



**HEARING
LOSS IS
PREVENTABLE**



Identify



Consult



Control



Review

**POCKET GUIDE
TO MANAGING
HAZARDOUS NOISE**



Scan for more
information

Recognising hazardous noise in your workplace

Ask yourself these questions:

- do people need to raise their voice in order to communicate with someone one metre away?
- do people notice a reduction in hearing over the course of a day?
- do workers ask you to repeat things already said?
- do workers experience any of the following:
 - ringing in the ears (tinnitus)?
 - the same sound having a different tone in each ear?
 - muffled hearing?
- are any of your long-term workers hard of hearing?
- do any workers operate noisy machinery for long periods?

If you answered 'yes' to any of the above questions, the chances are that your workplace could be putting workers' hearing at risk.

Assessing noise

Managers should first conduct a walk-through of their business, talk to workers and observe the equipment when in use to identify potentially noisy machinery or tasks.

Assessing the level of noise in the workplace must be done in accordance with AS/NZS 1269.1: 2005 Occupational noise management Part 1: Measurement and assessment of noise emission and exposure.

Tips for managing noise

Eliminating the source of the noise is the most effective way to control hazardous noise in the workplace.

If you can not eliminate the noise, protection is best achieved by controlling the noise at the source. Examples of how you can do this are:

- Apply engineering controls such as anti-vibration machine mountings to reduce the impacts between hard objects or surfaces.
- Quieter types of fans or placing mufflers in the ducts of ventilation systems.
- Enclose noisy plant within a sound-insulating enclosure, screen or barrier. Line guards and panels with noise dampening material.

- Move noisy plant into areas where there are fewer workers, or into a dedicated room.
- Ensure plant is properly maintained to stop rattles and prevent noise from wear.
- Limit the time people spend in noisy areas.

Consult with staff as you monitor and review

Ensure you are communicating with workers to monitor and review conditions. Management can't deal with it unless the workers tell them about it.

- Conduct a walk-through assessment of the workplace.
- Observe the plant, equipment and work being undertaken. Inspect the plant and equipment used during work activities.
- Talk to workers about how work is carried out and asking about any problems they may have.
- Talk to your relevant stakeholders - manufacturers, suppliers, industry associations, health and safety specialists and professionals.
- Review any incidents and monitor reports.

Examples of noise levels

Typical sound	Sound source
Level in dB	
140	Jet engine at 30 metres
130	Rivet Hammer
120 THRESHOLD OF PAIN	
110	Siren at 10m
105	Chainsaw at 1m
100	Sheet metal workshop
95	Hand circular saw
90	Lawn mower
85	Hand saw
80	Kerbside heavy traffic
70	Loud conversation
65	Normal conversation

