increase illustrates the importance of adequate viral transcript capping and the availability of viral T7-polymerase during the viral rescue.

Finally, the importance of the viroplasm forming GS8 (NSP2) and GS11 (NSP5) transcription plasmids was evaluated through the 3x increase of said plasmids in both the pT7\_SA11-L2<sub>C3P3</sub> and pSmart\_SA11-N5<sub>C3P3</sub> RV RG systems. The equi-ug pT7\_SA11-L2<sub>3xNSP2/5</sub> RG system reached a viral titer of  $3.16 \times 10^7$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml (green), another 100-fold increase over the equi-molar pT7\_SA11-L2<sub>C3P3</sub> RG system, and the pSmart\_SA11-N5<sub>3xNSP2/5</sub> RG system reached a viral titer of  $1.7 \times 10^8$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml (purple), also a 100-fold increase over the equi-molar pSmart\_SA11-N5<sub>C3P3</sub> RG system. This illustrated the profound impact the early formation of the viroplasm can have on viral rescue, and also re-affirmed that the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system outperforms the pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system in every comparable experiment. This increase in efficiency is most likely due to the smaller pSmart backbone (~2010bp) used in the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system than that used by the pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system (~3080bp). Considering the 11 RV cDNA transcription plasmids and the various capping and fusion expression plasmids, the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG system reduces plasmid load by up to 14000bp. The final comparative analysis between the pT7\_SA11-L2 and pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG systems also completed the final objective of the project and thus finalized the experimental components of my MSc.

## Chapter 4

### Concluding remarks and future prospects

The long-awaited goal of a true selection free RV RG system was first reported in 2017 and was made available to the scientific community through the AddGene service. This Japanese developed pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system was acquired by various institutions, including our research team at the NWU, but could not immediately be implemented robustly. This notwithstanding still represented a major breakthrough in RV research and is sure to significantly impact our understanding of RV replication, the biological mechanisms used by the virus, its pathogenesis and correlates of protection, and could provide systems for the identification of targets for viral therapeutics and act as a platform for the generation of novel, rationally designed RV vaccine candidates.

During this project, several plasmid-based RV RG systems were implemented and rationally optimized to form a platform from which future RV research can be initiated. The pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system was implemented at the NWU with initial difficulty and was optimized through the incorporation of insights gained for the BTV and AHSV RG systems. These optimizations included 1) The design and implementation of alternative capping and fusion enzyme expression plasmids, phCMVdream\_VV\_D1R, phCMVdream\_VV\_D12L and phCMVdream\_p10\_FAST. 2) Exchanging the transfection and co-seeding cell-lines from BHK-T7 and MA104 cells to BSR-T5/7 and ST cells respectively. 3) Using 3x more capping enzyme expression plasmids and the adaptation of an equi-molar transfection mixture approach. These optimizations significantly increased the pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG systems' repeatability and increased viral yield 10-fold from  $2.15 \times 10^2$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml, to  $2.15 \times 10^3$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml. Rescue of the recombinant SA11-L2 strain from the pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system was verified through dsRNA extraction, cDNA synthesis and whole viral genome sequencing.

The pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG plasmid set was already partially completed by another member of the NWU RV research team (L. Geldenhuys) with only three constructs not being completed, GS8(NSP2), GS9(VP7) and GS11(NSP5/6). These three constructs were finalized by me and sub-cloned into the pSmart plasmid backbone using In-Fusion HD seamless cloning.

The strategies used during the implementation and optimization of the Japanese pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system were then applied to the implementation of the full, locally developed, consensus sequence-based pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system. Rescue of recombinant SA11-N5 was verified by genome segment-specific, one-step RT-PCR and sequencing of GS4 (VP4). Comparative TCID<sub>50</sub> analysis was performed on both systems and their respective optimizations throughout the project and the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system outperformed the pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system in terms of repeatability and overall viral yield in each comparable experiment.

Further optimizations were made to both the pT7\_SA11-L2 and pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG systems through the incorporation of the pHCMVdream\_C3P3 construct that expressed the ASFV capping enzyme fused to a viral T7-RNA polymerase through a serine-glycine linker. Additionally, the relative amounts of the GS8(NSP2) and GS11(NSP5) transcription plasmids were increased three-fold to produce more viroplasm. Both these two final optimizations significantly increased viral recovery, each yielding a roughly 100-fold increase. All the various optimizations and adaptations performed in this project thus culminated in an increase of efficiency of viral rescue from  $2.15 \times 10^2$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml to viral titers of  $1.7 \times 10^8$  TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml. The project initially set out to establish a robust and helper-virus independent, plasmid-based RV RG system at the NWU, and although this process was arduous, it has been achieved and will form an integral part of many future RV research projects at the NWU and its collaborators in South Africa and elsewhere.

The implementation and optimization of the two RV RG systems described in this project are needed for a wide range of RV research projects at the NWU and elsewhere. The transcription plasmids that make up each of the pT7\_SA11-L2 RG and pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG systems, were transformed into DH5 $\alpha$  cells (New England Biolabs, NEB, Massachusetts, USA) and stored as glycerol stocks at -80°C, as is standard protocol. Samples of these glycerol stocks (in DH5 $\alpha$  cells) were shared with the University of the Free State (UFS) and another MSc student in our research group. As per standard protocol, these glycerol stocks were cultured for plasmid extraction and sequence verification. However, the sequencing results of the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG plasmid set indicated several mutations, rearrangements and large scale scrambling in the GS2(VP2), GS9(VP7), GS8(NSP2) and GS10(NSP4) transcription plasmids.

These findings were also confirmed by UFS, but the sequence variants obtained from their samples, differed from ours, indicating instability of the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG plasmids in DH5 $\alpha$  cells. This hypothesis was further supported by the culturing of various pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG plasmid glycerol stocks which were plasmid extracted and sent for sequencing, the results of which returned different mutations than those initially observed, indicating mutagenesis during glycerol stock culturing. The instability of the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG plasmids is currently being addressed through the testing of different bacterial hosts, such as JM109 (Zymo, Inqaba Biotec), Epi400 (Lucigen, Wisconsin, USA) and NEB10 $\beta$  (NEB). Preliminary results indicate that the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG transcription plasmids that were not stable in DH5 $\alpha$  cells are indeed stable in JM109, NEB10 $\beta$  or Epi400 cells. No investigation into the stability of the pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG plasmids has been done as of yet.

The plasmid-based RV RG systems implementation and optimization during this project are not stand-alone projects and will form part of many other RV research projects at the NWU in the future, once the plasmid stability issue has been resolved. Some of the future development proposals include the incorporation of fluorescent markers into both the established RV RG systems to facilitate the real-time evaluation of rescue progression and to eliminate IFMA confirmation of viral rescue (reducing time between transfection and confirmation of viral rescue). Another common use of a well-established RG system is the generation of rationally designed chimeric viruses. At the NWU, this work will be based on the RG strategies used for the generation of multi-strain BTV and AHSV vaccine candidates (transcapsidation). Furthermore, RV strains can undergo reassortment during co-infection, however, the genetic and biochemical determinants permitting or restricting this is not understood. As such the RV RG systems optimized in this project will be used to investigate the determinants of reassortment in SA11.

Results obtained during this MSc were presented at various national and international symposiums and meetings pertaining to dsRNA viruses and reverse genetics. The following is a list of symposiums, conferences and seminars where elements of this project were presented, as well as the format in which it was presented:

1. **MGJ Huyzers**, AC Potgieter, AA van Dijk. Local implementation and optimization of rotavirus reverse genetics systems. SASBMB-FASBMB conference, Potchefstroom, South Africa, 8 - 11 July 2018. (Oral and Poster presentation)
2. **MGJ Huyzers**, AC Potgieter, AA van Dijk. Local implementation and optimization of rotavirus reverse genetics systems. 13<sup>th</sup> international dsRNA virus symposium, Houffalize, Belgium, 24 - 28 September 2018. (Shotgun oral presentation and Poster)
3. **MGJ Huyzers**, AC Potgieter, AA van Dijk. Rotavirus reverse genetics, optimizations and future development potential. 12<sup>th</sup> African Rotavirus Symposium, Johannesburg, South Africa, 30 July - 1 August 2019. (Oral and Poster presentation)
4. **MGJ Huyzers**, AC Potgieter, AA van Dijk. Rotavirus reverse genetics, local implementation and optimizations. 1<sup>st</sup> Annual AfRota meeting, BFR, Berlin, 20 - 22 September 2018. (Oral presentation and progress report).
5. **MGJ Huyzers**, AC Potgieter, AA van Dijk. Rotavirus reverse genetics, local implementation and optimizations. 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual AfRota meeting, UFS, South Africa, 09 - 11 September 2019. (Oral presentation and progress report).

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## Appendix A

Plasmid maps of the phCMVdream constructs designed for, and implemented in both the pT7\_SA11-L2 and pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG systems.

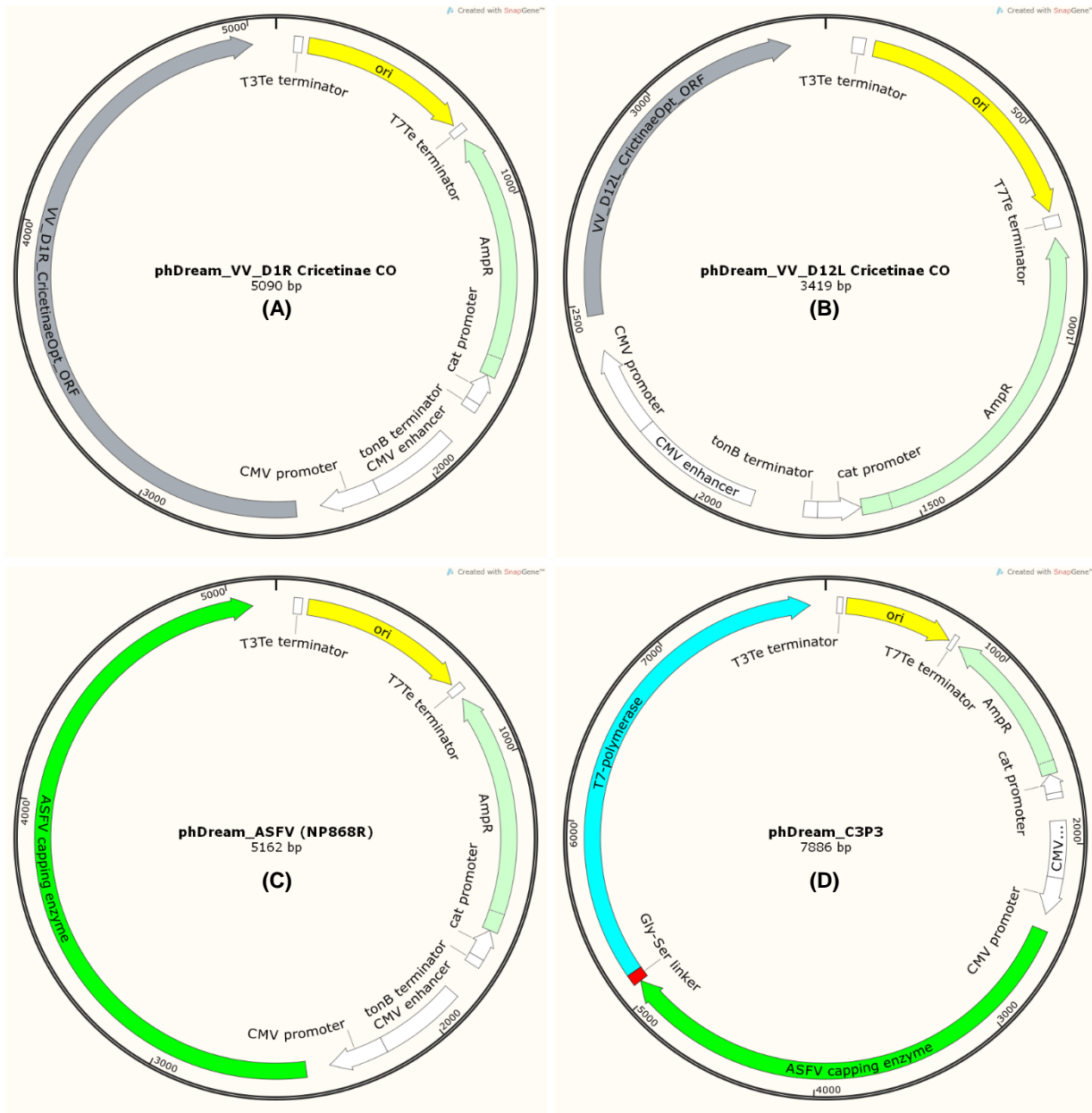
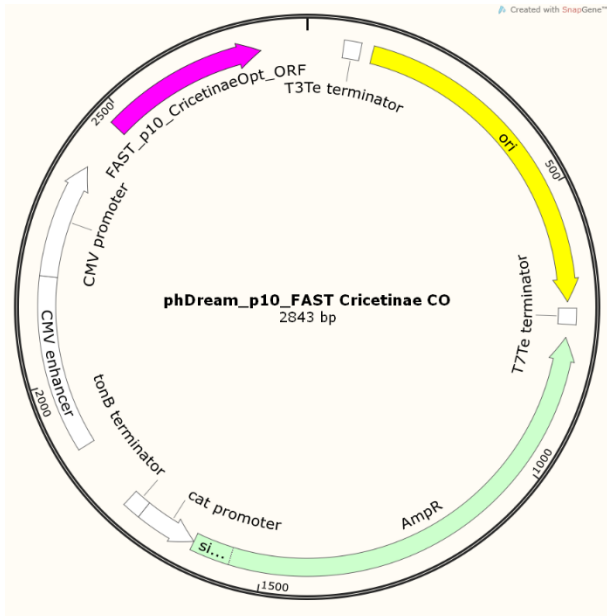


Figure 42: Plasmid maps of the phCMVdream expression plasmids for A: the VV D1R capping enzyme subunit, B: the VV D12L capping enzyme subunit, C: the ASFV capping enzyme and D: the ASFV capping enzyme fused to a viral T7-RNA polymerase through a serine-glycine linker (C3P3 construct). Images displayed show the short-hand annotations used during the early development and implantation of the project, ergo the phCMVdream plasmids are annotated as phDream. Plasmid maps were constructed using SnapGene software.



**Figure 43: Map of phCMVdream\_p10\_FAST NBV fusion protein expression plasmid.** Image shows the short-hand annotations used during the early development and implantation of the project, ergo the phCMVdream plasmid is annotated as phDream. Plasmid map was constructed using SnapGene software.

## Appendix B

Plasmid maps of the Japanese pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG transcription plasmids along with NGS reads of the dsRNA extracted from cell cultures infected with the P1 viral stocks obtained from the pT7\_SA11-L2 RG system, mapped against the RV SA11-L2 reference genome (LC333802 - LC3338012).

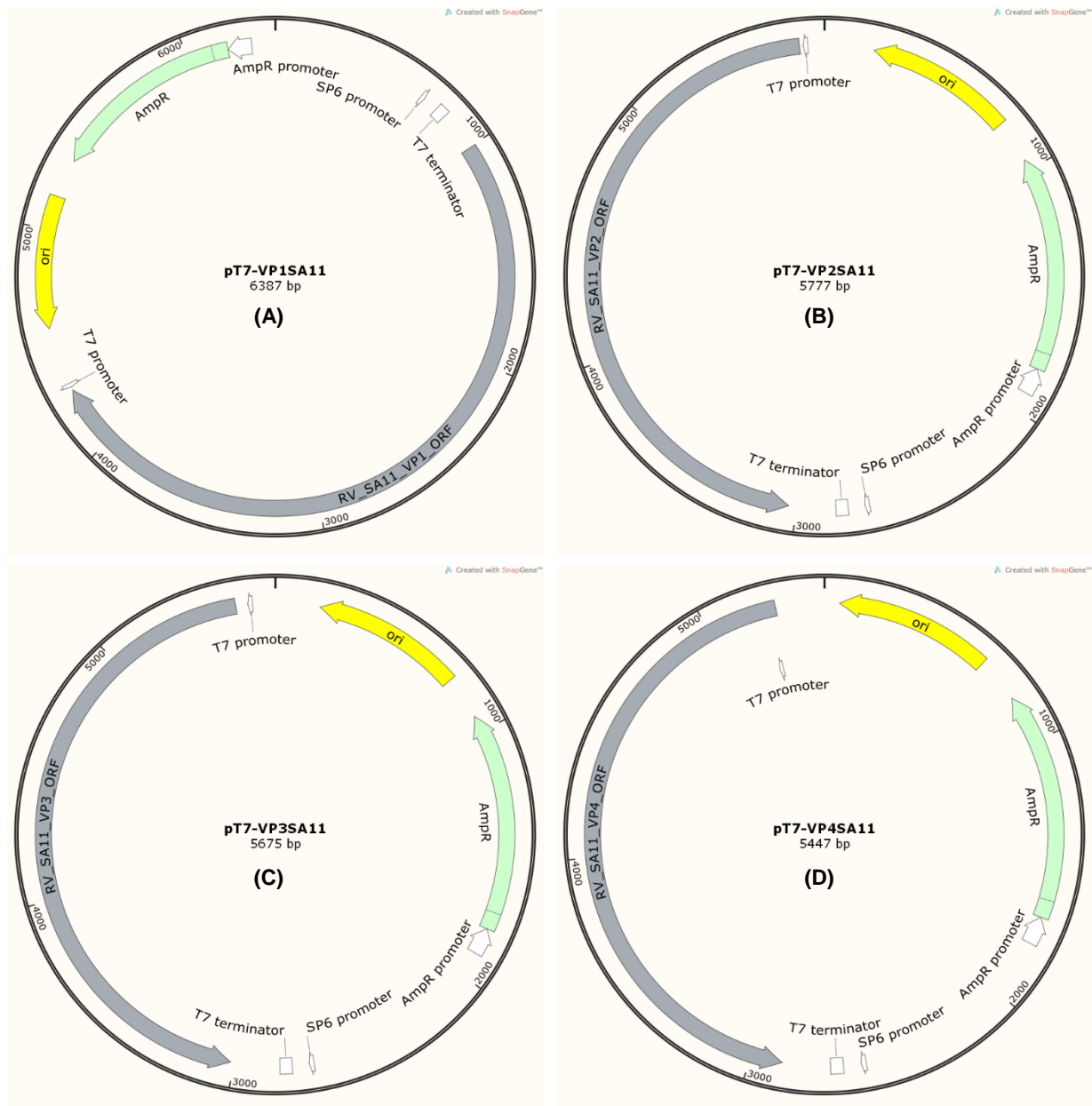
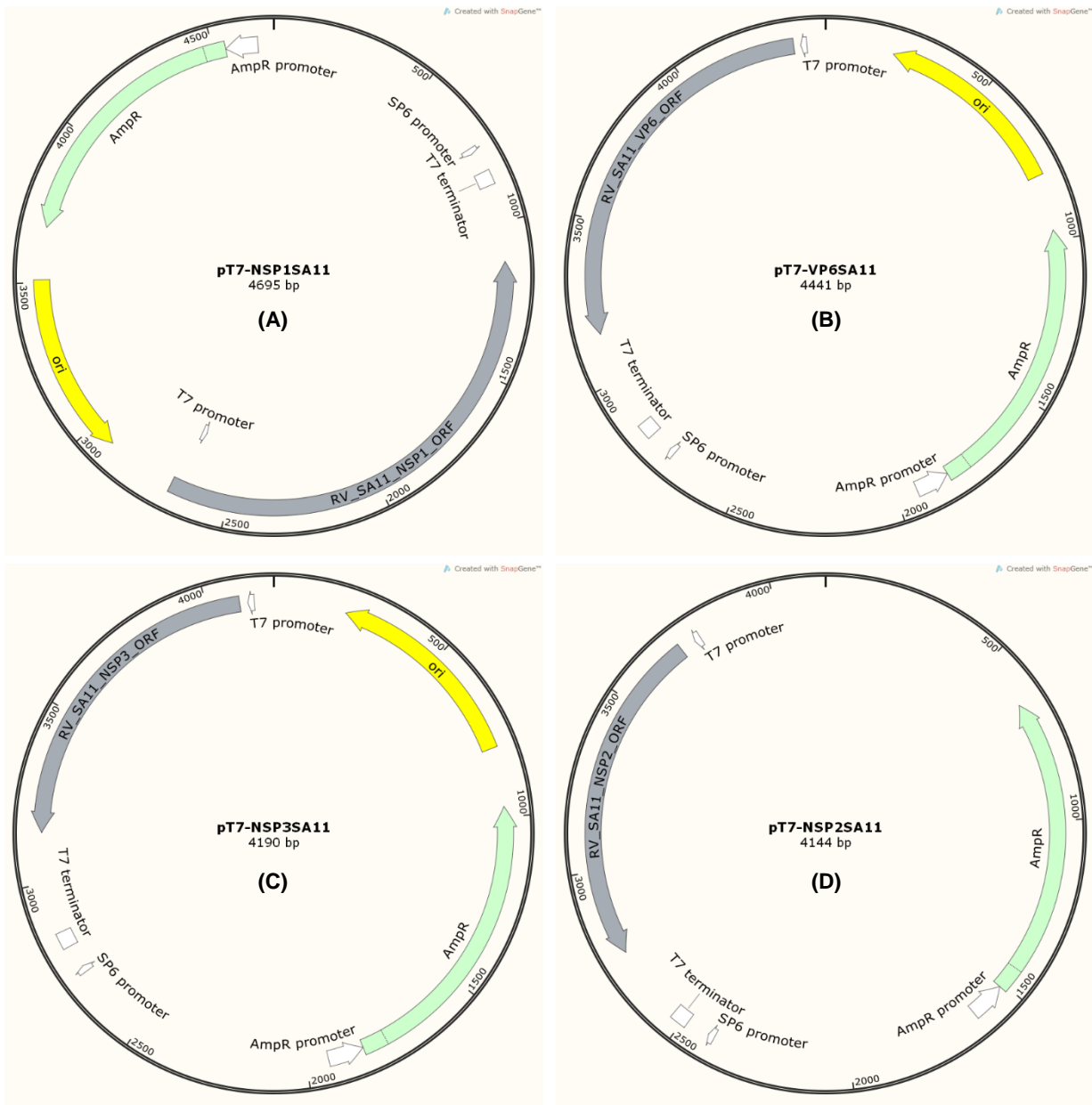
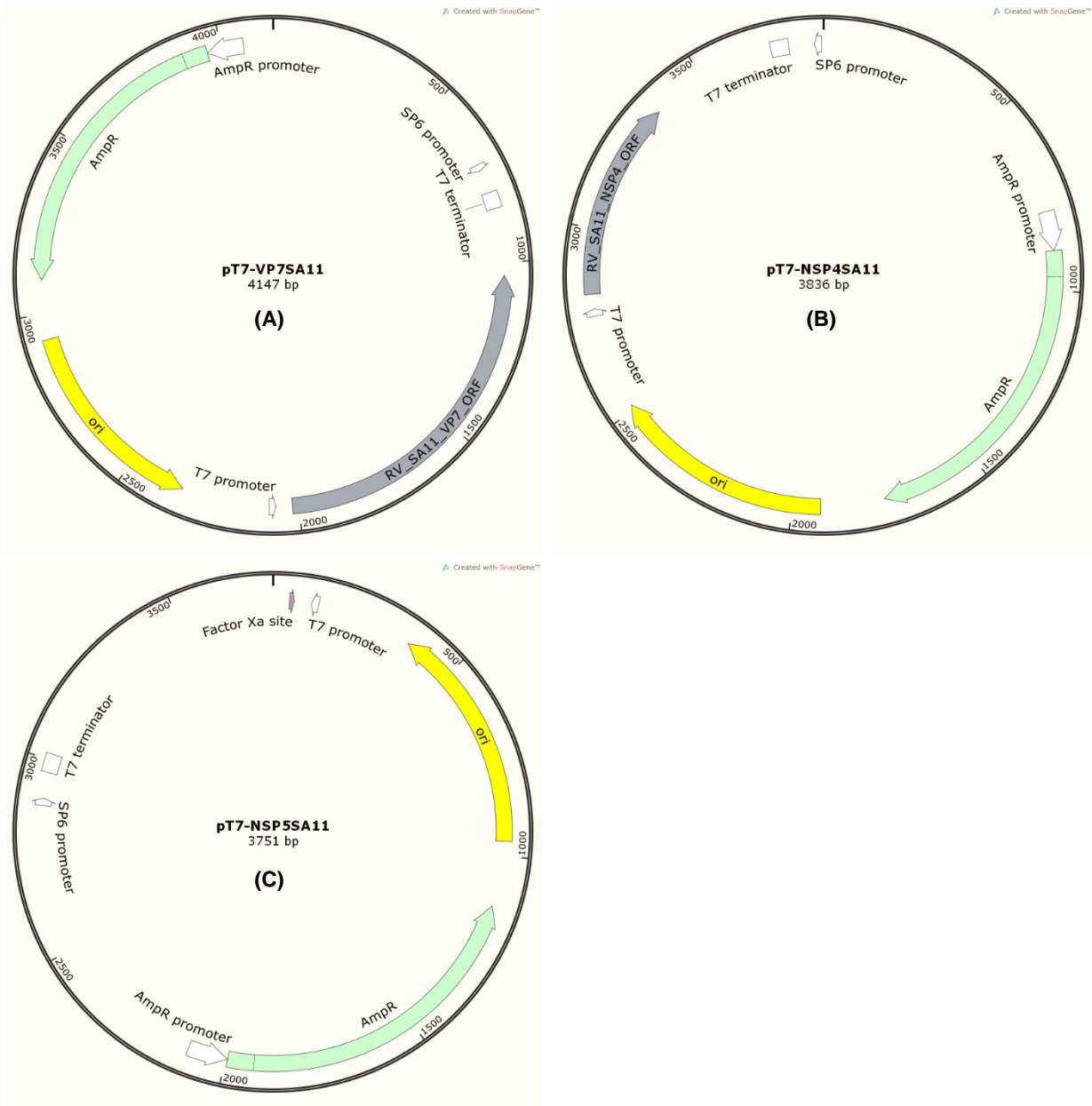


