Reviewer's report

Title: Postoperative troponin elevation is associated with high early mortality after lung resection for cancer

Version: 1 Date: 27 July 2006

Reviewer: Michael Dusmet

Reviewer's report:

General:
This is an important subject and Lim et al. have shown quite clearly how devastating a post-operative MI is in the setting of thoracic surgery. As such I think that this paper merits publication, but there are two suggestions I would like to make:

- what would they recommend be done when an elevated troponin is found? They vacillate on this and I would have thought that angioplasty ASAP with primary angioplasty would be the way forward, even with the risks of anti-platelet therapy. Are there guidelines? Perhaps they should invite one of their senior cardiology colleagues to join them in writing this part of the paper.

- The current guidelines on the work-up of patients with so-called stable angina would suggest that stable angina and/ or previous MI per se do not merit further investigation. I think this paper demonstrates that prior to major thoracic surgery this is not appropriate and it could be argued that if the patients in this study had had proper investigations (thallium scan Â± angiography with angioplasty and stent placement where appropriate) could possibly have modified the outcome for these patients. I would like to see these guidelines discussed and recommendations for the prevention of the MI in this very specific patient population formulated. Again the help of a cardiologist would be precious. To formulate these recommendations is it possible, in this retrospective study, to have a more precise idea of the cardiac history of the 14 patients who had elevation of their troponin levels?

These suggestions would allow the discussion to be more constructively re-written and some of the less important issues relegated to their appropriate level of interest.

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

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

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

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

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

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: Acceptable

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