

Reviewer's report

Title: Recreational and occupational field exposure to freshwater cyanobacteria - a review of anecdotal and case reports, epidemiological studies and the challenges for epidemiologic assessment

Version: 3 **Date:** 29 May 2005

Reviewer: James Spencer Metcalf

Reviewer's report:

General

The paper describes the current situation with respect to the various epidemiological criteria applicable to the assessment of cyanobacterial toxins. Although interesting, a number of points require attention

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

Although the work of Stewart et al has pushed the boundaries of epidemiological assessment of cyanobacterial toxins, this reviewer feels that for a review paper studies which are only submitted (e.g. Refs 68, 76, 145) should not be included or discussed unless they have been accepted for publication.

Figures 1-4. Unfortunately the figures obtained by this reviewer were only boxes and arrows with no text and were not able to be assessed.

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

Page 4, introduction, lines 6-8. Although the authors mention that saxitoxins are not unique to cyanobacteria, mention should be included that LPS is also not unique to cyanobacteria being able to be produced by heterotrophic bacteria such as E. coli and Salmonella.

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.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests