Reviewer's report

Title: Evaluation of surveillance case definition as a screening test for diagnosis of leptospirosis

Version: 1 Date: 5 December 2008

Reviewer: Lee LD Smythe

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Major Compulsory Revisions
1. The use of "surveillance case definition" as an actual "screening test" for diagnosis may not be considered accurate. The authors should provide an alternative description to describe the function or role of the surveillance case definition.

2. The authors need to review their results in the abstract where they report the number of positive cases. There are inconsistencies. This relates to: "A total of 123 patients were recruited and 73 had clinical features compatible with surveillance case definition out of which 57 patients had positive MAT results. Total of 62 had positive MAT results, where five patients were false positives............"

Minor Essential Revisions
1. The authors should review the manuscript for consistency for using the words microscopic agglutination test - at times the acronym MAT is used and other times the full descriptive of microscopic agglutination test is used.

2. In methods the authors state the MAT of >800 as being positive. Should this be also equal to or greater than 800.

3. Table 2 should be changed to show descending numbers and percentages, the table currently is quite random.

3. The MAT method used needs a reference.

Discretionary Revisions
1. The authors should consider the value of including the data and interpretations around the age distributions, occupations, seasonality etc unless they are going to more strongly link this information back to the performance or use of the surveillance case definition.

2. Further detail could be provided on the false positive cases.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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'