Reviewer's report

Title: Ambient biomass smoke and cardio-respiratory hospital admissions.

Version: 1 Date: 1 May 2007

Reviewer: Ravi Maheswaran

Reviewer's report:

General

This is an interesting, well written and well referenced paper on an important topic – the adverse health effects of biomass smoke from forest fires.

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

None.

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

The authors state that the pollution caused by fires in the savanna surrounding Darwin results in a haze of variable severity for up to eight months each year. The case crossover method they have employed uses control days in the same month and as the days are matched by day of the week, some control days are as close as one week on either side of the case-day. As the pollution haze seems to be more of a prolonged episode rather than a daily variation problem, is the method used justified? It would be useful for the authors to think this through and discuss potential limitations in the discussion.

The title should include “... in Darwin, Australia.”

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

None.

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What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

No competing interests.