

	ANC Foster Pty Ltd Safety Management System	Doc No:	NOISE
		Initial Issue Date:	27 Apr 2010
NOISE & VIBRATION		Revision Date:	Initial Version
		Revision No.:	0
		Next Revision Date:	27 Apr 2011
Preparation: Safety Mgr	Authority: Director	Issuing Dept: Safety	Page: Page 1 of 3

Purpose

The purpose of this program is to provide a process to minimize employee-hearing loss caused by excessive occupational exposure to noise.

Scope

This program is applicable to all employees who may be exposed to noise in excess of 85dB (A). When work is performed on a non-owned or operated site, the operator's program shall take precedence, however, this document covers ANC Foster employees and contractors and shall be used on owned premises, or when an operator's program doesn't exist or is less stringent.

Key Responsibilities

Managers and Supervisors

- Ensure requirements of this program are established and maintained.
- Ensure employees are trained and comply with the requirements of this program.

Employees

- Wear hearing protection when required, attend the training, and cooperate with testing and sampling.

Procedure

Occupational hearing loss is a cumulative result of repeated or continued absorption of sound energy by the ear; employee protection is based on reduction of the noise level at the ear or limiting the employee's exposure time. ANC Foster shall offer hearing protection to all employees exposed to potential high noise levels in working areas and to those employees requesting hearing protection.

Noise Surveys

Noise measurements are to be made in accordance with AS/NZS 1269.1:1998 Occupational Noise Management Part 1: Measurement and Assessment of Noise Emission and Exposure, and:

- Exposure to noise is taken to be measured at the position of the ears of a person, or at an equivalent of that position; and
- The measurement is to be made on the assumption that the person is not wearing any device to protect him or herself from noise.

Control Measurement Requirement

It is a requirement that appropriate control measures are taken if a person is exposed to noise levels that:

- Exceed an 8-hour noise level equivalent of 85 dB(A); or
- Peak at more than 140 dB(C).

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ANC Foster will refer also to the WorkCover document No 150 Noise Management and Protection of Hearing at Work.

Signage

Areas where persons may be exposed to noise levels exceeding those set by the Regulation should be sign-posted as “hearing protection areas”, and their boundaries should be clearly defined. No person should enter a hearing protection area during normal operation, unless wearing appropriate personal hearing protectors. The signs used to identify these areas should conform to specifications laid down in Australian Standard AS 1319 – Safety Signs for the Occupational Environment.

Additional signs within the hearing protection areas may also be necessary.

Where sign-posting is not practicable, alternative arrangements should be made in consultation to ensure that employees and others can recognise circumstances in which personal hearing protectors are required. Methods of achieving this include:

- Attaching prominent warning notices to tools and equipment indicating that personal hearing protectors must be worn when operating them
- Providing written and verbal instructions on how to recognise circumstances in which personal hearing protectors are needed
- Effective supervision of identified hearing protection areas.

Audiometric Testing

All testing should be undertaken by appropriately trained and experienced persons, selected by ANC Foster in consultation with employees and employee representative(s).

People who carry out audiometric testing should ensure that procedures and equipment used are in accordance with the specifications of Australian Standard AS 12693.

The audiometric testing scheme should include an initial reference test with periodic audiometric testing to follow. The initial audiogram should be taken as soon as the employee commences work, or before any exposure to workplace noise occurs. Further audiograms should be taken at 12 months and then periodically every one to two years.

Each employee’s hearing, and the best type of personal hearing protectors for the job, should be discussed with that employee.

Proper fitting of the personal hearing protectors should be ensured at the completion of the examination.

Instructions on their use should be repeated at each subsequent attendance for audiometric testing.

Results should be given to employees within two months of the audiometric testing. All results should be accompanied by a written explanation, in lay terms, of their meaning and implications. Individual results will be released to other parties only on the written authority of the employee.

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Where significant hearing impairment is detected during the initial reference test, the employee should be requested to undergo a repeat test on a different day after at least 16 hours in quiet, less than 80dB (A), conditions. If the hearing impairment is confirmed at this second examination, it must be decided whether or not the employee should seek specialist audiological or medical advice.

The test results and their implications should be made known to the employee tested. ANC Foster will refer to the National Acoustic Laboratories' Report No. 80 Criteria for Assessing Hearing Conservation Audiograms.

Hearing Protection Devices

It is important to ensure that personal hearing protectors will provide wearers with reliable adequate protection. Personal hearing protectors should conform to the specifications of Australian Standard AS 1270⁵ and their attenuation should be measured in accordance with Australian Standard AS 1270.

Inspection and Maintenance

ANC Foster will ensure that personal hearing protectors are regularly inspected and maintained. Employees should also inspect personal hearing protectors regularly to detect and report damage or deterioration.

Adequate provision will be made for clean storage of protectors when not in use. Facilities should be readily available for the cleaning of reusable protectors.

TRAINING

A training program shall be established to inform employees on topics that will be included aimed at prevention of noise-induced hearing loss and tinnitus including:

- The effects of noise on hearing
- The social handicaps of noise-induced hearing loss
- The rationale for the relevant provisions of the OHS Regulation 2001
- The statutory responsibilities of employers and employees
- An overview of the workplace noise control policy and program of action
- The nature and location of noise hazards in the workplace associated with the technology, plant and/or work practices employees use in the course of their jobs
- The nature of the general noise control measures which are in use or are planned
- The specific control measures which are necessary in relation to work at ANC Foster. (As appropriate, this should include instruction in the correct use and maintenance of exhaust silencers, enclosures and other measures which minimize noise levels.)
- When and how to use personal hearing protectors provided including selection, fitting, proper care and maintenance
- The arrangements for reporting defects in plant or the workplace which are likely to cause exposure to excessive noise
- The purpose and nature of audiometric testing.