

News

Swinburne expert comments on UK report on mobile phones and health

The UK Mobile Telecommunications and Health Research (MTHR) Programme has released the findings of a major six year review of mobile phones and health in London overnight. It is the largest UK investigation of mobile phones and health ever undertaken and includes research findings on base stations and using mobile phones while driving. It also includes limited findings on children and mobile phones.

Professor Andrew Wood, Research Director at Swinburne's Australian Centre for Radio Frequency Bioeffects Research (ACRBR) welcomed the report and said the research undertaken has done a lot to reduce public concerns over the use of mobile phones.

“This is a very welcome report of UK research activities on several aspects of mobile phone safety. It summarises knowledge gained from the results of 23 separate studies carried out over the last six years and costing GBP8.8 million (A\$21 million).

"The work undertaken has done a lot to reduce some of the concerns raised in the UK Stewart Report, but this new report notes that some concerns still remain. One of these is the question of whether an increased brain and nervous system cancer risk only emerges after 10 or more years of use and the second is related to the use of phones by children.

"It is useful to note that the research has covered questions relating to exposure from both base-stations and handsets. The issue of mobile phone use whilst driving has been looked at, and it is of note that such use might be more dangerous than other in-car distractions because of the greater cognitive resources that often go into such use.

"The NHMRC-funded Australian Centre for Radiofrequency Bioeffects Research has, since 2003, been pursuing a similar program. It, too, has concentrated on the concerns of effects on the nervous system and has specifically looked at any relationships there may be between mobile phone use in adolescents and cognitive development, hearing ability and other physiological measures.”

A copy of the full report is available on the MTHR website at www.mthr.org.uk/documents/MTHR_report_2007.pdf

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Available at:

http://www.swinburne.edu.au/corporate/marketing/mediacentre/core/releases_article.php?releaseid=976