

Identification, Genomic Organization, and Analysis of the Group III Capsular Polysaccharide Genes *kpsD*, *kpsM*, *kpsT*, and *kpsE* from an Extraintestinal Isolate of *Escherichia coli* (CP9, O4/K54/H5)

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Received 12 June 1997/Accepted 8 November 1997

Group III capsular polysaccharides (e.g., K54) of extraintestinal isolates of *Escherichia coli*, similar to group II capsules (e.g., K1), are important virulence traits that confer resistance to selected host defense components *in vitro* and potentiate systemic infection *in vivo*. The genomic organization of group II capsule gene clusters has been established as a serotype-specific region 2 flanked by regions 1 and 3, which contain transport genes that are highly homologous between serotypes. In contrast, the organization of group III capsule gene clusters is not well understood. However, they are defined in part by an absence of genes with significant nucleotide homology to group II capsule transport genes in regions 1 and 3. Evaluation of isogenic, *TnphoA*-generated, group III capsule-minus derivatives of a clinical blood isolate (CP9, O4/K54/H5) has led to the identification of homologs of the group II capsule transport genes *kpsDMTE*. These genes and their surrounding regions were sequenced and analyzed. The genomic organization of these genes is distinctly different from that of their group II counterparts. Although *kps_{K54}DMTE* are significantly divergent from their group II homologs at both the DNA and protein levels *phoA* fusions and computer-assisted analyses suggest that their structures and functions are similar. The putative proteins *Kps_{K54}M* and *Kps_{K54}T* appear to be the integral membrane component and the peripheral ATP-binding component of the ABC-2 transporter family, respectively. The putative *Kps_{K54}E* possesses features similar to those of the membrane fusion protein family that facilitates the passage of large molecules across the periplasm. At one boundary of the capsule gene cluster, a truncated *kpsM* (*kpsM_{truncated}*) and its 5' noncoding regulatory sequence were identified. In contrast to the complete *kps_{K54}M*, this region was highly homologous to the group II *kpsM*. Fifty-three base pairs 3' from the end of *kpsM_{truncated}* was a sequence 75% homologous to the 39-bp inverted repeat in the *IS110* insertion element from *Streptomyces coelicolor*. Southern analysis established that two copies of this element are present in CP9. These findings are consistent with the hypothesis that CP9 previously possessed group II capsule genes and acquired group III capsule genes via *IS110*-mediated horizontal transfer.

Over 80 serologically and chemically unique capsular polysaccharides can be produced by *Escherichia coli* (22, 31). Initially, these polysaccharides were divided into group I and group II based on chemical, physical, genetic, and microbiological distinctions (20, 21). Subsequently, the division of the group II capsules into groups II and III (formerly I and II) has been proposed (36).

Group I capsules are chemically and physically characterized by a high molecular weight (>100,000), an acidic component usually consisting of hexuronic acid or pyruvate, a low charge density and electrophoretic mobility, and stability at pH 5 to 6 at 100°C. Group I capsules may protect against desiccation and may contribute to adherence in enteric disease-producing isolates of *E. coli* (17, 27, 30). However, a role in the pathogenesis of extraintestinal *E. coli* infection has not been demonstrated (45).

In contrast, epidemiologic and experimental evidence supports a role for group II and group III capsules as virulence

factors for extraintestinal infection (10, 43, 44), and these capsules possess multiple similarities with the capsules of pathogenic strains of *Neisseria meningitidis* and *Haemophilus influenzae* (26). The group II capsules are characterized by a molecular weight of <50,000; hexuronic acids; *N*-acetyl neuraminic acid, phosphate, or 2-keto-3-deoxyoctonic acid (KDO) as acidic components; a higher charge density and electrophoretic mobility; and a general lack of stability at pH 5 to 6 at 100°C. Several group II capsules are linked to KDO-phosphatidic acid, which may serve both as a recognition signal for transport across the cytoplasmic membrane and as a membrane anchor (6, 7). The genes that code for these capsules have been mapped near *serA* (32, 33, 53), and these capsules are coexpressed with a large number of O antigens. It was originally believed that a given *E. coli* strain possessed only genes for either a group I or a group II capsule. However, it has been subsequently shown that three group II or III capsule (K1, K5, and K54)-producing strains were also capable of producing the group I capsule colanic acid (25, 46). This finding suggests the possibility that many if not all strains of *E. coli* have the capability to produce a group I capsule, whereas only a subset can produce a group II or group III capsule. The gene clusters coding for the group II capsules K1, K4, K5, K7, K12, and K92 have been cloned and extensively studied (particularly K1 and K5) and have a common organization of three func-

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tional regions (38–40, 48). Region 2, which is unique for a given capsular antigen, codes for genes whose products are responsible for the synthesis of the K-specific serotype. This region is flanked by regions 1 and 3, which are highly conserved among the group II capsule gene clusters evaluated to date. In fact, a DNA probe generated from region 1 in the K1 capsule gene cluster was used to identify the K4, K5, K7, K12, and K92 capsule gene clusters (13, 38). Region 1 contains six genes (*kpsFEDUCS*), and region 3 contains two genes (*kpsMT*); each region is organized in a single transcriptional unit and is temperature regulated. These gene products are needed for transport of the capsular polysaccharide across the cytoplasmic membrane and assembly onto the cell's surface (4).

Group III capsules were originally categorized as group II capsular polysaccharides. Although these groups have similar biochemical and physical characteristics (31), map to the same location on the chromosome (32, 33, 53), confer resistance to selected host defense components in vitro, and potentiate systemic infection in vivo (10, 43, 44), differences exist between them. Group III serotypes K2, K3, K10, K11, K19, and K54 do not show temperature regulation of capsule expression, a characteristic which correlates with constitutive levels of CMP-KDO activity (14), whereas group II capsules have increased capsule expression and CMP-KDO activity at 37°C. Further, only the K2 capsule gene cluster, but not those from K3, K10, K11, K19, and K54, possesses DNA sequences homologous to group II capsule gene cluster regions 1 and 3 on the basis of Southern analysis (12, 36). In a recent study that described the cloning of a K10 and a different K54 (*E. coli* A12b) capsule gene cluster, Southern analysis and complementation studies were used to elucidate group III capsule gene organization (36). The preliminary results of these analyses suggested that a central serotype-specific region was flanked by two regions in which there was homology between the K10 and K54 gene clusters. Further, complementation studies demonstrated that group II *kps_{K5}D* and *kps_{K5}E* mutations, but not *kps_{K5}M* or *kps_{K5}T* mutations, were complemented by subclones from the K10 and K54 capsule gene clusters. Therefore, this finding suggested that, despite a lack of DNA homology, functional homology exists, at least in part, between proteins involved in the export of group II and group III capsular polysaccharides. The combination of these findings has resulted in the designation of serotypes K3, K10, K11, K19, and K54 (with or without K2) as group III capsules (36) and has suggested that these gene clusters are phylogenetically divergent from those of group II. In support of this concept, a clonal group of clinical *E. coli* isolates was recently identified from multiple geographic regions (23, 24). These strains were characterized in part by possession of the *papG₁₉₆* (class I) and *prsG₁₉₆* (class III) genes, the O4-specific antigen moiety of lipopolysaccharide, the H5 flagellar antigen, the F13 fimbrial antigen, and a group III capsule (K3, K10, and K54/96).

Researchers in our laboratory have been studying a clinical bacteremic isolate of *E. coli* (CP9, O4/K54/H5) as a model pathogen for extraintestinal infection (42). Its group III K54 capsular polysaccharide has been shown to be important for serum resistance in vitro (44) and systemic infection in vivo (43) but not for resistance to bactericidal permeability-increasing protein in vitro (45) or urinary tract infection in vivo (41). Previously, we reported the construction and initial characterization of *TnphoA*-generated, isogenic K54-minus derivatives of CP9 that were used in these studies (42). In this study, we describe the genomic location and novel organization of a portion of the K54 capsule gene cluster, the DNA sequences of *kps_{K54}DMTE*, and an analysis of these genes.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Strains. The strains used for this study are listed in Table 1. The wild-type strain (CP9, O4/K54/H5), a clinical blood isolate, and its K54 capsule-minus isogenic derivatives have been previously described in part (23, 42).

Construction of capsule gene subclones. Subclones of the K54 capsule gene locus 5' to the *TnphoA* insertions in CP9.29, CP9.108, CP9.137, CP9.171, CP9.C43, CP9.C54, and CP9.C56 were obtained by restricting whole-cell DNA with *Bam*HI, which recognizes a site located 3' to the kanamycin resistance gene in *TnphoA* with or without *Xba*I (CP9.108, 137, 171, C43, C54, and C56) or *Apa*I (CP9.29), neither of which restricts within *TnphoA*. Ligations of these restrictions into pBSII SK⁻, electroporation into XL1 Blue (Stratagene, La Jolla, Calif.), and selection of ampicillin (100 µg/ml)- and kanamycin (40 µg/ml)-resistant transformants resulted in the identification of the subclones p29.1, p108.1, p137.1, p171.1, pC43.1, pC54.1, and pC56.1. To construct a second set of subclones, in which the active *phoA* fusion was in the opposite orientation, p108.1, p137.1, and p171.1 were restricted with *Bam*HI and *Xba*I, p29.1 was restricted with *Bam*HI and *Apa*I, and the inserts were purified by electroelution and ligated into pBSII KS⁻. This set of constructs has been designated p29.2, p108.2, p137.2, and p171.2. These plasmids are described in detail in Table 1.

Subclones of the K54 capsule gene locus 3' to the *TnphoA* insertions in CP9.108 and CP9.171 were obtained by restricting whole-cell DNA with *Clal*, which recognizes a site 5' to the kanamycin resistance gene in *TnphoA*. Ligations of these restrictions into pBSII SK⁻, electroporation into XL1 Blue (Stratagene), and selection of ampicillin- and kanamycin-resistant transformants resulted in the identification of the subclones p108.3 and p171.3. Each contains the right 6.7 kb of *TnphoA* and either 3.0 kb (p108.3) or 2.0 kb (p171.3) of chromosomal DNA 3' to the respective *TnphoA* insertions.

Identification of a cosmid clone containing capsule genes. Whole-cell DNA was purified from CP9 as described previously (42), and DNA fragments (30 to 50 kb) were ligated into the unique *Bam*HI site of the 8.8-kb cosmid cloning vector pWE15 (Clontech Laboratories, Palo Alto, Calif.). The ligation mix was packaged into lambda phage in vitro and transduced into *E. coli* NM554, and the resultant CP9-derived DNA library was amplified once. The amplified library was screened for clones containing capsule genes via colony filter hybridization as described previously (16). The probe used for detection was generated by digesting p171.1 with *Pvu*I/*Xba*I, purifying the 1.3-kb restriction product via electroelution, and subsequent radioactive labelling with [α -³²P]dCTP by random oligonucleotide priming. Approximately 1,000 colonies of NM554 containing the CP9 DNA library were screened, and a cosmid clone (cos9a) was detected. Cos9a was confirmed to contain capsule gene DNA via Southern analysis (42), with the p171.1 *Pvu*I/*Xba*I 1.3-kb fragment as the probe.

