Reviewer’s report

Title: Genomic imbalances in 5918 malignant epithelial tumors: An explorative meta-analysis of chromosomal CGH data.

Version: 2 Date: 24 May 2007

Reviewer: Beatriz Carvalho

Reviewer’s report:

General
The manuscript “Genomic imbalances in 5918 malignant epithelial tumors: An explorative meta-analysis of chromosomal CGH data” by Baudis comprises an overview of chromosomal imbalances present in epithelial neoplasias. It is an useful review of the typical chromosomal aberrations existing in different epithelial tumors. Although it describes carefully the main aberrations between different tumor types (e.g. breast, colon, stomach, ...) and different histologies (adenocarcinomas versus squamous carcinomas), it does not explore in detail (discussion) what is universal among all tumors and especially which aberrations distinguish the different cancers.

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

The author mentions the chromosomal aberrations more frequently observed throughout the panel of different tumors, from which some subsets occur in most entities, and although mentioning (describing) which ones in which types of tumors, he does not discuss it, leaving the reader without a clear overview.

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

Wording mistake on page 12, first paragraph: “…mapped distal of 8q24 (e.g. 8q21…”, probably the author means: proximal to 8q24.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

Page 5 – overall aberration profile (Figure 2) – the author describes the most common aberrations observed, but it omits gain of chromosome 7, which in the figure looks as frequent as gain of 5p, for example.

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

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I recently applied for a patent in colon cancer research which relates to the content of the manuscript.