



Safety & Wellbeing Policy Arrangement

Section 12 - Control of Workplace Noise

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Arrangement Section 12 – Control of Workplace Noise

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Appendix 1 - Main Requirements Contained in the Noise at Work Regulations 2005

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Further guidance on this matter can also be obtained from the Health and Safety Unit
Telephone No. 01698 520645

1. Statement

The Council will undertake to meet its obligations placed upon it by the Control of Noise at Work Regulations by undertaking a programme of noise assessments and implementing appropriate measures to reduce noise exposure.

Assistant Chief Executives will ensure that a system is in place to identify areas requiring assessment and that where necessary appropriate steps are taken to reduce the exposure to noise within the workplace. Arrangements made by each Service will include details on the following:

- Assessment of Risk from Noise;
- Prevention or Control of Exposure to Noise;
- Provision of Hearing Protection;
- Maintenance of Control Measures;
- Information, Instruction and Training;
- Pre-employment screening;
- Supervision.

2 Definitions

A number of specialist terms and phrases are used within this document. The main terms used are defined as follows:

“Daily personal noise exposure”	the level of the daily noise exposure taking no account of any personal protective equipment used. (Part 1 of the Schedule of the Regulations outlines how this is to be measured.)
“Exposed”	exposed whilst at work
“The Lower Exposure Level”	a) a daily or weekly personal noise exposure of 80dB(A); and b) a peak sound pressure of 135dB(C)
“The Upper Exposure Level”	a) a daily or weekly personal noise exposure of 85dB(A); and b) a peak sound pressure of 137dB(C)
“The Exposure Limit Values”	a) a daily or weekly personal noise exposure of 87dB(A); and b) a peak sound pressure of 140dB(C)
“dB”	the unit of measuring sound, the unit is a decibel.
“dB(A)”	the unit of measuring sound as heard by the ear, the unit is also a decibel.

“L _{EP,d} ”	the daily personal noise exposure over an 8 hour working day.
“L _{eq} ”	the exposure to noise over the period of noise measurement.
“Octave Band Analysis”	this means a comprehensive measurement of workplace noise and 8 specific sound frequencies. The results will often assist in the identification and provision of appropriate noise reduction measures.

3 The Regulations (Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005)

The regulations (sometimes shortened to CNWR) are based on a European Union Directive requiring basic laws on protecting workers from the risks caused by noise. They do not apply to members of the public exposed to noise from their non-work activities, or making an informed choice to go to noisy places. They replace the Noise at Work Regulations 1989.

The key points highlighted within the regulations are:

- (a) The two action values for daily noise exposure have been established (80dB and 85dB);
- (b) There are two action values for peak noise (135dB and 137dB);
- (c) There are exposure limit values of 87dB (daily exposure) and 140dB (peak noise) which take into account the effect of wearing hearing protection and which must not be exceeded;
- (d) There is a specific requirement to provide health surveillance where there is a risk to health.

Appendix 1 gives a more detailed summary of the expectations associated with the Control of Noise at Work Regulations.

4 Assessment of Noise Exposure

The regulations require employers to assess the noise levels within the workplace. The assessment at the very least should involve the measurement of sound at the operator’s ear and provide enough information to determine if the exposure to noise exceeds the action levels indicated within the regulations. In order to seek compliance with the regulations Services will develop management systems to clearly identify areas of operation that may constitute a noise “hazard”. These areas will then be assessed by a person competent in the measurement of noise for the purposes of Health and Safety at Work. The assessments will then be used to formulate a Service action plan aimed at reducing noise exposure. (See Appendix 2)

The assessment will be reviewed when there is reason to suspect the original assessment is no longer valid including, for example, a significant change in the work to which the assessment relates.

Noise assessments will be undertaken by competent persons using equipment that is suitable and has been calibrated in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions.

Services should develop an assessment process that will clearly identify and report on:

1. Which employees are so exposed;
2. To what extent they are exposed, and
3. The information required to facilitate:
 - (i) Noise reduction at source;
 - (ii) Provision of suitable hearing protectors;
 - (iii) Demarcation of Hearing protection zones;
 - (iv) Provision of information on exposure levels to employees.

Assessments should also consider the following:

a) Competent Persons

The regulations clearly state that assessments are carried out by a competent person who has the necessary skills and knowledge required to manage risks, and who has achieved a certificate relevant for the purposes of the control of noise. It is important that when Services are selecting noise course/s for employee training that they select a course which provides adequate information, instruction and training on the evaluation of noise data and the control of risks from noise. Certain noise courses only provide information on how to use the equipment. These courses would not be deemed sufficient training for persons to carry out a noise risk assessment.

b) Assessments

The need for an assessment can normally be determined without the need of noise measuring equipment, the Health and Safety Executive indicate that as a rough guide, if employees have to shout to be heard at around 2 metres then it is likely that the noise levels are around the action levels and an assessment may be required.

Where there is any doubt about the noise levels then measurements should be taken, and if this indicates levels of exposure above the first action level then a more detailed assessment will be required.

Any assessment undertaken to comply with the Regulations will need to:

- Identify all workers likely to be exposed to noise at or above the first action level or at or above the peak action level;
- Provide further information, where action is considered necessary to assist the employer to reduce the risks.

c) Noise Assessment Equipment

Equipment used to undertake assessments/surveys needs to be suitable for the task and calibrated in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and certainly within the preceding 12 month period.

Noise surveys should be carried out using equipment that will at least meet the standards of an IEC 61672 - Type 2 meter. Although older meters meeting the IEC 60651 (and IEC 60804) can continue to be used for most applications. If a new meter is being sourced then it should meet IEC 61672 standard.

Octave band analysis

In circumstances where exposure levels approach or exceed 85dB(A) then an Octave band analysis should normally be undertaken and the information used to ensure that suitable control measures are introduced or maintained to control the frequencies identified as causing problems.

In situations where hearing protectors are in use then the octave band analysis should be used to ensure that the PPE provided has the correct attenuation.

Octave band analysis should be undertaken using equipment designed for this purpose and marked to IEC 61672 Type 2 or better.

5. Review of Assessments

Assessments need to be reviewed on a regular basis (for example, at least every 12 months) as a result of the review a re-assessment may be required. Factors that would indicate a re-assessment include:

- installation of, or removal of machinery;
- substantial change in workload, work pattern or indeed work speed;
- changes in building structure;
- modifications to machinery and/or introduction of automation;
- changes in machine layout/operators position;
- machine wear and general deterioration;
- introduction of other measures under the noise control programme.

Systems developed by Services should include procedures to identify circumstances that would necessitate a re-assessment of an existing workplace. If no substantial changes have occurred in the workplace then there would be no need to undertake an additional assessment, this being the case a small note to indicate that a re-assessment was considered but not thought necessary should be made and a date for a future review established.

6. Records of Assessment

Assistant Chief Executives will ensure that a system is in place to record assessments in a suitable format and that these records are kept for future reference.

There are no defined standards for recording assessment results. The nature of the report is ultimately a choice for the competent person however any assessment

carried out under the Noise at Work Regulations must be recorded in a format that includes details of:

- the work location;
- the task being monitored;
- when the assessment was undertaken;
- persons involved in the assessment;
- the results;
- details of instrumentation used;
- the recommendations.

Records should be kept in a form that is easily accessible, an example of an assessment record is contained in Appendix 3.

Records of assessment should be retained for at least 40 years, even if replaced by a new assessment. Old records should only be destroyed with specific authorisation from the Council Health and Safety Officer on a record per record basis.

7. Risk Reduction

Assistant Chief Executives will put in place systems to reduce risks identified by noise assessments. This will include:

1. Reducing risk of damage to the hearing of employees from exposure to noise, to the lowest level that is reasonably practicable.
2. Reducing noise exposure, when any Service employees are likely to be exposed to the second action level or above or to the peak action level, so far as is reasonably practicable without the use of personal protective equipment.

The regulations seek to ensure employers reduce any noise at source and thus reduce the risk of hearing damage. As a result of assessment, Services may have to put in place measures to reduce the risks associated with the source of workplace noise.

Services should include as part of their “Annual Safety Plan” indications of measures being undertaken to reduce the noise levels at source, this may include:

- planned maintenance systems;
- asset replacement programmes, or
- purchasing policies where Services take conscious decisions to purchase quieter machines.