DNA sequencing, determination of *TnphoA* insertion sites, and analysis of capsule genes. DNA sequence was determined by the dideoxy chain termination method of Sanger et al. (47) with the capsule gene subclones (p29.1, p108.1, p137.1, p171.1, p171.3, and pC56.1) and cos9a as the DNA templates. DNA sequencing of the capsule gene subclones p29.1, p108.1, p137.1, p171.1, and pC56.1 was initially with a *TnphoA'* fusion joint primer (5' AATATCGCC CTGAGC 3'), which established the location for a given *TnphoA* insertion. Sequencing of capsule gene subclones p108.3 and p171.3 was initially with the *TnphoA* primer (5' CATGTTAGGAGTACAT 3'). Subsequent DNA sequence was determined with primers derived from the deduced sequences of the capsule gene subclones or the cosmid cos9a. A consensus sequence was generated by assembling and editing the DNA sequence obtained from 76 overlapping but independent sequencing reactions with AssemblyLIGN 1.0.2 (Oxford Molecular Group, Beaverton, Oreg.). Both strands of the capsule gene sequence submitted in this report were sequenced. The organization of the assembled subclone sequences and that of the cosmid cos9a sequence were in agreement. Sequence analysis, comparisons, and CLUSTAL alignments were performed, in part with MacVector (version 6.0; Oxford Molecular Group). Comparisons were also performed via BLAST analysis of the nonredundant GenBank, EMBL, DDBJ, and PDB sequences. Percentages of similarity and identity were determined by the GAP program of the Wisconsin Sequence Analysis Packages (Genetics Computer Group, Madison, Wis.). The PROSITE database was used for motif searches (2). SignalP V1.1 was used for identification of signal sequences (28). A terminator sequence search was performed by the method of Brendel and Trifonov adapted for the Wisconsin Sequence Analysis Packages (TERMINATOR) (5).

Capsule loci based on *Xba*I DNA fragments. We previously reported, based on Southern analysis of pulsed-field gel electrophoretically separated DNA from CP9 and *TnphoA*-generated isogenic capsule-minus derivatives, that the K54 capsule genes were located on at least three different *Xba*I DNA fragments (capsule loci *cl* 1, 2, and 3). These fragments were linked within the transducing range of bacteriophage T4 (100 to 150 kb) (42). *cl* 1 was estimated to be a 10.3-kb fragment, and strains CP9.29, CP9.108, CP9.137, CP9.171, and CP9.C56 had insertions within this locus. Sequence analysis from the present study confirmed this finding and indicated that *cl* 1 was approximately 6.0 kb (Fig. 1). The fragment identified as *cl* 3 and containing the *TnphoA* insertion in CP9.C54 was proven by sequence analysis to also be *cl* 1. CP9.C54 has subsequently been shown to contain a truncated form of *TnphoA*, a finding which led to the incorrect interpretation that *cl* 1 and *cl* 3 were separate loci. *cl* 2 was an estimated 18.5 kb, and strain CP9.C43 had a *TnphoA* insertion within this locus. Sequence

TABLE 1. *E. coli* strains and plasmids used in this study

Strain or plasmid	Genotype or other relevant characteristics	Source or reference
Strains		
CP9	O4/K54/H5 clinical blood isolate, serum resistant	42
CP9.29	<i>clI.29::TnphoA</i> active <i>TnphoA</i> fusion, serum sensitive	42
CP9.108	<i>kps_{K54}M::TnphoA</i> (formerly <i>clI.108::TnphoA</i>) active <i>TnphoA</i> fusion, serum sensitive	42
CP9.137	<i>kps_{K54}D::TnphoA</i> (formerly <i>clI.137::TnphoA</i>) active <i>TnphoA</i> fusion, serum sensitive	42
CP9.171	<i>kps_{K54}E::TnphoA</i> (formerly <i>clI.171::TnphoA</i>) active <i>TnphoA</i> fusion, serum sensitive	42
CP9.C56	<i>clI::TnphoA</i> inactive <i>TnphoA</i> fusion, serum sensitive	42
CP9.C54	<i>clI::TnphoA</i> inactive <i>TnphoA</i> fusion, serum sensitive	42
CP9.C43	<i>cl2::TnphoA</i> inactive <i>TnphoA</i> fusion, serum sensitive	42
NM554	<i>recA13 F⁻ araD139 Δ(ara-leu)7696 galE15 galK16 Δ(lac)X74 rpsL(Str^r) hsdR2 (r_K⁻ m_K⁺) mcrA mcrB1</i>	Lab strain
XL1 Blue	<i>recA1 endA1 gyrA96 thi-1 hsdR17 supE44 relA1 lac (F⁺ proAB lacI^r ZΔM15 Tn10)</i>	Stratagene
Plasmids		
p29.1	14.0-kb <i>Bam</i> HI/ <i>Apa</i> I fragment from CP9.29 containing the leftward 5.0 kb of <i>TnphoA</i> (active fusion) and capsule genes cloned into pBS II SK (-); capsule gene transcription is in the opposite orientation to the pBS II SK <i>lac</i> promoter	This study
p29.2	The above 14.0-kb fragment cloned into pBS II KS (-); capsule gene transcription is in the same orientation as the pBS II SK <i>lac</i> promoter	This study
p108.1	8.5-kb <i>Bam</i> HI/ <i>Xba</i> I fragment from CP9.108 containing the leftward 5.0 kb of <i>TnphoA</i> (active fusion) and capsule genes cloned into pBS II SK (-); capsule gene transcription is in the same orientation as the pBS II SK <i>lac</i> promoter	This study
p108.2	The above 8.5-kb fragment cloned into pBS II KS (-); capsule gene transcription is in the opposite orientation to the pBS II SK <i>lac</i> promoter	This study
p108.3	9.7-kb <i>Cla</i> I fragment from CP9.108 containing the rightward 6.7 kb of <i>TnphoA</i> (nonfusion) and capsule genes cloned into pBS II SK (-)	This study
p137.1	7.5-kb <i>Bam</i> HI/ <i>Xba</i> I fragment from CP9.137 containing the leftward 5.0 kb of <i>TnphoA</i> (active fusion) and capsule genes cloned into pBS II SK (-); capsule gene transcription is in the same orientation as the pBS II SK <i>lac</i> promoter	This study
p137.2	The above 7.5-kb fragment cloned into pBS II KS (-); capsule gene transcription is in the opposite orientation to the pBS II SK <i>lac</i> promoter	This study
p171.1	6.4-kb <i>Bam</i> HI fragment from CP9.171 containing the leftward 5.0 kb of <i>TnphoA</i> (active fusion) and capsule genes cloned into pBS II SK (-); capsule gene transcription is in the same orientation as the pBS II SK <i>lac</i> promoter	This study
p171.2	The above 6.4-kb fragment cloned into pBS II SK (-); capsule gene transcription is in the opposite orientation to the pBS II SK <i>lac</i> promoter	This study
p171.3	8.7-kb <i>Cla</i> I fragment from CP9.171 containing the rightward 6.7 kb of <i>TnphoA</i> (nonfusion) and capsule genes cloned into pBS II SK (-)	This study
pC56.1	5.25 kb <i>Bam</i> HI/ <i>Xba</i> I fragment from CP9.C56 containing the leftward 5.0 kb of <i>TnphoA</i> (inactive fusion) and capsule genes cloned into pBS II SK (-)	This study
pcos9a	An approximately 40-kb fragment that contains capsule genes cloned into the <i>Bam</i> HI site of the cosmid pWE15	This study

analysis has demonstrated that the *TnphoA* insertion, responsible for the K54⁻ phenotype in CP9.C43, is in a novel DNA sequence which has no identifiable homology with any known capsule gene. This sequence is not part of the K54 capsule gene cluster reported here (Fig. 1). This data, in conjunction with the information described below, suggests that the *TnphoA* insertion in CP9.C43 and *cl2* are located 3' to the end of *kps_{K54}E* (bp 6132).

Southern analysis. Whole-cell DNA was prepared as described previously (42) and restricted with *Acc*I as suggested by the manufacturer (New England Biolabs, Beverly, Mass.). Southern hybridization was performed as described previously (42) with the following modifications. A Robbins Scientific model 1000 hybridization oven was used. Salmon sperm DNA (180 μl of 150 μg/ml stock) was added to 10 ml of prehybridization solution, which was removed and replaced with 10 ml of hybridization solution (5× SSC [1× SSC is 0.15 M NaCl plus 0.015 M sodium citrate]-1% sodium dodecyl sulfate). An oligonucleotide was made from the IS_{CP9.110} sequence (bp 581 to 626), labelled with [γ-³²P]dATP with T4 polynucleotide kinase according to the manufacturer's instructions (Gibco BRL, Gaithersburg, Md.), and used as a probe. After hybridization at 65°C for 18 h, the blot was washed once at 65°C with 1× SSC-0.1% sodium dodecyl sulfate for 3 min, followed by five washes at 25°C with 6× SSC-1% Sarkosyl for 5 min.

Alkaline phosphatase assays. Alkaline phosphatase assays were performed as previously described except that a Beckman DU 640B spectrophotometer was used to record the hydrolysis rates of *p*-nitrophenyl phosphate (46). The baseline activity of CP9 is negligible and therefore was not accounted for in this calculation. PhoA activity from each of the measured constructs represents the mean of five independent evaluations.

