Reviewer's report

Title: The association between air travel and deep vein thrombosis: Systematic review & meta-analysis

Version: 1 Date: 22 March 2004

Reviewer: John Ludbrook

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I agree pretty much with John H Scurr’s report and recommendations.

Back in the 1960s I rather fancied myself as something of an expert in venous thrombo-embolism. Then, there were a host of reports of an alarmingly high incidence of postoperative calf vein thrombosis, detected by radio-labelled fibrinogen. These thromboses seemed to be rather unimportant. What is important is ilio-femoral vein thrombosis, because of the risk of life-threatening pulmonary embolism. And I have the distinct impression that ilio-femoral vein thrombosis does not occur from upwards extension of calf vein thrombosis. That is, I challenge your page 4, lines 1-2. Would you consider discussing these matters?

The definition of ‘long-haul. To get from Australia to Europe takes consecutive hauls of 8 and 12 hours. That is what I would call a long haul!

I rather agree with your suggestion that a suitably-powered case-control study would take around 2 x 1 million 2 subjects. Just how many would depend on: (a) The diagnostic technique for DVT; (b) Surely, the samples must be stratified by length of haul?; (c) Surely, there must be co-variables, such as age?

There are a few typos etc in this version.

Title page: !950s not 1950’s.
Page 2, para 3, line 2. Define VTE eg. venous thromboembolic events (VTE).
Page 3, para 2, line 1: There is a redundant ‘on’.

Declaration of competing interests:

None