Where proposed reduction measures are not being implemented, reasons for the decision should be recorded.

In addition to the above steps, the assessment/survey should also identify steps that can be taken by the employer to reduce noise in the workplace. Often these will be simple cost effective measures, however on occasions there may be a need to enlist the services of an acoustic engineer.

Any programme of noise reduction will actively consider the following:

- a) Identifying the major noise sources;

- b) Identifying reasonably practicable steps that can be taken to reduce the noise level by engineered methods;
- c) Establishing priorities for action;
- d) Ensuring action is taken;
- e) Re-assessment procedures.

Resources allocated to the 'Noise Reduction Programme' should be allocated giving due regard to the following factors:

- a) The number of people who will benefit from the programmed measure;
- b) The noise exposure levels involved in the work area;
- c) The cost effectiveness of the engineering and/or organisational measures proposed, i.e. implement the most cost effective measure first;
- d) The likelihood that the engineered methods proposed will produce measurable worthwhile results;
- e) Environmental/operational factors that make the wearing of hearing protection undesirable.

It may be possible to reduce an employee's noise exposure by limiting their time in a noisy work environment. The benefits from this are small and the operation of such a system is very difficult and fraught with supervision difficulties especially when considering that halving the time of exposure will only equate to a 3dB(A) reduction in exposure. This method may however prove useful as a short term control measure if managed properly and perhaps combined with other techniques.

Noise refuges:

In situations where employees are based in a continually noisy environment, it is recommended that consideration be given to the installation and use of noise refuges until the noise at source can be controlled. Advice on this matter should form part of the Noise Survey and Assessment undertaken by the competent person, alternatively advice can be obtained from the Council Health and Safety Officer.

Hearing Protection Zones:

The Council will adopt the standard that in situations where the noise levels are such that an employee may attain an exposure equivalent to, or above, the first or peak action level then steps will be taken to erect suitable signs showing where employees are expected to wear hearing protectors. Supervisors need to actively enforce the wearing of hearing protectors by employees and non employees using the work space.

8. Hearing Protection

Where control of noise is not reasonably practicable, or indeed there is a delay before an employer is able to control the noise exposure effectively, then, there is a duty on employers to provide suitable hearing protection. Services will have to make available appropriate hearing protectors to employees who will be exposed to an action level of 80dB(A) or above.

There is a need to provide suitable information, instruction and training in the use of the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) provided.

Suitability of Hearing Protectors:

Any hearing protection equipment provided to reduce exposure to noise must be of a suitable type. Services must consider a number of factors before issuing PPE to employees. Factors to consider include:

- Attenuation properties of the protectors at certain frequencies;
- Frequency of use, i.e. is it all day every day, or for one hour every week etc;
- Suitability of hearing protectors with other forms of PPE, e.g. safety spectacles will often reduce the effectiveness of ear muff style protectors or safety helmets may make the use of certain ear muffs impossible (see AS19 – Personal Protective Equipment);
- Environmental conditions, for example, is it particularly hot or humid in which case standard ear muffs may be inappropriate;
- Are employees working in particularly dirty environments where the hygienic condition of foam ear plugs may be difficult to maintain;
- Are employees subject to ear infections, which make ear plugs inappropriate?

Audiometric Testing:

In certain circumstances, in particular where employees undertake work regularly at noise levels in excess of the upper action levels, Services will make use of audiometric testing of at risk employees throughout their employment, to identify those who may be affected by their working environment. In order to provide a baseline and to identify potential hearing problems, pre-employment testing is recommended and medical advice sought on the results.

9. Maintenance and Use of Equipment

All Services need to ensure that equipment provided to control noise at work, is properly maintained and used and should make known to their employees their duties to make full and proper use of personal hearing protectors, and their responsibility to report defects.

The following guidance is given, and relates to all equipment provided under these regulations:

1. Noise Control Equipment

Services should have systems in place to check, on a regular basis, that all noise control equipment is in good condition and being properly used. Should any deficiencies be found during the check, or as a result of a reported fault, then the defect must be rectified promptly. To assist in this process, a suitable system to report defects/concerns should be established and made known to all appropriate employees.

