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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cal Poly Researchers Report on Risks, Ethics Related to New Trend in Warfare

[Read the Report Reaction on Wired.Com](#)

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SAN LUIS OBISPO – The Ethics + Emerging Technologies Group at Cal Poly today publicly released a major report, “Autonomous Military Robots: Risk, Ethics, and Design,” authored by several faculty researchers.

The 100-plus page report, funded by the U.S. Department of Navy, Office of Naval Research, addresses a range of issues, including current and predicted states of robotics, different programming approaches (top-down, bottom-up, etc.), just-war challenges, legal responsibilities, and other ethical concerns ranging from accidental deaths to robots’ rights.

“The public is generally surprised when they hear how great a role robots are playing in the military,” said Patrick Lin, director of the research group and co-author of the report. “But there hasn’t been much dialogue about the risks posed by these machines, especially as they are expected to be given more autonomy or a greater ability to make choices on their own, such as attack decisions.”

Additional co-authors of the report are George Bekey, special consultant in Cal Poly’s College of Engineering and Keith Abney of the university’s Philosophy Department. Bekey, an emeritus professor at the University of Southern California, is founder of USC’s robotics lab and author of the book “Autonomous Robots.”

Colin Allen from Indiana University, Peter Asaro from Rutgers, and Wendell Wallach from Yale University were retained as consultants on the project.

For more information and to access the report, go online to <http://ethics.calpoly.edu> or <http://www.emergingethics.com>.

About the Ethics + Emerging Technologies Group

Based at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, the Ethics + Emerging Technologies Group is a non-partisan research and educational organization focused on the risk, ethical and social impacts of emerging technologies. Current projects and interests are related to issues in robotics, human enhancement, nanotechnology and space development.

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