

Summary of Linkage Projects Applications for Funding to Commence in 2006

Victoria

Victoria University of Technology

LP0668252 Prof D Bruck; Prof I Thomas

Approved Project Title **Waking up to a fire - optimising the smoke alarm signal**

2006 : \$32,232

2007 : \$28,157

Primary RFCD 3801 PSYCHOLOGY

Partner Organisation(s)

Building Commission Victoria

Australian Building Codes Board

Health Services Engineering Pty Ltd

Umow Lai and Associates Pty Ltd

Administering Institution Victoria University of Technology

Project Summary

On any one night a significant proportion of the population is at risk of sleeping through the current smoke alarm in a fire emergency. Significant risk factors for not awakening include being a child, sleep deprivation, being a heavy sleeper, use of sleeping tablets, alcohol intoxication, and being aged over 60. Yet research suggests that a different alarm signal will awaken these groups more effectively at a lower volume. This innovative project will determine the best signal, with important implications for community public safety, fire safety engineers, the smoke alarm industry and our theoretical understanding of cognitive processing during sleep.