Nucleotide sequence accession number. The accession no. of the nucleotide sequence shown in Fig. 2 is AF007777.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Location, organization, and analysis of the K54 capsule gene locus. K54-deficient strains generated by *TnphoA* insertion mutagenesis (42) were used to identify clones carrying the group III capsule genes (see Materials and Methods), which were in turn used to identify a cosmid (pcos9a) carrying the wild-type genes. Sequencing of the region and identification of the sites of *TnphoA* insertion were carried out. The K54 group III capsule gene locus is depicted in Fig. 1. As expected, since group II or III capsule gene sequences have not been detected in *E. coli* K-12, a search of GenBank did not identify any DNA or protein homology of this capsule gene locus with the deposited *E. coli* K-12 sequence. Novel loci of unique DNA not present in laboratory strains of *E. coli* have been termed "pathogenicity islands," and this sequence likely represents a portion of such a locus. One of the two boundaries of this novel CP9 DNA sequence with *E. coli* sequence from the K-12 genome was established (Fig. 1). The boundary was contiguous with the third base (bp 6222, section 269, accession no. AE000379) of a 178-amino-acid open reading frame (ORF) (bp 6220 to 6756) of unknown identity from the complete *E. coli* K-12 genome. Interestingly, this novel CP9 sequence is 150

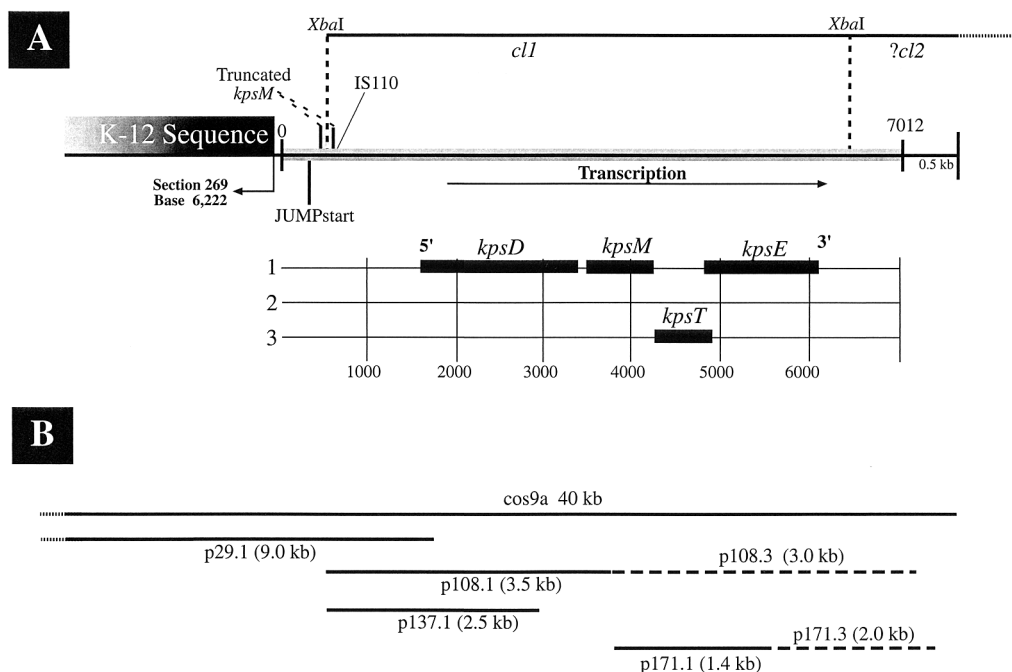


FIG. 1. (A) Schematic diagram of the K54 group III capsule gene sequence described in this study. From left to right are (i) the sequence homologous with the K-12 genome and its intersection (section 269, bp 6222) with a sequence unique to CP9 (90° arrow); (ii) bp 0 to 345, which are 85 to 90% homologous to the 5' noncoding region of *kps*_{K1.5}*M* (including the JUMPstart site as marked); (iii) a truncated *kpsM* (bp 346 to 476 and 501 to 526 are designated *kpsM*_{truncated}) that is 85 to 90% homologous to the corresponding region of *kps*_{K1.5}*M*; (iv) an IS110 element (bp 581 to 626) 53 bp from the 3' end of *kpsM*_{truncated}; and (v) the shaded region marked from 0 to 7012, representing the capsule gene sequence submitted in this report. The region from bp 627 to 1644 is unidentified but is probably capsule gene sequence. This region is followed by *kps*_{K54}*DMTE*, with their respective ORFs and reading frames depicted below. The 0.9 kb 3' to *kps*_{K54}*E* (bp 6133 to 7012) plus 0.5 kb is unidentified K54 capsule gene sequence. Prior to sequence analysis, the K54 *cl* were defined as *Xba*I fragments (44). The defined location of *cII* (6.0 kb) and the presumed location of *cl2* are marked above. (B) The lines represent various inserts of subclones used for sequence analysis and promoter localization. Insert sizes are as marked. Length is proportional, and location corresponds to the schematic diagram above. The insert in p29 consists of the first 154 bp of *kps*_{K54}*D* and an 8.9-kb region 5' to the start of *kps*_{K54}*D*. The insert in p108 contains the first half of *kps*_{K54}*M*, all of *kps*_{K54}*D*, and 1.2 kb 5' to *kps*_{K54}*D* (bp 452 to 3878). The insert in p137 consists of two-thirds of *kps*_{K54}*D* and the 1.2 kb 5' to it (bp 452 to 2801). The insert in p171 (bp 3894 to 5288) covers the first half of *kps*_{K54}*E*, all of *kps*_{K54}*T*, and the last half of *kps*_{K54}*M*. The dotted lines at the leftward boundaries of *cos9a* and p29.1 represent extension into K-12 homologous sequence beyond what is depicted above.

bp 3' to the phenylalanine tRNA (bp 5996 to 6071). The points of insertion of several pathogenicity islands are within various tRNAs (15). This location was consistent with the genetic linkage of the K54 capsule genes with *serA* (32), and its point of insertion is identical with that of the K5 capsule gene cluster.

Four homologs of group II capsule transport genes were recognized in the K54 capsule gene locus described in this study (Fig. 1). *kps*_{K54}*D* (bp 1645 to 3387, Fig. 2), *kps*_{K54}*M* (bp 3457 to 4254, Fig. 2), *kps*_{K54}*T* (bp 4269 to 4916, Fig. 2), and *kps*_{K54}*E* (bp 4888 to 6132, Fig. 2) were identified. However, while in group II capsule gene loci, *kpsD* and *kpsE* are in region 1 along with four other genes (*kpsFEDUCS*), and *kpsMT* are in region 3, in the CP9 (K54) capsule gene locus, these four genes are grouped together (*kpsDMTE*). These findings demonstrate that the organization of the K54 capsule transport genes in CP9 is unequivocally different from that of the corresponding regions in strains with group II capsule genes (39). Further, this data confirms the prediction, from complementation studies, that functional homologs of *kps*_{K5}*D* and *kps*_{K5}*E* existed in the K10 and K54 capsule gene clusters (36).

The putative molecular weights, estimated pI, guanosine-cytosine content, and presence or absence of an identifiable Shine-Dalgarno or signal sequence of *kps*_{K54}*DMTE* and their comparison with *kps*_{K1.5}*DMTE* are summarized in Table 2 (9, 34, 35, 49, 54). The guanosine-plus-cytosine content of *kps*_{K54}*DMTE* ranged from 37 to 43%, compared to the 51% observed for *E. coli* K-12, and suggested that these genes were

acquired by horizontal transfer from an unknown species. A nucleic acid subsequence analysis program and a manual search failed to identify any highly conserved Shine-Dalgarno sequences. The reason for this is unknown. However, since these genes are in essence "foreign DNA," perhaps their mRNAs possess sequence elements with complementarity to parts of the 16S rRNA that are distinct from those recognized by Shine-Dalgarno sequences, which in turn serve as translational enhancers.

The ORF (ORF1) from bp 1645 to 3387 encoded *kps*_{K54}*D*. It is 50% homologous at the nucleotide level and has 33% identity and 54% similarity at the predicted protein level with the group II genes *kps*_{K1.5}*D*. The limited homology with GumB (16% identity, 32% similarity) and OtnA (17% identity, 32% similarity) may represent common functional regions involved with transport (4). The identification of a putative signal sequence (Fig. 3), the presence of active *TnphoA* fusions within *kps*_{K54}*D*, a hydrophilic hydropathy profile, and secondary-structure predictions similar to those of *Kps*_{K1.5}*D* (data not shown) suggest that *KpsD* has a periplasmic location and a function similar to that of its group II counterpart, despite sequence divergence.

ORF2 (bp 3457 to 4254) encoded *kps*_{K54}*M*. No significant homology was detected at the nucleotide level; however, it has 39% identity and 52% similarity at the predicted protein level with the group II genes *kps*_{K1.5}*M*. Other homologs in *Actinobacillus pleuropneumoniae* (CpxB), *N. meningitidis* (CtrC), *H. influenzae* (BexB), and *Salmonella typhi* (VexB) revealed amino

1 CACCTTTCAGACTGTAAAGTTCCTAAGTGTGTTGACGCATTATGATTTAATAGTGTAGTGAATCATGAGTAATAATGATAGGTTAAAACATATAGGATAATCTTGTGTGATCTGTATTTGTGTGACTTGGAAATAGTAA

151 AATTCCTAGAGATAATCAATAAGTGAATTTTAAATAAGGAAATAATTCACGAAACCTGTTCGTCGAGCTTAAGAAATGTTTCTCAAGTATATCTAGTTCACCCAGTTCGAAATAAGTATACCTCCAGTGTATGGTAGCTGTAAAG
..... JUMPstart.....

301 CCAAGGGCCGTCATCTCTGAGAGATAGGAGCACATCAAAATCAAAAAGTGGGTTGAAGTCTAGAACCTCACCATAGAGACATTTATATACGAGAAATACGAACACGTTTGGCFAAATTTGTATGGGATATCAGTGGCGCA
**** JUMPstart ****
..... Truncated *kpsM*

451 TTCTAGAACCCTTCTGTGATCTGCTGCGCATTGGGGTTATGTTATGCACCACGATGCCAGACATTTCTCCAGGAAAATAAGCTGCGAAGTACTACAAAAGCTGTCCATGATGAGCATGCTCGTGGCTGACATGATCCACG
..... Truncated *kpsM*

601 CATGCTAGTCAGGACCGGGCAAGGGGCAAGAAGCCGCAATCTATCGCAAGTATCTCCCTCTTTTATATTTTGTGTTATCTGTATGATAAAGTACGACTATTATATTCGCAAAATATTAATCTAGTATGCAATTTTAT
..... IS_{Cp9110}

751 CGAAGTTCAGGGTCTGCTGAACGGCTCATGAAAATATTAGAGTGTAAAGTTCCTAGGACTTAGATTTTGGGGATAGTAATTTAAGAATTTATGAAAGCCCTATACCTTACTGAGTCATTACAAAACAAATTTATTAATGTATCCC

901 TCTTTATGTATAAGAGAAATTTCTCTTCCATATGTTGTTATTTAAATTTTATAAAAAAAGATAGCAATATACGGGGCCATAAAAATAATATTTTAGGGATGTGTGTGATGATGATACATCAAAAAGATAAAGGATATAT

1051 TCCTAATTAGTTATAAACAGATGATGATAAACACAGTTGACTAAAGTCAATCTTATACCTGCGCAACATCTATGATTAATTTGTGTGTTATAACTTTAAATATCTTATATTTATGGCTATTATGATATCTGTCAGAGTATCAATAATAG