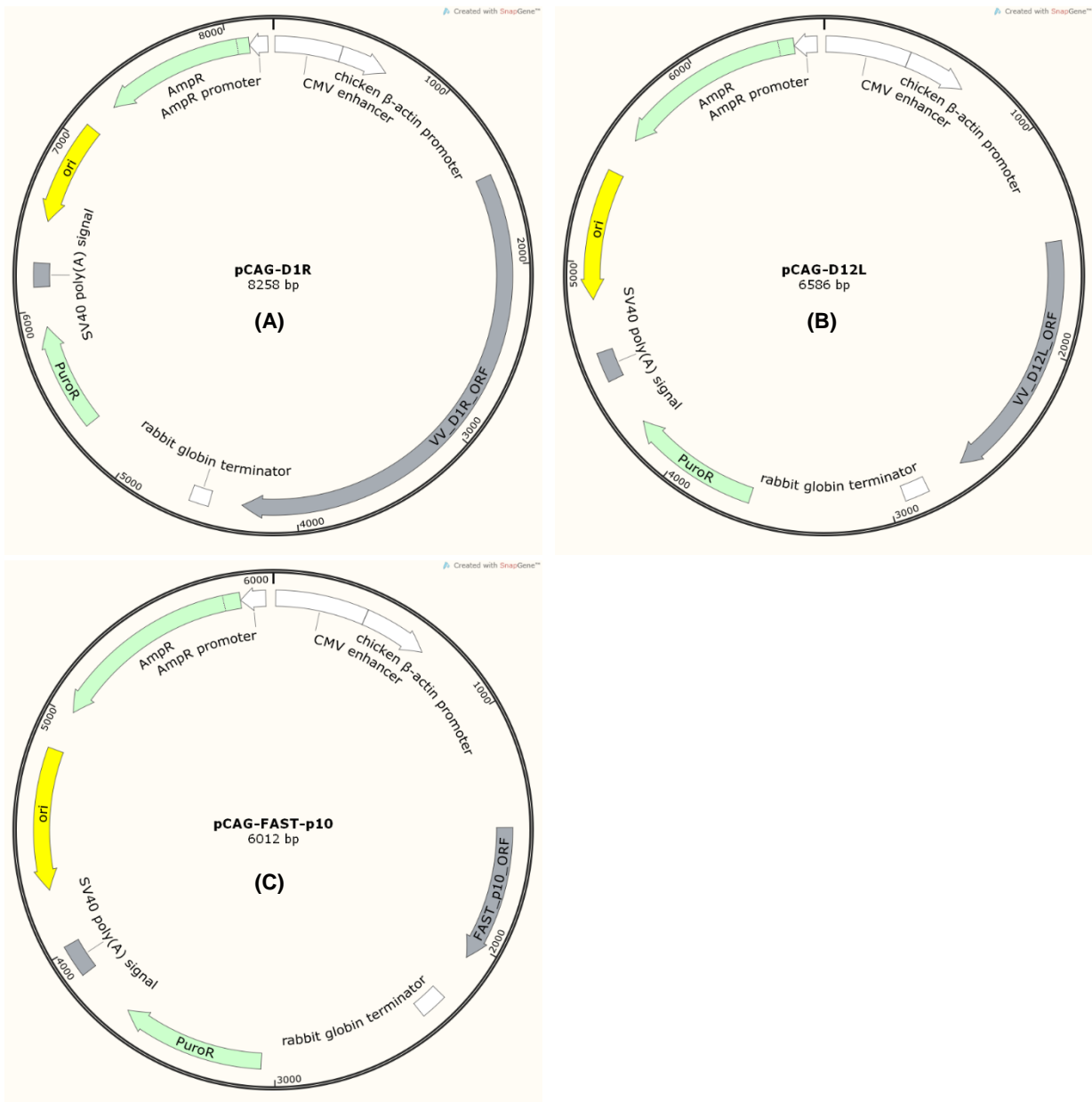
Figure 44: Plasmid maps of the pT7\_SA11-L2 transcription plasmids for A: GS1(VP1), B: GS2(VP2), C: GS3(VP3) and D: GS4(VP4). Plasmid maps were constructed using SnapGene software.



**Figure 45: Plasmid maps of the pT7\_SA11-L2 transcription plasmids for A: GS5(NSP1), B: GS6(VP6), C: GS7(NSP3) and D: GS8(NSP2). Plasmid maps were constructed using SnapGene software.**

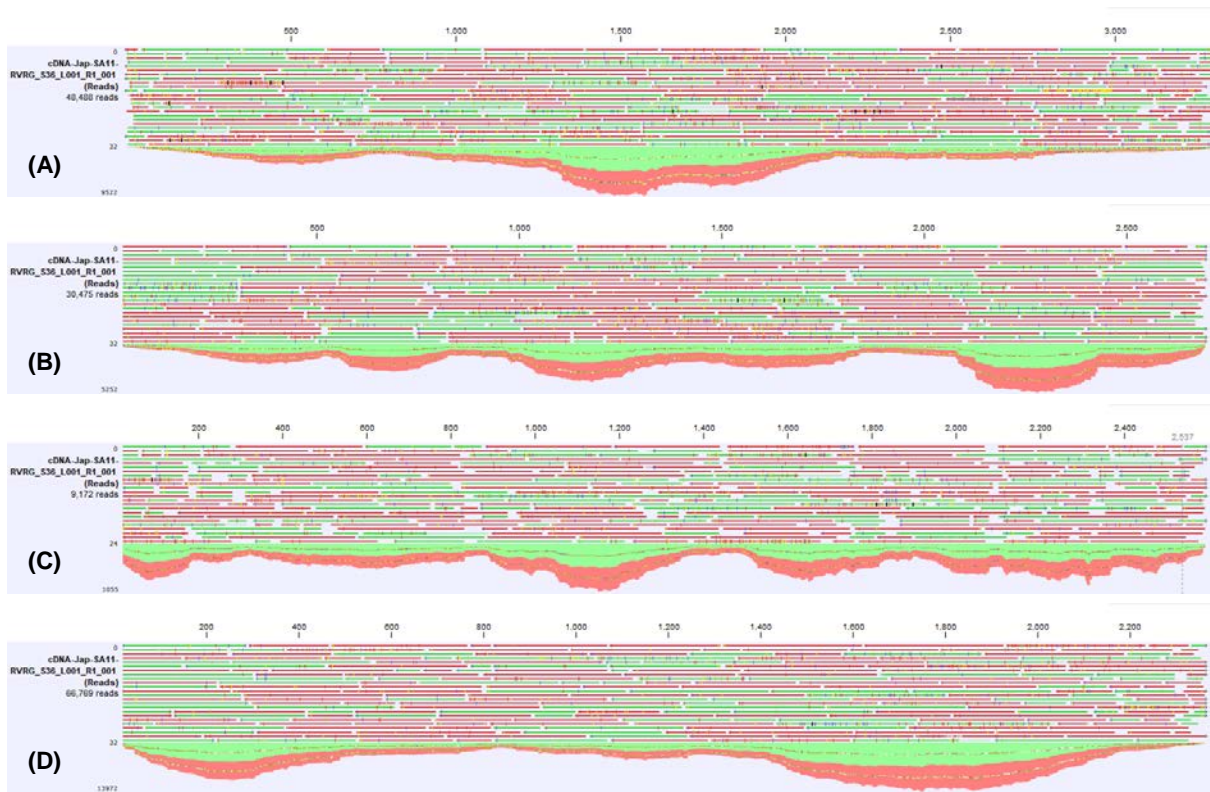


**Figure 46: Plasmid maps of the pT7\_SA11-L2 transcription plasmids for A: GS9(VP7), B: GS10 (NSP4) and C: GS11(NSP5/6).** Plasmid maps were constructed using SnapGene software.

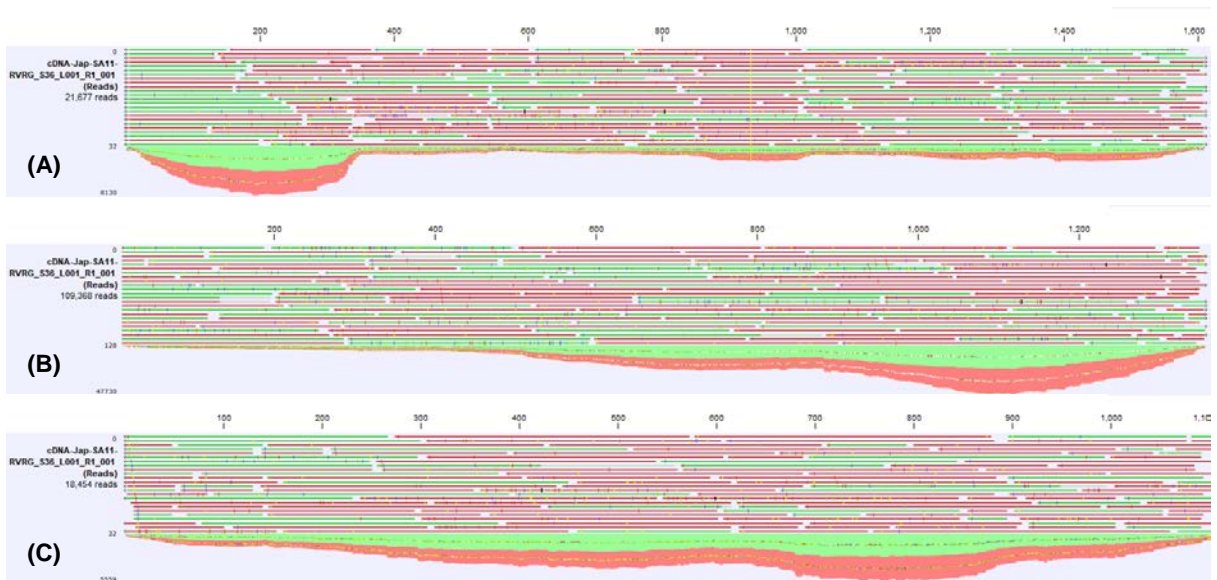


**Figure 47: Plasmid maps of the pCAG expression plasmids for A: the VV D1R capping enzyme subunit, B: the VV D12L capping enzyme subunit and C: the NBV fusion protein. Plasmid maps were constructed using SnapGene software.**

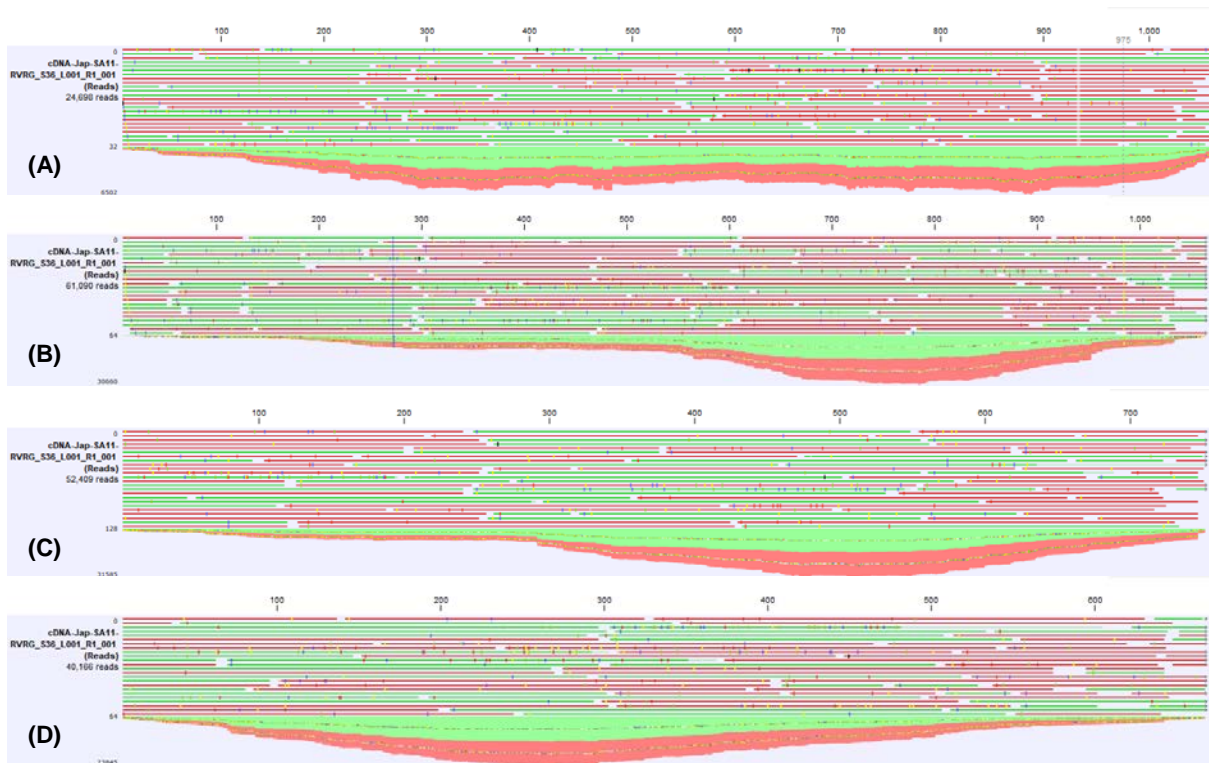
As stated in Section 3.3.7, dsRNA was extracted from cultured cells that were infected with P1 stocks of the optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system. The dsRNA was purified (Section 3.2.1) and used for sequence-independent primer ligation (Section 3.2.4). The oligo-ligated RNA was then converted to cDNA and PCR amplified for NGS. Figure 48, Figure 49 and Figure 50 are the visual illustrations of the NGS reads of the rescued SA11-L2 as mapped against the SA11-L2 reference genome (GenBank no: LC333802-LC333812).



**Figure 49:** NGS reads of dsRNA extracted from cell cultures infected with P1 stocks obtained from the optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system mapped against the RV SA11-L2 reference genome (LC333802-LC333812) for A: GS1(VP1), B: GS2(VP2), C: GS3(VP3) and D: GS4(VP4). NGS reads compiled and mapped against SA11-L2 reference genome on CLC-Bio software and aligned on BioEdit software.



**Figure 48:** NGS reads of dsRNA extracted from cell cultures infected with P1 stocks obtained from the optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system mapped against the RV SA11-L2 reference genome (LC333802-LC333812) for A: GS5(NSP1), B: GS6(VP6) and C: GS7(NSP3). NGS reads compiled and mapped against SA11-L2 reference genome on CLC-Bio software and aligned on BioEdit software.

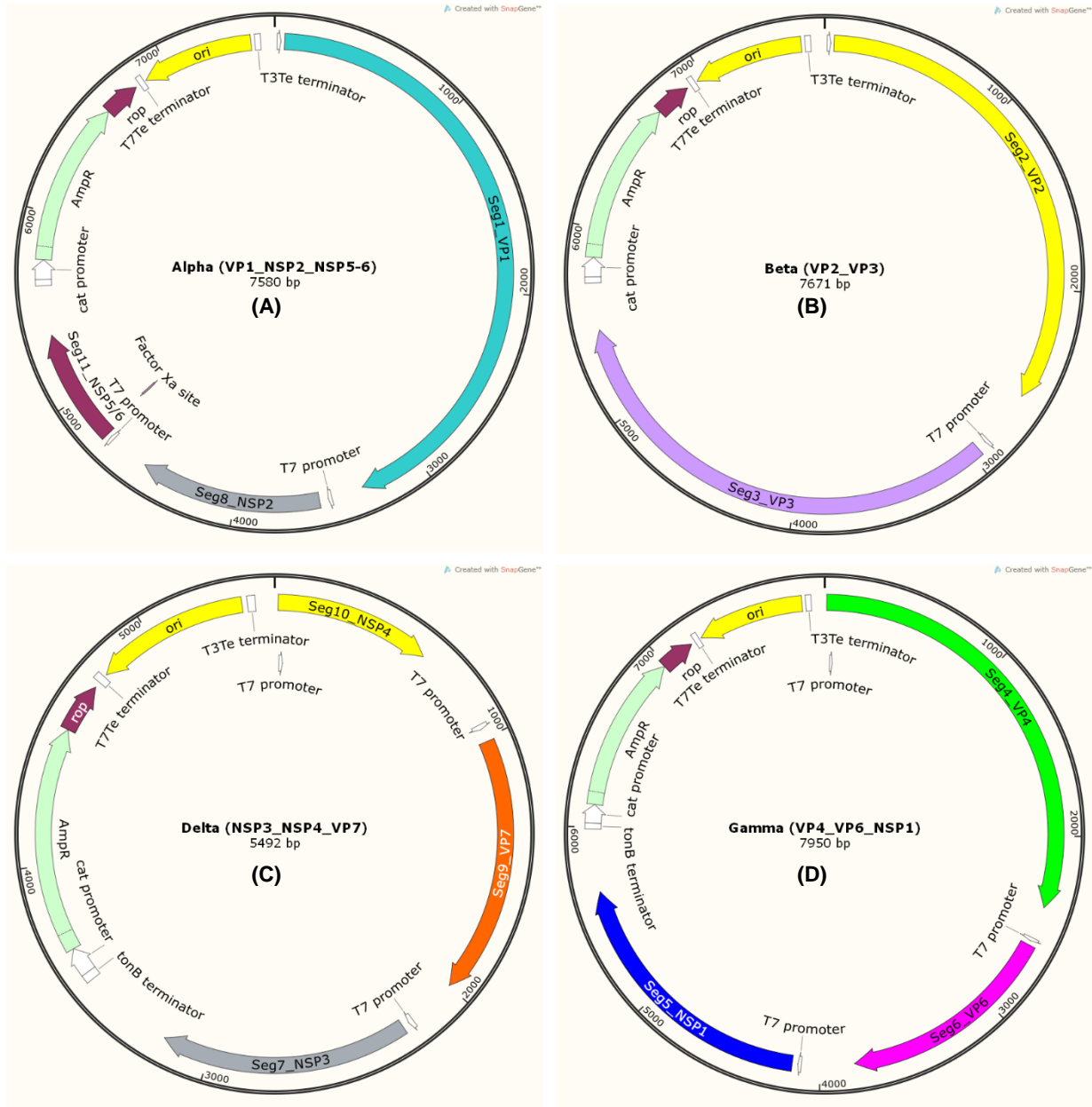


**Figure 50: NGS reads of dsRNA extracted from cell cultures infected with P1 stocks obtained from the optimized pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system mapped against the RV SA11-L2 reference genome (LC333802-LC333812) for A: GS8(NSP2), B: GS9(VP7), C: GS10(NSP4) and D: GS11(NSP5/6). NGS reads compiled and mapped against SA11-L2 reference genome on CLC-Bio software and aligned on BioEdit software.**

**See Supplementary Documentation for full consensus sequence alignments**

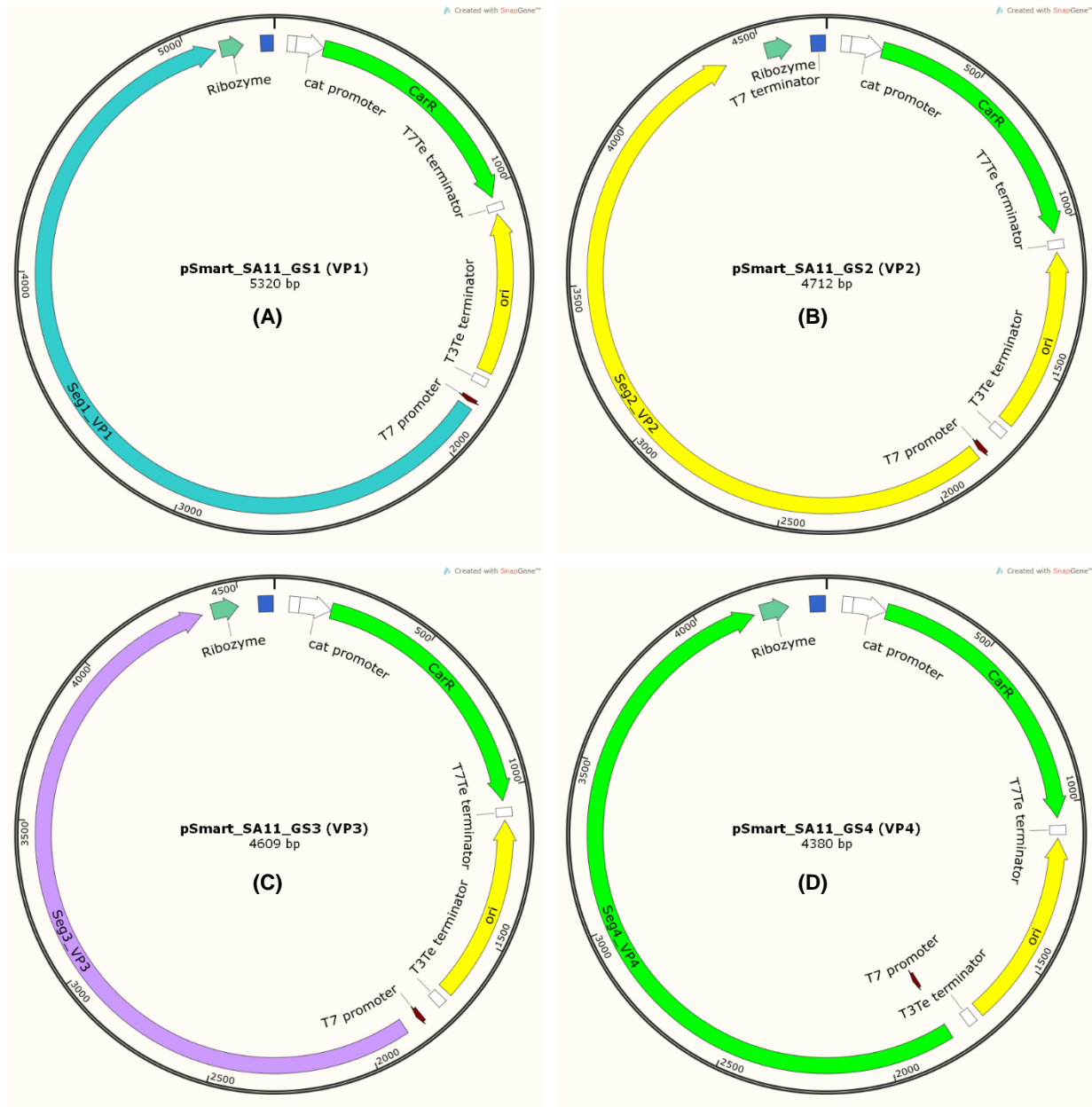
## Appendix C

Plasmid maps of the four SA11 consensus sequence-based transcription plasmids designed by Dr Wentzel.