2. Hearing Protection Programmes

Services are strongly encouraged to adopt a “Hearing Protection Programme”, such a programme involves regular information, instruction and training to employees working in noisy environments.

This can be achieved in a number of ways, for example:

- a) Appropriate statements and information within the Services Health and Safety Policy;
- b) Appropriate signs and information notices throughout the workplace advising persons where and when to use noise reduction equipment/personal protective equipment;
- c) Allocation of clear responsibilities in terms of co-ordination of the hearing protection programme, the distribution of hearing protectors and the maintenance of protectors and other noise protection equipment;
- d) Suitable and sufficient information, instruction and training on all aspects of noise and the systems of control;
- e) Appropriate record systems, that are able to indicate the types of PPE issued, any repairs/problems identified with the issued equipment and the level of instruction, information and training given;
- f) Use of a monitoring system to ensure that all of the above operate in accordance with Service instructions and guidance. Such monitoring might include: Spot checks, feedback systems on suitability of measures/equipment, links to disciplinary procedures.

Maintenance of Equipment

- a) Hearing protectors:

Where use is made of re-usable protectors there is a need to inspect the equipment on a regular basis and repair or replace as appropriate. The frequency of inspection will depend on the amount of usage and type of use associated with the equipment, for example, equipment used on a construction site may need to be inspected weekly whilst protectors used by a supervisor on a woodwork project may need the equipment inspected less often. This type of inspection is over and above the daily, pre-use inspection that every employee should undertake.

Each Service should make a provision for the clean and safe storage of the PPE, it is recommended that Services not already providing an appropriate locker close to the workplace, provide suitable storage facilities for the PPE provided, for example, storage bags or small "pigeon hole" units in a clean environment. Facilities for employees to clean and prepare their PPE should also be provided.

- b) Noise Control Equipment

Where noise control equipment has been installed such as pneumatic silencers or enclosures then a suitable system of inspection and monitoring should be put in place to ensure such equipment continues to operate properly. This may require noise level spot checks as well as visual inspections for damage.

The results of any monitoring and any subsequent maintenance must be recorded and those records kept.

10. Provision of Information, Instruction and Training

There is a legal requirement for the Service to provide “adequate information, instruction and training on all aspects of noise and noise control. The provision of such training and information could be through a number of methods, for example:

- “Tool box talks”;
- Information sheets (See extract of IS74 in Appendix 4);
- Training Briefings;
- Short Courses;
- Demonstrations by supervisors;
- Extensive training programme.

Any information given, must be in a form that is easily understood by employees and should consider some essential factors, which should include:

A programme of training/information will include:

1. The likely noise exposure, based on assessment results and the risk to hearing;
2. How to report defects in hearing protectors and noise control equipment;
3. Where and how ear protectors can be obtained and how to use them;
4. The employees' duties under the Control of Noise at Work Regulations;
5. The steps that an employee can take to minimise the risk of hearing damage;
6. Advice on the symptoms and signs of hearing damage and steps to take if concerned;
7. How to use equipment provided to reduce the risks associated with the workplace.

It would be useful to include in any training programme a general background to 'noise induced hearing loss', its cause and the reasons why all employees should also take steps to reduce their personal risk.

Employers are required by the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 to make certain information available to the appointed safety representatives in relation to the noise assessments made involving employees they represent. The Service should therefore consider a system to advise appointed safety representatives of the noise assessment made and their interpretation of the outcome.

11. Supervision

It is often the case that although employers put in place many of the systems contained within this and other guidance documents, inadequate supervision of the work activity can result in the system being ineffective.

It is therefore stressed that supervision of Noise Reduction Programmes, Hearing Protection Programmes or other Service measures, put in place to comply with these regulations, is vital and that adequate supervision levels must be maintained and monitored by the Service.

12. Employees' Duties

Any training programme or information system put in place by a Service should detail the employees' duties under these regulations. The employees' duties are detailed below and should form the basis of any information system.

Employees have a duty to:

- 1) co-operate with the competent person undertaking the assessment of noise exposure
- 2) use noise control measures, such as exhaust silencers and machine enclosures, in accordance with Service instructions
- 3) wear hearing protectors provided at or above the second or peak action levels and in areas marked as a "hearing protection zone"
- 4) take care of personal protective equipment and noise control equipment provided making use of storage accommodation after use
- 5) report, in accordance with Service procedures, any defect found in hearing protectors or noise control equipment.

