

LAND RECOVERY

Noise at Work Policy

Introduction

Land Recovery Ltd and Land Recovery Rail Ltd (from herein all references to Land Recovery Ltd also apply to Land Recovery Rail Ltd) recognises its responsibility and is committed to ensuring The Noise at Work Regulations 2005 is applied to all workplaces and will ensure appropriate measures are in place to protect employees from exposure to high noise levels at work.

The Noise Champion is Jane Beecroft.

Compliance

- Noise at Work Regulations 2005
- Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 1992
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Policy Arrangements

Where noise is thought to exceed 80dB(A) (i.e., the First Action Level), a noise assessment must be carried out by a competent person. As a rough guide, a noise assessment will be required if people must shout or have difficulty being understood by someone about 2 metres away.

When this noise level is thought to exist, the Health & Safety Manager should be contacted to arrange for a noise assessment to be carried out by a competent person. A competent person is someone who has the necessary knowledge, experience and skills to be able to:

- Understand the purpose of noise assessments
- Understand what information needs to be obtained
- Appreciate their limitations and know when to seek further advice
- Make noise measurements using the appropriate equipment
- Explain their findings and make recommendations.

Noise Assessments

Records of all noise assessments that are undertaken must be kept. The assessments should be reviewed whenever there are significant changes in the equipment or the work to which they relate or if there is any reason to suspect they are no longer valid. For example, introducing an additional item of machinery into a workplace may affect the noise level in that area.

Control Measures

If a noise assessment reveals that the noise level reaches the First Action Level of 80 dB(A), Management must ensure that employees are:

- Provided with adequate information, instruction and training about the risks to their hearing
- Advised of ways to minimise risk
- Provided with ear protection on request.

If the noise level reaches the Second Action Level of 85 dB(A), the noise must be reduced so far as is reasonably practicable by means other than ear protection, for example:

- Isolation of noisy equipment
- Providing soundproof havens for employees
- Reducing exposure time.

Where it is not practicable to reduce the noise level to below 85 dB(A), Management must ensure that:

- These areas are demarcated as "Ear Protection Zones."
- Adequate signage is displayed in these areas reading Ear Protection Zone - Ear Protection Must Be Worn
- Suitable hearing protection is provided and worn at all times by all employees when in Ear Protection Zones
- Employees have been shown how to use their ear protectors properly.

Ear protectors and other items of protective equipment must be maintained in good condition. Employees are obliged to report any defects found and report to their Manager. In addition, work equipment and machinery items should be kept in reasonable condition to minimise the noise levels generated.

Noise Controls

High levels of noise in the workplace can cause irreversible damage to your hearing, leading to deafness. Although Land Recovery Ltd will endeavour to reduce the noise level to the lowest level practicable without hearing protection, this is not

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always possible. Therefore, there may be cases when ear protectors are required to protect you from the risk of hearing damage.

Hearing Protection

When is hearing protection likely to be required? If the noise level in your workplace is above 80 decibels, you will be provided with information about the risks to your hearing. You will also be provided with ear protection on request. If the noise level in an area of your workplace is 85 decibels or above, that area will be classed as an Ear Protection Zone. You must always wear ear protection when in an Ear Protection Zone. If you believe that the area where you work has a high level of noise and ear protection has yet to be provided, or if you have a ringing in your ears after work, you should inform your manager.

Types of ear protection

There are two main types of ear protection:

- Earplugs - these are made of soft, flexible material with high sound attenuation properties and are pushed into the ear canal entrance. Earplugs come in both disposable and reusable types
- Earmuffs - High-attenuation cups which fit over the ears and are held in place by a headband.

Sound Advice

*Don't be put off by wearing ear protection; the more you wear them, the more normal they will become. Never remove your protectors where it is noisy, even for a short time, as it doesn't take much noise to damage your hearing. If you feel uncomfortable wearing your ear protectors, ask to try another kind, as some people get on better with earplugs than earmuffs and vice versa. I don't think you can get used to the noise. While your hearing can adjust for a short while, it does not take long for it to be damaged forever. Wear ear protection **AT ALL TIMES** when in an 'Ear Protection Zone'.*

Noise Measurements

Noise is measured using a sound level meter which reads sound pressure levels in the dBA logarithmic scale to the base of 10, and every 3dB will result in a doubling in sound intensity. Therefore, with a sound reading changing from 75dB to 81dB, the sound loudness or intensity has increased by four times.

Symptoms of Hearing Impairment

Exposure to high noise levels can cause several adverse effects, including:

- Noise-induced hearing loss - irreversible hearing damage that steadily worsens over time.
- Tinnitus - "ringing in the ear" that can be extremely painful and may cause severe torment, especially at night when it can prevent sleep.
- Accidents - due to distracting attention and concentration or masking audible warning signals.
- Reduced efficiency, morale and increased stress due to general nuisance.

In these cases, Land Recovery Ltd will endeavour to reduce the noise level to the lowest level practicable. Accordingly, it will conduct assessments of any area with a likelihood of the noise level reaching 85 decibels, {80dB(A)}.

Exposure Limit Values

There are also levels of noise exposure which must not be exceeded:

- daily or weekly exposure of 87 dB;
- peak sound pressure of 140 dB.

Levels of Hearing Impairment

The four levels of hearing impairment are defined by the quietest sound you can hear, measured in decibels.

Mild deafness

Mild deafness can make speaking difficult in noisy situations. The quietest sound that you can hear is between 25 and 39 dB.

Moderate deafness

You may find it difficult to understand speech without a hearing aid. The quietest sound you can hear is between 40dB and 69 dB.

Severe deafness

If you are severely deaf, the quietest sound you can hear is between 70 and 89dB, and even with the use of a hearing aid would need to use sign language or lip-read to understand the conversation.

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Who might be affected?

Although the vast majority of staff will not be exposed to excessive noise levels during their working day, some individuals, such as workshop staff, may be exposed to noise levels that can cause hearing damage. Employees in the office are unlikely to be exposed to noise that would exceed the 80db lower exposure action level.

Health Surveillance

Following the noise assessment, if it is found that employees are exposed to noise over a long period, baseline audiometric testing will be provided to those employees. Hearing ability will then be monitored to see if it has deteriorated over time. Health surveillance will generally be reviewed every two years unless the risk assessment or test results deem otherwise. Employees must be referred to the occupational health nurse for review if they have any signs or symptoms related to the hazards they work with.

Employee responsibilities

All employees are reminded of their responsibility in how they conduct themselves, ensuring they behave appropriately whilst carrying out their duties, including but not limited to using hearing protection when it is deemed necessary. Drivers are encouraged to switch off cab radios when arriving on site, turn off their vehicle engines when not in use and refrain from shouting.

Further Information & Guidance

Further information regarding noise at work may be obtained from a Health and Safety Team member.

The Managing Director and Directors fully support this policy and will actively communicate and promote the importance and relevance of it to all our staff.

This policy will be made available to all staff at induction, via the Company One Drive and on company notice boards. The Policy is available to view by interested parties via the Land Recovery upon request.

This policy shall be reviewed as a result of any significant changes or at least annually as part of the Management Review process defined in the Land Recovery Ltd Business Systems Manual.

Signed



Dan Beecroft

Date

January 2024

Title

Managing Director