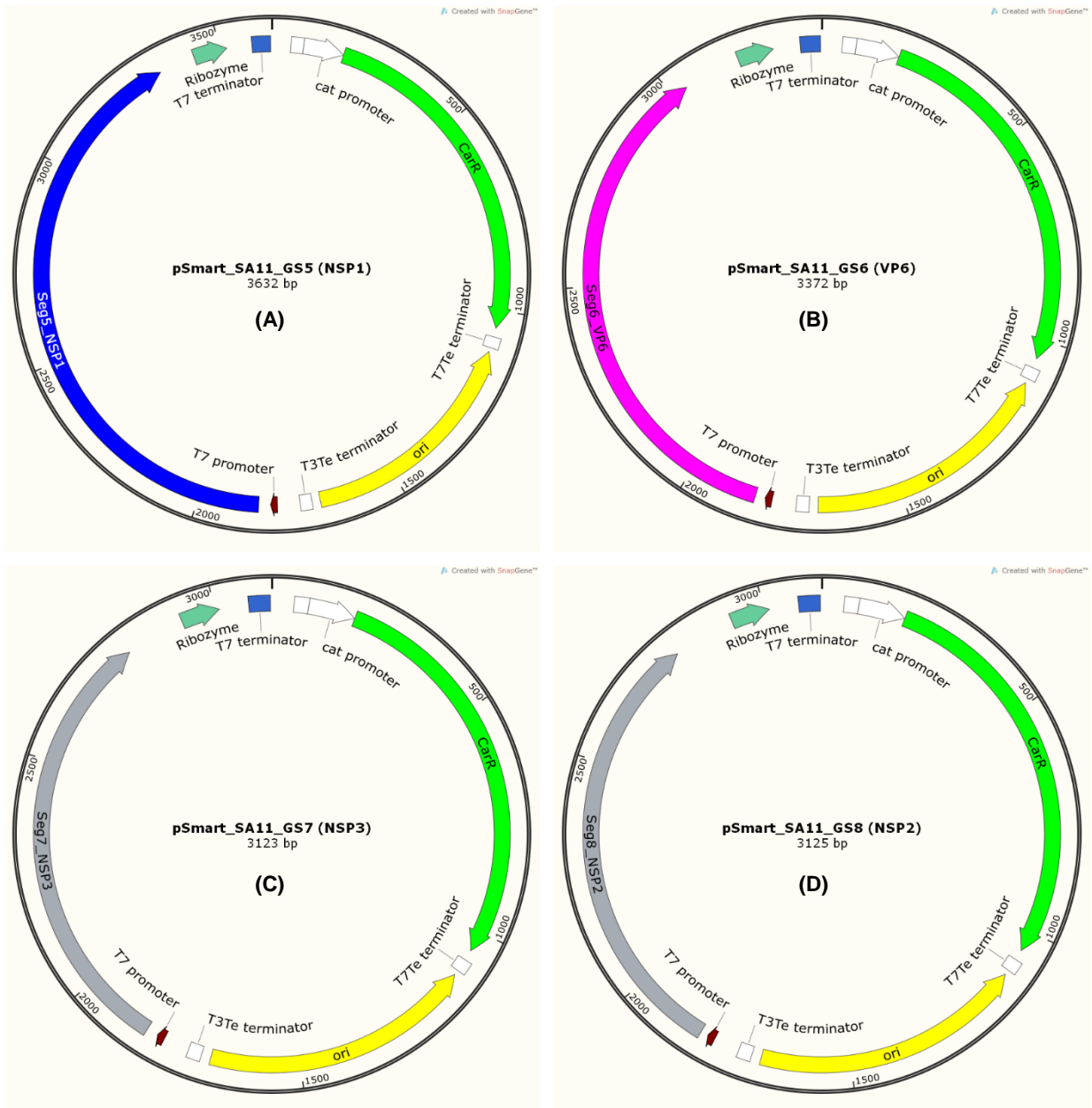


**Figure 51: Plasmid maps of the four, consensus sequence based SA11-N5 transcription plasmids designed by Dr. Wentzel. A: pAlpha, harbouring GS1(VP1), GS8(NSP2) and GS11(NSP5/6). B: pBeta, harbouring GS2(VP2) and GS3(VP3). C: pDelta, harbouring GS7(NSP3), GS10(NSP4) and GS9(VP7). D: pGamma, harbouring GS4(VP4), GS6(VP6) and GS5(NSP1). Plasmid maps were constructed using SnapGene software.**

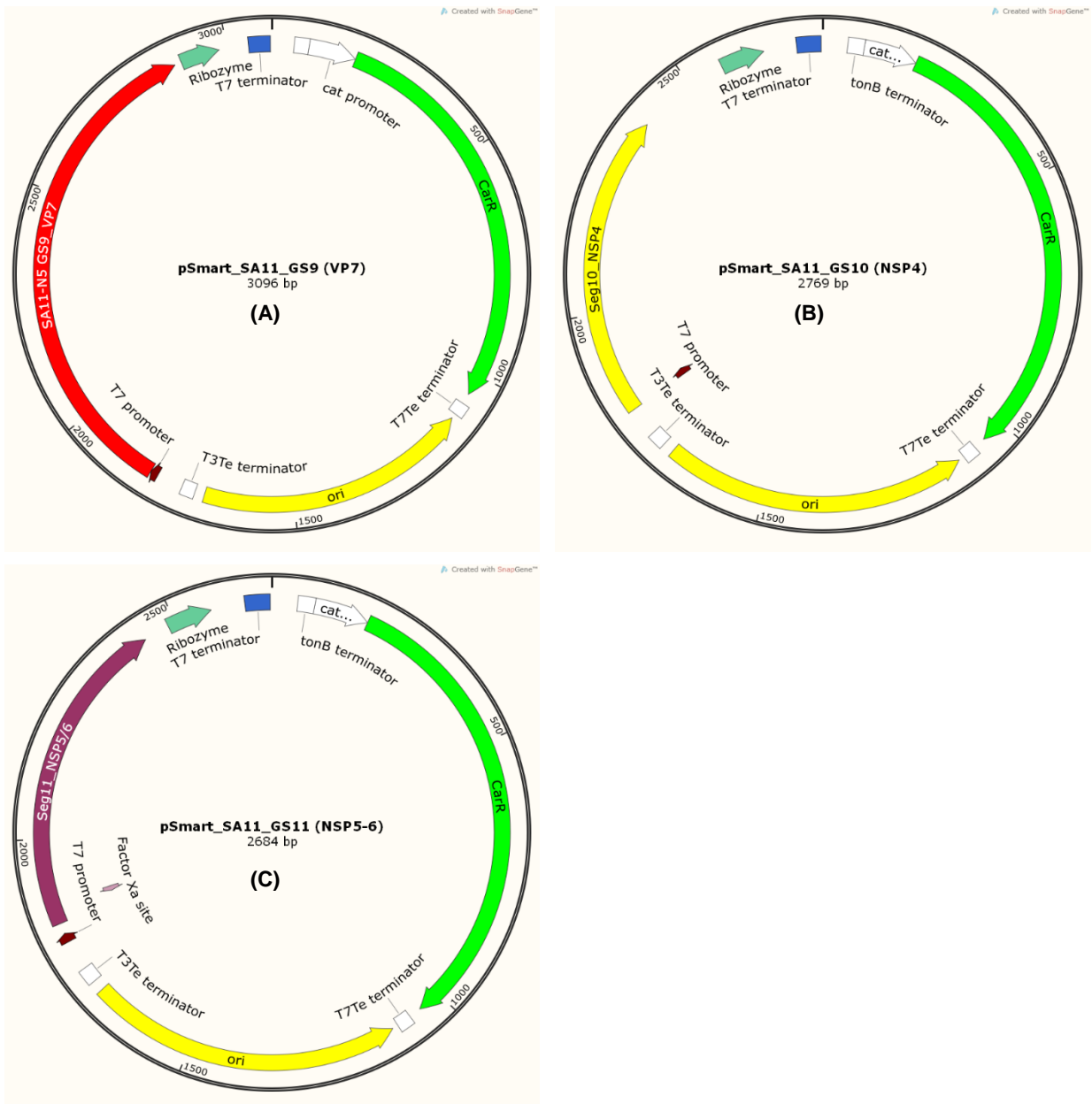
**Maps of the pSmart transcription plasmids that make up the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG system.**



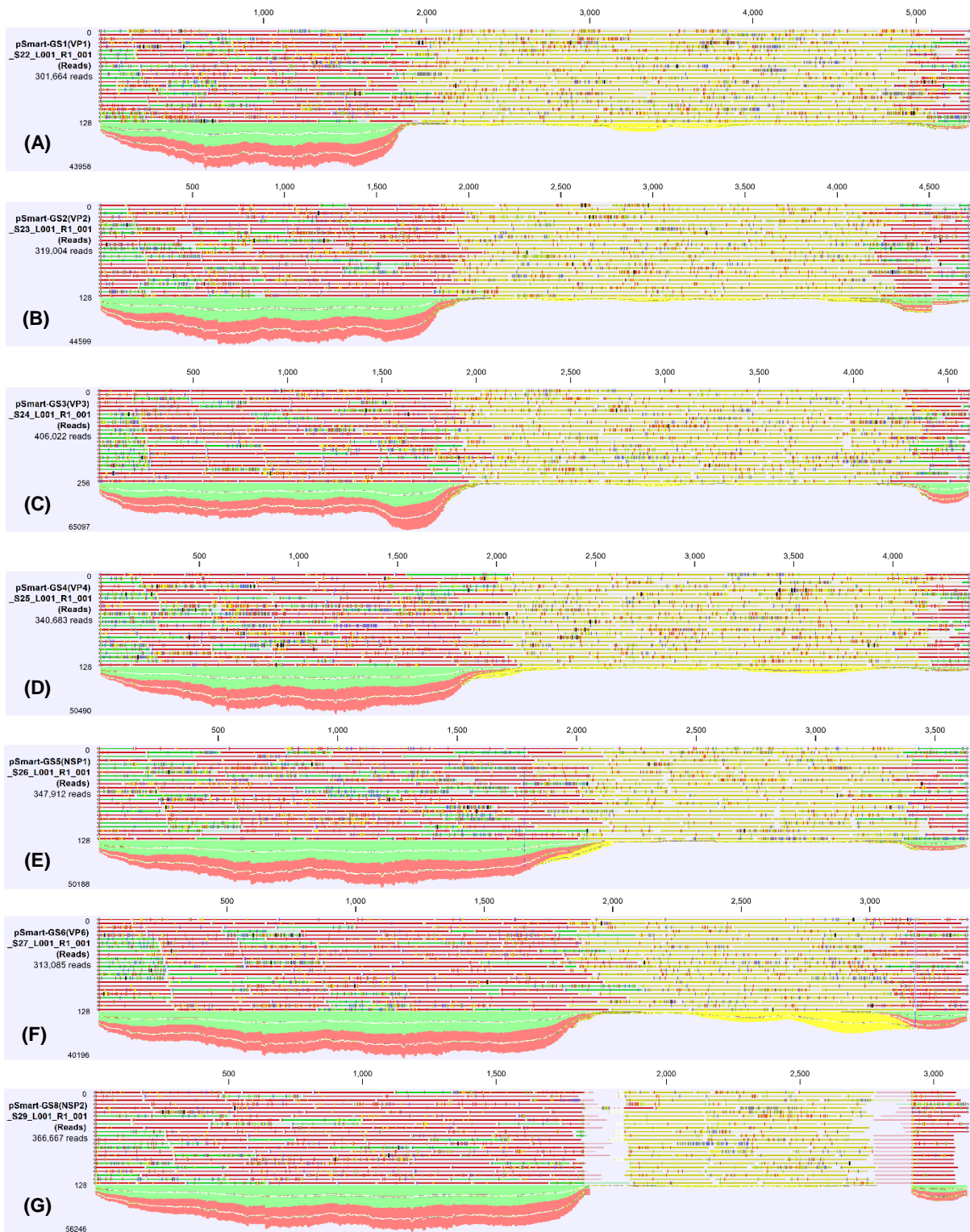
**Figure 52: Maps of the SA11-N5 consensus sequence based pSmart transcription plasmids for A: GS1(VP1), B: GS2(VP2), C: GS3(VP3) and D: GS4(VP4). Plasmid maps were constructed using SnapGene software.**



**Figure 53: Maps of the SA11-N5 consensus sequence based pSmart transcription plasmids for A: GS5(NSP1), B: GS6(VP6), C: GS7(NSP3) and D: GS8(NSP2). Plasmid maps were constructed using SnapGene software.**



**Figure 54: Maps of the SA11-N5 consensus sequence based pSmart transcription plasmids for A: GS9(VP7), B: GS10(NSP4) and C: GS11(NSP5/6). Plasmid maps were constructed using SnapGene software.**



**Figure 55: NGS reads of pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG transcription plasmids mapped against the RV SA11-N5 reference genome and in silico pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG constructs for A: GS1(VP1), B: GS2(VP2), C: GS3(VP3), D: GS4(VP4), E: GS5(NSP1), F: GS6(VP6) and G: GS7(NSP3).** NGS reads compiled and mapped against SA11-N5 reference genome (JN827244-JN827250 and JN827252-JN827255) on CLC-Bio software and aligned on BioEdit software.



**Figure 56: NGS reads of pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG transcription plasmids mapped against the RV SA11-N5 reference genome and in silico pSmart\_SA11-N5 RG constructs for A: GS8(NSP2), B: GS9(VP7), C: GS10(NSP4) and D: GS11(NSP5/6). NGS reads compiled and mapped against SA11-N5 reference genome (JN827244-JN827250 and JN827252- JN827255) on CLC-Bio software and aligned on BioEdit software.**

**See Supplementary Documentation for full consensus sequence alignments**

## Appendix D

### TCID<sub>50</sub> extended description and calculation illustration.

The TCID<sub>50</sub> begins with the preparation of the dilution media. 1x MEM is supplemented with 1% (v/v) NEAA, 1mg/ml porcine trypsin and 100 units/mL penicillin, 100 µg/mL streptomycin and 0.25 µg/mL amphotericin B (Anti-anti Gibco). This dilution media is then used to construct the serial dilution series of the isolated viral culture as per Table 25 below. The initial dilution (10<sup>0</sup>) is merely 500µl of activated viral inoculum. From this 50µl is transferred to 450µl of dilution media to create the second dilution (10<sup>-1</sup>). The second dilution is mixed very well and then a new tip is used to transfer 50µl of it to a new 450µl of dilution media, thus forming the third dilution (10<sup>-2</sup>). This process is repeated, using a new tip each time, until the dilution factor is 10<sup>-7</sup>.

**Table 25: Construction of dilution series for TCID<sub>50</sub> assay**

Dilution	Cell control	10 <sup>0</sup>	10 <sup>-1</sup>	10 <sup>-2</sup>	10 <sup>-3</sup>	10 <sup>-4</sup>	10 <sup>-5</sup>	10 <sup>-6</sup>	10 <sup>-7</sup>
Volume MEM (µl)	500	0	450	450	450	450	450	450	450
Volume virus (µl)	0	500	50	50	50	50	50	50	50

When transferring the viral serial dilution to a 96-well plate, ensure that each dilution is represented by four consecutive wells. Thus wells A1 through to A4 will each receive 100µl of the 10<sup>0</sup> dilutions while wells B1 through to B4 each receive 100µl of the 10<sup>-1</sup> dilution. This quadruplicate layout is required for the calculation of the 50% extinction coefficient and the TCID<sub>50</sub>. Once each dilution has been transferred to the 96-well plate the plate is incubated for 60min while MA104 or ST cells are prepared. A roughly 90% confluent 25cm<sup>2</sup> tissue culture flask of either cell-line will provide enough cells to seed the entire 96-well plate. The monolayer of cells has its growth media removed and is washed twice with 1x PBS. The cells are treated with 0.05% trypsin EDTA and incubated at 37°C until the cells start to detach. The trypsin is removed and the cells are then re-suspended in 500µl of 100% FBS and added to 9.5ml room-temperature growth media (lacking FBS). This yields 10ml of re-suspended MA104 or ST cells that

are of appropriate density to seed the entire 96-well plate. 100µl of this cell suspension is then added to each of the wells of the 96-well viral dilution. This results in each well-containing 200µl of media in which there is activated virus, 0.5µg/ml porcine trypsin and roughly  $0.1 \times 10^6$  cells.

The seeded 96-well plate is then incubated at 37°C for 3-5 days or until CPE is clearly visible, after which an IFMA is performed on the plate to visualise any viral activity. Any fluorescence detectable in a well is deemed sufficient indication of viral infection and propagation and that well is then annotated as positive. If no fluorescence is visible the well is annotated as negative. This is a slight deviation of the standard TCID<sub>(50)</sub> protocol which relied on plaque formation and cell death to visualise viral activity. In this case, we visualise the virus not by evaluating cell viability but by directly illuminating the virus. It is assumed that if a viral focus is formed that is visually fluorescent the cells in that well, given enough time, would all be infected and would perish. From this annotation, the basic calculations of TCID<sub>50</sub> can be done (Barrett *et al.*, 1996; LaBarre & Lowy, 2001; Smith *et al.*, 1996; Wang *et al.*, 2018). Table 26 below illustrates the annotation style and will be used to explain the calculation of the TCID<sub>(50)</sub> and viral titer.

**Table 26: Depiction of TCID<sub>50</sub> result annotation**

Dilution factor	Viral culture A				Viral culture B			
0	++	++	++	++	+++	+++	+++	+++
10 <sup>-1</sup>	+	+	+	+	+++	++	++	+++
10 <sup>-2</sup>	+	+	-	-	++	+	+	++
10 <sup>-3</sup>	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	+
10 <sup>-4</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
10 <sup>-5</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10 <sup>-6</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10 <sup>-7</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

As illustrated in Table 26 above each dilution is represented by 4 wells and fluorescent activity is annotated as “+” whereas the lack of fluorescence is annotated as “-“. To calculate the TCID<sub>50</sub> a table is constructed that summarises the dilution factor and correlates it with the number of wells that are either infected or non-infected. The sum total of infected wells is then calculated from the lowest dilution to highest. This is then

followed by the sum total of non-infected wells calculated from highest to lowest dilution. Finally, the percentage of infected wells as measured against the total number of wells is calculated. Table 27 below illustrates this calculation for the example used in Table 26 above.

**Table 27: Calculation of TCID<sub>50</sub>**

Viral culture	Dilution	No. infected wells	No. non-infected wells	ΣNo. infected wells (lowest to highest dilution)	ΣNo. non-infected wells (highest to lowest dilution)	% of ΣNo. infected wells / ΣTotal no. wells
	A	10 <sup>-1</sup>	4	0	6	0
10 <sup>-2</sup>		2	2	2	2	50
10 <sup>-3</sup>		0	4	0	4	0
B	10 <sup>-1</sup>	4	0	12	0	100
	10 <sup>-2</sup>	4	0	8	0	100
	10 <sup>-3</sup>	3	1	4	1	80
	10 <sup>-4</sup>	1	3	1	4	20
	10 <sup>-5</sup>	0	4	0	8	0

From Table 27 above we can see that the TCID<sub>50</sub> (or the dilution at which half of the wells died as a result of viral activity) for viral culture A is precisely 10<sup>-2</sup>, however, the value for viral culture B lies somewhere between 10<sup>-3</sup> and 10<sup>-4</sup>. Using the calculations described in Reed and Muench (1938) the TCID<sub>50</sub>/ml for viral culture A is 5x10<sup>2</sup> and viral culture B is 1.58x10<sup>4</sup> (REED & MUENCH, 1938).

## Supplementary Documentation

Sequence alignments for the dsRNA extracted from cell cultures infected with P1 stocks of the pT7\_SA11-L2 RV RG system, and the pSmart\_SA11-N5 RV RG transcription plasmids.









Alignment: SA11-L2\_GS2 (VP2)

SA11-L2\_Gs2(VP2) reference reference  
SA11-L2\_GS2(VP2) NGS cs  
10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100  
GGCTATTAAA GGCTCAATGG CGTATCGAAA ACGTGGAGCG CGTCGTGAGA CGAATCTAAA ACAAGATGAA CGAATGCAAG AAAAAGAAGA TAGCAAGAAC  
GGCTATTAAA GGCTCAATGG CGTATCGAAA ACGTGGAGCG CGTCGTGAGA CGAATCTAAA ACAAGATGAA CGAATGCAAG AAAAAGAAGA TAGCAAGAAC

SA11-L2\_Gs2(VP2) reference reference  
SA11-L2\_GS2(VP2) NGS cs  
110 120 130 140 150 160 170 180 190 200  
ATTAATAATG ACAGTCTCTAA ATCACAATTA TCAGAAAAG TATTATCTAA GAAAGAAGAG ATAATTACAG ATAATCAAGA AGAAGTTAAG ATATCTGATG  
ATTAATAATG ACAGTCTCTAA ATCACAATTA TCAGAAAAG TATTATCTAA GAAAGAAGAG ATAATTACAG ATAATCAAGA AGAAGTTAAG ATATCTGATG

SA11-L2\_Gs2(VP2) reference reference  
SA11-L2\_GS2(VP2) NGS cs  
210 220 230 240 250 260 270 280 290 300  
AGGTAACAAA ATCTAATAAA GAAGAATCGA AACAGTTGTT AGAAGTACTT AAAACAAAAG AGGAACATCA AAAAGAAAGTT CAGTATGAAA TATTACAAA  
AGGTAACAAA ATCTAATAAA GAAGAATCGA AACAGTTGTT AGAAGTACTT AAAACAAAAG AGGAACATCA AAAAGAAAGTT CAGTATGAAA TATTACAAA

SA11-L2\_Gs2(VP2) reference reference  
SA11-L2\_GS2(VP2) NGS cs  
310 320 330 340 350 360 370 380 390 400  
AACTATCCCT ACATTTGAAAC CAAAAGAGTC AATACTCAA AAATTAGAG ACATAAAACC AGAACAAGCA AAGAAAACAAA CTAAACTGTT TCGAATATTT  
AACTATCCCT ACATTTGAAAC CAAAAGAGTC AATACTCAA AAATTAGAG ACATAAAACC AGAACAAGCA AAGAAAACAAA CTAAACTGTT TCGAATATTT

SA11-L2\_Gs2(VP2) reference reference  
SA11-L2\_GS2(VP2) NGS cs  
410 420 430 440 450 460 470 480 490 500  
GAACCGAAC AATTGCCTAT TTATAGAGCT AATGGAGAA GAGAGCTTCG TAATAGATGG TAATGGAAAT TGAACGAGTA TACTCTTCTT GATGGAGATT  
GAACCGAAC AATTGCCTAT TTATAGAGCT AATGGAGAA GAGAGCTTCG TAATAGATGG TAATGGAAAT TGAACGAGTA TACTCTTCTT GATGGAGATT

SA11-L2\_Gs2(VP2) reference reference  
SA11-L2\_GS2(VP2) NGS cs  
510 520 530 540 550 560 570 580 590 600  
ATGATGTTAG AGAGTATTTT TTAATAATTTAT ATGATCAAGT ATTAATGGAA ATGCCGGGAT ATCTATTAAT TAAAGATATG GCTGTAGAGA ATAAAATTC  
ATGATGTTAG AGAGTATTTT TTAATAATTTAT ATGATCAAGT ATTAATGGAA ATGCCGGGAT ATCTATTAAT TAAAGATATG GCTGTAGAGA ATAAAATTC

SA11-L2\_Gs2(VP2) reference reference  
SA11-L2\_GS2(VP2) NGS cs  
610 620 630 640 650 660 670 680 690 700  
AAGGGATGCT GGCAAAAGTAG TTGATTTCTGA AACAGCCGCA ATATGCGATG CTATTTTTTCA AGATGAAGAA ACCGAAAGGTG CAGTAAAGAAG ATTCATAGCT  
AAGGGATGCT GGCAAAAGTAG TTGATTTCTGA AACAGCCGCA ATATGCGATG CTATTTTTTCA AGATGAAGAA ACCGAAAGGTG CAGTAAAGAAG ATTCATAGCT

SA11-L2\_Gs2(VP2) reference reference  
SA11-L2\_GS2(VP2) NGS cs  
710 720 730 740 750 760 770 780 790 800  
GAGATGAGAC AACGAGTTCA AGCTGATCGA AATGTAGTCA ATTATCCATC TATATTTGAT CCAATTTGACC ATGCGTTTAA CGAATACTTTC TTACAACTTC  
GAGATGAGAC AACGAGTTCA AGCTGATCGA AATGTAGTCA ATTATCCATC TATATTTGAT CCAATTTGACC ATGCGTTTAA CGAATACTTTC TTACAACTTC

SA11-L2\_Gs2(VP2) reference reference  
SA11-L2\_GS2(VP2) NGS cs  
810 820 830 840 850 860 870 880 890 900  
AGTTGGTAGA ACCATTAAAT AATGATATCA TTTTCAATTA CATACCAGAG AGAATAAGAA ATGATCTCAA CTATATATTA AATATGGACA GGAATTTTACC  
AGTTGGTAGA ACCATTAAAT AATGATATCA TTTTCAATTA CATACCAGAG AGAATAAGAA ATGATCTCAA CTATATATTA AATATGGACA GGAATTTTACC

SA11-L2\_GS2(VP2) reference 910 920 930 940 950 960 970 980 990 1000  
GTCTACTGCT AGATATATCA GACCAAACTT GCTACAAGAT AGGTTAAAT TACATGATAA TTTTGAGTCA CTCTGGGATA CTATAACTAC ATCTAAATTAT  
GTCTACTGCT AGATATATCA GACCAAACTT GCTACAAGAT AGGTTAAAT TACATGATAA TTTTGAGTCA CTCTGGGATA CTATAACTAC ATCTAAATTAT

SA11-L2\_GS2(VP2) reference 1010 1020 1030 1040 1050 1060 1070 1080 1090 1100  
ATTTTAGCAA GATCTGTGGT GCCAGACCTA AAAGAATTAG TATCTACTGA GGCACAAATC CAGAAAATGT CACAAGATTT GCAATTGGAA GTTTTGACAA  
ATTTTAGCAA GATCTGTGGT GCCAGACCTA AAAGAATTAG TATCTACTGA GGCACAAATC CAGAAAATGT CACAAGATTT GCAATTGGAA GTTTTGACAA

SA11-L2\_GS2(VP2) reference 1110 1120 1130 1140 1150 1160 1170 1180 1190 1200  
TACAATCAGA GACTCAGTTT TTAACAGGTA TAAACTCACA AGCCGCTAAT GATTGTTTTA AAACTTTGTAT TGCTGCTATG TTGAGTCAGA GAACCATGTC  
TACAATCAGA GACTCAGTTT TTAACAGGTA TAAACTCACA AGCCGCTAAT GATTGTTTTA AAACTTTGTAT TGCTGCTATG TTGAGTCAGA GAACCATGTC

SA11-L2\_GS2(VP2) reference 1210 1220 1230 1240 1250 1260 1270 1280 1290 1300  
ATTAGATTTT GTAACGACAA ATTACATGTC ACTTAFTTCA GGCATGIGGT TACTCACTGT GATTCACAAAT GATATGTTTA TAAAGAAATC ATTAGTAGCA  
ATTAGATTTT GTAACGACAA ATTACATGTC ACTTAFTTCA GGCATGIGGT TACTCACTGT GATTCACAAAT GATATGTTTA TAAAGAAATC ATTAGTAGCA

SA11-L2\_GS2(VP2) reference 1310 1320 1330 1340 1350 1360 1370 1380 1390 1400  
TGTCACACTAG CCATAATAAA TACCATTTGT TATCCGGCAT TCGGAATGCA AAGAATGTCAT TATAGGAATG GTGATCCACA GACTCCCTTT CAAAATTGCAG  
TGTCACACTAG CCATAATAAA TACCATTTGT TATCCGGCAT TCGGAATGCA AAGAATGTCAT TATAGGAATG GTGATCCACA GACTCCCTTT CAAAATTGCAG

SA11-L2\_GS2(VP2) reference 1410 1420 1430 1440 1450 1460 1470 1480 1490 1500  
AGCAACAGAT TCAAAATTTT CAGGTAGCTA ATTGGTTACA TTTTGTTAAT TATAATCAGT TTAGACAAGT AGTGATTGAT GGAGTGTTTAA ATCAAGTCTT  
AGCAACAGAT TCAAAATTTT CAGGTAGCTA ATTGGTTACA TTTTGTTAAT TATAATCAGT TTAGACAAGT AGTGATTGAT GGAGTGTTTAA ATCAAGTCTT

SA11-L2\_GS2(VP2) reference 1510 1520 1530 1540 1550 1560 1570 1580 1590 1600  
GAATGATAAT ATAAGAAATG GTCATGTAGT CAACCAATTA ATGGAAGCTC TGATGCAAT ATCTAGACAA CAGTTTCCCA CAATGCCAGT TGATTTATAAA  
GAATGATAAT ATAAGAAATG GTCATGTAGT CAACCAATTA ATGGAAGCTC TGATGCAAT ATCTAGACAA CAGTTTCCCA CAATGCCAGT TGATTTATAAA

SA11-L2\_GS2(VP2) reference 1610 1620 1630 1640 1650 1660 1670 1680 1690 1700  
AGATCTATAC AGAGAGGAAAT TTTTGTGCTT TCTAACAGAC TTGGTTCAGT TGTGCGATTTA ACAAGATTGT TATCATACAA TTAATGAGACA TTAATGGCAT  
AGATCTATAC AGAGAGGAAAT TTTTGTGCTT TCTAACAGAC TTGGTTCAGT TGTGCGATTTA ACAAGATTGT TATCATACAA TTAATGAGACA TTAATGGCAT

SA11-L2\_GS2(VP2) reference 1710 1720 1730 1740 1750 1760 1770 1780 1790 1800  
GCATAACAAAT GAATATGCAG CATGTTTCAAA CATTAAACAAC TGAAAAATTTG CAAATTAACAT CAGTAAACATC APTATGTATG CTAATTTGGAA ATGCTACGGT  
GCATAACAAAT GAATATGCAG CATGTTTCAAA CATTAAACAAC TGAAAAATTTG CAAATTAACAT CAGTAAACATC APTATGTATG CTAATTTGGAA ATGCTACGGT



Alignment: SA11-L2\_GS3 (VP3)

<b>SA11-L2_Gs3 (VP3) reference</b>	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
<b>SA11-L2_GS3 (VP3) NGS cs</b>	GGCTATTAAA	GCAGTACCAG	TAGTGTGTTT	TACCTCTGAT	GGTGTAACA	TGAAAGTACT	AGCTTTAAGA	CACAGTGTGG	CTCAAGTGTG	TGCAGACACT
	GGCTATTAAA	GCAGTACCAG	TAGTGTGTTT	TACCTCTGAT	GGTGTAACA	TGAAAGTACT	AGCTTTAAGA	CACAGTGTGG	CTCAAGTGTG	TGCAGACACT
<b>SA11-L2_Gs3 (VP3) reference</b>	110	120	130	140	150	160	170	180	190	200
<b>SA11-L2_GS3 (VP3) NGS cs</b>	CAAGTCTACG	TTCATGATCA	TACAAAAGAT	AGTTATGAAA	ACGCTTTT	AACTCTTAAT	CTTAGCACCC	ATAATATTTT	ATACTTAAAT	TATAGCATTAA
	CAAGTCTACG	TTCATGATCA	TACAAAAGAT	AGTTATGAAA	ACGCTTTT	AACTCTTAAT	CTTAGCACCC	ATAATATTTT	ATACTTAAAT	TATAGCATTAA
<b>SA11-L2_Gs3 (VP3) reference</b>	210	220	230	240	250	260	270	280	290	300
<b>SA11-L2_GS3 (VP3) NGS cs</b>	AAACATTAGA	AATATTAAAT	AAGTCAGGAA	TAGCTGCAAT	TGCTTTACAA	TCACCTTGAAG	AATTTATCAC	ATTAATAAGG	TGTAATTTCA	CTTATGATTA
	AAACATTAGA	AATATTAAAT	AAGTCAGGAA	TAGCTGCAAT	TGCTTTACAA	TCACCTTGAAG	AATTTATCAC	ATTAATAAGG	TGTAATTTCA	CTTATGATTA
<b>SA11-L2_Gs3 (VP3) reference</b>	310	320	330	340	350	360	370	380	390	400
<b>SA11-L2_GS3 (VP3) NGS cs</b>	TGAACCTTGT	ATAATATATT	TACATGATTA	TTCATATATT	ACCAATAATG	AAATTAGAAC	AGACCAACAT	TGGATAACAA	AAACAAATAT	TGAAGAATAT
	TGAACCTTGT	ATAATATATT	TACATGATTA	TTCATATATT	ACCAATAATG	AAATTAGAAC	AGACCAACAT	TGGATAACAA	AAACAAATAT	TGAAGAATAT
<b>SA11-L2_Gs3 (VP3) reference</b>	410	420	430	440	450	460	470	480	490	500
<b>SA11-L2_GS3 (VP3) NGS cs</b>	TTACTACCTG	GATGGAAATT	AACATATGTT	GGTTATAATG	GAAGTGAAC	TAGAGGACAT	TATAACTTTT	CATTTAAATG	TCAAAAACGCT	GCAACAGATG
	TTACTACCTG	GATGGAAATT	AACATATGTT	GGTTATAATG	GAAGTGAAC	TAGAGGACAT	TATAACTTTT	CATTTAAATG	TCAAAAACGCT	GCAACAGATG
<b>SA11-L2_Gs3 (VP3) reference</b>	510	520	530	540	550	560	570	580	590	600
<b>SA11-L2_GS3 (VP3) NGS cs</b>	ATGATCTAAT	AATGAAATAC	ATTTATTTCAG	AAGCGTTGGA	CTTCCAAAAT	TTTATGTTAA	AAAAGATAAA	GAAAAGAAATG	ACTACATCGT	TGCCTATAGC
	ATGATCTAAT	AATGAAATAC	ATTTATTTCAG	AAGCGTTGGA	CTTCCAAAAT	TTTATGTTAA	AAAAGATAAA	GAAAAGAAATG	ACTACATCGT	TGCCTATAGC
<b>SA11-L2_Gs3 (VP3) reference</b>	610	620	630	640	650	660	670	680	690	700
<b>SA11-L2_GS3 (VP3) NGS cs</b>	TAGATTATCT	AACAGAGTAT	TTAGGGATAA	GTTATTCCCA	TCATTATTGA	AGAACAATAA	GAATGTAGTG	AACGTTGGTC	CGCGTAAATG	ATCTATGTTT
	TAGATTATCT	AACAGAGTAT	TTAGGGATAA	GTTATTCCCA	TCATTATTGA	AGAACAATAA	GAATGTAGTG	AACGTTGGTC	CGCGTAAATG	ATCTATGTTT
<b>SA11-L2_Gs3 (VP3) reference</b>	710	720	730	740	750	760	770	780	790	800
<b>SA11-L2_GS3 (VP3) NGS cs</b>	ACATTTTAA	ATPATCCAAC	TATAAAAACAA	TTTTCAAATG	GTGCGTATTT	AGTAAAAGAT	ACTATAAAAT	TAAAACAAGA	ACGATGGTTA	GGTAAAAGGA
	ACATTTTAA	ATPATCCAAC	TATAAAAACAA	TTTTCAAATG	GTGCGTATTT	AGTAAAAGAT	ACTATAAAAT	TAAAACAAGA	ACGATGGTTA	GGTAAAAGGA
<b>SA11-L2_Gs3 (VP3) reference</b>	810	820	830	840	850	860	870	880	890	900
<b>SA11-L2_GS3 (VP3) NGS cs</b>	TATCTCAGTT	TGATATTGGT	CAGTATAAAA	ATATGCTGAA	TGTTCTTACA	GCAATTTATT	ATTACTATAA	TTTATATAAA	AGTAAACCCAA	TTATATATAT
	TATCTCAGTT	TGATATTGGT	CAGTATAAAA	ATATGCTGAA	TGTTCTTACA	GCAATTTATT	ATTACTATAA	TTTATATAAA	AGTAAACCCAA	TTATATATAT









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....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|
1810      1820      1830      1840      1850      1860      1870      1880      1890      1900
ATAACTGATA TATCGTCAFC AGTAAAGTTCA GTTTCGACAC AAACGTCAC TATCAGTAGA AGATTGAGAC TAAAGGAAAT GGCAACACAA ACTGAGGGTA
ATAACTGATA TATCGTCAFC AGTAAAGTTCA GTTTCGACAC AAACGTCAC TATCAGTAGA AGATTGAGAC TAAAGGAAAT GGCAACACAA ACTGAGGGTA

....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|
1910      1920      1930      1940      1950      1960      1970      1980      1990      2000
TGAATTTTGA TGATATATCA GCGGCTGTTT TGAAGACTAA GATAGATAAA TCGACTCAAA TATCACAAA CACAATACCT GACATTTGTTA CTGAAGCATC
TGAATTTTGA TGATATATCA GCGGCTGTTT TGAAGACTAA GATAGATAAA TCGACTCAAA TATCACAAA CACAATACCT GACATTTGTTA CTGAAGCATC

....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|
2010      2020      2030      2040      2050      2060      2070      2080      2090      2100
GGAAAAATTC ATACCAAATA GGGCTTACCG CGTTATAAAC AACGATGATG TGTTTGAAGC TGGAAATGAT GGGAAAATTTT TTGCTTATAA AGTGGATACA
GGAAAAATTC ATACCAAATA GGGCTTACCG CGTTATAAAC AACGATGATG TGTTTGAAGC TGGAAATGAT GGGAAAATTTT TTGCTTATAA AGTGGATACA

....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|
2110      2120      2130      2140      2150      2160      2170      2180      2190      2200
TTTGAGGAAA TACCATTTGA TGTACAAAAA TTCGCTGACT TAGTTACAGA TTCTCCAGTA ATATCCGCTA TAATTTGATTT TAAAAACACCTT AAAAAATTTGA
TTTGAGGAAA TACCATTTGA TGTACAAAAA TTCGCTGACT TAGTTACAGA TTCTCCAGTA ATATCCGCTA TAATTTGATTT TAAAAACACCTT AAAAAATTTGA

....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|
2210      2220      2230      2240      2250      2260      2270      2280      2290      2300
ACGATAAATTA CGGCATTACT AAGCAACAAG CATTTAACT TTTAAGATCT GACCCAAGAG TTTTACGTTGA ATTCAATTAAT CAGGACAATC CTATAATTAG
ACGATAAATTA CGGCATTACT AAGCAACAAG CATTTAACT TTTAAGATCT GACCCAAGAG TTTTACGTTGA ATTCAATTAAT CAGGACAATC CTATAATTAG

....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|
2310      2320      2330      2340      2350
AAATAGAATT GAACAACCTGA TTATGCAATG CAGGTTGTGA GTAATTTCTA GAGGATGTGA CC
AAATAGAATT GAACAACCTGA TTATGCAATG CAGGTTGTGA GTAATTTCTA GAGGATGTGA CC

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**SA11-L2\_Gs3(VP4) reference**  
**SA11-L2\_Gs4(VP4) NGS cs**

**SA11-L2\_Gs3(VP4) reference**  
**SA11-L2\_Gs4(VP4) NGS cs**

**SA11-L2\_Gs3(VP4) reference**  
**SA11-L2\_Gs4(VP4) NGS cs**

**SA11-L2\_Gs3(VP4) reference**  
**SA11-L2\_Gs4(VP4) NGS cs**

**SA11-L2\_Gs3(VP4) reference**  
**SA11-L2\_Gs4(VP4) NGS cs**

**SA11-L2\_Gs3(VP4) reference**  
**SA11-L2\_Gs4(VP4) NGS cs**





Alignment: SA11-L2\_GS6(VP6)

	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
<b>SA11-L2_GS6(VP6) reference</b>	GGCTTTTAAA	CGAAGTCTTC	AACATGGGATG	TCCTAFACTC	TTTGTCAAAG	ACICTTAAAG	ACGCTAGAGA	CAAAAATTGC	GAAGGCACAT	TGTAATTCCTAA
<b>SA11-L2_GS6(VP6) NGS cs</b>	GGCTTTTAAA	CGAAGTCTTC	AACATGGGATG	TCCTTACTC	TTTGTCAAAG	ACICTTAAAG	ACGCTAGAGA	CAAAAATTGC	GAAGGCACAT	TGTAATTCCTAA
	110	120	130	140	150	160	170	180	190	200
<b>SA11-L2_GS6(VP6) reference</b>	CGTGAGTGAT	CTAATTCAAC	AATTTAATCA	AATGATAATT	ACTATGAATG	GAAATGAATT	TCAAACCTGGA	GGAATCGGTA	AATTTGCCAAT	TAGAAACTGG
<b>SA11-L2_GS6(VP6) NGS cs</b>	CGTGAGTGAT	CTAATTCAAC	AATTTAATCA	AATGATAATT	ACTATGAATG	GAAATGAATT	TCAAACCTGGA	GGAATCGGTA	AATTTGCCAAT	TAGAAACTGG
	210	220	230	240	250	260	270	280	290	300
<b>SA11-L2_GS6(VP6) reference</b>	AATTTTAAAT	TCGGGTTACT	TGGAACAACCT	TTGCTGAACT	TAGACGCTAA	TTATGTTGAA	ACGGCAAGAA	ATACAATTGA	TTATTTCCGTG	GATTTTGTAG
<b>SA11-L2_GS6(VP6) NGS cs</b>	AATTTTAAAT	TCGGGTTACT	TGGAACAACCT	TTGCTGAACT	TAGACGCTAA	TTATGTTGAA	ACGGCAAGAA	ATACAATTGA	TTATTTCCGTG	GATTTTGTAG
	310	320	330	340	350	360	370	380	390	400
<b>SA11-L2_GS6(VP6) reference</b>	ACAATGTATG	CATGGATGAG	ATGGTTAGAG	AATCACAAG	GAACGGGAAT	GCACCTCAAT	CAGACTCGCT	AAGAAAGCTG	TCAGCCCAATTA	AATTCAAAAG
<b>SA11-L2_GS6(VP6) NGS cs</b>	ACAATGTATG	CATGGATGAG	ATGGTTAGAG	AATCACAAG	GAACGGGAAT	GCACCTCAAT	CAGACTCGCT	AAGAAAGCTG	TCAGCCCAATTA	AATTCAAAAG
	410	420	430	440	450	460	470	480	490	500
<b>SA11-L2_GS6(VP6) reference</b>	AATAAATTTT	GATAATTCGT	CGGAATACAT	AGAAAATGG	AATTTGCAAA	ATAGAAGACA	GAGGACAGGT	TTCACITTTT	ATAAACCCAAA	CATTTTTCTT
<b>SA11-L2_GS6(VP6) NGS cs</b>	AATAAATTTT	GATAATTCGT	CGGAATACAT	AGAAAATGG	AATTTGCAAA	ATAGAAGACA	GAGGACAGGT	TTCACITTTT	ATAAACCCAAA	CATTTTTCTT
	510	520	530	540	550	560	570	580	590	600
<b>SA11-L2_GS6(VP6) reference</b>	TATTCAGCAT	CATTTACACT	AAATAGATCA	CAACCCGCTC	ATGATAAATTT	GATGGGCACA	ATGTGGTTAA	ACGCAGGATC	GGAATTTCAA	GTCGCTGGAT
<b>SA11-L2_GS6(VP6) NGS cs</b>	TATTCAGCAT	CATTTACACT	AAATAGATCA	CAACCCGCTC	ATGATAAATTT	GATGGGCACA	ATGTGGTTAA	ACGCAGGATC	GGAATTTCAA	GTCGCTGGAT
	610	620	630	640	650	660	670	680	690	700
<b>SA11-L2_GS6(VP6) reference</b>	TTGACTACTC	ATGTGCTAAT	AACGCACCAG	CCAATATACA	ACAATTTGAG	CATATTTGTC	CACCTCCGAAG	AGTGTAACT	ACAGCTACGA	TAACCTTTCT
<b>SA11-L2_GS6(VP6) NGS cs</b>	TTGACTACTC	ATGTGCTAAT	AACGCACCAG	CCAATATACA	ACAATTTGAG	CATATTTGTC	CACCTCCGAAG	AGTGTAACT	ACAGCTACGA	TAACCTTTCT
	710	720	730	740	750	760	770	780	790	800
<b>SA11-L2_GS6(VP6) reference</b>	ACCAGACGCG	GAAAGGTTTA	GTTTTCCCAAG	AGTGATCAAT	TCAGCTGACG	GGGCAACTAC	ATGGTTTTTC	AACCCAGTGA	TTCTCAGGCC	GAATAACGTT
<b>SA11-L2_GS6(VP6) NGS cs</b>	ACCAGACGCG	GAAAGGTTTA	GTTTTCCCAAG	AGTGATCAAT	TCAGCTGACG	GGGCAACTAC	ATGGTTTTTC	AACCCAGTGA	TTCTCAGGCC	GAATAACGTT
	810	820	830	840	850	860	870	880	890	900
<b>SA11-L2_GS6(VP6) reference</b>	GAAAGTGGAGT	TTCTATTGAA	TGGACAGATA	ATAAACACTT	ATCAAGCRAAG	ATTTTGGAACT	ATCGTAGCTA	GAAAATTTGA	TACTATTAGA	CTATCATCTCC
<b>SA11-L2_GS6(VP6) NGS cs</b>	GAAAGTGGAGT	TTCTATTGAA	TGGACAGATA	ATAAACACTT	ATCAAGCRAAG	ATTTTGGAACT	ATCGTAGCTA	GAAAATTTGA	TACTATTAGA	CTATCATCTCC

SAL1-L2\_Gs6(VP6) reference  
SAL1-L2\_Gs6(VP6) NGS cs

```

.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
910    920    930    940    950    960    970    980    990    1000
AGTTAATGAG ACCACCAAAC ATGACACCAG CAGTAGCAGT ACTATTCCCG AATGCACAGC CATTGCAACA TCATGCAACA GTGGGATTGA CACTTAGAAT
AGTTAATGAG ACCACCAAAC ATGACACCAG CAGTAGCAGT ACTATTCCCG AATGCACAGC CATTGCAACA TCATGCAACA GTGGGATTGA CACTTAGAAT
```

SAL1-L2\_Gs6(VP6) reference  
SAL1-L2\_Gs6(VP6) NGS cs

```

.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
1010   1020   1030   1040   1050   1060   1070   1080   1090   1100
TGAGTCTGCA GTTTGTGAGT CTGTACTCGC CGATGCAAGT GAAACTCTAT TAGCAAATGT AACATCCGTT AGGCAAGGT ACCGAATACC AGTTGGACCA
TGAGTCTGCA GTTTGTGAGT CTGTACTCGC CGATGCAAGT GAAACTCTAT TAGCAAATGT AACATCCGTT AGGCAAGGT ACCGAATACC AGTTGGACCA
```

SAL1-L2\_Gs6(VP6) reference  
SAL1-L2\_Gs6(VP6) NGS cs

```

.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
1110   1120   1130   1140   1150   1160   1170   1180   1190   1200
GTCTTTCCAC CAGGTATGAA CTGGACTGAT TTAATCACCA ATTATTCCACC GTCTAGGGAG GACAATTTGC AACCGGTATT TACAGTGGCT TCCATTAGAA
GTCTTTCCAC CAGGTATGAA CTGGACTGAT TTAATCACCA ATTATTCCACC GTCTAGGGAG GACAATTTGC AACCGGTATT TACAGTGGCT TCCATTAGAA
```

SAL1-L2\_Gs6(VP6) reference  
SAL1-L2\_Gs6(VP6) NGS cs

```

.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
1210   1220   1230   1240   1250   1260   1270   1280   1290   1300
GCATGCTCAT TAAATGAGGA CCAAGCTAAC AACTTGGTAT CCAACTTTGG TGAGTATGTA GCTATATCAA GCTGTTTCAA CTCTGTAAGT AAGGATGCCG
GCATGCTCAT TAAATGAGGA CCAAGCTAAC AACTTGGTAT CCAACTTTGG TGAGTATGTA GCTATATCAA GCTGTTTCAA CTCTGTAAGT AAGGATGCCG
```

SAL1-L2\_Gs6(VP6) reference  
SAL1-L2\_Gs6(VP6) NGS cs

```

.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
1310   1320   1330   1340   1350
ATACGCATTC GCTACACAGA GTAATCACTC AGATGGTATA GTGAGAGGAT GTGACC
ATACGCATTC GCTACACAGA GTAATCACTC AGATGGTATA GTGAGAGGAT GTGACC
```

SA11-L2\_GS7(NSP3) **reference**  
 SA11-L2\_GS7(NSP3) **NGS cs**

```

    .....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
    10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
    GGCAATTAAT GCTTTTTCAGT GGTTGATGCT CAAGATGGAG TCTACGCAAC AGATGGCCGT CTCAAATTAAT AACTCTTCTT TTGAAGCTGC AGTTGTAGCT
    GGCAATTAAT GCITTTTCAGT GGTTGATGCT CAAGATGGAG TCTACGCAAC AGATGGCCGT CTCAAATTAAT AACTCTTCTT TTGAAGCTGC AGTTGTAGCT
    
```

SA11-L2\_GS7(NSP3) **reference**  
 SA11-L2\_GS7(NSP3) **NGS cs**

```

    .....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
    110 120 130 140 150 160 170 180 190 200
    GCAACCTCAG CTCCTTGAGAA TATGGGAATA GAATATGATT ATCAGGATAT ATATTCTAGA GTAAGAATA AATTTGATTT TGTGATGGAC GAITTCTGGTG
    GCAACCTCAG CTCCTTGAGAA TATGGGAATA GAATATGATT ATCAGGATAT ATATTCTAGA GTAAGAATA AATTTGATTT TGTGATGGAC GAITTCTGGTG
    
```

SA11-L2\_GS7(NSP3) **reference**  
 SA11-L2\_GS7(NSP3) **NGS cs**

```

    .....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
    210 220 230 240 250 260 270 280 290 300
    TTAATAATAA TCTGATTTGGT AAAGCAATAA CTATTGATCA AGCTTTTGAAT AATAAATTTG GATCTGCTAT AAGAAATAGA AACTGGCTTG CTGATACITTC
    TTAATAATAA TCTGATTTGGT AAAGCAATAA CTATTGATCA AGCTTTTGAAT AATAAATTTG GATCTGCTAT AAGAAATAGA AACTGGCTTG CTGATACITTC
    
```

SA11-L2\_GS7(NSP3) **reference**  
 SA11-L2\_GS7(NSP3) **NGS cs**

```

    .....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
    310 320 330 340 350 360 370 380 390 400
    TAGAGCAGCT AAATTAGATG AGGATGTAAA CAAACTAAGA ATGATGTTAT CATCAAAAGG AAITGATCAA AAAATGAGAG TTTTAAACGC ATGCTTTCAGT
    TAGAGCAGCT AAATTAGATG AGGATGTAAA CAAACTAAGA ATGATGTTAT CATCAAAAGG AAITGATCAA AAAATGAGAG TTTTAAACGC ATGCTTTCAGT
    
```

SA11-L2\_GS7(NSP3) **reference**  
 SA11-L2\_GS7(NSP3) **NGS cs**

```

    .....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
    410 420 430 440 450 460 470 480 490 500
    GTAATAAGAA TACCTGGAAA ATCATCATCT ATTATTAAT GCACAAAATT GATGCGTAT AAATTTGGAAC GTGGTGAAGT TGAAGTGGAT GAITTCATTTG
    GTAATAAGAA TACCTGGAAA ATCATCATCT ATTATTAAT GCACAAAATT GATGCGTAT AAATTTGGAAC GTGGTGAAGT TGAAGTGGAT GAITTCATTTG
    
```

SA11-L2\_GS7(NSP3) **reference**  
 SA11-L2\_GS7(NSP3) **NGS cs**

```

    .....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
    510 520 530 540 550 560 570 580 590 600
    TGGATGAAA AATGGAAGTG GATACCAATG ACTGAAAATC GCGTATGAG CAATTGGAGC AAAGTTTTGA ATCAATTGAAA TCCAGGGTAA ATGAAAAATA
    TGGATGAAA AATGGAAGTG GATACCAATG ACTGAAAATC GCGTATGAG CAATTGGAGC AAAGTTTTGA ATCAATTGAAA TCCAGGGTAA ATGAAAAATA
    
```

SA11-L2\_GS7(NSP3) **reference**  
 SA11-L2\_GS7(NSP3) **NGS cs**

```

    .....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
    610 620 630 640 650 660 670 680 690 700
    TAATAATGG GTGTTGAAAAG CAAGAAAAAT GAATGAAAAAT ATGCAITTC TTTCAAAAATGT CATCTCTCAA CAGCAAGCAC ATATAGCTGA GCTTCAAGTG
    TAATAATGG GTGTTGAAAAG CAAGAAAAAT GAATGAAAAAT ATGCAITTC TTTCAAAAATGT CATCTCTCAA CAGCAAGCAC ATATAGCTGA GCTTCAAGTG
    
```

SA11-L2\_GS7(NSP3) **reference**  
 SA11-L2\_GS7(NSP3) **NGS cs**

```

    .....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
    710 720 730 740 750 760 770 780 790 800
    TACAATAATA AACTAGAACG TGATTTGCAA AATAAATTTG GATCCCTTAC TTCTTCGATT GAATGGTATT TAAGATCAAT GGAATTAGAC CCTGAAATAA
    TACAATAATA AACTAGAACG TGATTTGCAA AATAAATTTG GATCCCTTAC TTCTTCGATT GAATGGTATT TAAGATCAAT GGAATTAGAC CCTGAAATAA
    
```

SA11-L2\_GS7(NSP3) **reference**  
 SA11-L2\_GS7(NSP3) **NGS cs**

```

    .....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
    810 820 830 840 850 860 870 880 890 900
    AGGCAGACAT TGAACAGCAA AITTAACITCAA TTGATGCGAT AAATCCATTTG CACGCTTTTG ATGACTTAGA ATCAGTAATA CGTAATTTGA TAITCTGATTA
    AGGCAGACAT TGAACAGCAA AITTAACITCAA TTGATGCGAT AAATCCATTTG CACGCTTTTG ATGACTTAGA ATCAGTAATA CGTAATTTGA TAITCTGATTA
    
```



Alignment: SAll-L2\_GS8(NSP2)

<b>SAll-L2_Gs8(NSP2) reference</b>	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
<b>SAll-L2_GS8(NSP2) NGS cs</b>	GGCTTTTAAA	GCGTCTCAGT	CGCCGTTTGA	GCCTTGCGGT	GTAGCCATGG	CTGAGCTAGC	TTGCTTTTGC	TATCCTCAAT	TGGAGAAATCA	TAGCTATAAA
	GGCTTTTAAA	GCGTCTCAGT	CGCCGTTTGA	GCCTTGCGGT	GTAGCCATGG	CTGAGCTAGC	TTGCTTTTGC	TATCCTCAAT	TGGAGAAATCA	TAGCTATAAA
<b>SAll-L2_Gs8(NSP2) reference</b>	110	120	130	140	150	160	170	180	190	200
<b>SAll-L2_GS8(NSP2) NGS cs</b>	TTTATTCCCTT	TTAATAAFTT	AGCTATTAAA	GCTATGCTGA	CAGCTAAAGT	AGACAAAAAG	GACATGGATA	AGTTTTATGA	TTCAATTTAT	TATGGAATAG
	TTTATTCCCTT	TTAATAAFTT	AGCTATTAAA	GCTATGCTGA	CAGCTAAAGT	AGACAAAAAG	GACATGGATA	AGTTTTATGA	TTCAATTTAT	TATGGAATAG
<b>SAll-L2_Gs8(NSP2) reference</b>	210	220	230	240	250	260	270	280	290	300
<b>SAll-L2_GS8(NSP2) NGS cs</b>	CACCGCCTCC	TCAATTTAAG	AAACGGTATA	ATACTAATGA	TAATTTCAAGA	GGCATGAATT	TTGAAAACAAT	TATGTTTACT	AAGGTGGCTA	TGTTGATATG
	CACCGCCTCC	TCAATTTAAG	AAACGGTATA	ATACTAATGA	TAATTTCAAGA	GGCATGAATT	TTGAAAACAAT	TATGTTTACT	AAGGTGGCTA	TGTTGATATG
<b>SAll-L2_Gs8(NSP2) reference</b>	310	320	330	340	350	360	370	380	390	400
<b>SAll-L2_GS8(NSP2) NGS cs</b>	TGAAGCTCTA	AATTCATTTGA	AAGTGACGCA	AGCAAAACGTC	TCTAATGTAT	TATCACGAGT	AGTATCAATA	AGGCATTTAG	AAAAATTTGGT	GATACGGTAAA
	TGAAGCTCTA	AATTCATTTGA	AAGTGACGCA	AGCAAAACGTC	TCTAATGTAT	TATCACGAGT	AGTATCAATA	AGGCATTTAG	AAAAATTTGGT	GATACGGTAAA
<b>SAll-L2_Gs8(NSP2) reference</b>	410	420	430	440	450	460	470	480	490	500
<b>SAll-L2_GS8(NSP2) NGS cs</b>	GAAAATCCAC	AGGATAITCT	AITTCATTTCA	AAAGATTTAC	TTTTGAAATC	AACACTGATT	GCTATTGGAC	AGCTAAAGA	AATTGAAACT	ACAATAACTG
	GAAAATCCAC	AGGATAITCT	AITTCATTTCA	AAAGATTTAC	TTTTGAAATC	AACACTGATT	GCTATTGGAC	AGCTAAAGA	AATTGAAACT	ACAATAACTG
<b>SAll-L2_Gs8(NSP2) reference</b>	510	520	530	540	550	560	570	580	590	600
<b>SAll-L2_GS8(NSP2) NGS cs</b>	CAGAAGGAGG	AGAAATTTGTA	TTTTCAAAACG	CTGCCCTTCC	CATGTGGAAA	CTAACTTTAT	TAGAACATCA	ATTGATGCCA	ATTCTGGATC	AGAAATTTTAT
	CAGAAGGAGG	AGAAATTTGTA	TTTTCAAAACG	CTGCCCTTCC	CATGTGGAAA	CTAACTTTAT	TAGAACATCA	ATTGATGCCA	ATTCTGGATC	AGAAATTTTAT
<b>SAll-L2_Gs8(NSP2) reference</b>	610	620	630	640	650	660	670	680	690	700
<b>SAll-L2_GS8(NSP2) NGS cs</b>	TGAAATATAAA	GTTACATTTGA	ACGAAGATTA	ACCAATTTCA	GATGTTTCATG	TTAAAAGAAAT	AGTCGCTGAA	CTTCGATGGC	AATATAACAA	GTTTGTCTGTA
	TGAAATATAAA	GTTACATTTGA	ACGAAGATTA	ACCAATTTCA	GATGTTTCATG	TTAAAAGAAAT	AGTCGCTGAA	CTTCGATGGC	AATATAACAA	GTTTGTCTGTA
<b>SAll-L2_Gs8(NSP2) reference</b>	710	720	730	740	750	760	770	780	790	800
<b>SAll-L2_GS8(NSP2) NGS cs</b>	ATCACACATG	GTAAGGGTCA	TTATAGAATT	GTAAGTATT	CATCAGTTGC	TAATCACGCT	GACAGAGTAT	ATGCAACTTT	CAAGAGTAAAT	GTTAAAACCTG
	ATCACACATG	GTAAGGGTCA	TTATAGAATT	GTAAGTATT	CATCAGTTGC	TAATCACGCT	GACAGAGTAT	ATGCAACTTT	CAAGAGTAAAT	GTTAAAACCTG
<b>SAll-L2_Gs8(NSP2) reference</b>	810	820	830	840	850	860	870	880	890	900
<b>SAll-L2_GS8(NSP2) NGS cs</b>	GAGTTAATAA	TGATTTTAAAC	CTACTTTGATC	AAAGAAATTA	TTGGCAAAAC	TGCTATGCCAT	TTACATCATC	AATGAAAACAG	GGTAAATACAC	TTGACGGTGTG
	GAGTTAATAA	TGATTTTAAAC	CTACTTTGATC	AAAGAAATTA	TTGGCAAAAC	TGCTATGCCAT	TTACATCATC	AATGAAAACAG	GGTAAATACAC	TTGACGGTGTG

```

.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
910      920      930      940      950      960      970      980      990      1000
TAAAAGGTTG CTTTTCCAAA AAATGAAACC AGAAAAAAT CCATTTAAAG GGCTGTCAAC GGATAGAAAA ATGGACGAAG TTTCTCAAGT TGGCGTTTAA
TAAAAGGTTG CTTTTCCAAA AAATGAAACC AGAAAAAAT CCATTTAAAG GGCTGTCAAC GGATAGAAAA ATGGACGAAG TTTCTCAAGT TGGCGTTTAA

```

**SAL1-L2\_GS8(NSP2) reference**  
**SAL1-L2\_GS8(NSP2) NGS cs**

```

.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
1010     1020     1030     1040     1050
TTCCGCTATCA ATTTGAGGAT GATGATGGCT TAGCAAGAAT AGAAAGCGCT TATGTGACC
TTCCGCTATCA ATTTGAGGAT GATGATGGCT TAGCAAGAAT AGAAAGCGCT TATGTGACC

```

**SAL1-L2\_GS8(NSP2) reference**  
**SAL1-L2\_GS8(NSP2) NGS cs**



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.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
910   |.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
920   |.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
930   |.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
940   |.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
950   |.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
960   |.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
970   |.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
980   |.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
990   |.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
1000  |.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
GATGCCGAATT AACTGGGAAA AATGGTGGCA AGTTTTTTTAT ACTGTAGTAG ACTATGTAGA TCAGATAATA CAAGTTTATGT CCAAAAGATC AAGATCACTA
GATGCCGAATT AACTGGGAAA AATGGTGGCA AGTTTTTTTAT ACTGTAGTAG ACTATGTAGA TCAGATAATA CAAGTTTATGT CCAGAAGATC AAGATCACTA

```

**S11-L2\_GS9(VP7) reference**  
**S11-L2\_GS9(VP7) NGS cs**

```

.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
1010  |.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
1020  |.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
1030  |.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
1040  |.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
1050  |.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
1060  |.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
AATTCAGCAG CATTTTTATTA CAGAGTGTAG GTATAACTTA GGTTAGAATT GTATGATGTG ACC
AATTCAGCAG CATTTTTATTA CAGAGTGTAG GTATAACTTA GGTTAGAATT GTATGATGTG ACC

```

**S11-L2\_GS9(VP7) reference**  
**S11-L2\_GS9(VP7) NGS cs**

Alignment: SAll-L2\_GS10 (NSP4)

SAll-L2\_GS10 (NSP4) reference  
SAll-L2\_GS10 (NSP4) NGS cs  
10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100  
GGCTTTTAAA AGTTCCTGTTT CGAGAGAGCG CGTCCGGAAA GATGGAAAAG CTTACCAGACC TCAATTATAC ATTGAGTGTG ATCACTCTAA TGAACAATAC  
GGCTTTTAAA AGTTCCTGTTT CGAGAGAGCG CGTCCGGAAA GATGGAAAAG CTTACCAGACC TCAATTATAC ATTGAGTGTG ATCACTCTAA TGAACAATAC

SAll-L2\_GS10 (NSP4) reference  
SAll-L2\_GS10 (NSP4) NGS cs  
110 120 130 140 150 160 170 180 190 200  
ATTGCACACA ATACTTTGAGG ATCCAGGAAAT GGCCTATTTT CCTTATATAG CATCTGTCTT AACAGTTTTG TTTGGCCTAC ATAAAGCATC CATTCCAACA  
ATTGCACACA ATACTTTGAGG ATCCAGGAAAT GGCCTATTTT CCTTATATAG CATCTGTCTT AACAGTTTTG TTTGGCCTAC ATAAAGCATC CATTCCAACA

SAll-L2\_GS10 (NSP4) reference  
SAll-L2\_GS10 (NSP4) NGS cs  
210 220 230 240 250 260 270 280 290 300  
ATGAAAATTG CATTGAAAAC GTCAAAAATCT TCATATAAAG TGGTGAATA TTGTATTGTA ACAATTTTTT ATACGTTGTT AAAATTGGCA GGTATATAAAG  
ATGAAAATTG CATTGAAAAC GTCAAAAATCT TCATATAAAG TGGTGAATA TTGTATTGTA ACAATTTTTT ATACGTTGTT AAAATTGGCA GGTATATAAAG

SAll-L2\_GS10 (NSP4) reference  
SAll-L2\_GS10 (NSP4) NGS cs  
310 320 330 340 350 360 370 380 390 400  
AGCAGATAAC TACTAAAGAT GAGATAGAAA AGCRAATGGA CAGAGTAGTC AAAGAAATGA GACGCCAGCT AGAAATGATT GACAAAATGA CTACACGTGA  
AGCAGATAAC TACTAAAGAT GAGATAGAAA AGCRAATGGA CAGAGTAGTC AAAGAAATGA GACGCCAGCT AGAAATGATT GACAAAATGA CTACACGTGA

SAll-L2\_GS10 (NSP4) reference  
SAll-L2\_GS10 (NSP4) NGS cs  
410 420 430 440 450 460 470 480 490 500  
AATTGAACAA GTAGAGTTGC TTAACCGCAT TTACGATAAA TTGACGGTGC AAACGACAGG TGAATAAGAT ATGACAAAAG AGATCAATCA AAAAAACGTC  
AATTGAACAA GTAGAGTTGC TTAACCGCAT TTACGATAAA TTGACGGTGC AAACGACAGG TGAATAAGAT ATGACAAAAG AGATCAATCA AAAAAACGTC

SAll-L2\_GS10 (NSP4) reference  
SAll-L2\_GS10 (NSP4) NGS cs  
510 520 530 540 550 560 570 580 590 600  
AGAACGCTAG AAGAATGGGA AAGTGGAAA AATCCTTATG AACCAAGAGA AGTGACTGCA GCAATGTAAG AGTTGAGCT GCCGTCGACT GTCCTCGGAA  
AGAACGCTAG AAGAATGGGA AAGTGGAAA AATCCTTATG AACCAAGAGA AGTGACTGCA GCAATGTAAG AGTTGAGCT GCCGTCGACT GTCCTCGGAA

SAll-L2\_GS10 (NSP4) reference  
SAll-L2\_GS10 (NSP4) NGS cs  
610 620 630 640 650 660 670 680 690 700  
GCGCGGAGT TCTTTACAGT AAGCACCCATC GGACTTGATG GCTGACTGAG AAGCCACAGT CAGCCATATC CCGTGTGGCT CAAGCCTTAA TCCCGTTTTAA  
GCGCGGAGT TCTTTACAGT AAGCACCCATC GGACTTGATG GCTGACTGAG AAGCCACAGT CAGCCATATC CCGTGTGGCT CAAGCCTTAA TCCCGTTTTAA

SAll-L2\_GS10 (NSP4) reference  
SAll-L2\_GS10 (NSP4) NGS cs  
710 720 730 740 750  
CCAAATCCCGT CAGCACCGGA CGTTAATGGA AGGAACGGTC TTAATGTGAC C  
CCAAATCCCGT CAGCACCGGA CGTTAATGGA AGGAACGGTC TTAATGTGAC C

Alignment: SAll1-N5\_Gs1 (VP1)

SAll1-N5\_Gs1 (VP1) reference  
pSmart\_SAll1-N5\_Gs1 referen  
pSmart\_SAll1-N5\_Gs1 NGS

```

.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
10      20      30      40      50      60      70      80      90      100
ATCGCTCAAT ACTGACCAAT TAAATCATAC CTGACCTCCA TAGCAGAAAG TCAAAAAGCCT CCGACCGGAG GCTTTTGACT TGATCGGCAC GTAAGAGGTT
ATCGCTCAAT ACTGACCAAT TAAATCATAC CTGACCTCCA TAGCAGAAAG TCAAAAAGCCT CCGACCGGAG GCTTTTGACT TGATCGGCAC GTAAGAGGTT

.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
110     120     130     140     150     160     170     180     190     200
CCAACITTTCA CCATAATGAA ATAGATCAC TACCGGCGT ATTTTTGAG TTATCGAGAT TTTCAGGAGC TAAGGAAAGT AAAATGAGTA TTCAACATTT
CCAACITTTCA CCATAATGAA ATAGATCAC TACCGGCGT ATTTTTGAG TTATCGAGAT TTTCAGGAGC TAAGGAAAGT AAAATGAGTA TTCAACATTT

.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
210     220     230     240     250     260     270     280     290     300
CCGTGTCGCC CTTATTCCCT TTTTTCGGC ATTTGCGCTT CCTGTTCCT CACACCCAGA AACGCTGGTG AAAGTAAAAG ATGCTGAAGA TCAGTTGGGT
CCGTGTCGCC CTTATTCCCT TTTTTCGGC ATTTGCGCTT CCTGTTCCT CACACCCAGA AACGCTGGTG AAAGTAAAAG ATGCTGAAGA TCAGTTGGGT

.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
310     320     330     340     350     360     370     380     390     400
GCACGAGTGG GTTACATCGA ACTGGATCTC AACAGCGGTA AGATCCTTTGA GAGTTTACGC CCCGAAAGAAC GFTTTTCCAAT GATGAGCACT TTAAAGTTC
GCACGAGTGG GTTACATCGA ACTGGATCTC AACAGCGGTA AGATCCTTTGA GAGTTTACGC CCCGAAAGAAC GFTTTTCCAAT GATGAGCACT TTAAAGTTC

.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
410     420     430     440     450     460     470     480     490     500
TGCTATGTGG CCGGGTATTA TCCCGTATTG ACGCCGGGCA AGAGCAACTC GGTTCGCCGCA TACACTATTC TCAGAATGAC TTGGTTGAGT ACTCACCAGT
TGCTATGTGG CCGGGTATTA TCCCGTATTG ACGCCGGGCA AGAGCAACTC GGTTCGCCGCA TACACTATTC TCAGAATGAC TTGGTTGAGT ACTCACCAGT

.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
510     520     530     540     550     560     570     580     590     600
CACAGAAAAG CATCTCACGG ATGGCATGAC AGTAAGAGAA TTATGCAGTG CTGCCATAAC CATGAGTGGT AACACTGCGG CCRAACTTACT TCTGGCAACG
CACAGAAAAG CATCTCACGG ATGGCATGAC AGTAAGAGAA TTATGCAGTG CTGCCATAAC CATGAGTGGT AACACTGCGG CCRAACTTACT TCTGGCAACG

.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
610     620     630     640     650     660     670     680     690     700
ATCGGAGGAC CGAAGGAGCT AACCGTTTTT TTGCACAACA TGGGGGATCA TGTAACTCGC CTTGATCGTT GGGAAACCGA GCTGAATGAA GCCATACCAC
ATCGGAGGAC CGAAGGAGCT AACCGTTTTT TTGCACAACA TGGGGGATCA TGTAACTCGC CTTGATCGTT GGGAAACCGA GCTGAATGAA GCCATACCAC

.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
710     720     730     740     750     760     770     780     790     800
SAll1-N5_Gs1 (VP1) reference
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**SAll1-N5\_Gs1(VP1) reference**  
 pSmart\_SAll1-N5\_Gs1 referen  
 pSmart\_SAll1-N5\_Gs1 NGS

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GCTACAGAGT TCTTGAAGTG GTGGCCTAAC TACGGCTACA CTAGAAGAAC AGTATTTGGT ATCTGGGCTC TGCTGAAGCC AGTTACCTCG GAAAAAGAGT
GCTACAGAGT TCTTGAAGTG GTGGCCTAAC TACGGCTACA CTAGAAGAAC AGTATTTGGT ATCTGGGCTC TGCTGAAGCC AGTTACCTCG GAAAAAGAGT
....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|
1610 1620 1630 1640 1650 1660 1670 1680 1690 1700
-----
SAll1-N5_Gs1(VP1) reference
pSmart_SAll1-N5_Gs1 referen
pSmart_SAll1-N5_Gs1 NGS
-----
TGGTAGCTCT TGAATCCGGCA AACAAACCAC CGTGTGTAGC GGTGGTTTTT TTGTTTGCAA GCAGCAGATT ACGGCGCAGAA AAAAAGGATC TCAAGAAGAT
TGGTAGCTCT TGAATCCGGCA AACRAACCAC CGCTGTGTAGC GGTGGTTTTT TTGTTTGCAA GCAGCAGATT ACGGCGCAGAA AAAAAGGATC TCAAGAAGAT
....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|
1710 1720 1730 1740 1750 1760 1770 1780 1790 1800
-----
SAll1-N5_Gs1(VP1) reference
pSmart_SAll1-N5_Gs1 referen
pSmart_SAll1-N5_Gs1 NGS
-----
CCTTTGATTT TCTACCGAAG AAAGCCCCAC CCGTGAAGGT GAGCCAGTGA GTTGATTTGCA GTCCAGTTAC GCTGGAGTCT GAGGCTCGTC CTGAATGATA
CCTTTGATTT TCTACCGAAG AAAGCCCCAC CCGTGAAGGT GAGCCAGTGA GTTGATTTGCA GTCCAGTTAC GCTGGAGTCT GAGGCTCGTC CTGAATGATA
....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|
1810 1820 1830 1840 1850 1860 1870 1880 1890 1900
-----
SAll1-N5_Gs1(VP1) reference
pSmart_SAll1-N5_Gs1 referen
pSmart_SAll1-N5_Gs1 NGS
-----
TCTAATACGA CTCACATATAG GCTATPTAAAG CTGTACAATG GGGAAAGTACA ATCTAATCTT GTCAGAATAT CTATCAITTA TATATAAITC ACAATCTGCA
TCTAATACGA CTCACATATAG GCTATPTAAAG CTGTACAATG GGGAAAGTACA ATCTAATCTT GTCAGAATAT CTATCAITTA TATATAAITC ACAATCTGCA
....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|
1910 1920 1930 1940 1950 1960 1970 1980 1990 2000
-----
SAll1-N5_Gs1(VP1) reference
pSmart_SAll1-N5_Gs1 referen
pSmart_SAll1-N5_Gs1 NGS
-----
GTTCAAAATC CAATATATTA CTCCTTCCAAC AGTGAATAG AAAATAGATG TATTGAAATTT CAITTCAGAT GTTTAGAGAA CTCAAAAGAT GGGTTATCTGT
GTTCAAAATC CAATATATTA CTCCTTCCAAC AGTGAATAG AAAATAGATG TATTGAAATTT CAITTCAGAT GTTTAGAGAA CTCAAAAGAT GGGTTATCTGT
....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|
2010 2020 2030 2040 2050 2060 2070 2080 2090 2100
-----
SAll1-N5_Gs1(VP1) reference
pSmart_SAll1-N5_Gs1 referen
pSmart_SAll1-N5_Gs1 NGS
-----
TAAGAAAGTT GTTTGTTGAA TATAATGATG TCATAGAAA TCCACATTA CTGTCAATAC TATCATATTC TTACGACAAG TATAACGCTG TTGAAGAGAAA
TAAGAAAGTT GTTTGTTGAA TATAATGATG TCATAGAAA TCCACATTA CTGTCAATAC TATCATATTC TTACGACAAG TATAACGCTG TTGAAGAGAAA
....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|
2110 2120 2130 2140 2150 2160 2170 2180 2190 2200
-----
SAll1-N5_Gs1(VP1) reference
pSmart_SAll1-N5_Gs1 referen
pSmart_SAll1-N5_Gs1 NGS
-----
ATTGGTCAAG TATGCGAAG GCAAACCATT GGAGGCAGAC TTAACAGTGA ATGAATTTGGA ATGAATTTGGA TTAAGAAAC AATAAATAA CATCTGAAT ATTCCAACA
ATTGGTCAAG TATGCGAAG GCAAACCATT GGAGGCAGAC TTAACAGTGA ATGAATTTGGA ATGAATTTGGA TTAAGAAAC AATAAATAA CATCTGAAT ATTCCAACA
....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|
2210 2220 2230 2240 2250 2260 2270 2280 2290 2300
-----
SAll1-N5_Gs1(VP1) reference
pSmart_SAll1-N5_Gs1 referen
pSmart_SAll1-N5_Gs1 NGS
-----
GCGGAGGAAT ATACGGACTC ACTAATGGAT CCAGCAATTT TAACTTCGCT ATCATCAAA TTAATGCGAG TCATGTTCTG GTTGGAAAAA CATGAAAATG
GCGGAGGAAT ATACGGACTC ACTAATGGAT CCAGCAATTT TAACTTCGCT ATCATCAAA TTAATGCGAG TCATGTTCTG GTTGGAAAAA CATGAAAATG
....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|
2310 2320 2330 2340 2350 2360 2370 2380 2390 2400
-----
SAll1-N5_Gs1(VP1) reference
pSmart_SAll1-N5_Gs1 referen
pSmart_SAll1-N5_Gs1 NGS
-----
GCGGAGGAAT ATACGGACTC ACTAATGGAT CCAGCAATTT TAACTTCGCT ATCATCAAA TTAATGCGAG TCATGTTCTG GTTGGAAAAA CATGAAAATG
GCGGAGGAAT ATACGGACTC ACTAATGGAT CCAGCAATTT TAACTTCGCT ATCATCAAA TTAATGCGAG TCATGTTCTG GTTGGAAAAA CATGAAAATG
....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|....|
2410 2420 2430 2440 2450 2460 2470 2480 2490 2500

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SA11-N5\_Gs1(VP1) reference  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs1 referen  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs1 NGS

SA11-N5\_Gs1(VP1) reference  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs1 referen  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs1 NGS

SA11-N5\_Gs1(VP1) reference  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs1 referen  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs1 NGS

SA11-N5\_Gs1(VP1) reference  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs1 referen  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs1 NGS

SA11-N5\_Gs1(VP1) reference  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs1 referen  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs1 NGS

SA11-N5\_Gs1(VP1) reference  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs1 referen  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs1 NGS

SA11-N5\_Gs1(VP1) reference  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs1 referen  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs1 NGS

SA11-N5\_Gs1(VP1) reference  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs1 referen  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs1 NGS











**SAL1-N5\_GS2(VP2) reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_GS2 reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_GS2 NGS**  
  
**SAL1-N5\_GS2(VP2) reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_GS2 reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_GS2 NGS**  
  
**SAL1-N5\_GS2(VP2) reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_GS2 reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_GS2 NGS**  
  
**SAL1-N5\_GS2(VP2) reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_GS2 reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_GS2 NGS**  
  
**SAL1-N5\_GS2(VP2) reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_GS2 reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_GS2 NGS**  
  
**SAL1-N5\_GS2(VP2) reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_GS2 reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_GS2 NGS**  
  
**SAL1-N5\_GS2(VP2) reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_GS2 reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_GS2 NGS**  
  
**SAL1-N5\_GS2(VP2) reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_GS2 reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_GS2 NGS**



**SAL1-N5\_Gs2(VP2) reference**  
 TGAATATGGA ACAGATTGAA CGTGCATCAG ATAAATTCG ACAAGAGTT AFAATAGCAT ACCGAGATAT CGAGTTAGAA CGAGATGAGA TGFATGGTTA  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs2 reference**  
 TGAATATGGA ACAGATTGAA CGTGCATCAG ATAAATTCG ACAAGAGTT AFAATAGCAT ACCGAGATAT CGAGTTAGAA CGAGATGAGA TGFATGGTTA  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs2 NGS**  
 TGAATATGGA ACAGATTGAA CGTGCATCAG ATAAATTCG ACAAGAGTT AFAATAGCAT ACCGAGATAT CGAGTTAGAA CGAGATGAGA TGFATGGTTA  
  