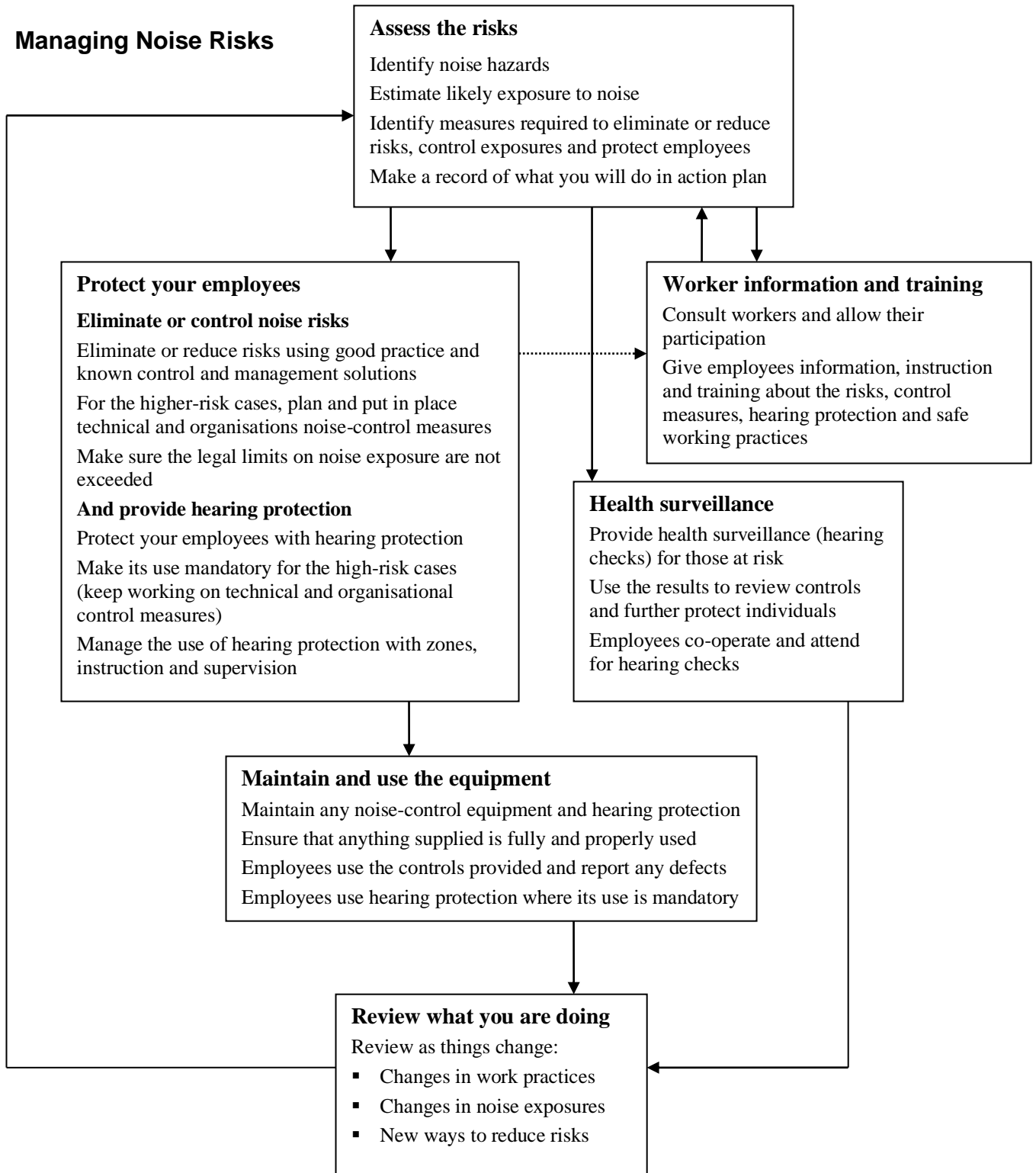
MAIN REQUIREMENTS CONTAINED IN THE NOISE AT WORK REGULATIONS 2005

Action required where $L_{EP,d}$ is likely to be:	Below 80dB(A)	80dB(A) Lower Exposure Level	85dB(A) Upper Exposure Level	Daily or weekly personnel exposure of 87dB(A)
EMPLOYERS' DUTIES				
General duty to reduce risk				
Risk of hearing damage to be reduced to the lowest level reasonably practicable (Reg 6)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Assessment of noise exposure				
Noise assessments to be made by a Competent Person (Reg 5)		✓	✓	✓
Record of assessments to be kept until a new one is made (Reg 5)		✓	✓	✓
Noise reduction				
Reduce exposure to noise as far as is reasonably practicable by means other than ear protectors (Reg 6)			✓	✓
Provision of Information to Workers				
Provide adequate information, instruction and training about risks to hearing, what employees should do to minimise risk, how to obtain ear protectors if they are exposed between 80 and 85dB(A), and their obligations under the Regulations (Reg 10)		✓	✓	✓
Mark ear protection zones with notices, so far as reasonably practicable (Reg 8)		**	✓	✓
Ear Protectors				
Ensure so far as is practicable that protectors are: • Provided to employees who ask for them (Reg 8)		✓	**	
• Provided to all exposed (Reg 8)		**	✓	✓
• Maintained and repaired (Reg 8)		✓	✓	✓
• Used by all exposed (Reg 8)		**	✓	✓
Ensure so far as reasonably practicable that all who go into a marked ear protection zone use ear protectors (Reg 8)		**	✓	✓

Action required where $L_{EP,d}$ is likely to be:	Below 80dB(A)	80dB(A) Lower Exposure Level	85dB(A) Upper Exposure Level	Daily or weekly personnel exposure of 87dB(A)
Maintenance and use of equipment				
Ensure so far as is practicable that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All equipment provided under the Regulations is used, except for the ear protectors provided between 80 and 85 dB(A) (Reg 8) 		✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all equipment is maintained (Reg 8) 		✓	✓	✓
EMPLOYEES' DUTIES				
Use of equipment				