1201 AAGGTAATTTGTTTACACTACTACACTTTTGGATACGCTTTAAAATGCCACTGACACATGATTTTATTTTACACTTCTTTTATAACGGCTCGCCACATGATCAAAAACAGTTGAAGCTCTGCTCCATGGTAAACG

1351 GATTAATCTCTTATCTCTTATCTCTTATCTGAAGATTTGACGACCACTTAAATAACCAAGATCAAGGACGACATCAACAAAATGGCGAATTTATACTATGAGGAAAGGTATATATCGGCTTTAGGTCTCAATGCAATAAAGTTAG

1501 TTATGCGATGAATGAAAATTTTCAAAGCGAAGTGTGTATGTAAGAGAAATAACAAGTGTATCAAGTACCTCAGTTGGAACAAACATCAGTTAGCACTTTGCTTATTGAAGAATAAAGTTGAAGGTAGACGGTTAGAAAATA ATG
kpsD Met
→

1648 AAA ATT TCG CAA CTT AGC ACT CTT CTC TTT CTT ATT TCT GCA TCA GCA TTC GCC GCA ATA GAG CAA AAT CAA TCT AAT GGT TCA CAT TTA GAT TAT GAT CTT GCT GCC TCG
Lys Ile Ser Gln Leu Ser Thr Leu Leu Phe Leu Ile Ser Ala Ser Ala Phe Ala Ala Ile Glu Gln Asn Gln Ser Asn Gly Ser His Leu Asp Tyr Asp Leu Ala Ala Ser

1759 ACA GGA GAG TCT CGG AAA ATG CTA GCA GAC ATC ACT GGA CAG CCT AAT ACA ACC TCC ACA ACA GGA AGC TTC ACA CAA CAG AAT CGT AAT GGG ATG TTG CTT CCA GGA GAG
Thr Gly Glu Ser Arg Lys Met Leu Ala Asp Ile Thr Gly Gln Pro Asn Thr Ser Thr Ser Phe Thr Gln Gln Asn Arg Asn Gly Met Leu Leu Pro Gly Glu

1870 TCA GAT GTA CGA AAA TTA CTG CCG CAA TCT GAA GCA GGC TTA CCT CCT CCG TAT GGT GCT AAT TTA TTT GCC GGA GGC TAT GAA ACA GAA AGG AGT GAC GGC TTA AGC GAT
Ser Asp Val Arg Lys Leu Leu Pro Gln Ser Glu Ala Gly Leu Pro Pro Tyr Gly Ala Asn Leu Phe Ala Gly Gly Tyr Glu Thr Glu Arg Ser Arg Ala Gly Gly Leu Ser Asp

1981 AAT TAT TTG ATT GCT CCT GGG GAT AAG TTA AAT ATC TGG ATT TGG GGA GCG GTC AAT TTC TCT AAT GTG GTT ACG GTA GAT AAT CAA GGA AAT ATT TTC ATA CCT GAT GTA
Asn Tyr Leu Ile Ala Pro Gly Asp Lys Leu Asn Ile Trp Ile Trp Gly Ala Val Asn Phe Ser Asn Val Val Thr Val Asp Asn Gln Gly Asn Ile Phe Ile Pro Asp Val

2092 GGT CCA ATA AAT GTA AAA AAT GTT CCT GCA AGC CAA GTT AAT CAG TTG GTG GCA AGT AAG ATC GGT GAT GTA TTT ACC AAT AAT GTA AAT ACT TAC GTA AAT CTT TTG ACT
Gly Pro Ile Asn Val Lys Asn Val Pro Ala Ser Gln Val Asn Gln Leu Val Ala Ser Lys Ile Gly Asp Val Phe Thr Asn Asn Val Asn Thr Tyr Val Asn Leu Leu Thr

2203 GCA ACC CCT GTA AGT GTA TTC GTT ACG GGG CCT GTA ATT CGT CCT GGG CAG TAT GCA GGA CAA TCT TCT GAT AGT ATA TTG TAT TTT TTA AAA CGT GCC GGT GGA ATA GAT
Ala Thr Pro Val Ser Val Phe Val Thr Gly Pro Val Ile Arg Pro Gly Gln Tyr Ala Gly Gln Ser Ser Asp Ser Ile Leu Tyr Phe Leu Lys Arg Ala Gly Gly Ile Asp

2314 TCT GAC CGT CGA AGT TAT CGA AAA ATT AAG GTG TTA CGA CAA AAT AGA GTA ATA CAG CAA ATT GAT CTT TAT GAT TTC ATA CGG TAT GGG AAA CTC CCG AAG CTG GCA TTA
Ser Asp Arg Gly Ser Tyr Arg Lys Ile Lys Val Leu Arg Gln Asn Arg Val Ile Gln Gln Ile Asp Leu Tyr Asp Phe Ile Arg Tyr Gly Lys Leu Pro Lys Leu Ala Leu

2425 AAA GAT CAA GAT GTG ATT TTA GTT GAG CAA CAA GGT CCA ATG ATC AAT GTT CCG GGA AAG GTT CGA AAC CCA TTC CGA TTT GAG CTT ACC CAG CGC AAT GCA TTA GGC TCT
Lys Asp Gln Asp Val Ile Leu Val Glu Gln Gln Gly Pro Met Ile Asn Val Ala Gly Lys Val Arg Asn Pro Phe Arg Phe Glu Leu Thr Gln Arg Asn Ala Leu Gly Ser

2536 GAA TTG GTG AAT TAT GCA CTT CCT CTC GCA AAA GTC AGT CAT GTC GGT GTG ATT GGC GAT AGG GAA AGC GGC CCG TTT TCC GTC TAC TTG CCG TAT AAA GAT TTT ACA CGT
Glu Leu Val Asn Tyr Ala Leu Pro Leu Ala Lys Val Ser His Val Gly Val Ile Gly Asp Arg Glu Ser Gly Pro Phe Ser Val Tyr Leu Pro Tyr Lys Asp Phe Thr Arg

2647 CTT CAA CTT AAA GAC GGT GAC AAA GTA CTT TTT AAT GAT GAC ATG CAT GCA CAA GTA TAT GAT ATA CAA GTA TCA GGC AGT TAT ATG GGA CCG TCA TAT TTC ACG GTT CGT
Leu Gln Leu Lys Asp Gly Asp Lys Val Leu Phe Asn Asp Asp Met His Ala Gln Val Tyr Asn Ala Asp Ala Asn Leu Asp Asp Tyr Val Ala Trp Ala Gly Phe Thr Glu Arg

2758 AAG CAA ACT AAA TTG CAT GAT TTA TTG AAC TAT ATC CCT ATT GAC CCA GAG CTT GCG GAT TAT CAA TCA ATT TAT CTG ATA CGA AAG AGT GTG GCT GCA AGA CAA AAA GAG
Lys Gln Thr Lys Leu His Asp Leu Leu Asn Tyr Ile Pro Ile Asp Pro Glu Leu Ala Asp Tyr Gln Ser Ile Tyr Leu Ile Arg Lys Ser Val Ala Ala Arg Gln Lys Glu

2869 ATG CTG GAT GAA TCT CTA AAC CGC TTG GAA CGT AGT GTA TTT ACC ACA CCC GCG CGA TCT GAT GGT GAG GCG AAT ATA CGT GCT AAA GAA GCA GAG TTA GTG ATG CAG TTT
Met Leu Asp Glu Ser Leu Asn Arg Leu Glu Arg Ser Val Phe Thr Thr Pro Ala Arg Ser Asp Gly Glu Ala Asn Ile Arg Ala Lys Glu Ala Glu Leu Val Met Gln Phe

2980 GTT GAA AAG GCT CGT AAA GTT CAA CCG CTT GGT AAA GTA GTA GTT GCA GAT AAA GGT GTT ATT GCC AAT ATC CAA TTA GAA CAA GGC GAT CAA ATA GTT ATT CCA AAT AAG
Val Glu Lys Ala Arg Lys Val Gln Pro Leu Gly Lys Val Val Val Ala Asp Lys Gly Val Ile Ala Asn Ile Gln Leu Glu Gln Gly Asp Gln Ile Val Ile Pro Asn Lys

3091 ACT GAT CTT ATT CAA GTG GGT GGT GAA GTG TTG ATG CCA CAA GCA GTA GTA TAT AAT GCC GAT GCT AAT TTG GAT GAT TAT GTT GCA TGG GCC GGA GGT TTT ACT GAG CGA
Thr Asp Leu Ile Gln Val Gly Gly Val Leu Phe Asn Asp Asp Met His Ala Gln Val Tyr Asn Ala Asp Ala Asn Leu Asp Asp Tyr Val Ala Trp Ala Gly Phe Thr Glu Arg

3202 GCT AAC GAC AAG CGA ATT GCT ATT GTA CAT GCA AAT GGT CTT GTA GAA TTT AAA GGG CAA GGT AAA GTA CAA CCG GGG GAT CAG ATA TTG GTT CTA CCT CAG GTT GAT AGC
Ala Asn Asp Lys Arg Ile Ala Ile Val His Ala Asn Gly Leu Val Glu Phe Lys Gly Gln Gly Lys Val Gln Pro Gly Asp Gln Ile Leu Val Leu Pro Gln Val Asp Ser

3313 AAA ACC ATG CAA TCA TTT AAA GAT ATC ACA CAA ATT ATT TAT CAA ATC GCT GTA GCT GCT AAC GTT GCT ATT AAA TGATGAGTGTTTAAATTTTAAATCGGAGGCTGTGTACTAATGAGCCG
Lys Thr Met Gln Ser Phe Lys Asp Ile Thr Gln Ile Ile Tyr Gln Ile Ala Val Ala Ala Asn Val Ala Ile Lys

3438 ATTAATTTGGGTAAGTATTA ATG GAC AAA CCC ATT ATT AGT CAA ACT CCA CGC ACT TCT TTG CAA GTA TTA CGT GAT GTA GTA TTT GGC TTA TTA ATT CGT GAG CTA AAA ACA AGA
kpsM Met Asp Lys Pro Ile Ile Ser Gln Thr Pro Arg Thr Ser Leu Gln Val Leu Arg Asp Val Val Phe Gly Leu Leu Ile Arg Glu Leu Lys Thr Arg
→

3553 TTT GGT AAT TAC CGA CTA GGT TAT GCT TGG GCA TTA CTT GAC CCA TTA TTA ATG ATT AGC CTG TTC AGC GTA GTA TTT GGG ATG AGA AGC CAA AGT GGC TTT GGT GGT GTC
Phe Gly Asn Tyr Arg Leu Gly Tyr Ala Trp Ala Leu Leu Asp Pro Leu Leu Met Ile Ser Leu Phe Ser Val Val Phe Gly Met Arg Ser Gln Ser Gly Phe Gly Gly Val

3664 CCA GCC CAG GTT TTT ATT ACT GCT GGT TAT TTA CCT TTC ATG TTT TTC AAT AAA GTT GTG ACT CAG TTG AAA TCT GCT GTC AAT GCT AAT ATG GGA CTT TTT TGT TAT AGA
Pro Ala Gln Val Phe Ile Thr Ala Gly Tyr Leu Pro Phe Met Phe Phe Asn Lys Val Val Thr Gln Leu Lys Ser Ala Val Asn Ala Asn Met Gly Leu Phe Cys Tyr Arg

FIG. 2. Nucleotide sequence and deduced amino acid sequence of *kps_{K54D}*, *kps_{K54M}*, *kps_{K54T}*, and *kps_{K54E}*. Arrows identify putative transcriptional start sites, solid triangles identify the insertion site of active *TnphoA* fusions, the open triangle identifies the insertion site of an inactive *TnphoA* fusion, and the underlined regions identify the inverted repeats of a strong theoretical rho-independent RNA polymerase terminator. The JUMPstart site, the truncated *kpsM* (*kpsM_{truncated}*), and IS_{Cp9110} are marked and identified by the dotted lines.

acid identities from 23 to 24% and similarities from 37 to 34%. All of these homologs have been implicated as the integral membrane component of the ABC-2 transporters of capsular polysaccharide across the cytoplasmic membrane (1, 18, 37). In

kps_{K54M}, the identification of the ABC-2 transporter system integral membrane protein signature (Fig. 4), a similar hydrophathy profile (hydrophobic protein with six transmembrane regions), and secondary-structure predictions similar to those of

▼ CP9.108

3775 CAA GTG ACT CCT TTT GCA ACT TTT ATA GCA CGT TTT ATG CTA GAA ACA ATG GTG GGC ATG ATT GTC GGT ATC ATC CTA GTA CTA GGA TTA TTG TGG TTT GGC TTT GAT GCA
 Gln Val Thr Pro Phe Ala Thr Phe Ile Ala Arg Phe Met Leu Glu Thr Met Val Gly Met Ile Val Gly Ile Ile Leu Val Leu Gly Leu Leu Trp Phe Gly Phe Asp Ala

3886 ATA CCT GCG GAT CCA TTG CAA GTG ATC CTT GGT TAT TCT CTT CTG ATG CTG TTT TCT TTT TCT CTT GGT ATT GTA TTT TGT GTT ATT TGT AAC TTA GCG AAA GAG GCA GAT
 Ile Pro Ala Asp Pro Leu Gln Val Ile Leu Gly Tyr Ser Leu Leu Met Leu Phe Ser Phe Ser Leu Gly Ile Val Phe Cys Val Ile Cys Asn Leu Ala Lys Glu Ala Asp

3997 AAA TTT CTT AGC TTG TTA ATG ATG CCT TTG ATG TTT ATC TCT TGT GTT ATG TTT CCT CTT GCT ACT ATT CCC CCT CAA TAT CAG CAT TGG TTT TTA TGG AAT CCA CTT GTG
 Lys Phe Leu Ser Leu Leu Met Met Pro Leu Met Phe Ile Ser Cys Val Met Phe Pro Leu Ala Thr Ile Pro Pro Gln Tyr Gln His Trp Phe Leu Trp Asn Pro Leu Val

4108 CAT GCT GTA GAA CTA ATC CGA AGG GCA TGG ATA TCT GGT TAT CGT AGT CCT GAT GTA AGT TGG GCG TAT CTG TCG GTT GTC ACC TTA TTA TTG CTC ACT TTT GCT ATG AGT
 His Ala Val Glu Leu Ile Arg Arg Ala Trp Ile Ser Gly Tyr Arg Ser Pro Asp Val Ser Trp Ala Tyr Leu Ser Val Val Thr Leu Leu Leu Leu Thr Phe Ala Met Ser

4219 TGT TAC CGA TTA CGC CAT CCG CAA TTG ATT GCT AGT TAGCGTTAAGAAA ATG ATT ATT CTT GAT AAT GTA TCA AAA TAT TAT CCG ACT AAA TTT GGA CGA AAT TAT GTC CTG AGG
 Cys Tyr Arg Leu Arg His Arg Gln Leu Ile Ala Ser
kpsT Met Ile Ile Leu Asp Asn Val Ser Lys Tyr Tyr Pro Thr Lys Phe Gly Arg Asn Tyr Val Leu Arg

4335 AAT GTA AAT ATT GAG CTA CCA AGG GAC CGT AAT ATA GGT ATT CTA GGT ATC AAT GGA GCA GGA AAA TCT ACT TTG TTA CGT TTG TTA GGA GGG ATG GAT ACG CCT AAC AGG
 Asn Val Asn Ile Glu Leu Pro Arg Asp Arg Asn Ile Gly Ile Leu Gly Ile Asn Gly Ala Gly Lys Ser Thr Leu Leu Arg Leu Leu Gly Gly Met Asp Thr Pro Asn Arg

4446 GGG AAA GTA ACT CGT CTC TGC CGA GTA TCT TGG CCT CTA GCA CTA GGT GGG GGA TTT CAA GGT AGT ATG ACT GGT CGT GAA AAC ACG CGA TTT GTT TGC GCG ATT CAT GGT
 Gly Lys Val Thr Arg Leu Cys Arg Val Ser Trp Pro Leu Ala Leu Gly Gly Gly Phe Gln Gly Ser Met Thr Gly Arg Glu Asn Thr Arg Phe Val Cys Arg Ile His Gly

4557 GTA CGC GAT ACA AGC ACC GTA GAA GAG TGG GTT AAA GAG TTT TCT GAA ATT GGA CAA CAT TAT GAG TTG CCT ATT AAA ACA TAC TCT AGC GGC ATG AAA TCA AAA TTT TCT
 Val Arg Asp Thr Ser Thr Val Glu Glu Trp Val Lys Glu Phe Ser Glu Ile Gly Gln His Tyr Glu Leu Pro Ile Lys Thr Tyr Ser Ser Gly Met Lys Ser Lys Phe Ser

4668 TTT GCT GGT AGT ATG GCT TTT GAT TTT GAT ATA TAT CTT ACC GAT GAA ATT ACC TCA GTA GGT GAT GCA CGT TTT AAA CAA AAA TGT ATT GAT GTA TTT AAC AAA AAG CGA
 Phe Ala Val Ser Met Ala Phe Asp Phe Asp Ile Tyr Leu Thr Asp Glu Ile Thr Ser Val Gly Asp Ala Arg Phe Lys Gln Lys Cys Ile Asp Val Phe Asn Lys Lys Arg

4779 GAA ACA GCT AGT TTG ATT ATG GTT TCA CAT GAT ATG AAA AAT CTA CGA CAA CAA TGC GAT ATG GGC ATC TTG TTA CGT GAT GGT AAA TTA GAA GTT TTT GAT AAT ATT GAT
 Glu Thr Ala Ser Leu Ile Met Val Ser His Asp Met Lys Asn Leu Arg Gln Gln Cys Asp Met Gly Ile Leu Leu Arg Asp Gly Lys Leu Glu Val Phe Asp Asn Ile Asp
kpsE Met

4890 GAT GCC ATC AAA ATT TAC CAG TCA CTT T GAG CAG CAA CTG ATT ATG ACA TCT CCG AAT TCT TCA TCC TCA ATA TCT CCG CTT GCG CGA AAG TTA AGA AAA CTG AGC AAT AAT
 kpsT Asp Ala Ile Lys Ile Tyr Gln Ser Leu
 kpsE Met Pro Ser Lys Phe Thr Ser His Phe Glu Gln Gln Leu Ile Met Thr Ser Pro Asn Ser Ser Ser Ser Ile Ser Arg Leu Ala Arg Lys Leu Arg Lys Leu Ser Asn Asn

5002 CCA AAA CTA TTT TTG ATT GAT TCG AGA GGA TAT CAA ATT GTA CAC CGC TCG TGG AAG AAA AGT TTA CAG CTA GGC AGT TTT CTT TGG GTA GTT ATC TGC TTT TCT ATC GCA
 Pro Lys Leu Phe Leu Ile Asp Ser Arg Gly Tyr Gln Ile Val His Arg Ser Trp Lys Lys Ser Leu Gln Leu Gly Ser Phe Leu Trp Val Val Ile Cys Phe Ser Ile Ala

5113 GTG CTC TAT TTT GGC TTC ATT GCT TCC GAT CGT TAT GTG AGC CGG GCT GAA TTA ATG ATT AAA CAA GCC GAT CAA GTT AAA ATG TTG CCT GAT GCG TTA TCA ATG TTA GGG
 Val Leu Tyr Phe Gly Phe Ile Ala Ser Asp Arg Tyr Val Ser Arg Ala Glu Leu Met Ile Lys Gln Ala Asp Gln Val Lys Met Leu Pro Asp Ala Leu Ser Met Leu Gly
▼ CP9.171

5224 ATA GGT GGT AGT AAT CAT CAG GAT ATA TTA CTC GTT CAG GAT TAT ATG AAG TCA TGG GAT ATG CTG GCC AAG TTG AAC AAA GAA CTT GCA CTT AAA GCA CAT TTC CAG AGT
 Ile Gly Gly Ser Asn His Gln Asp Ile Leu Leu Val Gln Asp Ile Leu Leu Val Gln Asp Met Lys Ser Trp Asp Met Leu Ala Lys Leu Asn Lys Glu Leu Lys Ala His Phe Gln Ser

5335 GAT AGT GCA GAT TAT TTC TCG CGG TTG CAT AAG GGA GTC AGT AGG GAA GAT TTT CTT GAT TAT TAC CGC AAA CAT TTG ACG TTA CAC CTT GAT GAA TTA TCA GGA GTA CTT
 Asp Ser Ala Asp Tyr Phe Ser Arg Leu His Lys Gly Val Ser Arg Leu Asp Phe Leu Asp Tyr Tyr Arg Lys His Leu Thr Leu His Leu Asp Glu Leu Ser Gly Val Leu

5446 ACC GTT GAG TTG CAG ACA TTT GAT CCC CAA TAC GGT CAG CGA GTT GTT GAG TTA ATG CTC AAA GAA TCG GAG CGT TTT ATT AAC AAA TTA GGT CAT CAG GTT GCG CTC GAA
 Thr Val Glu Leu Gln Thr Phe Asp Pro Gln Tyr Gly Gln Arg Val Val Glu Leu Met Leu Lys Glu Ser Glu Arg Phe Ile Asn Lys Leu Gly His Gln Val Ala Leu Glu

5557 CAA TTG GCC TTT GTT GAA AAA GAA GTA AAT AGA GCA TAT CAA CGC TTA CAG GAT GAA AAA GCT AAA GTA TTA GCA TTT CAG AAT AGC CAC CAA CTT CTC AGC CCT GAA TCT
 Gln Leu Ala Phe Val Glu Lys Glu Val Asn Arg Ala Tyr Gln Arg Leu Gln Asp Glu Lys Ala Lys Val Leu Ala Phe Gln Asn Ser His Gln Leu Leu Ser Pro Glu Ser

5668 ACC AGC AGC GCA CCG TTG GGA GTG GTC AGC CAG ATT GAA GGA GAG TTG GTG CGT CAA CAG GCG GAG CTA AAA CAA CTG CCG AGC TAT ATG AAG GAA ACC GCA CCG GCC GTA
 Thr Ser Ser Ala Arg Leu Gly Val Val Ser Gln Ile Glu Gly Glu Leu Val Arg Gln Gln Ala Glu Leu Lys Gln Leu Arg Ser Tyr Met Lys Glu Thr Ala Pro Ala Val

5779 GTC TCA TTA CAG GCG AGA GTT GAC GCC CTA ACT AAG CAG CTT GAA CAG GAG CGT GCT AAG CTG ACT GGT CAA GAT AAC GAT GCC ATG AAT GAA ATC ACC GCC GGT TAC ATG
 Val Ser Leu Gln Gly Arg Val Asp Ala Leu Thr Lys Gln Leu Glu Gln Glu Arg Ala Lys Leu Thr Gly Gln Asp Asn Asp Ala Met Asn Glu Ile Thr Ala Gly Tyr Met

5890 GAT GTG CAA ACG CAG GCA ACC TTG GCA GCG GAT CTC TAT AAA ACT GGC CTT ATC AGC TTA GAG CAG ACG CGG GTT GAG GCA TAT CGT AAA CTT AAG CAC CTA TTG GTT ATC
 Asp Val Gln Thr Gln Ala Thr Leu Ala Ala Asp Leu Tyr Lys Thr Gly Leu Ile Ser Leu Glu Gln Thr Arg Val Glu Ala Tyr Arg Lys Leu Lys His Leu Leu Val Ile

6001 ACC CAA CCA ACT TTA CCG GAA GAT GCC GAA TAT CCA CCG CGA CTC TAT AAT CTT CCG ACT GTG GCG GTA TTA CTT TCG TTG TTC TAT GGT CTT ATT ATT ATG GGG CTG GCG
 Thr Gln Pro Thr Leu Ala Glu Asp Ala Glu Tyr Pro Arg Arg Leu Tyr Asn Leu Ala Thr Val Gly Val Leu Cys Leu Phe Tyr Gly Leu Ile Ile Met Gly Leu Ala
▼ CP9.C56

6112 ACT TTG CGT GAA CAC CAG GAT TAATCACTGCCTGGTGCAGCGGATACCTGGTITTTTATGTCTTTGGATTACGGAGAGACTAATGCTTTAGGTTCTCTTTAATATTTAATGTCGTGATTAACAAGAACATAAATAACAATA
 Thr Leu Arg Glu His Gln Asp

6255 TATAAATCGCTTTTAAATTAGTTGGAGATGGAGATTTGGAAAGATATTTATATTTCCGTGATPACTTATTTGTTGTCAGTGTAAATAGAGTGTATGTGCGCTTTATTTTAAAGTGGGATATGTTCAATTAATAAATGAATCAACAAGGG

6405 CATAGGATATGCGAAAGGCAATATCTAGAGTAACAAATAAATAACTCATTTGAGCGAAATGAAAATAGTTGGAGCGCGTAAAAAAGCAATTAAGTGAGAAAGATTAACCTTATCACTCATTAATAGAGGACTCCTTGCCCTGCAAGTTC

6555 AATTGGAGATCAGTCAAGGCAATCCGCTCAACTCGCTGTGATAATGCAGCGTGAATGTTCCAGTGAATGAGCTTGAAGAAAGGCTATCAAAACAAAATTTCTGAACATGGGCAATGCTTAGTAAAGTTGTTCTTCAAACTGAGGAGAAC

6705 TCTCAACGGATGCTGACAGTTGAAAAGAGTCACTTGAAGTATGTTGCTTAAAAGTGAACATGACAGCAAGCAAAAGCGCTTTAGATATATCTCAAACGAAGTTAAAGAAAATTAAGTACAGAACTTGCCCTTATGAAAATACACAC

6855 AGTAAGATCAAGCAAGAACTTGGAGTGAACCTCGTAAAGTTAAAGTCAATAGTTAAAGAAAAAAGAAATCAAAATTTACTTTCACACAGCGCTACTGTTTACAGATGATTTGAATCTTAGATTGAGTGGTGGCCAAACTTAGT

7005 AATATTTT

FIG. 2—Continued.

Kps_{K1.5}M (data not shown) support the notion that Kps_{K54}M is also a member of this family.

ORF3 (bp 4269 to 4916) encoded *kps_{K54}T*. It is 65 to 62% homologous at the nucleotide level and has 51 to 45% identity and 66 to 62% similarity at the predicted protein level with the

group II genes *kps_{K1.5}T*. Other homologs in *A. pleuropneumoniae* (CpxA), *N. meningitidis* (CtrD), *H. influenzae* (BexA), and *S. typhi* (VexC) showed amino acid identities from 47 to 24% and similarities of 59 to 36%. These proteins are the peripheral ATP-binding components of the ABC-2 transporter protein

TABLE 2. Comparisons of putative molecular weight, pI, and GC content and the presence or absence of Shine-Dalgarno and signal sequences between *kps*_{K54}*DMTE* and *kps*_{K1,5}*DMTE*

Gene and region	Mol wt (in thousands)	Estimated pI	% GC	Presence or absence of sequence ^a	
				Shine-Dalgarno	Signal
<i>kps</i> _{K54} <i>D</i>	63.9	6.29	40	—	+
<i>kps</i> _{K1} <i>D</i>	60	7.33	51	+	+
<i>kps</i> _{K5} <i>D</i>	60	8.37	52	+	+
<i>kps</i> _{K54} <i>M</i>	30.2	10.04	38	—	—
<i>kps</i> _{K1} <i>M</i>	29.6	9.22	43	+	—
<i>kps</i> _{K5} <i>M</i>	29.5	9.06	45	+	—
<i>kps</i> _{K54} <i>T</i>	24.5	9.36	37	—	—
<i>kps</i> _{K1} <i>T</i>	24.9	9.29	35	+	—
<i>kps</i> _{K5} <i>T</i>	25.5	8.73	39	+	—
<i>kps</i> _{K54} <i>E</i>	47.3	8.64	43	—	—
<i>kps</i> _{K1} <i>E</i>	39.0	5.0	50	+	—
<i>kps</i> _{K5} <i>E</i>	43.0	6.02	50	+	—

^a +, present; —, absent. The presence or absence of Shine-Dalgarno and signal sequences was determined by MacVector version 6.0 and PSORT, respectively.

family. The identification of Walker motifs (Fig. 5), an ABC transporter signature sequence, a similar hydrophilic hydrophathy profile, and secondary-structure predictions similar to those of *Kps*_{K1,5}*T* support the notion that *Kps*_{K54}*T* is also a member of the ABC-2 transporter family, and its structure seems conserved in comparison with that of *Kps*_{K1,5}*T*.

ORF4 (bp 4888 to 6132) encoded *kps*_{K54}*E*. No significant homology was detected at the nucleotide level; however, it has 31% identity and 46% similarity at the predicted protein level with the group II genes *kps*_{K1,5}*E*. Other homologs in *A. pleuropneumoniae* (CpxC), *N. meningitidis* (CtrB), *H. influenzae* (BexC), and *S. typhi* (VexD) showed amino acid identities from 27 to 20% and similarities from 40 to 32%. Analysis of the putative *Kps*_{K54}*E* protein via hydrophathy profiles and secondary-structure predictions suggests that this protein is similar to the membrane fusion protein family (4, 11). These proteins are believed to interact with ABC-type transport proteins (and others) and perhaps outer membrane proteins to facilitate substrate transport of large molecules. *Kps*_{K54}*E* has a number of features of this family, including (i) a hydrophilic amino terminus located in the cytoplasm (amino acids 1 to 60 of *Kps*_{K54}*E* with an excess of basic over acidic residues of a net +11), (ii) a hydrophobic amino terminus region that may both span and anchor the protein in the cytoplasmic membrane, (iii) a hydrophilic, largely alpha-helical periplasmic region (supported by the presence of active *TnphoA* fusions at amino acid residue 136), and (iv) a hydrophobic carboxy terminus. However, the *Kps*_{K54}*E* hydrophobic carboxy terminus is significantly smaller than in the membrane fusion protein family, and the conservation of residues in this region is absent. *Kps*_{K1,5}*E* possess a similar predicted structure (4) except that *Kps*_{K1}*E* has a deletion of amino acid residues 1 to 71 and *Kps*_{K5}*E* has a deletion of residues 37 to 71 (Fig. 6).

Based on DNA and protein homologies, the sequence from bp 1645 to 6132 clearly comprised genes involved in K54 transport. Located 5' to the end of this cluster is 1.0 kb (bp 626 to 1644) of sequence which has no identifiable DNA or protein homology. No *TnphoA* insertions have been mapped to this region. A 369-bp ORF was identified from bp 1247 to 1615. Whether this ORF or another sequence in this 1.0-kb region

codes for products involved with capsule transport or synthesis is unclear.