**SAL1-N5\_Gs2(VP2) reference**  
 CGTCAATAAT GCCAGAACT TGGACGGATT TCAACAATA AATCTTGAAG AATTGATGAG ATCAGGAGAT TATGCTCAA TTACTAACAT GCTACTTAAAT  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs2 reference**  
 CGTCAATAAT GCCAGAACT TGGACGGATT TCAACAATA AATCTTGAAG AATTGATGAG ATCAGGAGAT TATGCTCAA TTACTAACAT GCTACTTAAAT  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs2 NGS**  
 CGTCAATAAT GCCAGAACT TGGACGGATT TCAACAATA AATCTTGAAG AATTGATGAG ATCAGGAGAT TATGCTCAA TTACTAACAT GCTACTTAAAT  
  
**SAL1-N5\_Gs2(VP2) reference**  
 AATCAACCAG TAGCTTTAGT TGGAGCGCTA CCATTATATA CCGATTCAATC AGTGATTTCG TTAATAGCTA AACTAGATGC AACCGTTTTT GCACAGATTG  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs2 reference**  
 AATCAACCAG TAGCTTTAGT TGGAGCGCTA CCATTATATA CCGATTCAATC AGTGATTTCG TTAATAGCTA AACTAGATGC AACCGTTTTT GCACAGATTG  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs2 NGS**  
 AATCAACCAG TAGCTTTAGT TGGAGCGCTA CCATTATATA CCGATTCAATC AGTGATTTCG TTAATAGCTA AACTAGATGC AACCGTTTTT GCACAGATTG  
  
**SAL1-N5\_Gs2(VP2) reference**  
 TCAAACTTAG AAAGTTCGAC ACGTTAAAAC CCATCCTATA TAAGATAAAT TCAGATTCTA ATGACTTTTA TTTGGTGGCT AATTATGATT GGATTCCTAC  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs2 reference**  
 TCAAACTTAG AAAGTTCGAC ACGTTAAAAC CCATCCTATA TAAGATAAAT TCAGATTCTA ATGACTTTTA TTTGGTGGCT AATTATGATT GGATTCCTAC  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs2 NGS**  
 TCAAACTTAG AAAGTTCGAC ACGTTAAAAC CCATCCTATA TAAGATAAAT TCAGATTCTA ATGACTTTTA TTTGGTGGCT AATTATGATT GGATTCCTAC  
  
**SAL1-N5\_Gs2(VP2) reference**  
 ATCTACTACA AAAGTGTATA AACAAAGTTCC ACAACAAATTT GATTTTAGAG CGTCAATGCA TATG-TTAAAC GTCTAACCTA ACATTTACCG TATATTCCAGA  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs2 reference**  
 ATCTACTACA AAAGTGTATA AACAAAGTTCC ACAACAAATTT GATTTTAGAG CGTCAATGCA TATG-TTAAAC GTCTAACCTA ACATTTACCG TATATTCCAGA  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs2 NGS**  
 ATCTACTACA AAAGTGTATA AACAAAGTTCC ACAACAAATTT GATTTTAGAG CGTCAATGCA TATG-TTAAAC GTCTAACCTA ACATTTACCG TATATTCCAGA  
  
**SAL1-N5\_Gs2(VP2) reference**  
 TTTGCTTGGC TTCGTTTCAG CTGATACTGT TGAACCAATT AATGCTGTTG CTTTGTGATAA TATGCGCATC ATGAACGAAC TGTAACGCC AACCCCATTTG  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs2 reference**  
 TTTGCTTGGC TTCGTTTCAG CTGATACTGT TGAACCAATT AATGCTGTTG CTTTGTGATAA TATGCGCATC ATGAACGAAC TGTAACGCC AACCCCATTTG  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs2 NGS**  
 TTTGCTTGGC TTCGTTTCAG CTGATACTGT TGAACCAATT AATGCTGTTG CTTTGTGATAA TATGCGCATC ATGAACGAAC TGTAACGCC AACCCCATTTG  
  
**SAL1-N5\_Gs2(VP2) reference**  
 TGGAGATATG ACC  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs2 reference**  
 TGGAGATATG ACCGGCCGGC ATGGTCCCAG CCTCCTCGCT GGCGCCGCT GGGCAACATT CCGAGGGGAC CGTCCCTCG GTAATGGGA ATGGACCGGA  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs2 NGS**  
 TGGAGATATG ACCGGCCGGC ATGGTCCCAG CCTCCTCGCT GGCGCCGCT GGGCAACATT CCGAGGGGAC CGTCCCTCG GTAATGGGA ATGGACCGGA  
  
**SAL1-N5\_Gs2(VP2) reference**  
 TCCGGCTGCT AACAAAGCCC GAAAGGAAGC TGAGTTGGCT GCTGCCACCG CTGAGCAATA ACTAGCATAA CCCCTTGGGG CCTCTAACCG GGTCCTTGAGG  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs2 reference**  
 TCCGGCTGCT AACAAAGCCC GAAAGGAAGC TGAGTTGGCT GCTGCCACCG CTGAGCAATA ACTAGCATAA CCCCTTGGGG CCTCTAACCG GGTCCTTGAGG  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs2 NGS**  
 TCCGGCTGCT AACAAAGCCC GAAAGGAAGC TGAGTTGGCT GCTGCCACCG CTGAGCAATA ACTAGCATAA CCCCTTGGGG CCTCTAACCG GGTCCTTGAGG

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      4710
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pSmart_SAI1-N5_GS2 reference GGGTTTTTTGG AT
pSmart_SAI1-N5_GS2 NGS      GGGTTTTTTGG AT
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SAI1-N5_GS2(VP2) reference
pSmart_SAI1-N5_GS2 reference
pSmart_SAI1-N5_GS2 NGS
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2310 2320 2330 2340 2350 2360 2370 2380 2390 2400  
 CAAAACGCTG CAACAGATGA TGATCTAATA ATTGAATACA TTTAITTCAGA AGCGTTGGAC TTCCAAAATT TTATGTTAAA AAAAGATAAG GAAAATAATGA  
 pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 reference  
 pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 reference  
 pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 NGS  
 . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . |  
 2410 2420 2430 2440 2450 2460 2470 2480 2490 2500  
 CTACATCGTT GCCTATAGCT AGATTATCTA ACAGAGTATT TAGGGATAAG TTATTTCCCAT CATTATTGAA AGAACAATAAG AATGTAGTGA ACGTTGGTCC  
 SAL1-N5\_Gs3(VP3) reference  
 pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 reference  
 pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 NGS  
 . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . |  
 2510 2520 2530 2540 2550 2560 2570 2580 2590 2600  
 GCGTAATGAA TCTATGTTA CATTTTAAA TTATCCAAT ATAAAACAAT TTCCAATGG TCGGTATTTA GTAAAAGATA CTATAAAATT AAAACAAGAA  
 SAL1-N5\_Gs3(VP3) reference  
 pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 reference  
 pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 NGS  
 . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . |  
 2610 2620 2630 2640 2650 2660 2670 2680 2690 2700  
 CGATGGTTAG GTAAAAGGAT ATCTCAGTTT GATATGGTGC AGTATAAAA TATGCTGTAAT GTTTTACAG CAATTTATTA TTACTATAAT TTATATAAAA  
 SAL1-N5\_Gs3(VP3) reference  
 pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 reference  
 pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 NGS  
 . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . |  
 2710 2720 2730 2740 2750 2760 2770 2780 2790 2800  
 GTAARACCAAT TATATATATG ATCGGATCTG CTCATCTTA TTGGATATAT GACGTTAGGC ATTATTTCCGA TTTTTTCTTT GAAACTTTGG ATCCATTGGA  
 SAL1-N5\_Gs3(VP3) reference  
 pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 reference  
 pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 NGS  
 . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . |  
 2810 2820 2830 2840 2850 2860 2870 2880 2890 2900  
 CACACCATAT TCATCAATCC ATCACAAGA AATATTTTT ATAAAATGATG TGAAGAARCT GAAGGATAAC TCAATATGT ATATTGATAT AAGAACCAGT  
 SAL1-N5\_Gs3(VP3) reference  
 pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 reference  
 pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 NGS  
 . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . |  
 2910 2920 2930 2940 2950 2960 2970 2980 2990 3000  
 AGGGCAATG CTGATTGGAA AAAATGGAGA AAGACAGTAG AAGACAACA TATTAATAT TTGCACATAG CTTATGAATA TTTCGTAAC GGTAAAGCGA  
 SAL1-N5\_Gs3(VP3) reference  
 pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 reference  
 pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 NGS  
 . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . |  
 3010 3020 3030 3040 3050 3060 3070 3080 3090 3100  
 AGGTGTGTTG TGTTAAGATG ACAGCTATGG ATTTGGAAT GCCAAATTC AACTACCACC TGCCACCACC AACTACCACC AATAAGATCAG AATTTTATTT  
 SAL1-N5\_Gs3(VP3) reference  
 pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 reference  
 pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 NGS  
 . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . |



**SAL1-N5\_Gs3(VP3) reference**  
pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 reference  
pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 NGS

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....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|.
3910 |. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|.
CAAACGAAAT AGAGAATAT ATTAATACAG TATATAGTAT AACATACGCT GATGATCCGA ATTACTTTTAT CGGAATACAA TTTAGAATA TACCATATAA
CAAACGAAAT AGAGAATAT ATTAATACAG TATATAGTAT AACATACGCT GATGATCCGA ATTACTTTTAT CGGAATACAA TTTAGAATA TACCATATAA
CAAACGAAAT AGAGAATAT ATTAATACAG TATATAGTAT AACATACGCT GATGATCCGA ATTACTTTTAT CGGAATACAA TTTAGAATA TACCATATAA
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**SAL1-N5\_Gs3(VP3) reference**  
pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 reference  
pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 NGS

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4010 |. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|.
ATATGATGTT AAAATACCGC ATTTAACCTT CGGAGTATTA CATATTTCTG ATAACTGTT GCCAGACGTTG ATTGCACATAC TAAAGATAAT GAAGAATGAA
ATATGATGTT AAAATACCGC ATTTAACCTT CGGAGTATTA CATATTTCTG ATAACTGTT GCCAGACGTTG ATTGCACATAC TAAAGATAAT GAAGAATGAA
ATATGATGTT AAAATACCGC ATTTAACCTT CGGAGTATTA CATATTTCTG ATAACTGTT GCCAGACGTTG ATTGCACATAC TAAAGATAAT GAAGAATGAA
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**SAL1-N5\_Gs3(VP3) reference**  
pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 reference  
pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 NGS

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....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|.
4110 |. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|.
TTATTTAAA TGGATATTAC GACCAGTTAT ACATATATGT TATCAGATGG AATCTACGTA GCAAATGTTA GTGGAGTATT ATCTACATAC TTTAAAATCT
TTATTTAAA TGGATATTAC GACCAGTTAT ACATATATGT TATCAGATGG AATCTACGTA GCAAATGTTA GTGGAGTATT ATCTACATAC TTTAAAATCT
TTATTTAAA TGGATATTAC GACCAGTTAT ACATATATGT TATCAGATGG AATCTACGTA GCAAATGTTA GTGGAGTATT ATCTACATAC TTTAAAATCT
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**SAL1-N5\_Gs3(VP3) reference**  
pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 reference  
pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 NGS

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....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|.
4210 |. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|.
ATAACGTATT TTATATAAAT CAAATAACTT TTGGCCAATC CAGAATGTTT ATTCCGCACA TAACATTAAG CTTCAATAAC ATGAGAACAG TAAGGATAGA
ATAACGTATT TTATATAAAT CAAATAACTT TTGGCCAATC CAGAATGTTT ATTCCGCACA TAACATTAAG CTTCAATAAC ATGAGAACAG TAAGGATAGA
ATAACGTATT TTATATAAAT CAAATAACTT TTGGCCAATC CAGAATGTTT ATTCCGCACA TAACATTAAG CTTCAATAAC ATGAGAACAG TAAGGATAGA
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**SAL1-N5\_Gs3(VP3) reference**  
pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 reference  
pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 NGS

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....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|.
4310 |. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|.
GACTACTAAA TTACAATAA ATCCCAATTA TTTAAGAAA ATTAAAGGTTG ATACAGTGT TGATATGGTT GAGTGAGCTA AAAACTTAAAC ACACTAGTCA
GACTACTAAA TTACAATAA ATCCCAATTA TTTAAGAAA ATTAAAGGTTG ATACAGTGT TGATATGGTT GAGTGAGCTA AAAACTTAAAC ACACTAGTCA
GACTACTAAA TTACAATAA ATCCCAATTA TTTAAGAAA ATTAAAGGTTG ATACAGTGT TGATATGGTT GAGTGAGCTA AAAACTTAAAC ACACTAGTCA
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**SAL1-N5\_Gs3(VP3) reference**  
pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 reference  
pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 NGS

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....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|.
4410 |. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|.
TGATGTGACC -----
TGATGTGACC GGCCTGACC GTCCCAGCCT CCTCGTGGC GCCGGTGGG CAACATTCCG AGGGACCCGT CCCCTCGGTA ATGGCGAATG GGACGGATCC
TGATGTGACC -----
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**SAL1-N5\_Gs3(VP3) reference**  
pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 reference  
pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 NGS

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....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|.
4510 |. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|.
GGCTGCTAAC AAAGCCGAA AGGAAGCTGA GTTGCTGTCT GCCACCGCTG AGCAATAACT AGCATAAACC CTTGGGGCCT CTAAACCGGT CTTGAGGGGT
GGCTGCTAAC -----
GGCTGCTAAC -----
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**SAL1-N5\_Gs3(VP3) reference**  
pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 reference  
pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs3 NGS

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....|. ....|. ....|. ....|
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TTTTTGGAT
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Alignment: SAl1-N5\_Gs4 (VP4)

SAl1-N5\_Gs4 (VP4) reference  
pSmart\_SAl1-N5\_Gs4 reference  
pSmart\_SAl1-N5\_Gs4 NGS

SAl1-N5\_Gs4 (VP4) reference  
pSmart\_SAl1-N5\_Gs4 reference  
pSmart\_SAl1-N5\_Gs4 NGS

SAl1-N5\_Gs4 (VP4) reference  
pSmart\_SAl1-N5\_Gs4 reference  
pSmart\_SAl1-N5\_Gs4 NGS

SAl1-N5\_Gs4 (VP4) reference  
pSmart\_SAl1-N5\_Gs4 reference  
pSmart\_SAl1-N5\_Gs4 NGS

SAl1-N5\_Gs4 (VP4) reference  
pSmart\_SAl1-N5\_Gs4 reference  
pSmart\_SAl1-N5\_Gs4 NGS

SAl1-N5\_Gs4 (VP4) reference  
pSmart\_SAl1-N5\_Gs4 reference  
pSmart\_SAl1-N5\_Gs4 NGS

SAl1-N5\_Gs4 (VP4) reference  
pSmart\_SAl1-N5\_Gs4 reference  
pSmart\_SAl1-N5\_Gs4 NGS

SAl1-N5\_Gs4 (VP4) reference  
pSmart\_SAl1-N5\_Gs4 reference  
pSmart\_SAl1-N5\_Gs4 NGS



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SAl1-N5_Gs4(VP4) reference
pSmart_SAl1-N5_Gs4 reference
pSmart_SAl1-N5_Gs4 NGS

SAl1-N5_Gs4(VP4) reference
pSmart_SAl1-N5_Gs4 reference
pSmart_SAl1-N5_Gs4 NGS

SAl1-N5_Gs4(VP4) reference
pSmart_SAl1-N5_Gs4 reference
pSmart_SAl1-N5_Gs4 NGS

SAl1-N5_Gs4(VP4) reference
pSmart_SAl1-N5_Gs4 reference
pSmart_SAl1-N5_Gs4 NGS

SAl1-N5_Gs4(VP4) reference
pSmart_SAl1-N5_Gs4 reference
pSmart_SAl1-N5_Gs4 NGS

SAl1-N5_Gs4(VP4) reference
pSmart_SAl1-N5_Gs4 reference
pSmart_SAl1-N5_Gs4 NGS

SAl1-N5_Gs4(VP4) reference
pSmart_SAl1-N5_Gs4 reference
pSmart_SAl1-N5_Gs4 NGS

SAl1-N5_Gs4(VP4) reference
pSmart_SAl1-N5_Gs4 reference
pSmart_SAl1-N5_Gs4 NGS

SAl1-N5_Gs4(VP4) reference
pSmart_SAl1-N5_Gs4 reference
pSmart_SAl1-N5_Gs4 NGS

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3110 3120 3130 3140 3150 3160 3170 3180 3190 3200  
AGATTTAGAT TTAGACTAGC TGTCGAAGAA CCACACTTTA AACTGACTAG AACTAGATTA GATAGATTGT ATGGTCTGCC TGCTGCAGAT CCAAATAATG  
AGATTTAGAT TTAGACTAGC TGTCGAAGAA CCACACTTTA AACTGACTAG AACTAGATTA GATAGATTGT ATGGTCTGCC TGCTGCAGAT CCAAATAATG  
AGATTTAGAT TTAGACTAGC TGTCGAAGAA CCACACTTTA AACTGACTAG AACTAGATTA GATAGATTGT ATGGTCTGCC TGCTGCAGAT CCAAATAATG

**SAL1-N5\_Gs4(VP4) reference**

**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs4 reference**

**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs4 NGS**

3210 3220 3230 3240 3250 3260 3270 3280 3290 3300  
GTAAGAATA TTATGAAAT GCTGGACGAT TTTCACTTAT ATCAATTAGTG CCATCAAATG ATGACTATCA GACTCCTATA GCAAACTCAG TTACTGTACG  
GTAAGAATA TTATGAAAT GCTGGACGAT TTTCACTTAT ATCAATTAGTG CCATCAAATG ATGACTATCA GACTCCTATA GCAAACTCAG TTACTGTACG  
GTAAGAATA TTATGAAAT GCTGGACGAT TTTCACTTAT ATCAATTAGTG CCATCAAATG ATGACTATCA GACTCCTATA GCAAACTCAG TTACTGTACG

**SAL1-N5\_Gs4(VP4) reference**

**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs4 reference**

**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs4 NGS**

3310 3320 3330 3340 3350 3360 3370 3380 3390 3400  
ACAAGATTTA GAAAGGAGT TAGGAGAACT AAGAGAAGAG TTTAAGCTTT TGCTCAAGA AATTGCAAATG TCGCAAGTTAA TCGAATTTAGC GCTTCTACCA  
ACAAGATTTA GAAAGGAGT TAGGAGAACT AAGAGAAGAG TTTAAGCTTT TGCTCAAGA AATTGCAAATG TCGCAAGTTAA TCGAATTTAGC GCTTCTACCA  
ACAAGATTTA GAAAGGAGT TAGGAGAACT AAGAGAAGAG TTTAAGCTTT TGCTCAAGA AATTGCAAATG TCGCAAGTTAA TCGAATTTAGC GCTTCTACCA

**SAL1-N5\_Gs4(VP4) reference**

**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs4 reference**

**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs4 NGS**

3410 3420 3430 3440 3450 3460 3470 3480 3490 3500  
TTAGATATGT TCTCAATGTT TCTTGGCATT AAAAGTACTA TTGATGCTGC AAAATCAATG GCTACTAAATG TTATGAAAAA ATTCAAAGA TCAGGATTAAG  
TTAGATATGT TCTCAATGTT TCTTGGCATT AAAAGTACTA TTGATGCTGC AAAATCAATG GCTACTAAATG TTATGAAAAA ATTCAAAGA TCAGGATTAAG  
TTAGATATGT TCTCAATGTT TCTTGGCATT AAAAGTACTA TTGATGCTGC AAAATCAATG GCTACTAAATG TTATGAAAAA ATTCAAAGA TCAGGATTAAG

**SAL1-N5\_Gs4(VP4) reference**

**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs4 reference**

**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs4 NGS**

3510 3520 3530 3540 3550 3560 3570 3580 3590 3600  
CGAATTCAGT TTCAACACTG ACAGATTCTT TATCAGACGC AGCATCATCA ATATCAAGAG GTTCACTAT ACCTTCGATT GGATCTTACG CATCAGCATG  
CGAATTCAGT TTCAACACTG ACAGATTCTT TATCAGACGC AGCATCATCA ATATCAAGAG GTTCACTAT ACCTTCGATT GGATCTTACG CATCAGCATG  
CGAATTCAGT TTCAACACTG ACAGATTCTT TATCAGACGC AGCATCATCA ATATCAAGAG GTTCACTAT ACCTTCGATT GGATCTTACG CATCAGCATG

**SAL1-N5\_Gs4(VP4) reference**

**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs4 reference**

**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs4 NGS**

3610 3620 3630 3640 3650 3660 3670 3680 3690 3700  
GACGGATGTA TCAACACAAA TAACTGATAT ATCGTCATCA GTAAGTTCAG TTTTCGACACA AACGTCAAAT ATCAGTAGAA GATTGAGACT AAAGGAAAATG  
GACGGATGTA TCAACACAAA TAACTGATAT ATCGTCATCA GTAAGTTCAG TTTTCGACACA AACGTCAAAT ATCAGTAGAA GATTGAGACT AAAGGAAAATG  
GACGGATGTA TCAACACAAA TAACTGATAT ATCGTCATCA GTAAGTTCAG TTTTCGACACA AACGTCAAAT ATCAGTAGAA GATTGAGACT AAAGGAAAATG

**SAL1-N5\_Gs4(VP4) reference**

**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs4 reference**

**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs4 NGS**

3710 3720 3730 3740 3750 3760 3770 3780 3790 3800  
GCAACACAAA CTGAGGGTAT GAATTTTGCAT GATATATCAG CGGCTGTGTTT GAAACTAAG ATAGATAAAT CGACTCAAAT ATCACCACAAC ACAATACCTG  
GCAACACAAA CTGAGGGTAT GAATTTTGCAT GATATATCAG CGGCTGTGTTT GAAACTAAG ATAGATAAAT CGACTCAAAT ATCACCACAAC ACAATACCTG  
GCAACACAAA CTGAGGGTAT GAATTTTGCAT GATATATCAG CGGCTGTGTTT GAAACTAAG ATAGATAAAT CGACTCAAAT ATCACCACAAC ACAATACCTG

**SAL1-N5\_Gs4(VP4) reference**

**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs4 reference**

**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs4 NGS**

3810 3820 3830 3840 3850 3860 3870 3880 3890 3900  
ACAATGTTAC TGAAGCATCG GAAAAATTTCA TACCAAATAG GGCCTTACCAG GTTATAACA ACCGATGATGT GTTTGAAGCT GGAATTTAGT GAAAAATTTT  
ACAATGTTAC TGAAGCATCG GAAAAATTTCA TACCAAATAG GGCCTTACCAG GTTATAACA ACCGATGATGT GTTTGAAGCT GGAATTTAGT GAAAAATTTT  
ACAATGTTAC TGAAGCATCG GAAAAATTTCA TACCAAATAG GGCCTTACCAG GTTATAACA ACCGATGATGT GTTTGAAGCT GGAATTTAGT GAAAAATTTT

**SAL1-N5\_Gs4(VP4) reference**

**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs4 reference**

**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs4 NGS**









<b>SAL1-NS5_GS5(NSP1) reference</b>	2310	2320	2330	2340	2350	2360	2370	2380	2390	2400	
<b>pSmart_SAL1-NS5_GS5 reference</b>		ATATAATAATT	TCCAATAAT	GA---TAAAG	TAAATTAGAAA	ATTT-----	---GAAAAGAAT	GATAAAGCAA	AG-----	-----AGAA	
<b>pSmart_SAL1-NS5_GS5 NGS</b>		GCTCAGAAC	CTTCATCAAG	TACCCCTAAG	GAATCCACAG	TTTTCTCAAG	CAGAGCTTCC	CCGAAGGAAIT	CACITGGGAA	AGGTCACCC	GCTACGAGGA
		ATATAATAATT	TCCAATAAT	GA---TAAAG	TAAATTAGAAA	ATTT-----	---GAAAAGAAT	GATAAAGCAA	AG-----	-----AGAA	
<b>SAL1-NS5_GS5(NSP1) reference</b>	2410	2420	2430	2440	2450	2460	2470	2480	2490	2500	
<b>pSmart_SAL1-NS5_GS5 reference</b>		TGTAGGAATC	A-----ATAT	AAAATTGAAT	GGTATTAATC-	--ATTTGCTG	CTCCCAATTA	-----CATTA	AATGCT---	G	CTGCATTTAA
<b>pSmart_SAL1-NS5_GS5 NGS</b>		CGGAGGCGTC	GTCAAGACAC	GTCACTGGAG	GATGGATGCC	TGGTTTACCA	CGTCAAGTG	AGAGGCGTGA	ATTTCCEGAG	CAACGGTCCA	
		TGTAGGAATC	A-----ATAT	AAAATTGAAT	GGTATTAATC-	--ATTTGCTG	CTCCCAATTA	-----CATTA	AATGCT---	G	CTGCATTTAA
<b>SAL1-NS5_GS5(NSP1) reference</b>	2510	2520	2530	2540	2550	2560	2570	2580	2590	2600	
<b>pSmart_SAL1-NS5_GS5 reference</b>		GT---TTGA	TGAAAAT---	-----AAT-	-----CTTTA	TTATGTTTTT	GGGTATATG	AG-----	-----	---	AAATCAG
<b>pSmart_SAL1-NS5_GS5 NGS</b>		GTGATGCAGA	AGAAAACCT	CGGCTGGGAG	CCAAATACTG	AAATGCTTTA	CCCTGCCGAC	GGAGGACTCG	AAGGGCGCTC	GGACATGGCT	CTTAAAGTTGG
		GT---TTGA	TGAAAAT---	-----AAT-	-----CTTTA	TTATGTTTTT	GGGTATATG	AG-----	-----	---	AAATCAG
<b>SAL1-NS5_GS5(NSP1) reference</b>	2610	2620	2630	2640	2650	2660	2670	2680	2690	2700	
<b>pSmart_SAL1-NS5_GS5 reference</b>		TCAGTGT---	ATATATATGC	TCCATAT---	-----AGAATTGTT-	-----	AACTTTAT	AA-----	ATGAATTTGA	TAAATTAATTG	
<b>pSmart_SAL1-NS5_GS5 NGS</b>		TCGGTGGGG	ACATCTGAGC	TGCTCATTTG	TGACCACCTA	CGGTGCGAAG	AAAACCGTGG	GGAACATCAA	GATGCCGGC	ATCCATGCTG	TCGATCACCG
		TCAGTGT---	ATATATATGC	TCCATAT---	-----AGAATTGTT-	-----	AACTTTAT	AA-----	ATGAATTTGA	TAAATTAATTG	
<b>SAL1-NS5_GS5(NSP1) reference</b>	2710	2720	2730	2740	2750	2760	2770	2780	2790	2800	
<b>pSmart_SAL1-NS5_GS5 reference</b>		CITTGAT---	-----CATAT	AACTT---	-----TACA	AGA-----AT	GTCCAA-TCT	ACCA-ATAGA	GTGAGA---	-----AACC-	
<b>pSmart_SAL1-NS5_GS5 NGS</b>		CCTGGTGGG	ATCAAGAAG	CGGATAAAG	AACTTATGTTG	GAGCAGCAG	AGGTGGCGGT	GGCCAAAGTTT	GCCGAGTTGG	GCGGAGGCAT	GGAGAACCTC
		CITTGAT---	-----CATAT	AACTT---	-----TACA	AGA-----AT	GTCCAA-TCT	ACCA-ATAGA	GTGAGA---	-----AACC-	
<b>SAL1-NS5_GS5(NSP1) reference</b>	2810	2820	2830	2840	2850	2860	2870	2880	2890	2900	
<b>pSmart_SAL1-NS5_GS5 reference</b>		-----A	TTACGCAAAG	AAATACCTCC	AAITATCAAG	ACTGCCATCA	TCAAAAACCTAA	AGCAAATTTA	CTTTTCAGAT	TTTACTAAAG	AAACTGTGTGAT
<b>pSmart_SAL1-NS5_GS5 NGS</b>		TACAAGTAA	TTACGCAAAG	AAATACCTCC	AAITATCAAG	ACTGCCATCA	TCAAAAACCTAA	AGCAAATTTA	CTTTTCAGAT	TTTACTAAAG	AAACTGTGTGAT
		-----A	TTACGCAAAG	AAATACCTCC	AAITATCAAG	ACTGCCATCA	TCAAAAACCTAA	AGCAAATTTA	CTTTTCAGAT	TTTACTAAAG	AAACTGTGTGAT
<b>SAL1-NS5_GS5(NSP1) reference</b>	2910	2920	2930	2940	2950	2960	2970	2980	2990	3000	
<b>pSmart_SAL1-NS5_GS5 reference</b>		TTTTTAATACT	TATACAAAA	CCCAGGAAAG	ATCAATATAC	AGAAATGTAA	CTGAAATTTAA	TTGGAGAGAT	GAATTTGGAGC	TTTTATTCTGA	TTTAAAAAAT
<b>pSmart_SAL1-NS5_GS5 NGS</b>		TTTTTAATACT	TATACAAAA	CCCAGGAAAG	ATCAATATAC	AGAAATGTAA	CTGAAATTTAA	TTGGAGAGAT	GAATTTGGAGC	TTTTATTCTGA	TTTAAAAAAT
		TTTTTAATACT	TATACAAAA	CCCAGGAAAG	ATCAATATAC	AGAAATGTAA	CTGAAATTTAA	TTGGAGAGAT	GAATTTGGAGC	TTTTATTCTGA	TTTAAAAAAT
<b>SAL1-NS5_GS5(NSP1) reference</b>	3010	3020	3030	3040	3050	3060	3070	3080	3090	3100	
<b>pSmart_SAL1-NS5_GS5 reference</b>		GATAAGAATA	AATTAATTGC	TGCAATGATG	ACGAGTAAGT	ATACCTCGGT	CTATGCTCAT	GATAATAAAT	TTGGAAGGTT	GAAAATGACA	ATATTTGAGT
<b>pSmart_SAL1-NS5_GS5 NGS</b>		GATAAGAATA	AATTAATTGC	TGCAATGATG	ACGAGTAAGT	ATACCTCGGT	CTATGCTCAT	GATAATAAAT	TTGGAAGGTT	GAAAATGACA	ATATTTGAGT
		GATAAGAATA	AATTAATTGC	TGCAATGATG	ACGAGTAAGT	ATACCTCGGT	CTATGCTCAT	GATAATAAAT	TTGGAAGGTT	GAAAATGACA	ATATTTGAGT

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3110 3120 3130 3140 3150 3160 3170 3180 3190 3200
TGGGACATCA TTGTCAGCCT AACTACGTTG CAITTAATCA CCCAGGCAAT GCTTCCGATA TCCAGTACTG TAAATGGTGT AATATAAAT ATTTTCTTAG
TGGGACATCA TTGTCAGCCT AACTACGTTG CAITTAATCA CCCAGGCAAT GCTTCCGATA TCCAGTACTG TAAATGGTGT AATATAAAT ATTTTCTTAG
TGGGACATCA TTGTCAGCCT AACTACGTTG CAITTAATCA CCCAGGCAAT GCTTCCGATA TCCAGTACTG TAAATGGTGT AATATAAAT ATTTTCTTAG

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3210 3220 3230 3240 3250 3260 3270 3280 3290 3300
TAAAATTGAT TGGCGGATTC GTGATATGTA TAAATTAATG ATGGAATTTA TTAAGGATTTG TTATAAAAAGT AATGTTAAAG TGGACATTTG TAGTTCGTGT
TAAAATTGAT TGGCGGATTC GTGATATGTA TAAATTAATG ATGGAATTTA TTAAGGATTTG TTATAAAAAGT AATGTTAAAG TGGACATTTG TAGTTCGTGT
TAAAATTGAT TGGCGGATTC GTGATATGTA TAAATTAATG ATGGAATTTA TTAAGGATTTG TTATAAAAAGT AATGTTAAAG TGGACATTTG TAGTTCGTGT

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3310 3320 3330 3340 3350 3360 3370 3380 3390 3400
GAAAACATAT ATCCTTTAAT TAAAAGATTA AATTTGGAGT TGTTTACTAA TCACATGGAT CAAACAATTTG AAGAAGTGTT TAATCACATG TCGCCAGTGT
GAAAACATAT ATCCTTTAAT TAAAAGATTA AATTTGGAGT TGTTTACTAA TCACATGGAT CAAACAATTTG AAGAAGTGTT TAATCACATG TCGCCAGTGT
GAAAACATAT ATCCTTTAAT TAAAAGATTA AATTTGGAGT TGTTTACTAA TCACATGGAT CAAACAATTTG AAGAAGTGTT TAATCACATG TCGCCAGTGT

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3410 3420 3430 3440 3450 3460 3470 3480 3490 3500
CAGTTGAAGG TACGAATGTC ATCATGTTGA TTCCTGGATT GAATATTAGT TTGTATAATG AAATTAAGCG CACTTTGAAT GTAGATAGCA TACCAATGGT
CAGTTGAAGG TACGAATGTC ATCATGTTGA TTCCTGGATT GAATATTAGT TTGTATAATG AAATTAAGCG CACTTTGAAT GTAGATAGCA TACCAATGGT
CAGTTGAAGG TACGAATGTC ATCATGTTGA TTCCTGGATT GAATATTAGT TTGTATAATG AAATTAAGCG CACTTTGAAT GTAGATAGCA TACCAATGGT

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3510 3520 3530 3540 3550 3560 3570 3580 3590 3600
ACTTAATTTA AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC
ACTTAATTTA AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC
ACTTAATTTA AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC
ACTTAATTTA AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC AATGAATTC

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3610 3620 3630 3640 3650 3660 3670 3680 3690 3700
GAGGAACCTGA TTGAAATGAA GAAATTCGGA ACTTTAACTG AAGAATTTGA GCTACTGTATC TCCAACCTCAG AAGATGACAA TGAGTGAAT TACTAATGTC
GAGGAACCTGA TTGAAATGAA GAAATTCGGA ACTTTAACTG AAGAATTTGA GCTACTGTATC TCCAACCTCAG AAGATGACAA TGAGTGAAT TACTAATGTC
GAGGAACCTGA TTGAAATGAA GAAATTCGGA ACTTTAACTG AAGAATTTGA GCTACTGTATC TCCAACCTCAG AAGATGACAA TGAGTGAAT TACTAATGTC

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3710 3720 3730 3740 3750 3760 3770 3780 3790 3800
ACTATCTAAT TATACAGTAT TTAGCCATCA CAAGACCCGTC CAGACTAGAG TAGCGCCTAG TAGCGCAAAAT ACTGTGAACC -----
ACTATCTAAT TATACAGTAT TTAGCCATCA CAAGACCCGTC CAGACTAGAG TAGCGCCTAG TAGCGCAAAAT ACTGTGAACC GCGCCGATG GTCCCAGCCT
ACTATCTAAT TATACAGTAT TTAGCCATCA CAAGACCCGTC CAGACTAGAG TAGCGCCTAG TAGCGCAAAAT ACTGTGAACC GCGCCGATG GTCCCAGCCT

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3810 3820 3830 3840 3850 3860 3870 3880 3890 3900
CCTCGCTGGC GCCGGCTGGG CAACATTCGG AGGGGACCGT CCCCCTCGGTA ATGGCGAATG GGACGGATCC GGTGTCTAAC AAAGCCCGAA AGGAAGCTGA
CCTCGCTGGC GCCGGCTGGG CAACATTCGG AGGGGACCGT CCCCCTCGGTA ATGGCGAATG GGACGGATCC GGTGTCTAAC AAAGCCCGAA AGGAAGCTGA
CCTCGCTGGC GCCGGCTGGG CAACATTCGG AGGGGACCGT CCCCCTCGGTA ATGGCGAATG GGACGGATCC GGTGTCTAAC AAAGCCCGAA AGGAAGCTGA

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3910.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....
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GTTGGCTGCT GCCACCGCTG AGCAATAACT AGCATAACCC CTTGGGGCCT CTAAACGGGT CTTGAGGGGT TTTTGGAT
GTTGGCTGCT GCCACCGCTG AGCAATAACT AGCATAACCC CTTGGGGCCT CTAAACGGGT CTTGAGGGGT TTTTGGAT

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**sAl1-N5\_Gs5(NSP1) reference**  
**pSmart\_sAl1-N5\_Gs5 reference**  
**pSmart\_sAl1-N5\_Gs5 NGS**



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pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS6 reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS6 NGS
    ACGACGAGCG TGACACACAG ATGCCTGTAG CAATGGCAAC AACGTTGGCG AACATAITAA CTGGCGAACT ACTTACTCTA GCTTCCCGCG AACAAITAA
    ACGACGAGCG TGACACACAG ATGCCTGTAG CAATGGCAAC AACGTTGGCG AACATAITAA CTGGCGAACT ACTTACTCTA GCTTCCCGCG AACAAITAA
    . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . |
    810      820      830      840      850      860      870      880      890      900
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SALL1-N5_GS6(VP6) reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS6 reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS6 NGS
    AACTGTGATG GAGGGGATA AAGTTGCAGG ATCACTTCTG CGTCCGCC CCTCCGGCTGG CTGGTTTATT GCTGATAAAT CTGGAGCCGG TGAGCGTGGG
    AACTGTGATG GAGGGGATA AAGTTGCAGG ATCACTTCTG CGTCCGCC CCTCCGGCTGG CTGGTTTATT GCTGATAAAT CTGGAGCCGG TGAGCGTGGG
    . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . |
    910      920      930      940      950      960      970      980      990      1000
-----
SALL1-N5_GS6(VP6) reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS6 reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS6 NGS
    TCTCGCGGTA TCATTGCAGC ACTGGGGCCA GATGTAAGC CCTCCGCCAT CGTAGTTATC TACACGACGG GGAGTCAGGC AACTATGGAT GAACGAAAATA
    TCTCGCGGTA TCATTGCAGC ACTGGGGCCA GATGTAAGC CCTCCGCCAT CGTAGTTATC TACACGACGG GGAGTCAGGC AACTATGGAT GAACGAAAATA
    . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . |
    1010     1020     1030     1040     1050     1060     1070     1080     1090     1100
-----
SALL1-N5_GS6(VP6) reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS6 reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS6 NGS
    GACAGATCGC TGAGATAGGT GCCTCACTGA TTAAGCATTG GTAATGAGGG CCCAAATGTA ATCACCTGGC TCACCTTCGG FTGGGCCCTTT CTGCGTTGCT
    GACAGATCGC TGAGATAGGT GCCTCACTGA TTAAGCATTG GTAATGAGGG CCCAAATGTA ATCACCTGGC TCACCTTCGG FTGGGCCCTTT CTGCGTTGCT
    . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . |
    1110     1120     1130     1140     1150     1160     1170     1180     1190     1200
-----
SALL1-N5_GS6(VP6) reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS6 reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS6 NGS
    GCGGTTTTC CATAGGTCC GCCCCCCTGA CGACATCAC AAAATCGAT GCTCAAGTCA GAGTGCGGA AACCCGACAG GACTATAAAG ATACCAGGGC
    GCGGTTTTC CATAGGTCC GCCCCCCTGA CGACATCAC AAAATCGAT GCTCAAGTCA GAGTGCGGA AACCCGACAG GACTATAAAG ATACCAGGGC
    . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . |
    1210     1220     1230     1240     1250     1260     1270     1280     1290     1300
-----
SALL1-N5_GS6(VP6) reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS6 reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS6 NGS
    TTTCCCCCTG GAAGTCCCT CGTGGGCTCT CCTGTTCCGA CCTGCGGCT TACC GGATAAC CTGTCGCCCT TTCTCCCTC GGAAGCGTG GCGCTTTC
    TTTCCCCCTG GAAGTCCCT CGTGGGCTCT CCTGTTCCGA CCTGCGGCT TACC GGATAAC CTGTCGCCCT TTCTCCCTC GGAAGCGTG GCGCTTTC
    . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . |
    1310     1320     1330     1340     1350     1360     1370     1380     1390     1400
-----
SALL1-N5_GS6(VP6) reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS6 reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS6 NGS
    ATAGTCCAG CTGTAGTAT CTCAGTTCCG TGTAGTTCGT TCGTCCAAAG CTGGGCTGTG TGACGAAACC CCCCGTTCCG CCCGACCGCT GCGCTTATC
    ATAGTCCAG CTGTAGTAT CTCAGTTCCG TGTAGTTCGT TCGTCCAAAG CTGGGCTGTG TGACGAAACC CCCCGTTCCG CCCGACCGCT GCGCTTATC
    . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . |
    1410     1420     1430     1440     1450     1460     1470     1480     1490     1500
-----
SALL1-N5_GS6(VP6) reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS6 reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS6 NGS
    CCGTAACTAT CGTCTTGAGT CCAACCCGGT AAGACACGAC TTAATGCCAC TGGCAGCAGC CACTGGTAAC AGGATPAGCA GAGCGAGGTA TGTAGGGCGT
    CCGTAACTAT CGTCTTGAGT CCAACCCGGT AAGACACGAC TTAATGCCAC TGGCAGCAGC CACTGGTAAC AGGATPAGCA GAGCGAGGTA TGTAGGGCGT
    . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . |
    1510     1520     1530     1540     1550     1560     1570     1580     1590     1600

```



<b>SA11-N5_Gs6(VP6) reference</b>	2310	2320	2330	2340	2350	2360	2370	2380	2390	2400
<b>pSmart_SA11-N5_Gs6 reference</b>										
<b>pSmart_SA11-N5_Gs6 NGS</b>										
	2410	2420	2430	2440	2450	2460	2470	2480	2490	2500
<b>SA11-N5_Gs6(VP6) reference</b>										
<b>pSmart_SA11-N5_Gs6 reference</b>										
<b>pSmart_SA11-N5_Gs6 NGS</b>										
	2510	2520	2530	2540	2550	2560	2570	2580	2590	2600
<b>SA11-N5_Gs6(VP6) reference</b>										
<b>pSmart_SA11-N5_Gs6 reference</b>										
<b>pSmart_SA11-N5_Gs6 NGS</b>										
	2610	2620	2630	2640	2650	2660	2670	2680	2690	2700
<b>SA11-N5_Gs6(VP6) reference</b>										
<b>pSmart_SA11-N5_Gs6 reference</b>										
<b>pSmart_SA11-N5_Gs6 NGS</b>										
	2710	2720	2730	2740	2750	2760	2770	2780	2790	2800
<b>SA11-N5_Gs6(VP6) reference</b>										
<b>pSmart_SA11-N5_Gs6 reference</b>										
<b>pSmart_SA11-N5_Gs6 NGS</b>										
	2810	2820	2830	2840	2850	2860	2870	2880	2890	2900
<b>SA11-N5_Gs6(VP6) reference</b>										
<b>pSmart_SA11-N5_Gs6 reference</b>										
<b>pSmart_SA11-N5_Gs6 NGS</b>										
	2910	2920	2930	2940	2950	2960	2970	2980	2990	3000
<b>SA11-N5_Gs6(VP6) reference</b>										
<b>pSmart_SA11-N5_Gs6 reference</b>										
<b>pSmart_SA11-N5_Gs6 NGS</b>										
	3010	3020	3030	3040	3050	3060	3070	3080	3090	3100
<b>SA11-N5_Gs6(VP6) reference</b>										
<b>pSmart_SA11-N5_Gs6 reference</b>										
<b>pSmart_SA11-N5_Gs6 NGS</b>										

```

.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
3110 3120 3130 3140 3150 3160 3170 3180 3190 3200
TCTGTAAGTA AGGATGGGTA TACGCATTTCG CTACACAGAG TAATCACTCA GATGGTATAG TGAGAGGATG TGACC----- 3200
TCTGTAAGTA AGGATGGGTA TACGCATTTCG CTACACAGAG TAATCACTCA GATGGTATAG TGAGAGGATG TGA--GGCCG GCATGGTCCC AGCCTCCTCG
TCTGTAAGTA AGGATGGGTA TACGCATTTCG CTACACAGAG TAATCACTCA GATGGTATAG TGAGAGGATG TGACCAGGCCG GCATGGTCCC AGCCTCCTCG

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SAL1-N5\_GS6(VP6) reference  
pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_GS6 reference  
pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_GS6 NGS

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.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
3210 3220 3230 3240 3250 3260 3270 3280 3290 3300
CTGGCGCCGG CTGGGCAACA TTCCGAGGGG ACCGTCCCCT CGGTAATGGC GAATGGGACG GATCCGGCTG CTAACAAAGC CCGAAAAGAA GCTGAGTTGG
CTGGCGCCGG CTGGGCAACA TTCCGAGGGG ACCGTCCCCT CGGTAATGGC GAATGGGACG GATCCGGCTG CTAACAAAGC CCGAAAAGAA GCTGAGTTGG

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SAL1-N5\_GS6(VP6) reference  
pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_GS6 reference  
pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_GS6 NGS

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.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
3310 3320 3330 3340 3350 3360 3370
CTGCTGCCAC CGCTGAGCAA TAACTAGCAT AACCCCTTGG GCCCTCTAAA CGGGTTTTTTT GGAT
CTGCTGCCAC CGCTGAGCAA TAACTAGCAT AACCCCTTGG GCCCTCTAAA CGGGTTTTTTT GGAT

```

SAL1-N5\_GS6(VP6) reference  
pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_GS6 reference  
pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_GS6 NGS

Alignment: SALL1-N5\_GS7(NSP3)

```
SALL1-N5_GS7(NSP3) reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS7 reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS7 NGS
....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|.
10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90
-----
ATCGTCAAT ACTGACCAAT TAAATCATA C TGACTCTCA TAGCAGAAAG TCAAAAGCCT CCGACCCGGAG GCTTTTGACT TGATCGGCAC GTAAGAGGTT
ATCGTCAAT ACTGACCAAT TAAATCATA C TGACTCTCA TAGCAGAAAG TCAAAAGCCT CCGACCCGGAG GCTTTTGACT TGATCGGCAC GTAAGAGGTT

SALL1-N5_GS7(NSP3) reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS7 reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS7 NGS
....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|.
110 120 130 140 150 160 170 180 190 200
-----
CCAACTTTCA CCATAATGAA ATAAGATCAC TACCGGGCGT ATTTTTGAG TATCGAGAT TTTTTCAGGAGC TAAGGAAGCT AAAATGAGTA TTCAACATTT
CCAACTTTCA CCATAATGAA ATAAGATCAC TACCGGGCGT ATTTTTGAG TATCGAGAT TTTTTCAGGAGC TAAGGAAGCT AAAATGAGTA TTCAACATTT

SALL1-N5_GS7(NSP3) reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS7 reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS7 NGS
....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|.
210 220 230 240 250 260 270 280 290 300
-----
CCGTCTCGCC CTTATTCCCT TTTTTCGGC A TTTTCGCCT C CTGTCTCTC CTCACCCAGA AACGCTGGT AAAGTAAAAG ATGCTGAAGA TCAGTTGGGT
CCGTCTCGCC CTTATTCCCT TTTTTCGGC A TTTTCGCCT C CTGTCTCTC CTCACCCAGA AACGCTGGT AAAGTAAAAG ATGCTGAAGA TCAGTTGGGT

SALL1-N5_GS7(NSP3) reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS7 reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS7 NGS
....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|.
310 320 330 340 350 360 370 380 390 400
-----
GCACGAGTGG GTTACATCGA ACTGGATCTC AACAGCGGTA AGATCCTTGA GAGTTTACGC CCGAAGAAC GTTTTCCAAT GATGAGCACT TTFAAAGTTC
GCACGAGTGG GTTACATCGA ACTGGATCTC AACAGCGGTA AGATCCTTGA GAGTTTACGC CCGAAGAAC GTTTTCCAAT GATGAGCACT TTFAAAGTTC

SALL1-N5_GS7(NSP3) reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS7 reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS7 NGS
....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|.
410 420 430 440 450 460 470 480 490 500
-----
TGCTATGTGG CGGGTATTA TCCCGTATG ACGCCGGGCA AGAGCAACTC GGTCCGCCGA TACACTATTC TCAGATGAC TTGGTTGAGT ACTCACCAGT
TGCTATGTGG CGGGTATTA TCCCGTATG ACGCCGGGCA AGAGCAACTC GGTCCGCCGA TACACTATTC TCAGATGAC TTGGTTGAGT ACTCACCAGT

SALL1-N5_GS7(NSP3) reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS7 reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS7 NGS
....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|.
510 520 530 540 550 560 570 580 590 600
-----
CACAGAAAAG CATCTCACGG ATGGCATGAC AGTAAGAGAA TTATGAGTG CTGCCATAAC CATGAGTAT AACACTGCGG CCAACTTACT TCTGGCAACG
CACAGAAAAG CATCTCACGG ATGGCATGAC AGTAAGAGAA TTATGAGTG CTGCCATAAC CATGAGTAT AACACTGCGG CCAACTTACT TCTGGCAACG

SALL1-N5_GS7(NSP3) reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS7 reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS7 NGS
....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|.
610 620 630 640 650 660 670 680 690 700
-----
ATCGGAGGAC CGAAGGAGCT AACCGCTTTT TTGCACAACA TGGGGATCA TGTAACTCGC CTTGATCTGTT GGGAACCGGA GCTGAATGAA GCCATACCAA
ATCGGAGGAC CGAAGGAGCT AACCGCTTTT TTGCACAACA TGGGGATCA TGTAACTCGC CTTGATCTGTT GGGAACCGGA GCTGAATGAA GCCATACCAA