So far as practicable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use ear protectors (Reg 8) 		**	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use any other protective equipment (Reg 8) 		✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report any defects discovered to his/her employer (Reg 8) 		✓	✓	✓

** Note - North Lanarkshire Council will apply this as an internal standard

Managing Noise Risks



Control of Noise at Work Regulations - Summary of Assessment

Location: _____ Service: _____

Address of Premises: _____

Date of Survey: _____ Survey undertaken by: _____

Equipment Used: _____ Serial No: _____ Calibration Date: _____

Description of Task:

RESULTS

Location	Noise Level L _{eq} dB(a)	Daily Exposure Time	Average Exposure L _{EP,d} - dB(A)	Peak Pressure Pascals (Pa) (if appropriate)	Comments: (include number of persons exposed)

OBSERVATIONS

Notes on Building/Workplace Construction:

Notes on Existing Control Measures:

General Comments:

Conclusions and Recommendations:

Re-assessment date/notes: _____

Signature of Assessor: _____ Name: _____ Date: _____

Employee Information Sheet – Control of Workplace Noise

The human ear is capable of responding to a wide range of noise levels from low frequencies (i.e. notes) up to very high frequencies. This capability will be reduced with:

- Age
- Exposure to unacceptably high levels of noise for long enough periods.

This information sheet aims to give you an understanding of the main issues associated with controlling noise in the workplace.

What are the effects?

In simple terms there are two effects noise can have:

1. Short term decrease in hearing, from which you make a full recovery. For example, life sounds quieter when you leave a room where loud music has been played, but you are back to normal in the morning.
2. Permanent decrease in hearing – this is the greatest concern!

What causes permanent loss?

Hearing loss is caused by the combination of noise level and the time we are exposed to that noise. Up to a certain level, we can cope with high levels of noise for a short period. On the other hand, lower levels of noise for long periods may be more harmful.

How can it be prevented?

Hearing loss can be prevented by:

- Reduction of the level of noise at source
- Use of hearing protection
- Reduction of the time exposed to the noise.



