Reviewer's report

Title: Increased Standardized Incidence Ratio of Breast Cancer in Female Electronics Workers: Is it Related to Trichloroethylene Exposure?

Version: 2 Date: 18 December 2006

Reviewer: Ann Aschengrau

Reviewer's report:

General
This is an interesting article describing a fairly, well-conducted study whose limitations are adequately addressed by the authors.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
The authors focus on the breast cancer results throughout the manuscript, yet they include results for males and other cancers in females. They should make a decision to either: (1) add information on the males and the other cancers among females to the abstract, background, results, discussion (and perhaps change the title), or (2) limit the manuscript to the results among females. This would mean changing Tables 1 and 2. In addition, if no matter which option is chosen, more detailed analyses on the other cancers among women (for example, by duration of employment, by more specific cancer sites) should also be included. For example, many other occupational studies have found associations between solvents and cervical cancer and it would be good for this study to add to that literature.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
Most results for short duration of employment (e.g., less than 1 year) in Table 3 are based on small numbers. Why was duration cut up so finely? Could these short durations be grouped together? In any case, a test for trend should be done on the data in Table 3.

I think that the latent period for breast cancer may be considerably longer than 10-15 years and that the prior studies suggesting this length were limited by their data.

In the discussion, the authors state that they did not control for "old age" but age WAS controlled in the SIR calculation.

Reference #56 appears to be incorrectly cited in Table 5.
Reference #19 also appears to be incorrectly cited in the methods section.

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 of importance in its field

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.