



OCCUPATIONAL NOISE POLICY

1. PREAMBLE

The normal ongoing activities at the University do not cause noise levels in excess of the limits set by the National Occupational Health & Safety Commission's National Standard for Occupational Noise (NOHSC:1007 (1993)).

As a matter of principle, works which may generate abnormal noise levels, regardless of whether such noise levels are excessive, are avoided where possible during examination periods.

Any incidents of apparently excessive noise are investigated by officers of Human Resource Services and where abatement is required, this occurs through engineering or management intervention.

2. OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Occupational Noise policy is to achieve compliance with the Worksafe Australia Standard for Occupational Noise.

The National Standard for exposure to noise in the workplace is an average daily level of 85 decibels (A - weighted).

For peak noise incidents, the National Standard is 140 decibels (peak linear level). These levels are defined as the maximum acceptable levels for noise.

It is an objective to reduce noise exposures wherever practical.

3. EMPLOYERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Employers' responsibilities are in accordance with the Standard to ensure that:

- 3.1 statutory requirements are complied with;
- 3.2 a noise control policy and program of action are developed;
- 3.3 all levels of management and employees are aware of the control measures to reduce exposure to noise;
- 3.4 all employees are encouraged to cooperate in using agreed safe work practices;
- 3.5 information on noise, the risks of exposure to noise and the appropriate control measures are disseminated in a manner appropriate to the workplace;
- 3.6 a comprehensive personal hearing protection program, including the selection of personal hearing protectors, and instruction of employees in their correct use and maintenance, is implemented; and
- 3.7 employees receive appropriate training and education when it is required.

4. EMPLOYEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees' responsibilities in accordance with the Standard are to comply with all statutory requirements and established workplace procedures, and cooperate, as far as they are capable, in all activities which have as their objective the protection of hearing at work and the minimisation of occupational noise-induced hearing loss.

5. NOISE CONTROL

The requirements to meet the objectives of the Standard are an essential and integral component of:

- the design brief for new and refurbished buildings;
- the specification of new plant and equipment;
- the contracts for works and services;
- the design of all university academic and other ongoing activities.

APPROVED BY ACTING VICE-CHANCELLOR: 6.5.99

Nomenclature Updated: September 2003

This document is based upon Worksafe Australia's Occupational Noise - National Standard and National Code of Practice, September 1993.

6. PROVISION OF PROTECTIVE HEARING EQUIPMENT

Where noise levels exceed the limits set by the Standard and it is not possible to reduce those noise levels, appropriate protective hearing equipment will be provided by the University.

7. AUDIOMETRIC TESTING

- 7.1 Audiometric testing of staff who work in areas where noise levels approach the limits set by the Standard will be carried out in accordance with AS1269-1989.
- 7.2 New staff, whose positions are identified in the position Health & Hazard Assessment Questionnaire as being exposed to excessive noise, will be tested prior to appointment.
- 7.3 Heads of School/Supervisors of ongoing staff whose work environment changes from no or little exposure to exposure to excessive noise will be responsible for identifying these positions and advising Human Resource Services within 2 working days.
- 7.4 Staff who are identified as being exposed to excessive noise levels will be tested at 2 yearly intervals during the first six years of noise exposure and 5 yearly intervals thereafter.
- 7.5 To the extent that facilities are available within the University, audiometric testing will be undertaken on the campus, otherwise external providers of testing services will be engaged.

8. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

Responsibility for the implementation of the policy rests with the Manager, Health & Safety. Responsibility includes the development of an annual program of action to ensure implementation, appropriate training and education strategies, and appropriate noise assessments in areas where employees are identified as potentially being at risk.

9. REVIEW

This policy will be subject to review on an annual basis.