

Technical Information

Noise Regulations

The Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005 is designed to ensure that employees are protected from physical as opposed to chemical hazards. Hearing loss is one of the most common industrial injuries, and, despite some success in reducing it due to earlier legislation, continues to cost industry dearly whilst making retirement a misery for many. Noise induced hearing loss is totally preventable using a variety of techniques including process evaluation, engineering control, hearing protectors etc.

Action and Limit Values

All values for noise exposure are averaged over an 8 hour working day except for peak values (impact or impulse noise) which refer to a single event. There is an option to average the noise level over a 40 hour week. An action Value is a point at which certain defined actions must take place. The Limit Value is the noise level at the ear which must not be exceeded.

Lower Exposure Action Value 80 dB(A) continuous or 112 pa (135 dB(C)) Peak level

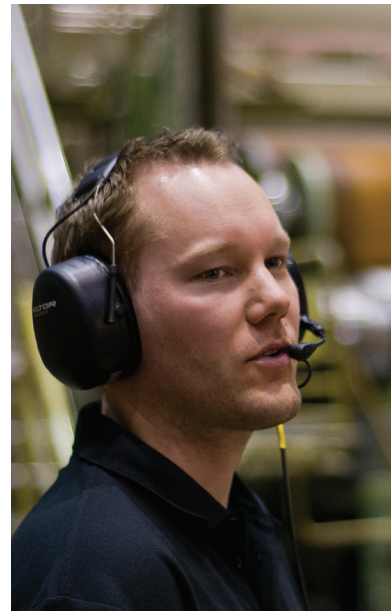
- Assess the level of the risk
- Take reasonable steps to reduce exposure
- Advise employees of the risk
- Provide appropriate hearing protection
- Provide training and information about the risk and control measures
- Provide Audiometry when risk assessment suggests a risk to health

Upper Exposure Action Value 85 dB(A) continuous or 140 pa (137 dB(C)) Peak level

- All the above
- Wearing of hearing protection is compulsory
- Audiometry is a requirement

Exposure Limit Value 87 dB(A) continuous or 200 pa (140 dB(C)) Peak level

- This limit must never be exceeded
- The level is at the ear, i.e. takes into account any hearing protection used



Hearing Protection Standards

EN 352-1	General Requirements - Earmuffs	EN 352-7	Safety requirements and testing - Level Dependent Earplugs
EN 352-2	General Requirements - Earplugs	EN 458	Guidance Document - Selection, Care, Use, Maintenance of hearing protectors
EN 352-3	General Requirements - Helmet Mounted Earmuffs	EN 352-8	Safety requirements and testing - Entertainment Audio Earmuff
EN 352-4	Safety requirements and testing - Level Dependent Earmuffs		
EN 352-5	Safety requirements and testing - Active Noise Reduction Earmuffs		
EN 352-6	Safety requirements and testing - Earmuffs with Electrical Audio Input		

Educational Aids

Providing your workers with hearing protection is not enough to ensure you comply with health & safety regulations. Involving workers in the choice of hearing protection and providing them with a good quality training program plays a vital part.

3M has a wide variety of educational material to help you achieve an effective training scheme: from posters, leaflets, videos and presentations through to model ears to demonstrate how to fit an earplug. Our sales expertise can provide you with the tools you need to construct and provide an effective training programme.



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