It is important to realise that the best prevention route is to reduce or contain the noise where it is being generated, rather than by the other two steps.

What you must do:

Where devices have been supplied to contain the noise at source, (acoustic hoods, booths, etc.) you must use these controls.

When the hearing protection signs are displayed, you must wear hearing protection.

What can, or must, the employer do?

The employer must take all reasonably practical measures to reduce noise. Where there is reason to suspect that noise levels are above 80 dB(A), the employer must carry out an assessment. If this shows that the LEP,d is above 80 dB(A), then hearing protection, information and advice to those who may be affected must be provided. Council policy is that this protection must be worn.

Noise and how it is Measured

Because we can hear such a large range of sound levels, sound is measured by a logarithmic scale called decibels or dB for short. The human ear responds in different ways to different frequencies, so sound levels are normally adjusted to mimic the ear's response. This is then called dB(A).

Examples of Some Common Noises dB(A)

- Library 35
- Office 65
- Street traffic 85
- Pneumatic road drill 100

Because of this logarithmic scale, a change of 3dB(A) means either a doubling or halving of the noise level. Therefore, a change from 86 dB(A) to 83 dB(A) doesn't seem much but the noise is actually half what it was. Were we to lower it to 80 dB(A) then it would be a quarter of the level at 86 dB(A).



What are the problem levels?

Problems occur with unacceptable combination of noise level and time. This combination is called a daily personal noise exposure or "dose" and is given the term LEP,d. An LEP,d of 85 means that the noise dose is the same as that from a constant 85 dB(A) for 8 hours.

If you know the noise level and duration, you can look up the LEP,d in a chart. For example, 4 hours at 88 dB(A) gives an LEP,d of 86 dB(A). In other words, 4 hours at 88 dB(A) has the same effect on you as 86 dB(A) for 8 hours. When it comes to durations at different levels, you cannot simply average the readings. So 4 hours at 85 dB(A) and 4 hours at 75 dB(A) is not the same as 80 dB(A) for 8 hours. We have to use calculations or charts to work this out.

The Control of Noise at Work Regulations identifies noise doses of 80 dB(A) and 85 dB(A) as action points.

Legal Requirements

The Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005 lists a number of obligations:

- The employer must take reasonably practical steps to control risk
- The employee must co-operate with the employer with regard to these steps,
- Nobody shall intentionally or recklessly interfere with anything which the employer has provided to control risks.
- Control risks at source or by using engineered controls, the use of Personal Protective equipment is generally considered the last resort in noise control



Hearing protection can take the form of ear muffs (shown left) which fit over the ear or plugs (shown right) which fit in the ear. When properly fitted, the protection of plugs is better but the main criterion is personal preference.

Hearing protection is available through your supervisor. Follow these simple rules:

- Do not wear ear muffs if you have long hair covering the ears, thick framed glasses or large ear-rings. These reduce the effectiveness of the protection.
- Ensure than ear plugs fit snugly in the ear and do not leave gaps. Mould them to your ear, if possible.
- For hygiene reasons, do not share hearing protection.
- Report defects in hearing protectors to your supervisor.

As a principal guide, if you have to raise your voice to have a conversation with someone who is around 2 metres away then it may be necessary to have a noise assessment carried out. You should discuss this, other noise related concerns, with your line manager as soon as you can.

(Extract of IS74 – Control of Workplace Noise)

Arrangement Section: Control of Workplace Noise
Version 1.0 **Reference:** IS74

Impact Assessments

Document Title: Health and Safety Policy - Arrangement Section 12
Control of Noise at Work

Date: 1 December 2017

Review Date: As circumstances dictate

Environmental Impact Assessment: This document has been assessed for significant environmental impact; no detrimental impact has been identified

Equality Impact Assessment: This document has been assessed for significant equality implications; no significant issues have been identified.

General Comments: This document is the arrangement section, relating to the management of noise in the workplace and is associated with the Council's health and safety policy as required by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. The general aim of the council is to ensure a healthy and safe working environment for all persons working for or make use of Council Services. Nothing in the document serves to have any negative impact on the above issues and indeed, in general, associated documents will encourage positive consideration of the factors to ensure all members of the workforce and community are afforded access to the same safe and healthy workplace