However, 5' to this region, a sequence homologous to the initial 20% of *kpsM* and its entire 5' noncoding regulatory region (0.35 kb) was identified. The sequence homologous to the 5' coding region of *kpsM* (bp 346 to 476 and 501 to 526) has been designated *kpsM*_{truncated} (Fig. 1 and 2). Over the entire *kpsM*_{truncated} sequence and its 5' noncoding regulatory region, an 85 to 90% DNA sequence homology to its K1 and K5 counterparts was observed. Previous investigators, using Southern analysis, did not identify any regions of homology with a variety of strains that contained group III capsule gene clusters (including a different K54 serotype) when probes containing *kps*_{K5}*M* were used (12, 36). The reasons for this discrepancy are unclear. However, the degree of homology of *kpsM*_{truncated} with *kps*_{K1,5}*M* was notable, since the complete *kps*_{K54}*M* possessed no significant homology at the nucleotide level to *kps*_{K1,5}*M*. This finding suggested the possibility that CP9 originally possessed a group II capsule gene locus and that the K54 capsule genes were subsequently acquired by horizontal transfer. Therefore, the DNA sequence immediately 3' to *kpsM*_{truncated} was analyzed for potential insight into the evolution of this group III capsule gene locus. A 51-bp region (bp 581 to 626) identified 53 bp 3' to the end of *kpsM*_{truncated} (Fig. 1 and 2) was 75% homologous with the IS110 insertion sequence identified from *Streptomyces coelicolor*. The area of homology coincided with a 39-bp inverted repeat that has been identified within this element (8) and the 12 bp 5' to the repeat (bp 1073 to 1122, accession no. Y00434). Runs of cytosines appear to be the target site for this element, and the 11-bp region 5' to this element contained two runs of cytosines (5' CCGTTTCCCC 3'). These findings were consistent with the hypothesis that CP9 previously possessed group II capsule genes and acquired group III capsule genes via IS110-mediated horizontal transfer. A second prediction of this model would be the presence of a second IS_{CP9}110 element at the 3' end of the transferred segment. Southern analysis of *AccI*-restricted chromosomal DNA isolated from CP9 and the closely related strain J96 (23) was performed under high-stringency conditions, with the IS_{CP9}110 element used as an oligonucleotide probe. Two copies of the IS_{CP9}110 element were detected in the chromosomes of CP9 and J96 on identically sized restriction fragments (Fig. 7). One of the fragments was the size predicted from the known sequence of the K54 capsule gene cluster containing IS_{CP9}110 (1.4 kb). Insertion elements are well-known mediators of the evolution of genomic organization, and in other studies researchers have shown their role in the horizontal transfer of genes involved in polysaccharide synthesis (3, 55). The origin of the group III genes, however, remains speculative.

The 1.3 kb downstream from bp 6132 (bp 6133 to 7012 plus 0.5 kb 3' to the submitted sequence) appeared, at least in part, to code for genes involved in capsule synthesis or transport. Although no homology to any known capsule genes was identified in this region, the transposon insertion in the K54 capsule-deficient strain CP9.C56 was located at bp 6179, which is 3' to *kps*_{K54}*E*. Further evidence for the presence of these additional genes is suggested by the isolation of the capsule-negative strain CP9.C43 (42), which contains a *TnphoA* insertion in an 18.5-kb *XbaI* fragment, *cl2* (Fig. 1). *cl2* and the *cl1* fragment sequenced here are cotransducible by phage T4, suggesting that the gene defined by CP9.C43 insertion and *cl2* are located 3' to the end of *kps*_{K54}*E*.

Transcriptional organization of the K54 capsule gene locus. CP9.29, CP9.108, CP9.137, and CP9.171 possessed active *phoA* fusions with genes in the K54 capsule gene locus. The trans-

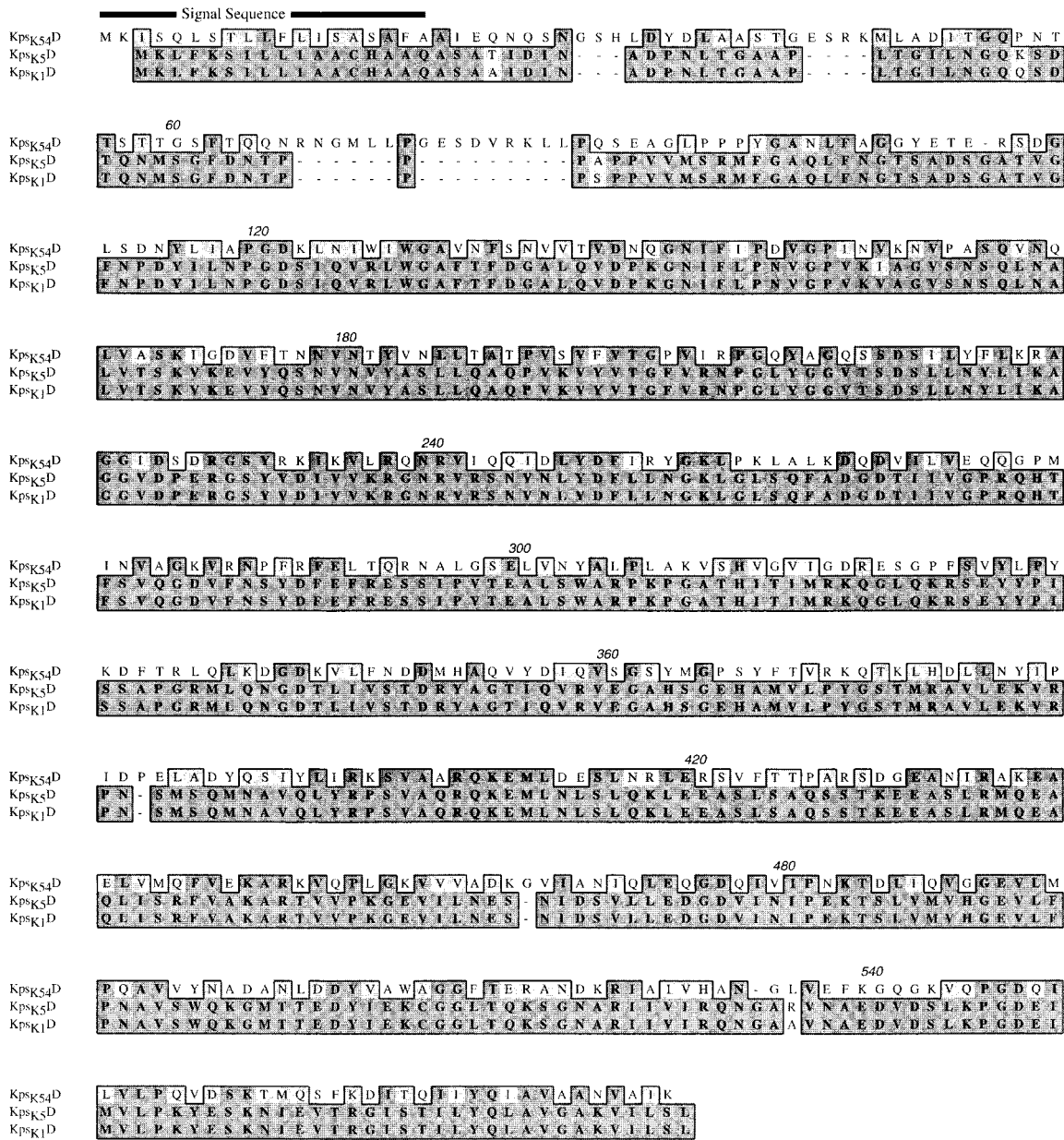


FIG. 3. CLUSTAL alignment of the predicted amino acid sequences of *E. coli* *kpsK54D* (this study), *kpsK1D*, and *kpsK5D*. The boxed sequence identifies amino acid residues that are functionally similar (lighter shading) or identical (darker shading). Numbers above the sequences are residue numbers. The predicted signal sequence of *KpsK54D* is identified.

poson insertion in CP9.29 (bp 1799) and that in CP9.137 (bp 2801) were within *kpsK54D*, the transposon insertion in CP9.108 (bp 3878) was within *kpsK54M*, and the transposon insertion in CP9.171 (bp 5288) was within *kpsK54E* (Fig. 1 and 2). These active fusions confirm the direction of transcription. *kpsK54D* and *kpsK54M* are separated by 69 bp, *kpsK54M* and *kpsK54T* are separated by 14 bp, and *kpsK54T* and *kpsK54E* overlap by 29 bp. No predicted promoter regions were identified. Bp 6135 to 6157, located just 3 bp 3' to *kpsK54E*, were consistent with a strong theoretical rho-independent RNA polymerase terminator. These base pairs formed a hairpin structure which was followed by a 6-bp poly(T) sequence (bp 6163 to 6169). The free energy of the stem-loop (ΔG [25°C]) was calculated to be -10.2 kcal (52). The K1 K5 capsule gene cluster regions 1 and

3 are organized as a single transcription unit. The organization of these regions for the K54 genes is not yet known.

Alkaline phosphatase assays on the subclones containing active *TnphoA* insertions in either of two orientations were performed. In constructs in which the capsule gene insert was in the opposite orientation to the vector *lacZ* promoter (p29.1, p108.2, p137.2, and p171.2), PhoA activity likely reflects transcription from an insert promoter; however, the possibility of read-through transcription from a cryptic promoter cannot be excluded. In constructs with the insert in the same orientation as the *lacZ* promoter, PhoA activity reflects transcription from the insert and potentially the vector promoter. The similar degrees of PhoA activity seen with p29.1 (15.2 ± 1.6) (mean \pm standard error) and p29.2 (17.7 ± 2.1) suggested that this

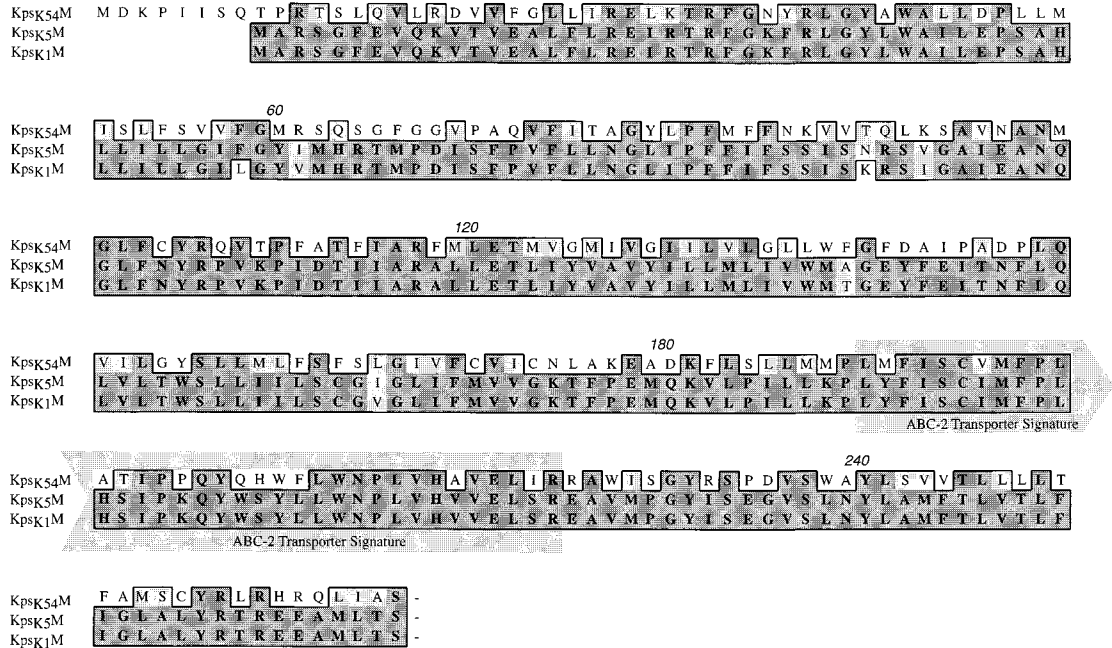


FIG. 4. CLUSTAL alignment of the predicted amino acid sequences of *E. coli kpsK54M* (this study), *kpsK5M*, and *kpsK1M*. The boxed sequence identifies amino acid residues that are functionally similar (lighter shading) or identical (darker shading). The ABC-2 transporter system integral membrane protein signature is marked and corresponds to amino acid residues 190 to 224 (1, 18). Numbers above the sequences are residue numbers.

