Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Sleeve lobectomy by video-assisted thoracic surgery versus thoracotomy for non-small cell lung cancer

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 5 June 2015

**Reviewer:** Alessandro Bertani

**Reviewer’s report:**

Major compulsory revisions:
- The paper has a significant limitation due to the english language; it requires a very extensive revision. Some sections can be hardly understood.
- The case series is reasonably representative compared to other publications although still very small. There are several recent reports in the literature of successful VATS sleeve lobectomy. These should be reviewed by the authors and included in the references. The paper does not focus on any specific innovative topic of VATS sleeve lobectomy.
- The statistical design is very basic and could be improved in order to make the paper more attractive. Is a propensity score matching applicable in this series?
- In general, although the case series reports a very good clinical work by the authors, I suggest that the impact of the paper could be increase by focusing more specifically on a topic that the authors believe to be representative and unique in their experience.

Minor Essential Revisions:
- The description of the surgical technique should be massively improved. Anterior or posterior approach? Please expand and refer to the standard approaches (are you using a standard or modified approach?)
- Figure 1 is very difficult to interpret and of limited help in understanding the technique.
- The process of preoperative staging and selection of the patients for sleeve lobectomy should be discussed more in detail. What are the inclusion and exclusion criteria for a sleeve lobectomy.

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

**Quality of written English:** Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**
I do not have any competing interest.