Reviewer's report

Title: Experimental glomerulonephritis induced by hydrocarbon exposure. A systematic review

Version: 1 Date: 21 August 2005

Reviewer: Paul Cockwell

Reviewer's report:

General
This review by Ravnskov comprises an overview of published studies that report the effect of various hydrocarbons on the development of glomerular disease in animals. The report is linked to human disease.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

1. The search should be repeated for the key words ‘renal disease’ or ‘tubulointerstitial disease’, these studies should be then assessed for reports of glomerular pathology and the manuscript revised appropriately. I am concerned that important papers may be excluded on the basis of the failure to register glomerulonephritis as a key word by the search engines studied. It would also be useful to search against the term ‘glomerulopathy’.
2. The table could be more informative: I would include separate columns for: length of study; light microscopy; immunohistochemistry; electron microscopy.
3. The author should report whether there is any in vitro evidence to support a direct toxic effect of hydrocarbons on resident renal cells.
4. Is there any supportive evidence for pathogenetic mechanisms from other organ systems?
5. Care should be taken in reporting the human literature. Is there any information on the comparative levels of hydrocarbons that humans are exposed with the animal models reported here? Critical analysis of the human studies should be made – how stringent were these, were they controlled for age, body mass, smoking history, socioeconomic group, analgesic use etc – that is factors that we know are important for the development of renal disease, but may not have been recognised at the time of these original studies.
6. The paper needs editing in areas: for example, the workers don’t produce microscopic or histological changes directly, they report these patterns of findings in animals that they have treated with hydrocarbons.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No

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