



Police on case of exercise project

By ROSEMARY BOLGER

INSPECTOR Grant Twining copped some strange looks when he was spotted shadow boxing at his desk and doing a crab walk down the corridor.

“They must have thought ‘What is going on here?’” Inspector Twining said.

He was one of 52 Tasmania Police employees across the state to trial a computer program designed to reduce the amount of time that office workers spend sitting down.

University of Tasmania human movement researchers

Scott Pederson and Dean Cooley developed the program Exertime in response to research showing that sitting for more than four hours a day can lead to increased risk factors for cardiovascular disease, diabetes and obesity.

In Hobart yesterday, they revealed results of the 13-week trial showing that participants had reduced those risk factors.

It also led to a decrease in stress levels and improved work culture.

Exertime prompts users every 45 minutes and allows them to choose from more than 60 exercises that can be performed at their desk.

Dr Cooley said it was a move away from the “huff and puff” style of fitness activity, which often did not appeal to those that most needed the exercise.

“The primary focus was to get people to stand up,” Dr Cooley said. “There’s no one in your face screaming at you, saying you have to do 50 star jumps. You get to choose.”

He said this type of project was needed as more people were stuck at their desks. “Twenty years ago we used to take a break from work and take a seat — now we take a break and stand up,” he said.

Workers spent 30 seconds to two minutes exercising eight to 12 times a day on average.

Inspector Twining said he could feel the difference.

“I can tell that I’m a little bit more flexible. I have got back on the pushbike and I’m eating better.”



Exertime participants Inspector Grant Twining and Miranda Walsh and researcher Scott Pederson exercise at the office in Hobart.