insert, not the vector, contained a promoter that is responsible for its *phoA* gene fusion activity. The inserts in p108 and p137 do not appear to contain promoters, based on the low level of PhoA activity produced by p108.2 (0.59 ± 0.2) and p137.2 (0.61 ± 0.1). p171 may possess a region with promoter activity, since p171.2 produced 1.93 ± 0.1 U of PhoA activity. The extent of these inserts (Fig. 1) and their activity or lack of activity suggest that an essential promoter element is upstream of bp 452, which is located within *kpsM*_{truncated}. Although the insert in p29 contains about 8 kb of DNA upstream of bp 452,

it seems likely that the promoter for these genes lies within the 741 bp 5' to the initiation site for *kpsM*_{truncated} (bp 345), since the K5 region 3 promoter has been mapped to this location (50). No stem-loop terminators were identified between this region and the start of *kpsK54D* (bp 1645). Also present in this region is the JUMPstart sequence (bp 279 to 317), which has been implicated in the regulation of a variety of polysaccharide genes and genes encoding secreted products (19, 29). This sequence is present 5' to region 3 in both the K1 and K5 capsule gene sequences, in the promoter-operator region of

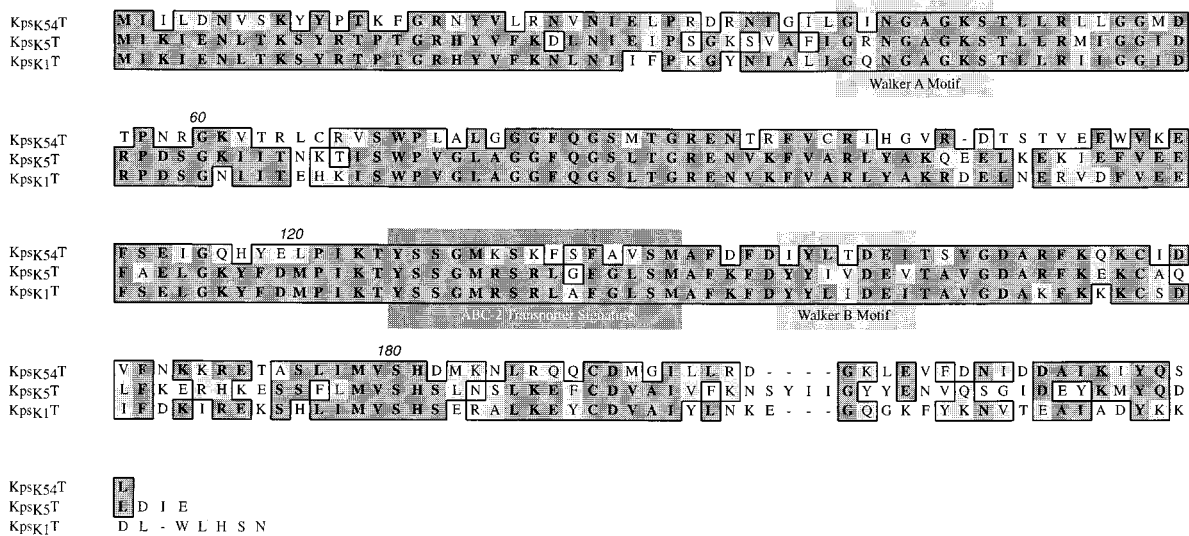


FIG. 5. CLUSTAL alignment of the predicted amino acid sequences of *E. coli kpsK54T* (this study), *kpsK5T*, and *kpsK1T*. The boxed sequence identifies amino acid residues that are functionally similar (lighter shading) or identical (darker shading). The ATP-binding domain Walker A (residues 38 to 45), and Walker B (residues 145 to 151) motifs (34) and the ABC-2 transporter signature sequence (residues 125 to 139) are marked (1, 18). Numbers above the sequences are residue numbers.

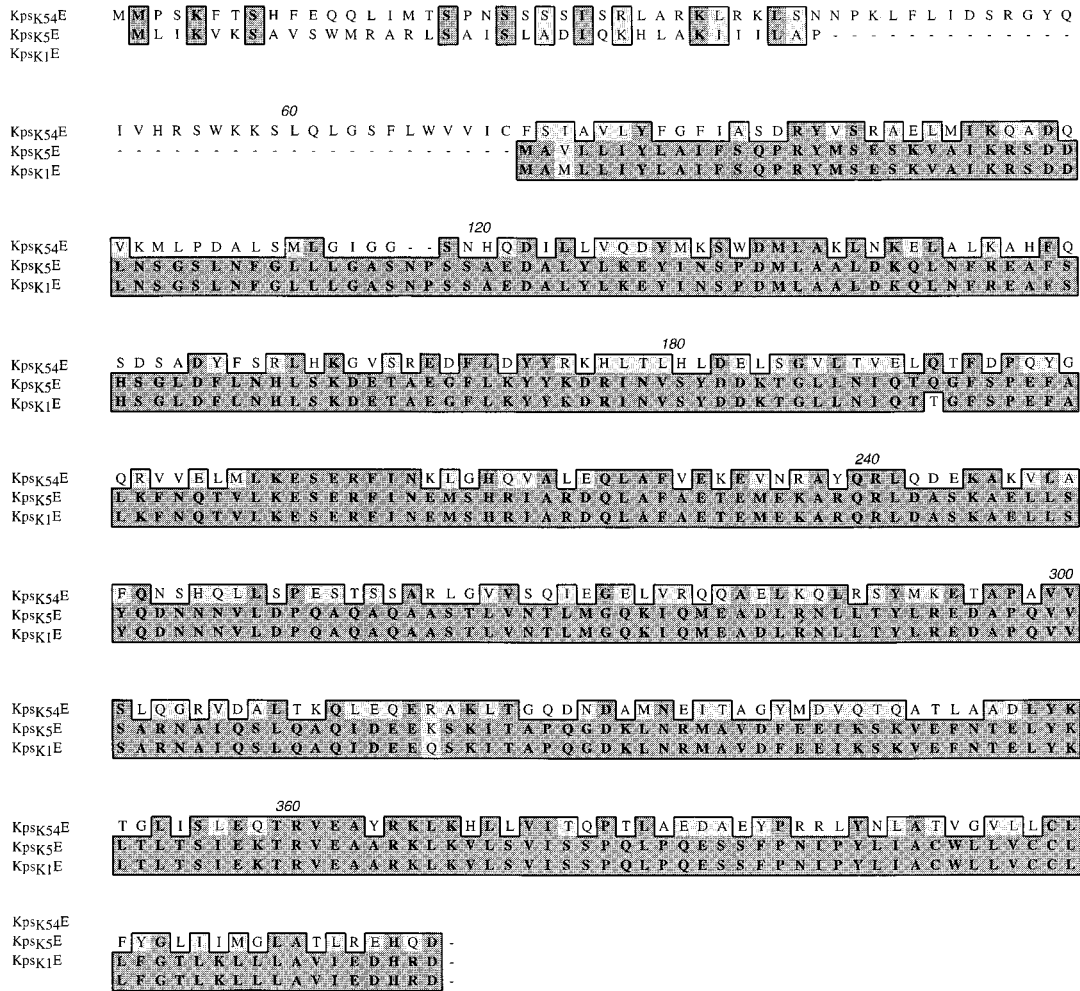


FIG. 6. CLUSTAL alignment of the predicted amino acid sequences of *E. coli* *kpsK54E* (this study), *kpsK1E*, and *kpsK5E*. The boxed sequence identifies amino acid residues that are functionally similar (lighter shading) or identical (darker shading). Numbers above the sequences are residue numbers.

the *cps* genes coding for the group I colanic acid capsule (51), and in the 5' noncoding region of several lipopolysaccharide gene clusters (19) and the *hly* and *tra* genes (29). It has been shown that this site is required for the up-regulation of *hly* genes and *kpsK5* region 2 genes by RfaH via antitermination (29, 50). The effect of RfaH on K54 capsule gene activity has not yet been evaluated. However, in previous studies we have demonstrated that RcsA is a negative regulator of group III capsule genes, which we have now identified as *kpsK54DME* (46). Although the precise promoter-operator region for these group III capsule genes has not been definitively established, it is intriguing that the JUMPstart site is present within both the insert in p29 and the promoter-operator region of the *cps* genes encoding for the group I colanic acid capsule. Further, RcsA is a positive regulator of group I capsule production and interacts with the promoter-operator region of the *cps* genes (51). Since RcsA divergently regulates the group I colanic acid and the K54 capsular polysaccharides, it is tempting to speculate that this regulation is mediated by RcsA either via direct interaction with the JUMPstart site or by interaction with protein complexes assembled there.

In summary, the genomic location, the novel organization of a portion of the group III, K54 capsule gene cluster, and the DNA sequences of *kpsK54DMTE* have been determined. De-

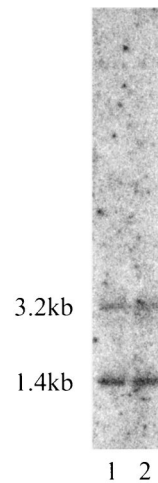


FIG. 7. Southern analysis of DNA from CP9 and J96 to detect the copy number of IS_{CP9110} element. *AccI*-restricted whole-cell DNA from CP9 and J96 was separated by conventional electrophoresis, blotted onto nylon, and subjected to Southern analysis under high-stringency conditions as described in Materials and Methods, with the IS_{CP9110} element as the probe. Lane 1, J96; lane 2, CP9.

spite a divergence of these genes at the nucleotide and protein levels, analysis suggests that their function is similar to that of described homologs. Further, this study lends insight into the phylogenetic evolution of a group III capsule gene cluster. Findings support the hypothesis that CP9 previously possessed group II capsule genes and acquired group III capsule genes via *IS110*-mediated horizontal transfer. Future studies will be focused on the remaining genes in the K54 capsule gene cluster, in particular those that do not possess homology to reported capsule genes. The products of these genes may function differently from those responsible for group II capsule expression.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work was supported by Research for Health in Erie County (T.A.R.) and the Office of Research and Development, Department of Veterans Affairs (A.J.L.).

We appreciate the continued support of Tim Murphy.

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