Reviewer's report

Title: Refining animal models in fracture research: seeking consensus for changing the agenda in optimising both animal welfare and scientific validity for appropriate biomedical use

Version: 2 Date: 21 May 2007

Reviewer: P.René van Weeren

Reviewer's report:

General
It is clear that the paper has been extensively revised and rewritten for the larger part. The paper has been shortened significantly and duplications have been omitted. Readability has improved considerably and the paper has become much more balanced than in its original form. The authors have to be commended for the effort they have put into the paper and the way in which they succeeded in improving it dramatically. I feel the paper in its present state is a very valuable contribution to the discussion about the use of experimental animals in fracture repair studies and may well succeed in its goal of bringing about a real change in the way of thinking about this item.

There are only a few minor comments left.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
None

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

Minor comments:

P3, L11 from bottom: I do not think points 1-10 are “experimental designs”, as suggested in the opening phrase of this paragraph. They could perhaps be called requirements the experimental design of animal studies should comply with. The opening phrase could perhaps be the following: “The experimental design of all research where animals serve as models for humans should comply with several requirements. These include:”

P13, L3 from bottom: Phrase unclear. Perhaps: “Osteones are an example of the differences in structural entities of bone”?

P19, L1: ..numbers of animals used…

P19, L14: two times “species”

P21, L6 from bottom: ..experimental animals during a…

P23, L15: Use of the conjunction “as” is unclear, perhaps meant “for which reason”?

Legend frig.1: L6: For this reason…
L8: In the open space we should presumably read “pulley”?

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

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:
I declare that I have no competing interests.