

# HS708 Noise Management Procedure

Work Health and Safety Act 2011

Manager, UNSW Health & Safety

Policy Hierarchy link

| Superseded Documents |                                          | OHS708 Noise Management Procedure                                      |                  |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| File Number          |                                          | 2016/00369                                                             |                  |
| Associated Documents |                                          | HS087 Noise Level Assessment Form<br>HS091 Health Monitoring Guideline |                  |
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Nuisance Noise is that which is perceived as annoying, irrespective of daily exposure.

Administrative Noise Control Measures are work systems designed to substantially reduce noise exposure. Examples are job rotation, job redesign or rosters which are designed to reduce exposure to noise.

Audiometric Testing is the testing and measurement of the hearing threshold levels of each ear of a person by means of pure tone air conduction threshold tests.

Engineering Noise Control Measures is any engineering procedure that reduces the sound level either at the source of the noise or in its transmission, but does not include the use of administrative noise control measures or personal hearing protectors.

Ototoxic substance is one that can cause hearing loss or exacerbate the effects of noise on hearing. They consist of industrial chemicals and some medications. Ototoxic substances absorbed into the bloodstream may damage the cochlea in the inner ear and/or the auditory pathways to the brain, leading to hearing loss and tinnitus. Hearing loss is more likely to occur if a worker is exposed to both noise and ototoxic substances than if exposure is just to noise or ototoxic substances alone

Hand-arm vibration is vibration transmitted to the hand and arm during the operation of hand-held power tools and hand-guided equipment, or holding materials being processed by machines.

Plant is any machinery

assist in the identification of potential noise hazards. These inspections should be carried out in consultation between Managers and workers.

c) Consultation with the workforce

d) Hazard/Incident reports

### 3.2 Risk Management

Once the hazard identification is completed, a noise level assessment may need to be completed (see table below to help determine if one is needed). Once hazards are identified, control measures must be implemented and reviewed.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A 'Yes' to any of the following indicates the need to carry out a noise assessment if exposure to the noise cannot be immediately controlled.                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Is a raised voice needed to communicate with someone about one metre away?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Do your workers notice a reduction in hearing over the course of the day? (This may only become noticeable after work, for example, needing to turn up the radio on the way home).                                                                                                                                                         |
| Are your workers using noisy powered tools or machinery?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Are there noises due to impacts (such as hammering, pneumatic impact tools) or explosive sources (such as explosive powered tools, detonators)?                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Are personal hearing protectors used for some work?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Do your workers complain that there is too much noise or that they can't clearly hear instructions or warning signals?                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Do your workers experience ringing in the ears or a noise sounding different in each ear?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Do any long-term workers appear to be hard of hearing?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Have there been any workers' compensation claims for noise-induced hearing loss?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Does any equipment have manufacturer's information (including labels) indicating noise levels equal or greater than any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o 80 dB(A) LAeq,T (T= time period over which noise is measured)?</li> <li>o 130 dB(C) peak noise level?</li> <li>o 88 dB(A) sound power level?</li> </ul> |
| Do the results of audiometry tests indicate that past or present workers have hearing loss?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Are any workers exposed to noise and ototoxins in the workplace?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Are any workers exposed to noise and hand-arm vibration?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

#### 3.2.1 Noise Level Assessment

A noise assessment should be done by a competent person in accordance with the procedures in AS/NZS 1269.1 Measurement and assessment of noise immission and exposure. The more complex the situation, the more knowledgeable and experienced the person needs to be.

A competent person is one who has accurately calibrated noise measuring instruments and, through training and experience:

- understands what is required by the WHS Regulations for noise
- knows how to check the performance of the instruments
- knows how to take the measurements properly
- can interpret the results of the noise measurements.

The assessment can be used to determine the noise levels in an area, or the exposure to a person over a time period. The Noise Level Assessment Form (HS087) should be used to record this assessment. Any such assessment should only be used as a guide to assist in making decisions regarding the control of noise hazards.

The table below d

Noise Level dB(A)



The degree of attenuation required in the worker's environment (see table below). Do not provide protectors that overprotect by cutting out too much sound – this can cause difficulties hearing verbal instructions or alarm sounds.

|                                        |
|----------------------------------------|
| Recommended class of hearing protector |
|----------------------------------------|

Refer to HS091 Health Monitoring Guideline for more information.

### 3.4 Training

Training is an integral part of a preventative strategy, and is in addition to the





## 5. References

- Work Heat