



PRACTICE UPDATE

Managing Noise and Preventing Hearing Loss at Work

Scope: Duty holders who have a role in managing the risks of noise include:

- persons conducting a business or undertaking (PCBUs)
- designers, manufacturers, importers, suppliers and installers of plant, substances or structures
- WHS service providers
- officers
- workers

Definition: Hazardous noise may cause temporary hearing loss. After a period of time away from noise, hearing may be restored. With further exposure to hazardous noise, the ear will gradually lose its ability to recover and the hearing loss will become permanent. Permanent hearing loss can also occur suddenly if a person is exposed to very loud impact or explosive sounds.

Key Information: Audiometric testing is required for workers who are frequently required to use personal protective equipment (PPE) to protect them from the risk of hearing loss associated with noise that exceeds the exposure standard (not to exceed an average of 85 dB(A) over 8 hours, or a peak of 140 dB(C)).

Actions:

- Identify hazards — find out what could cause harm.
- Assess risks, if necessary — understand the nature of the harm that could be caused by the hazard, how serious the harm could be and the likelihood of it happening. This step may not be necessary if you are dealing with a known risk with known controls.
- Eliminate risks so far as is reasonably practicable.
- Control risks — if it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate the risk, implement the most effective control measures that are reasonably practicable in the circumstances in accordance with the hierarchy of control measures, and ensure they remain effective over time.
- Provide training to ensure workers can correctly select, fit, wear and maintain hearing PPE.
- Review control measures to ensure they are working as planned.

References: [Code of Practice: Managing noise and preventing hearing loss at work](#)

Who do you call with questions?

If you have any queries, please contact Health and Safety on 9266 4900 or email healthandsafety@curtin.edu.au.

Date of Issue

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