SALL1-N5_GS7(NSP3) reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS7 reference
pSmart_SALL1-N5_GS7 NGS
....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|.
710 720 730 740 750 760 770 780 790 800
-----
```

pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs7 reference  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs7 NGS

ACGACGAGCG TGACACACAG ATGCCTGTAG CAATGGCAAC AACGTTGGCG AAACATATTA CTGGCGAACT ACTTACTCTA GCTTCCCGCG AACAAATTAAT  
ACGACGAGCG TGACACACAG ATGCCTGTAG CAATGGCAAC AACGTTGGCG AAACATATTA CTGGCGAACT ACTTACTCTA GCTTCCCGCG AACAAATTAAT

. . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . |  
810 820 830 840 850 860 870 880 890 900

SAI1-N5\_Gs7(NSP3) reference  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs7 reference  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs7 NGS

AGACTGGATG GAGGCGGATA AAGTTGCAGG ATCACTTCTG CGCTCGCCC TCCCGGCTGG CTGGTTTATT GCTGATAAAT CTGGAGCCGG TGAGCGTGGG  
AGACTGGATG GAGGCGGATA AAGTTGCAGG ATCACTTCTG CGCTCGCCC TCCCGGCTGG CTGGTTTATT GCTGATAAAT CTGGAGCCGG TGAGCGTGGG

. . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . |  
910 920 930 940 950 960 970 980 990 1000

SAI1-N5\_Gs7(NSP3) reference  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs7 reference  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs7 NGS

TCTCGCGGTA TCAITGGAGC ACTGGGGGCA GAITGTAAGC CCTCCGCGAT CGTAGTTATC TACACGACGG GGAGTCAGGC AACTATGGAT GAACGAAATA  
TCTCGCGGTA TCAITGGAGC ACTGGGGGCA GAITGTAAGC CCTCCGCGAT CGTAGTTATC TACACGACGG GGAGTCAGGC AACTATGGAT GAACGAAATA

SAI1-N5\_Gs7(NSP3) reference  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs7 reference  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs7 NGS

. . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . |  
1010 1020 1030 1040 1050 1060 1070 1080 1090 1100  
GACAGATCGC TGAGATAGGT GCCTCACTGA TTAAGCATTG GTAATGAGGG CCCAAATGTA ATCACCTGGC TCACCTTCGG FTGGGCCCTTT CTGCGTTGCT  
GACAGATCGC TGAGATAGGT GCCTCACTGA TTAAGCATTG GTAATGAGGG CCCAAATGTA ATCACCTGGC TCACCTTCGG FTGGGCCCTTT CTGCGTTGCT

SAI1-N5\_Gs7(NSP3) reference  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs7 reference  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs7 NGS

. . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . |  
1110 1120 1130 1140 1150 1160 1170 1180 1190 1200  
GGCGTTTTTC CATAGGTCCT GCGGCGCTCT CCTGTTCGGA CCTGCCGCT TACCGGATAC CTGTCCGCCT TTCTCCCTC GGAAGCGTG GCGCTTTCCT  
GGCGTTTTTC CATAGGTCCT GCGGCGCTCT CCTGTTCGGA CCTGCCGCT TACCGGATAC CTGTCCGCCT TTCTCCCTC GGAAGCGTG GCGCTTTCCT

SAI1-N5\_Gs7(NSP3) reference  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs7 reference  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs7 NGS

. . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . |  
1210 1220 1230 1240 1250 1260 1270 1280 1290 1300  
TTTTCCCGCTG GAAGTCCCT CGTGGCTCT CCTGTTCGGA CCTGCCGCT TACCGGATAC CTGTCCGCCT TTCTCCCTC GGAAGCGTG GCGCTTTCCT  
TTTTCCCGCTG GAAGTCCCT CGTGGCTCT CCTGTTCGGA CCTGCCGCT TACCGGATAC CTGTCCGCCT TTCTCCCTC GGAAGCGTG GCGCTTTCCT

SAI1-N5\_Gs7(NSP3) reference  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs7 reference  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs7 NGS

. . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . |  
1310 1320 1330 1340 1350 1360 1370 1380 1390 1400  
ATAGCTCAG CTGTAGTAT CTCAGTTCCG TGTAGTCTGT TCGTCCAAG CTGGGCTGTG TGACGAAACC CCCCCTTCAG CCGGACCGCT GCGCTTTCCT  
ATAGCTCAG CTGTAGTAT CTCAGTTCCG TGTAGTCTGT TCGTCCAAG CTGGGCTGTG TGACGAAACC CCCCCTTCAG CCGGACCGCT GCGCTTTCCT

SAI1-N5\_Gs7(NSP3) reference  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs7 reference  
pSmart\_SAI1-N5\_Gs7 NGS

. . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . |  
1410 1420 1430 1440 1450 1460 1470 1480 1490 1500  
CGGTAACACTAT CGTCTTTCAGT CCAACCCGGT AAGACACGAC TTAATGCCAC TGGCAGCAGC CACTGGTAAAC AGGATFAGCA GAGCGAGGTA TGTAGGCGGT  
CGGTAACACTAT CGTCTTTCAGT CCAACCCGGT AAGACACGAC TTAATGCCAC TGGCAGCAGC CACTGGTAAAC AGGATFAGCA GAGCGAGGTA TGTAGGCGGT

. . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . |  
1510 1520 1530 1540 1550 1560 1570 1580 1590 1600

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SA11-N5_Gs7(NSP3) reference
pSmart_SAL1-N5_Gs7 reference
pSmart_SAL1-N5_Gs7 NGS
-----
GCTACAGAGT TCTTGAAGTG GTGGCCTAAC TACGGCTACA CTAGAAGAAC AGTATTTCGGT ATCTGCGCTC TGCTGAAGCC AGTTACCTCG GAAAAAGAGT
GCTACAGAGT TCTTGAAGTG GTGGCCTAAC TACGGCTACA CTAGAAGAAC AGTATTTCGGT ATCTGCGCTC TGCTGAAGCC AGTTACCTCG GAAAAAGAGT
.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
1610 1620 1630 1640 1650 1660 1670 1680 1690 1700
-----
SA11-N5_Gs7(NSP3) reference
pSmart_SAL1-N5_Gs7 reference
pSmart_SAL1-N5_Gs7 NGS
-----
TGGTAGCTCT TGATCCGCA AACAAACCAC CGCTGGTAGC GGTGGTTCCTTT TTGTTTGCAA GCACGAGATT ACGCCAGAA AAAAAGGATC TCAAGAAGAT
TGGTAGCTCT TGATCCGCA AACAAACCAC CGCTGGTAGC GGTGGTTCCTTT TTGTTTGCAA GCACGAGATT ACGCCAGAA AAAAAGGATC TCAAGAAGAT
.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
1710 1720 1730 1740 1750 1760 1770 1780 1790 1800
-----
SA11-N5_Gs7(NSP3) reference
pSmart_SAL1-N5_Gs7 reference
pSmart_SAL1-N5_Gs7 NGS
-----
CCTTTGATTT TCTACCGAAG AAAGGCCAC CCGTGAAGGT GAGCCAGTGA GTTGATTGCA GTCCAGTTAC GCTGGAGTCT GAGGCTCGTC CTGAATGATA
CCTTTGATTT TCTACCGAAG AAAGGCCAC CCGTGAAGGT GAGCCAGTGA GTTGATTGCA GTCCAGTTAC GCTGGAGTCT GAGGCTCGTC CTGAATGATA
.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
1810 1820 1830 1840 1850 1860 1870 1880 1890 1900
-----
SA11-N5_Gs7(NSP3) reference
pSmart_SAL1-N5_Gs7 reference
pSmart_SAL1-N5_Gs7 NGS
-----
TCTAATACGA CTCACATATAG GCATTTAATG CTTTTCAGTG GTTGATGCTC AAGATGGAGT CTAGCCAACA GATGGCCGTC TCAATTAFTA ACTCTTCTTT
TCTAATACGA CTCACATATAG GCATTTAATG CTTTTCAGTG GTTGATGCTC AAGATGGAGT CTAGCCAACA GATGGCCGTC TCAATTAFTA ACTCTTCTTT
.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
1910 1920 1930 1940 1950 1960 1970 1980 1990 2000
-----
SA11-N5_Gs7(NSP3) reference
pSmart_SAL1-N5_Gs7 reference
pSmart_SAL1-N5_Gs7 NGS
-----
TGAAGCTGCA GTTGTAGCTG CAACCTCAGC TCTTTGAGAT ATGGGAATAG AATATGATTA TCAGGATATA TAITTCAGAG TAAAGAATAA AITTGATTTT
TGAAGCTGCA GTTGTAGCTG CAACCTCAGC TCTTTGAGAT ATGGGAATAG AATATGATTA TCAGGATATA TAITTCAGAG TAAAGAATAA AITTGATTTT
.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
2010 2020 2030 2040 2050 2060 2070 2080 2090 2100
-----
SA11-N5_Gs7(NSP3) reference
pSmart_SAL1-N5_Gs7 reference
pSmart_SAL1-N5_Gs7 NGS
-----
GTGATGGAGC ATCTCTGGTG TAAAAATAAT CTGATGGTA AAGCAATAAC TATTGATCAA GCITTTGAATA ATAAATTTGG ATCTGCTATA AGAAATAGAA
GTGATGGAGC ATCTCTGGTG TAAAAATAAT CTGATGGTA AAGCAATAAC TATTGATCAA GCITTTGAATA ATAAATTTGG ATCTGCTATA AGAAATAGAA
.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
2110 2120 2130 2140 2150 2160 2170 2180 2190 2200
-----
SA11-N5_Gs7(NSP3) reference
pSmart_SAL1-N5_Gs7 reference
pSmart_SAL1-N5_Gs7 NGS
-----
ACTGGCTTGC TGATACTTCT AGAGCAGCTA AAITGGATGA GGATGTAAC AAACATAAGAA TGATGTTATC ATCAAAGGA ATTGATCAA AAATGAGAGT
ACTGGCTTGC TGATACTTCT AGAGCAGCTA AAITGGATGA GGATGTAAC AAACATAAGAA TGATGTTATC ATCAAAGGA ATTGATCAA AAATGAGAGT
.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
2210 2220 2230 2240 2250 2260 2270 2280 2290 2300
-----
SA11-N5_Gs7(NSP3) reference
pSmart_SAL1-N5_Gs7 reference
pSmart_SAL1-N5_Gs7 NGS
-----
TTTAAACGCA TGCTTCAGTG TAAAAAGAT ACCTGGAAAA TCATCATCTA TTATTAATG CACAAAATGG ATGCGTGATA AATTGGAACG TGGTGAAGTT
TTTAAACGCA TGCTTCAGTG TAAAAAGAT ACCTGGAAAA TCATCATCTA TTATTAATG CACAAAATGG ATGCGTGATA AATTGGAACG TGGTGAAGTT
.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
2310 2320 2330 2340 2350 2360 2370 2380 2390 2400
-----
SA11-N5_Gs7(NSP3) reference
pSmart_SAL1-N5_Gs7 reference
pSmart_SAL1-N5_Gs7 NGS
-----
TTTAAACGCA TGCTTCAGTG TAAAAAGAT ACCTGGAAAA TCATCATCTA TTATTAATG CACAAAATGG ATGCGTGATA AATTGGAACG TGGTGAAGTT
TTTAAACGCA TGCTTCAGTG TAAAAAGAT ACCTGGAAAA TCATCATCTA TTATTAATG CACAAAATGG ATGCGTGATA AATTGGAACG TGGTGAAGTT
.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
2410 2420 2430 2440 2450 2460 2470 2480 2490 2500

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**SAL1-N5\_Gs7(NSP3) reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs7 reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs7 NGS**  
  
**SAL1-N5\_Gs7(NSP3) reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs7 reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs7 NGS**  
  
**SAL1-N5\_Gs7(NSP3) reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs7 reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs7 NGS**  
  
**SAL1-N5\_Gs7(NSP3) reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs7 reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs7 NGS**  
  
**SAL1-N5\_Gs7(NSP3) reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs7 reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs7 NGS**  
  
**SAL1-N5\_Gs7(NSP3) reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs7 reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs7 NGS**  
  
**SAL1-N5\_Gs7(NSP3) reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs7 reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs7 NGS**  
  
**SAL1-N5\_Gs7(NSP3) reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs7 reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs7 NGS**  
  
**SAL1-N5\_Gs7(NSP3) reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs7 reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs7 NGS**

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.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....
3110 ----- 3120 -----
GGGTCTTGAG GGGTTTTTTG GAT
-----
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SAL1-N5\_GS7(NSP3) reference  
pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_GS7 reference  
pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_GS7 NGS



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pSmart_SAI1-N5_GS8 reference
pSmart_SAI1-N5_GS8 NGS
      810 |.....| 820 |.....| 830 |.....| 840 |.....| 850 |.....| 860 |.....| 870 |.....| 880 |.....| 890 |.....| 900
-----
SAI1-N5_GS8(NSP2) reference
pSmart_SAI1-N5_GS8 reference
pSmart_SAI1-N5_GS8 NGS
      910 |.....| 920 |.....| 930 |.....| 940 |.....| 950 |.....| 960 |.....| 970 |.....| 980 |.....| 990 |.....| 1000
-----
SAI1-N5_GS8(NSP2) reference
pSmart_SAI1-N5_GS8 reference
pSmart_SAI1-N5_GS8 NGS
      1010 |.....| 1020 |.....| 1030 |.....| 1040 |.....| 1050 |.....| 1060 |.....| 1070 |.....| 1080 |.....| 1090 |.....| 1100
-----
SAI1-N5_GS8(NSP2) reference
pSmart_SAI1-N5_GS8 reference
pSmart_SAI1-N5_GS8 NGS
      1110 |.....| 1120 |.....| 1130 |.....| 1140 |.....| 1150 |.....| 1160 |.....| 1170 |.....| 1180 |.....| 1190 |.....| 1200
-----
SAI1-N5_GS8(NSP2) reference
pSmart_SAI1-N5_GS8 reference
pSmart_SAI1-N5_GS8 NGS
      1210 |.....| 1220 |.....| 1230 |.....| 1240 |.....| 1250 |.....| 1260 |.....| 1270 |.....| 1280 |.....| 1290 |.....| 1300
-----
SAI1-N5_GS8(NSP2) reference
pSmart_SAI1-N5_GS8 reference
pSmart_SAI1-N5_GS8 NGS
      1310 |.....| 1320 |.....| 1330 |.....| 1340 |.....| 1350 |.....| 1360 |.....| 1370 |.....| 1380 |.....| 1390 |.....| 1400
-----
SAI1-N5_GS8(NSP2) reference
pSmart_SAI1-N5_GS8 reference
pSmart_SAI1-N5_GS8 NGS
      1410 |.....| 1420 |.....| 1430 |.....| 1440 |.....| 1450 |.....| 1460 |.....| 1470 |.....| 1480 |.....| 1490 |.....| 1500
-----
SAI1-N5_GS8(NSP2) reference
pSmart_SAI1-N5_GS8 reference
pSmart_SAI1-N5_GS8 NGS
      1510 |.....| 1520 |.....| 1530 |.....| 1540 |.....| 1550 |.....| 1560 |.....| 1570 |.....| 1580 |.....| 1590 |.....| 1600

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SA11-N5\_Gs8(NSP2) reference  
 pSmart\_SA11-N5\_Gs8 reference  
 pSmart\_SA11-N5\_Gs8 NGS

SA11-N5\_Gs8(NSP2) reference  
 pSmart\_SA11-N5\_Gs8 reference  
 pSmart\_SA11-N5\_Gs8 NGS

SA11-N5\_Gs8(NSP2) reference  
 pSmart\_SA11-N5\_Gs8 reference  
 pSmart\_SA11-N5\_Gs8 NGS

SA11-N5\_Gs8(NSP2) reference  
 pSmart\_SA11-N5\_Gs8 reference  
 pSmart\_SA11-N5\_Gs8 NGS

SA11-N5\_Gs8(NSP2) reference  
 pSmart\_SA11-N5\_Gs8 reference  
 pSmart\_SA11-N5\_Gs8 NGS

SA11-N5\_Gs8(NSP2) reference  
 pSmart\_SA11-N5\_Gs8 reference  
 pSmart\_SA11-N5\_Gs8 NGS

SA11-N5\_Gs8(NSP2) reference  
 pSmart\_SA11-N5\_Gs8 reference  
 pSmart\_SA11-N5\_Gs8 NGS

SA11-N5\_Gs8(NSP2) reference  
 pSmart\_SA11-N5\_Gs8 reference  
 pSmart\_SA11-N5\_Gs8 NGS

SA11-N5\_Gs8(NSP2) reference 2310 2320 2330 2340 2350 2360 2370 2380 2390 2400  
pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs8 reference  
pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_Gs8 NGS

ATTGAAAATA CAATAACTGC AGAAGGAGGA GAAATGTAT TTCAAACGC TGCCTTCACC ATGFTGGAAC TAAC TTATTTT AGAACATCAA TTGATGCCAA  
ATTGAAAATA CAATAACTGC AGAAGGAGGA GAAATGTAT TTCAAACGC TGCCTTCACC ATGFTGGAAC TAAC TTATTTT AGAACATCAA TTGATGCCAA  
ATTGAAAATA CAATAACTGC AGAAGGAGGA GAAATGTAT TTCAAACGC TGCCTTCACC ATGFTGGAAC TAAC TTATTTT AGAACATCAA TTGATGCCAA  
.....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|  
2410 2420 2430 2440 2450 2460 2470 2480 2490 2500  
TTCTGGATCA GAATTTTTATT GAAATATAAG TTACATTTGAA CGAAGATAAA CCAATTTTTCAG ATGTTTCATGT TAAAGAAATTA GTCGGTGAAC TTCCGATGGCA  
TTCTGGATCA GAATTTTTATT GAAATATAAG TTACATTTGAA CGAAGATAAA CCAATTTTTCAG ATGTTTCATGT TAAAGAAATTA GTCGGTGAAC TTCCGATGGCA  
TTCTGGATCA GAATTTTTATT GAAATATAAG TTACATTTGAA CGAAGATAAA CCAATTTTTCAG ATGTTTCATGT TAAAGAAATTA GTCGGTGAAC TTCCGATGGCA

.....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|  
2510 2520 2530 2540 2550 2560 2570 2580 2590 2600  
ATATAACAAG TTTTGTCTAA TCACACATGG TAAGGTTCAT TATAGAATTC TAAAGTATTC ATCAGTTGCT AATCAGCTG ACAGAGTATA TGCAACTTTTC  
ATATAACAAG TTTTGTCTAA TCACACATGG TAAGGTTCAT TATAGAATTC TAAAGTATTC ATCAGTTGCT AATCAGCTG ACAGAGTATA TGCAACTTTTC  
ATATAACAAG TTTTGTCTAA TCACACATGG TAAGGTTCAT TATAGAATTC TAAAGTATTC ATCAGTTGCT AATCAGCTG ACAGAGTATA TGCAACTTTTC

.....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|  
2610 2620 2630 2640 2650 2660 2670 2680 2690 2700  
AAGAGTAAAG TTTTAACTGG AGTTAAATAAT GATTTTAAC TACITTCATCA AAGAAATTTATT TGGCAAAAAT GGTATGCATT TACATCATCA ATGAAAACAGG  
AAGAGTAAAG TTTTAACTGG AGTTAAATAAT GATTTTAAC TACITTCATCA AAGAAATTTATT TGGCAAAAAT GGTATGCATT TACATCATCA ATGAAAACAGG  
AAGAGTAAAG TTTTAACTGG AGTTAAATAAT GATTTTAAC TACITTCATCA AAGAAATTTATT TGGCAAAAAT GGTATGCATT TACATCATCA ATGAAAACAGG

.....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|  
2710 2720 2730 2740 2750 2760 2770 2780 2790 2800  
GTAATACACT TGACGTGTGT AAAAAGTGTG TTTTCCAAAA AATGAACCA GAAAAAATC CAITTTAAAG GCTGTCAACG GATAGAAAAA TGGAACGAAAT  
GTAATACACT TGACGTGTGT AAAAAGTGTG TTTTCCAAAA AATGAACCA GAAAAAATC CAITTTAAAG GCTGTCAACG GATAGAAAAA TGGAACGAAAT  
GTAATACACT TGACGTGTGT AAAAAGTGTG TTTTCCAAAA AATGAACCA GAAAAAATC CAITTTAAAG GCTGTCAACG GATAGAAAAA TGGAACGAAAT

.....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|  
2810 2820 2830 2840 2850 2860 2870 2880 2890 2900  
TTCTCAAAGTT GCGGTTTAAAC TCGCTATCAA TTTGAGGATG ATGATGGCTT A-----GCAA GAATAGAAA GCGTTATGTG ACC-----  
TTCTCAAAGTT GCGGTTTAAAC TCGCTATCAA TTTGAGGATG ATGATGGCTT GCGTTCGTTT CAGGTGATAC TGTTGAACCA ATTAATGCTG TTGCTTTTGA  
TTCTCAAAGTT GCGGTTTAAAC TCGCTATCAA TTTGAGGATG ATGATGGCTT GCGTTCGTTT CAGGTGATAC TGTTGAACCA ATTAATGCTG TTGCTTTTGA

.....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|  
2910 2920 2930 2940 2950 2960 2970 2980 2990 3000  
-----  
TAATATGCG ATCATGAACG AACTGTAAAC GCCAACCCCA TTGTGGAGAT ATGACCGGCC GGCATGGTCC CAGCTCCTC GCTGGCGCG GCTGGGGCAA  
NNNNNNNNN NNNNNNNNN NNNNNNNNN NNNNNNNNN NNNNNNNNN NNNNNNNNN NNNNNNNNN NNNNNNNNN NNNNNNNNN NNNNNNNNN

.....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|. ....|  
3010 3020 3030 3040 3050 3060 3070 3080 3090 3100  
-----  
ATTCCGAGG GACCGTCCCG TCGGTAATGG CGAATGGGAC GGATCCGGT GCTAACAAA CCGAAAAGGA AGCTGAGTTG GCTGTGCCA CCGCTGAGCA  
ATTCCGAGG GACCGTCCCG TCGGTAATGG CGAATGGGAC GGATCCGGT GCTAACAAA CCGAAAAGGA AGCTGAGTTG GCTGTGCCA CCGCTGAGCA

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.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
3110      3120      3130      3140      3150
-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
ATAACTAGCA TAACCCCTTG GGCCTCTTAA ACGGTCCTTG AGGGGTTTTT TGGAT
ATAACTAGCA TAACCCCTTG GGCCTCTTAA ACGGTCCTTG AGGGGTTTTT TGGAT

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**SAL1-N5\_GS8(NSP2) reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_GS8 reference**  
**pSmart\_SAL1-N5\_GS8 NGS**

Alignment: SAl1-N5\_GS9(VP7)

	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
<b>SAl1-N5_GS9(VP7) reference</b>	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
<b>pSmart_SAl1-N5_GS9 reference</b>	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
<b>pSmart_SAl1-N5_GS9 NGS</b>	ATCGTCAAT	ACTGACCATT	TAAATCATA	CTGACCTCCA	TAGCAGAAAG	TCAAAAGCCT	CCGACCCGGAG	GCITTTTGACT	TGATCGGCAC	GTAAGAGGTT
	ATCGTCAAT	ACTGACCATT	TAAATCATA	CTGACCTCCA	TAGCAGAAAG	TCAAAAGCCT	CCGACCCGGAG	GCITTTTGACT	TGATCGGCAC	GTAAGAGGTT
	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
<b>SAl1-N5_GS9(VP7) reference</b>	110	120	130	140	150	160	170	180	190	200
<b>pSmart_SAl1-N5_GS9 reference</b>	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
<b>pSmart_SAl1-N5_GS9 NGS</b>	CCAACTTTCA	CCATAATGAA	ATAAGATCAC	TACCGGGCGT	ATTTTTTGG	TTATCGAGAT	TTTTCAGGAGC	TAAGGAGCT	AAAAATGAGTA	TTCAACATTT
	CCAACTTTCA	CCATAATGAA	ATAAGATCAC	TACCGGGCGT	ATTTTTTGG	TTATCGAGAT	TTTTCAGGAGC	TAAGGAGCT	AAAAATGAGTA	TTCAACATTT
	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
<b>SAl1-N5_GS9(VP7) reference</b>	210	220	230	240	250	260	270	280	290	300
<b>pSmart_SAl1-N5_GS9 reference</b>	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
<b>pSmart_SAl1-N5_GS9 NGS</b>	CCGTCTCGCC	CTTATTCCT	TTTTTGCGC	ATTTTGCCTT	CCTGTTTTG	CTCACCCAGA	AACGCTGGTG	AAAGTAAAAG	ATGCTGAAGA	TCAGTTGGGT
	CCGTCTCGCC	CTTATTCCT	TTTTTGCGC	ATTTTGCCTT	CCTGTTTTG	CTCACCCAGA	AACGCTGGTG	AAAGTAAAAG	ATGCTGAAGA	TCAGTTGGGT
	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
<b>SAl1-N5_GS9(VP7) reference</b>	310	320	330	340	350	360	370	380	390	400
<b>pSmart_SAl1-N5_GS9 reference</b>	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
<b>pSmart_SAl1-N5_GS9 NGS</b>	GCACGAGTGG	GTTACATCGA	ACTGGATCTC	AACAGCGGTA	AGATCCCTGA	GAGTTTTACGC	CCCGAAGAAC	GTTTTTCCAAT	GATGAGCACT	TTTTAAAGTTC
	GCACGAGTGG	GTTACATCGA	ACTGGATCTC	AACAGCGGTA	AGATCCCTGA	GAGTTTTACGC	CCCGAAGAAC	GTTTTTCCAAT	GATGAGCACT	TTTTAAAGTTC
	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
<b>SAl1-N5_GS9(VP7) reference</b>	410	420	430	440	450	460	470	480	490	500
<b>pSmart_SAl1-N5_GS9 reference</b>	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
<b>pSmart_SAl1-N5_GS9 NGS</b>	TGCTATGTGG	CGCGGTATTA	TCCCCTATTG	ACGCCGGGCA	AGAGCAACTC	GGTCGCCGGA	TACACTATTTC	TCAGAAATGAC	TTGGTTTGGT	ACTCACCAGT
	TGCTATGTGG	CGCGGTATTA	TCCCCTATTG	ACGCCGGGCA	AGAGCAACTC	GGTCGCCGGA	TACACTATTTC	TCAGAAATGAC	TTGGTTTGGT	ACTCACCAGT
	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
<b>SAl1-N5_GS9(VP7) reference</b>	510	520	530	540	550	560	570	580	590	600
<b>pSmart_SAl1-N5_GS9 reference</b>	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
<b>pSmart_SAl1-N5_GS9 NGS</b>	CACAGAAAAG	CATCTCACGG	ATGGCATGAC	AGTAAGAGAA	TTATCAGTGG	CTGCCATAAC	CATGAGTGAT	AACACTGCGG	CCAACCTTACT	TCTGGCAACG
	CACAGAAAAG	CATCTCACGG	ATGGCATGAC	AGTAAGAGAA	TTATCAGTGG	CTGCCATAAC	CATGAGTGAT	AACACTGCGG	CCAACCTTACT	TCTGGCAACG
	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
<b>SAl1-N5_GS9(VP7) reference</b>	610	620	630	640	650	660	670	680	690	700
<b>pSmart_SAl1-N5_GS9 reference</b>	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
<b>pSmart_SAl1-N5_GS9 NGS</b>	ATCGGAGGAC	CGAAGGAGCT	AACCGCTTTT	TTGCACAACA	TGGGGATCA	TGTAACCTGC	CTTGATCTGTT	GGGAACCGGA	GCTGAATGAA	GCCATACCAA
	ATCGGAGGAC	CGAAGGAGCT	AACCGCTTTT	TTGCACAACA	TGGGGATCA	TGTAACCTGC	CTTGATCTGTT	GGGAACCGGA	GCTGAATGAA	GCCATACCAA
	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
<b>SAl1-N5_GS9(VP7) reference</b>	710	720	730	740	750	760	770	780	790	800
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----





















