Title: Training practitioners in preparing systematic reviews: a cross-sectional survey of participants in the Australasian Cochrane Centre training program

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General comments
1. This is a well-written account and is worth publishing. However, at the moment it is a very Cochrane Collaboration orientated report. Its appeal might be broadened by adding some discussion of any similar studies on the relationship between training and subsequent productivity.

Compulsory revisions
2. Make it clear in the abstract methods section that the survey was done by email and fax.
3. Where "time" is referred to as a barrier, be explicit that this is "lack of time".
4. The end of the last paragraph of the Background and the subsequent 3-item list seem repetitive. These should be combined or the rationale for describing the aims in the text and then in the list should be made clearer.
5. Include the actual survey. Table 1 is not sufficient to see how questions were asked or to judge whether the framing of the questions may have influenced the responses.
6. Results, first paragraph, last sentence: give the numbers, not just the percentages.
7. Results, fourth paragraph, first sentence: this begins with 14 but it seems to be 13 in Table 1. Specify the definition of "recently".
8. Add discussion of the reliability of answers such as "not enough time". This is a very easy answer to give in response to surveys such as this, even if the real reason might be, for example, that the review is no longer of sufficient interest to the reviewer for them to use time that would be available to do it.
9. Discussion: why do the authors regard the finding that lack of time is a barrier as "striking"? Do they mean surprising (it probably isn't) or that this reason is so common.
10. Discussion: I disagree that one cannot create more time for reviewers. The time could be "bought" through, for example, the commissioning of reviews and the provision of paid-for, protected time within which to do them.
11. Conclusions: the first sentence should be edited so that it is clearer what is meant by "is the issue". Also, are the authors referring to people before or after they have been trained (i.e. is it "people who have attended" rather than "people who are attending"?).
12. The paper refers to "systematic review of the literature" in a few places. Are the authors deliberately referring to reviews of published data (i.e. "literature") or do they mean reviews regardless of the publication status of the component studies or data.

Discretionary revisions
13. Change "Australasian Cochrane reviewers" to "Cochrane reviewers in Australasia" - my understanding is that participation depended on geographical location, not nationality.
14. In looking for publications, do the authors think that using surname and first initial may have missed some publications? For example, if the person used a different first initial for the workshop and any publications.
15. More information should be added on the number of people who were trained but, for whom, survey responses are not available. A flow diagram of the number of participants in each year of workshops, the number of successfully delivered surveys and the numbers of returned (useable and unusable) surveys would be helpful.

16. As noted under point 1, the article might benefit from additional discussion relating to any similar studies on the relationships between training and productivity.