Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Natural History of Malignant Bone Disease in Breast Cancer and the Use of Cumulative Mean Functions to Measure Skeletal Morbidity

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 21 April 2009

**Reviewer:** Antonio AR Rulli

**Reviewer’s report:**

DISCRETIONARY REVISIONS

This is a peculiar study since is trying to divulge information before the trial’s expiry (considered the very scarce duration of survival of the sample).

In any case, more than on the course of the illness, the study is based on the bio-mechanic of the bone lesion location. It is taken for granted that the SREs rather affect the spine than the skull due to the different load of the body weight.

It would have been correct to analyse a specific location, i.e. the femur, and evaluate the metastasization in different locations: skull, neck, diaphyses, condyles.

As a matter of fact, from the conclusions one deduces that the median survival of the studied patients is similar for the several examined subgroups and suggestion that every patient with bone metastases, independently from the location, ought to be submitted to specific therapies is taken for granted.

Finally, the risk of SREs, that doubles owing to the first incident, might also be referable to the type of metastasization of the breast cancer that rather appears in “small shot” form than in single units. Just one bone metastasis location is often evident where there actually are many smaller ones that escape the clinical-instrumental investigation.

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**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

Prof. Antonio Rulli