Reviewer's report

Title: Dermatitis associated with exposure to toxic cyanobacterium during recreational water exposure

Version: 1 Date: 2 September 2008

Reviewer: Prue Hart

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions:
This is a very confusing manuscript. It details the report of symptoms which the authors hypothesise are due to L. majuscula infections. I searched this manuscript for evidence that there may have been a bloom during Jan-Feb 1998 (aim is to ascertain any link between health consequences and timing to outbreaks) and only found a statement in the Summary at the end that ‘This was also the only period that rangers of the Queensland National Parks Service identified the presence of L. majuscula on Fraser Island’. This identification requires expansion, for example, a quantification of the L majuscula identified, how tested, how often, how verified.

I am uncertain as to what is new in this manuscript. All symptoms remain just an association or correlation with a proposed algae. There appears no convincing link in the manuscript as it is presented that Lyngbya majuscula was responsible at all. This is all the more confusing due to the second last sentence in the Discussion suggesting that there was not a bloom, but instead more recreational water users.

Minor Essential Revisions:
The manuscript was poorly proof-read. See line 37, page 2; third sentence of the Introduction; the meaning of the last sentence of para 1 of the Introduction; line 61 of the Introduction p3; line 78 page 4; line 87 page 4; last sentence of the Introduction; first sentence of the Results.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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