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Occupational Health and Safety Manual

Specialist Risk Assessment - Workplace Noise

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Issue record

Issue	Date	Comments
01	August 2006	New issue in response to the Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005

Implementation

This component of the Occupational Health & Safety Manual shall be implemented within all functions of Network Rail with effect from 5 August 2006

Compliance

This component of the Occupational Health & Safety Manual (OHSM) is mandatory and must be complied with by all functions within Network Rail by 7 April 2007.

When this procedure is implemented, it is permissible for all projects, which have formally completed GRIP Level 4, to continue to comply with the Issue of any relevant Network Rail Standards current when GRIP Level 4 was reached and not to comply with requirements contained herein unless the designated Procedure Owner has stipulated otherwise in the accompanying Briefing Note.

Where the Procedure Owner has specified that all projects will comply with the requirements, specific authority not to comply can be sought in the usual manner using the appropriate non-compliance authority processes described in Network Rail Standard, [NR/SP/STP/045](#) Managing the Process for Non-compliance Authority (formerly RT/LS/P/045).

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Supply

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1 Purpose

This document details the process by which Network Rail will:-

- undertake Specialist Risk Assessments for Workplace Noise in support of NR/SP/OHS/00102, Work Activity Risk Assessment; and
- ensure risk assessment is undertaken in compliance with the Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005.

2 Scope

The procedure applies to all business functions within Network Rail in the evaluation and control of risks posed to its employees by exposure to workplace noise.

3 Reference documentation

SI 2005: 1643	The Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005
L108	Controlling Noise at Work, The Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005, Guidance on Regulations
INDG362 (rev1)	Noise at Work - Guidance for employers on the Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005
INDG363 (rev1)	Protect your hearing or lose it!
NR/SP/OHS/00102	Work Activity Risk Assessment
NR/SP/OHS/00123	Health Screening and Health Surveillance for Noise Induced Hearing Loss

4 Definitions

Additional Control Measures

Control measures, over and above Existing Control Measures, that have been introduced in order to reduce risks from an identified hazard to so far as is reasonably practicable.

Attenuation

The term used to indicate the reduction of noise by a control method, the amount of reduction expressed in decibels.

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A-weighting (A)

The frequency weighting that takes into account the response of the human ear to sound, in particular its sensitivity to sound at different frequencies.

Consequence

The estimated outcome of an occurrence.

C-weighting (C)

A standard weighting of the audible frequencies used for the measurement of Peak Sound Pressure level.

Daily personal noise exposure ($L_{EP,d}$)

A measure of the total noise received by an employee during the working day, taking into account the level and duration of exposure, ascertained in accordance with Schedule 1 Part 1 of the Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005.

Decibel (dB)

A logarithmic measurement unit that describes a sound's relative loudness.

Existing control measures

Control measures that are already applied in an attempt to reduce the risk.

Exposure limit values (ELV)

A daily or weekly personal noise exposure of 87dB(A) or a peak sound pressure of 140dB(C), **taking** into account the protection given by any hearing protection device issued.

Hearing protection device

Personal protective equipment that is designed to be worn in the ear canal or over the ear to reduce sound level that reaches the ear drum.

Impact noise

A sharp burst of sound, generally of less than half a second in duration.

Lower exposure action values (LEAV)

A daily or weekly personal noise exposure of 80dB(A) or a peak sound pressure of 135dB(C), **not taking** into account the protection given by any hearing protection device issued.

Nominated risk assessor(s)

Person(s) within a Function who have been specifically identified as having the competence and authority to prepare new risk assessments and carry out scheduled and unscheduled reviews of existing risk assessments.

Nominated reviewer(s)

Person(s) within a Function who has been specifically identified as having the competence and authority to review and approve new or revised risk assessments.

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Peak sound pressure

Greatest value of the absolute instantaneous sound pressure within a specified time interval.

So far as is reasonably practicable (SFARP)

The level of risk at which the benefits of implementing further control measures is grossly outweighed by the costs of those further control measures.

Single number rating (SNR)

An estimate of the average overall protection afforded by the particular type of hearing protection device.

Specialist risk assessment

A risk assessment made to satisfy the requirements of hazard specific health and safety legislation.

Sponsor

The individual within a Function responsible for proposing the use of newly approved or modified plant, equipment, substances or working practice.

Upper exposure action values (UEAV)

A daily or weekly personal noise exposure of 85dB(A) or a peak sound pressure of 137dB(C), **not taking** into account the protection given by any hearing protection device issued .

Weekly personal noise exposure ($L_{EP,w}$)

A measure of the total noise received by an employee during the working week, taking into account the level and duration of exposure, ascertained in accordance with Schedule 1 Part 2 of the Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005.

Work activity risk assessment database

A database of generic work activity risk assessments for all significant activities carried out by Network Rail personnel during the course of their duties.

5 Overview

It is one of the requirements of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations that Network Rail, as an employer, makes suitable and sufficient assessments of the risks to the health and safety of its employees and others that may be affected its work activities. Where a general risk assessment made under these regulations indicates that there is the possibility of risk to employees from exposure to noise the requirements of the Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005 must also be satisfied.

The Control of Noise at Work Regulations set out a series of measures that an employer must undertake to control risks from noise exposure. These include: