Reviewer's report

Title: Modeling the impact of air, sea, and land travel restrictions supplemented by other interventions on the emergence of a new influenza pandemic virus

Version: 2 Date: 26 August 2012

Reviewer: Gianpaolo Scalia Tomba

Reviewer's report:

The revised version of the paper is a great improvement over the first version. I would recommend the following further improvements:

- cutting down on size: in particular the Results section could be made a little bit more compact;

- better defining the interventions, i.e. making clear that travel restriction by p% means that p% of "actually" incoming travel will simply not take place, while the remaining (100-p)% incoming travellers will be screened at entry and latent/infectious individuals identified with a given degree of success;

- in this connection, it would be interesting to see how large the numbers of thus identified individuals is, since they are supposed to be transferred to hospital for quarantining and that entails a capacity problem;

- if incoming travel is restricted, presumably outgoing travel must also be restricted, since otherwise outgoing individuals would not be allowed to return;

- it would also be interesting to see an analysis of incoming travel by main purpose, in order to assess the feasibility of restrictions: what percentage is tourism, business, work migration, returning residents, etc., maybe subdivided by different foreign locations of origin;

- since the paper is focused on the Hong Kong reality, more than on qualitative matters, some hierarchy of recommendations would be useful, of the type (the following sentences are not meant to be actual, just examples of how recommendations could be phrased...):

- if possible, implement 95% travel restrictions and antivirals to everybody following the first confirmed 20 local cases;

- second best, if only 70% travel restrictions can be achieved, start antivirals when a certain level is achieved in some specific related country that is in advance regarding spread;

etc....

- in the spirit of simulation of useful countermeasures, what about social measures such as school closures, reduction of public gatherings, improved personal hygiene (hand disinfectants, etc...), voluntary reduction of contacts, no handshaking, etc...? At least some mention of all hitherto proposed measures and some comments on their feasibility and probable efficacy would be a nice
complement to the ones presented in the paper...
- the language is now almost without errors or non-idiomatic expressions; still, as in the Abstract, referring to imported infections as "exotic source of local disease transmission" is a little bit unusual... just one more pass, maybe?

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**
I declare that I have no competing interests