Author's response to reviews

Title: Auditory dysfunction associated with solvent exposure

Authors:

Adrian Fuente (a.fuente@uq.edu.au)
Bradley McPherson (dbmcpher@hku.hk)
Louise Hickson (l.hickson@uq.edu.au)

Version: 4 Date: 10 January 2013

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor

Re. “Auditory dysfunction associated with solvent exposure” MS: 9553587738081718

Thank you for forwarding to us the very thoughtful comments provided by the reviewer of this manuscript. We are pleased to submit the revised manuscript for possible inclusion in BMC Public Health. My co-authors and I have revised the manuscript carefully after considering the changes suggested by the reviewer.

The following changes have been made according to the comments previously received:

**Major Compulsory Revisions**

**Methods**

1) Workplace Environment, (page 7) First para: MEK, Toluene, xylene etc are the names of specific chemicals, and is possible to measure the concentration of the chemical in air, and there are occupational limits; "Varsol" is not a chemical, is a brand name for a commercial product composed of a mixture of different chemicals: the Authors ‘d clarify in the text what Varsol is (as possibly not all readers are familiar with this product); furthermore, what means “….. airborne concentrations for …… varsol. “: the concentration of what specific component(s) as it is a mixture! The same in Table 2: “111.91 mg/m3” is the concentration of what chemical?

   **R.** In the revised manuscript (including Table 2) we have replaced the word “Varsol” with the term “Stoddard solvent” for which TLV, PEL and IDLH data are available. When the term “Stoddard solvent” is mentioned for the first time in the manuscript, a parenthesis with the term “mineral spirits” has been added in order to provide clarification for readers who may not know this term (see page 7, line 2).

2) Page 8 -10: Were audiometer, headphones, etc. calibrated (e.g. according to ISO Standard)?

   **R.** In the revised version of the manuscript we have included the details about calibration of the equipment. Pure-tone air-and bone-conduction thresholds were obtained using an Interacoustics AC33 clinical audiometer with TDH-39P headphones (calibrated according to ISO 389 series). Pure-tone measurements were all conducted in a double-walled sound treated room meeting ISO 8253-1 standards of ambient sound pressure levels (see page 8, lines 1-4). For TEAOEs and HINT, the
equipment was calibrated according to manufacturer recommendations (see Page 8 beginning of second paragraph, and page 9 end of third paragraph).

**Minor Essential Revisions**

3) Background: Page 3, line 16 (2nd para): introduce the meaning of the abbreviation “SIHL”

*R.* The meaning of the abbreviation “SIHL” has been added accordingly (solvent-induced hearing loss). See page 3 beginning of second paragraph

4) References

Refs 28 and 42: title of the article not bold font;

*R.* The titles of these two articles have been replaced with bold font

Ref. 18: “Audiol Neurootol”: I suppose is Audiol Neurootol

*R.* The abbreviation of the title of this journal has been changed accordingly, “*Audiol Neurootol*”

My co-authors and I would like to thank you and your review team for their careful reading of our manuscript and the valuable comments offered. We feel they have led to a much improved revised version and we look forward to receiving your further advice regarding the status of our manuscript.

With my best wishes for 2013,

Adrian Fuente, Ph. D.