

**GALLDRIS GROUP LIMITED**  
**SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**  
Procedure 24

**NOISE**

**Overview**

This procedure sets out the Company's Policy and Risk Management arrangements to meet the legal requirements and most importantly, to prevent individuals being harmed from noise generated by work activities and the surrounding environment.

- The actions required to achieve these objectives are set out in seven Health and Safety Risk Management steps:
- identify noisy activities and environments
- assess the associated risks
- identify all those who might be harmed
- take measurements
- implement controls
- record findings of assessments and exposures
- review and revise.

Since no cure for noise induced hearing loss currently exists, effective preventative measures are the only means of protecting the worker. Pre-employment assessment of those who have been previously exposed to significant noise risk is very important. This procedure sets out the Company's arrangements to meet the legal requirements and most importantly, to prevent individuals being harmed from noise generated by work activities and the surrounding environment.

**DEFINITIONS**

**Competent Person** – means someone who holds a certificate of competence for noise assessment and possesses the experience and skills appropriate to the risks involved i.e. to complete the tasks set out Step 4 below.

**Noise Exposure Action Values**

The Noise Regulations define exposure action values as levels of noise exposure which, if exceeded, require specific action to be taken. There are 'lower' and 'upper' action values.

**Lower exposure action value;**

*An 8 hour daily personal noise exposure of 80Db(a)*

**Upper exposure action value;**

*An 8 hour daily personal noise exposure of 85dB(A)*

**Peak Sound Pressure**

*A linear peak sound pressure of 135dB(lower) and 137Db(upper) e.g. nail gun impacts*

**dB** = decibel, the unit of sound pressure using a logarithmic scale.

**dB(A)** – the A scale, where the measuring instrument is weighted to correspond with the frequency response of the human ear.

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**SITE MANAGEMENT ACTION**

**Step 1 – Identification of Noise Hazards**

Commencing at the planning stage, prepare a simple inventory of all foreseeable work tasks, background noise (wind, traffic etc), that might combine to create sound bordering on the first or peak action levels.

Detailed measurements are not essential at this stage. As a rough guide, noise assessments must be completed and recorded if individuals must shout or have difficulty being heard clearly by someone standing about 2m away.

Check the safety information supplied with tools, plant, and equipment for noise emission levels (suppliers have a legal duty to provide this data).

A basic, simple to operate noise meter is available for site use.

**Step 2 – Measure the Hazard – the level of noise in dB(a)**

Ensure a competent person records noise measurement of the identified significant risk hazards. These will be required for the written Risk Assessment.

**Step 3 – Identify all those who might be harmed**

Consider all individuals or groups who may be either directly or indirectly at risk eg:

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Employees -        | <i>Managers, supervisors, operatives, visitors.</i> |
| Visitors (other) - | <i>Client, delivery drivers etc</i>                 |
| Others -           | <i>Occupiers, residents, neighbours.</i>            |

**Step 4 Assess the Risks**

The completed written noise risk assessment must be checked for suitability and sufficiency by a competent person.

It should identify:

- those persons who are likely to have a daily personal noise exposure of 80dB(A) or above.
- their individual personal noise exposure.
- the information on work patterns and exposure times used in calculating their daily personal noise exposures.
- the areas where employees are likely to receive a daily personal noise exposure of 85dB(A) or above.
- the significant sources of noise which contribute to the exposures at the first point above
- the noise control measures being used at the time the assessment was made.
- the noise control measures **other than those relying on personal ear protectors** which may reduce the noise exposures (for daily personal noise exposures of 85dB(A) or above) the type and specification of ear protection which should be provided only as a last resort.
- the information, instruction and training which should be provided to the employees.

It is generally not necessary to produce a written noise risk assessment if the sound pressure is below 80dB(A).

**NB: Every effort must be made to eliminate the risk at the outset.**

**Step 5 – Implement Control Measures**

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Where persons are exposed to or above the second action or peak action levels, managers must reduce exposure as far as reasonable practicable by means other than the provision of personal ear protectors.

In practice ear defenders are unlikely to be worn 100% of the time. They only protect the individual, and not those in the vicinity. They require careful supervision and should only be relied upon as a last resort.

In respect of control measures, generally take in to account:

- the number of people who would benefit from the measures proposed.
- the noise exposure levels involved.
- the cost of any changes to reduce noise exposure and how practical they will be to introduce.
- how effective any controls will be.
- any factors which make reliance on personal ear protection especially undesirable, such as strenuous work in a hot, dirty environment, the need to hear emergency alarms etc.

**Step 6 – Record the findings of the noise assessment**

Follow the requirements of Step 2 above. Ensure it is recorded whether the action levels were exceeded or not.

It is essential to pass on recorded risk assessment information to all those likely to be harmed or their representatives and supervisors.

**Step 7 – Review and Revise**

The Site Manager or nominated supervisor must review and revise noise risk assessments at specified periods.

Review and subsequent action must take place when there are significant changes in the work, environment or equipment used

**INFORMATION, INSTRUCTION, AND TRAINING**

Where persons are likely to be exposed at or above any of the action levels, Site Managers must ensure they are provided with information, instruction and training covering:

- the likely noise exposure and the risk to hearing that noise creates
- noise risk assessment
- control measures
- how to obtain ear protectors / ear plugs
- how to report defects in ear protectors and noise control equipment
- the correct use and maintenance of ear protection
- what their duties are under the Noise at Work Regulations
- what the employee should do to minimise risk

**ENVIRONMENT**

Where the risk assessment process confirms that noise is likely to reach levels that may disturb the local community, site management should take pre-emptive action to avoid complaints. It may be necessary or even desirable to obtain a Section 61 consent from the local authority which will stipulate what can and cannot be done in terms of making noise on a site. Failure to meet the conditions of a Section 61 consent or an imposed Section 60 notice is an offence.