

## **WORKING FROM HOME ‘COULD SAVE BILLIONS’**

Strategic Workstyles 2000, an Oxford forecasting unit, says that industry could make huge financial savings by allowing their staff to work from home. Noel Hodson, the report's author, says that the effects of allowing 15 per cent of Britain's 22 million workforce to work in their own homes using telephones, facsimile machines and computers would be enormous.

London would feel the biggest benefits with 526,000 fewer drivers on the roads. More than 11,000 commuters would not need to enter central London daily. Commuters would benefit from seeing their families more, saving up to four hours a day travelling to work. Companies would have a fresher workforce which did not need to be transported into a central, expensive location daily.

A study for a big financial institution planning to allow 20 people to 'telecommute' calculated that the company would save more than £ 430,000 per year. The study examines the reasons why telecommuting has not achieved the advantages of time saved and cost cutting. It says the managers are often nervous about leaving staff unattended and out of sight of the office. For the 'teleworker', working from home might bring unforeseen hazards, such as a partner who does not want the house invaded by machinery and office paperwork. 'A number of car commuters thoroughly enjoy the total isolation and privacy, available to them in their cars,' the report says.

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