



• Noise at Work Policy and Procedure

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Reference No:	Name.
P22:2004	Health & Safety Policy and Procedure

Suitable for Publication	
Policy Section	Yes
Procedure Section	Yes

Protective Marking
Not Protectively Marked

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1 Policy Section

1.1 Statement of Intent – Aim and Rationale

This policy, depending on the individual circumstances can apply to both the Chief Constable as the employer of Police Officers and Police Staff and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner as the employer of staff employed by them. Where the phrase “Dorset Police” is stipulated, this policy may apply to the Chief Constable or the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, or potentially both acknowledging that they are in their own right separate corporations sole and both have legal responsibilities under the Health and Safety At Work etc Act 1974.

The purpose of this policy is to safeguard the hearing of staff by first preventing them from being unintentionally exposed to adverse known or suspected noisy work activities which could have a detrimental affect on a person’s hearing and secondly, to put into place satisfactory noise control measures to reduce a person’s personal noise exposure. Thirdly, to enable Dorset Police to comply with the “Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005”.

1.2 Our Visions and Values

Dorset Police is committed to the principles of “One Team, One Vision – A Safer Dorset for You”

Our strategic priority is to achieve two clear objectives:

- ◆ To Make Dorset Safer
- ◆ To Make Dorset Feel Safer

In doing this we will act in accordance with our values of:

- ◆ Integrity
- ◆ Professionalism
- ◆ Fairness and
- ◆ Respect

National Decision Model

The National Decision Model (NDM) is the primary decision-making model used in Dorset Police. The NDM is inherently flexible and is applied to the development and review of all policy, procedure, strategy, project, plan or guidance. Understanding, using and measuring the NDM ensures that we are able to make ethical (see Code of Ethics), proportionate and defensible decisions in relation to policy, procedure, strategy, project, plan or guidance.

Code of Ethics

The Code of Ethics underpins every day policy, procedures, decision and action in policing today. The Code of Ethics is an everyday business consideration. This

document has been developed with the Code of Ethics at the heart ensuring consideration of the 9 Policing principles and the 10 standards of professional behaviour. Monitoring is carried out through the Equality Impact Assessment process which has been designed to specifically include the Code of Ethics

1.3 People, Confidence and Equality

This document seeks to achieve the priority to make Dorset feel safer by securing trust and confidence. Research identifies that this is achieved through delivering services which:

1. Address individual needs and expectations
2. Improve perceptions of order and community cohesion
3. Focus on community priorities
4. Demonstrate professionalism
5. Express Force values
6. Instil confidence in staff

This document also recognises that some people will be part of many communities defined by different characteristics. It is probable that all people share common needs and expectations whilst at the same time everyone is different.

Comprehensive consultation and surveying has identified a common need and expectation for communities in Dorset to be:-

- Listened to
- Kept informed
- Protected, and
- Supported.

2 Standards Legal Basis

To put in place effective arrangements to enable Dorset Police to comply with the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and more specifically the Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005.

2.1 People, Confidence and Equality Impact Assessment

During the creation of this document, this business area is subject to an assessment process entitled "People, Confidence and Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)". Its aim is to establish the impact of the business area on all people and to also ensure that it complies with the requirements imposed by a range of legislation.

2.2 Monitoring / Feedback

The contents of this document will be monitored by The HR Specialist (Health and Safety). This business area will fall within the active health safety monitoring

Not Protected

programme. Monitoring of the noise control prevention arrangements will be undertaken by the Health and Safety Unit and will be continually undertaken in the daily course of visits. Dedicated monitoring will be undertaken of the specific business areas where exposure to noise is seen as a significant risk as appropriate.

Feedback relating to this policy can be made in writing or by e-mail to

Address: Mr. R. Aiston, HR Specialist (Health & Safety), Winfrith, Dorchester,
DT2 8DZ

E-mail: bob.aiston@dorset.pnn.police.uk

Telephone: 01305 223724

3 Procedure Section

3.1 Principle Content

- 3.1.1 Exposure to noise (audible unwanted sound) is an every day occurrence. The general population is exposed to noise in some form which could potentially be injurious to health, e.g. aeroplanes, lorries etc. Noise exposure due to recreational activities which is beyond the employer's control, such as personal music stereos, cheering football crowds, pop festivals, discos etc can all be potentially hazardous and can have an adverse effect on a person's hearing.
- 3.1.2 Generally, there is a gradual deterioration in the sensitivity of hearing which is age related. Loud sudden or long term noises can also induce hearing loss. Factors such as the intensity of the noise, duration of exposure, noise frequency, periods of exposure and a person's own susceptibility can all contribute to potential hearing loss.
- 3.1.3 Hearing loss can be temporary or permanent. Temporary hearing loss can occur when a person is exposed to an impact noise. This may be accompanied by ringing in the ears known as Tinnitus. This usually resolves in time provided the exposure to noise ceases. If exposure is repeated before recovery is complete some degree of permanent damage can result.
- 3.1.4 Loss of hearing can have an adverse effect on a person's quality of life and on those in the immediate vicinity.
- 3.1.5 The employer must statutorily consider methods of elimination or reducing exposure to noise in the workplace.
- 3.1.6 The most effective method of dealing with any hazard is to always to consider eliminating it in the first place. If elimination is not possible, the hazard then has to be managed.
- 3.1.7 When controlling noise, the source, path and receiver must be considered in that order. The Control of Noise at Work regulations lays down a set of principles of prevention to be considered when reducing exposure to noise.
- 3.1.8 The provision and wearing of personal hearing protection must be the final control measure to be employed and only when all other methods have been assessed as being inadequate, unsatisfactory or impracticable.

3.2 Statutory Requirements

- 3.2.1 The general provisions of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (as amended) place a statutory obligation on employers to protect the Health, Safety and Welfare of its employees who could be affected by their undertaking. Equally, employees have a statutory obligation to comply with the employers arrangements.
- 3.2.2 The Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005 enacts in part the European physical agent's directive.

- 3.2.3 The most recent changes to the noise legislation included the revised introduction of noise permitted noise exposure levels at which employers need to decide whether they need to employ control measures to prevent damage to hearing from potentially occurring.

3.3 Force Arrangements

- 3.3.1 All Managers will have identified in the first instance through having completed their generic workplace risk assessments, whether there could be or is a problem with noise levels associated with a work activity which could cause hearing damage in their business area.
- 3.3.2 Managers may have difficulty in determining whether a noise is at an actionable level. Advice in such instances must be sought from the Health & Safety Unit by the individual manager. But as a guide only, noise levels could be excessive if normal conversation cannot be understood between two persons standing approximately one metre apart.
- 3.3.3 It is the responsibility of Area Commanders/Supervisors and Departmental Managers who manage staff who are employed in noisy work environments and could potentially suffer hearing damage to contact the Health & Safety Unit for advice.
- 3.3.4 Managers etc must ensure that maintenance procedures must be established to ensure the effectiveness of noise control measures.
- 3.3.5 The process for the identification and managing of noise issues is as follows. A documented noise assessment is partly completed comprising initially of a level 1 survey carried out by the Health and Safety Unit to confirm or otherwise that a noise problem exists. If a problem is considered to exist, a level 2 survey is carried out by a contracted in competent person).

3.4 Noise Assessments/Form

- 3.4.1 The purpose of the noise assessment form is to collate the information from both the level one and two surveys into one management document.
- 3.4.2 A noise assessment form needs only to be completed by the assessor where the findings from an initial level one survey indicate that the noise levels are above 80dB.
- 3.4.3 The Noise assessment form is located at Appendix 1 to this document. Noise assessments are to be reviewed in the following circumstances: an adverse health monitoring report on a member of staff has been received from Occupation Health, the work process/pattern has changed, changes in the building structure or layout, modification to the equipment, to take into account machinery wear and tear, the work process equipment has changed, additional equipment been installed, staff have raised concerns and where the previous noise findings are felt to be no longer valid.

- 3.4.4 Assessors may have to identify the need for additional control measures when it is identified that the current control measures are inadequate in controlling noise exposure. The noise assessment form at appendix 1 lists additional control measures.
- 3.4.5 The hierarchy of control measures listed at appendix 1, paragraph 15 must be first considered to reduce noise.

3.5 Noise Surveys

- 3.5.1 The Force will use in-house resources to undertake an initial noise level one survey in the following circumstances: where staff have expressed concerns at the level of noise in their work area or where a noisy work activity is known to take place.
- 3.5.2 The HR Specialist (Health and Safety) has the ability to undertake an initial level one noise survey using class two noise measuring equipment. The purpose of the initial level one noise survey is to identify if the noise levels are above 80dB and are such that they could potentially be injurious to health. The initial level one survey will confirm or otherwise the requirement for a more detailed competent person level two noise survey to be carried out.
- 3.5.3 The HR Specialist (Health & Safety) will seek the services of a competent person in undertaking level two noise surveys.
- 3.5.4 Persons undertaking level one or level two noise surveys will have received suitable training and be competent to use noise monitoring equipment appropriate to the task and be able to undertake the appropriate levels of noise surveys.

3.6 Statutory Exposure action values and limit values

- 3.6.1 These are limits set by statute that require action to be taken if they are exceeded.
- 3.6.2 Lower and upper action values are:

	Lower exposure action value (dB)	Upper exposure action value (dB)	Action required
Daily/weekly personal noise exposure (Lep,d/Lep,w)	80	85	< 80/135 No action likely required. 80 – 84/135 -136 take action to reduce risks <_85/137 Take action to reduce noise exposure
Peak sound pressure (impact noise-gunfire) (Lcpeak)	135	137	

3.6.3 Exposure limit values are:

	Exposure limit (dB)	Action required
Daily/weekly personal noise exposure ($L_{ep,d}/L_{ep,w}$)	87	Must not exceed, Suspend work immediately
Peak sound pressure (impact noise-gunfire) (L_{Cpeak})	140	Must not exceed Suspend work immediately

3.7 Duty of Employees

- 3.7.1 Employees whilst at and in the course of work shall make full and proper use of any safe system of work or personal hearing protection where so prescribed.
- 3.7.2 Employees are to report to their line manager as soon as practicable any defect in any personal hearing protection or any other measure which has been introduced to protect employees from damage to their hearing.

3.8 Health Monitoring

- 3.8.1 Employers are required to provide health monitoring to employees if the noise risk assessment (Appendix 1) indicates that personal noise exposure could be above the upper exposure action value and that there is a risk to the health of employees from exposure to noise. Arrangements for health surveillance which contain those groups where noise levels are likely to exceed the upper exposure action value and are therefore at foreseeable risk of hearing damage can be located in the "Health Monitoring" policy which can be located on SharePoint. The periodicity of hearing tests can be located in the Health Monitoring Policy.
- 3.8.2 The Force in addition undertakes base line hearing tests of those staff that are not likely to exceed the upper exposure action value but are subject to wearing a headset as part of their role and are therefore exposed to noise directly at the ear.
- 3.8.3 Health monitoring, which includes testing of hearing, is undertaken by a contracted in occupational health provider who provides the full range of occupational medical advice to Dorset Police.
- 3.8.4 The Force will be advised if an employees' fitness to continue working in a noisy environment is in doubt. A person is to be removed from the noisy environment if there is any concern as to a person's hearing fitness until further medical advice has been sought.

3.9 Procurement

- 3.9.1 Suppliers of equipment for use at work have a statutory duty to provide to the purchaser any relevant health and safety information relating to the piece of equipment. This information must include the noise levels of the equipment where applicable.
- 3.9.2 Managers responsible for the purchase of equipment must consider buying or hiring quieter equipment or machinery. They must obtain from the suppliers any noise level readings of the piece of equipment before final purchase has taken place. Managers are to seek the advice of the HR Specialist (Health & Safety) before purchase takes place where they believe the piece of equipment could produce noise levels in excess of 80dB and could potentially be injurious to health.
- 3.9.3 Where practicable, quieter equipment should be always be sourced in preference to noisier equipment. If noisier equipment is sourced, there may be the additional cost, difficulty, time and effort in putting in effective noise reduction control measures. There will then be the additional considerations of ensuring that those measures, i.e. staff wearing ear protection and it's maintained, maintaining screens/enclosures etc remain in place and are effective.

3.10 Contractors

- 3.10.1 Persons issuing instructions for a contract of service on behalf of Dorset Police (DP) are to ensure that the client (DP) is advised of all planned work activities which could involve significant either short or long periods of noise.
- 3.10.2 The DP responsible person is to ascertain from the contractor that they will only use work equipment which is the quietest equipment or machinery possible or the noise-reduction measures that they intend to employ.

3.11 Personal Protective Equipment (Hearing Protection)

- 3.11.1 Hearing protection should only be issued to staff; where staff request it, where extra protection is required in addition to what is already in place, to control noise, or as a short term control measure whilst other methods of controlling noise are being put into place. Where it has not been possible to sufficiently control noise by engineering measures, hearing protection can only then be used as an alternative measure but this must be as a last resort when no technical or system of work will achieve a suitable reduction in personal noise levels.
- 3.11.2 The use of ear plugs and ear defenders must be the last resort/control measure to be used to reduce excessive noise levels.
- 3.11.3 Hearing protection can be obtained through the person's supervisor. Staff have a duty to maintain hearing protection so that it works effectively. The headband tension must be sufficient to retain the hearing protection firmly onto the head and the condition of the seals must be in good order. Both must be checked before wearing them.

Not Protected

- 3.11.4 Staff must report verbally to their supervisor/manager immediately any defect immediately in hearing protection whether that is personal hearing protection or hearing reduction engineering control measures.
- 3.11.5 Hearing protection must be compatible with other protective equipment e.g. hard hats masks and eye protection.
- 3.11.6 Staff must wear hearing protection when their noise level exposure exceeds the upper exposure action values 85(dB). Staff may elect to wear hearing protection below the upper exposure action values.

3.12 Information, Instruction and Training

- 3.12.1 Where noise levels are likely to exceed the lower and upper action exposure action values, the Force will provide information, instruction and training to staff on: the hazards of noise, the health effects of excessive noise, measures in place to control noise exposure, personal hearing protection, how to maintain hearing protection, health monitoring procedures, symptoms of hearing loss, reporting defects and their responsibilities.

4 Consultation and Authorisation

4.1 Consultation

Version No:	Name	Rank/Role	Date
Police & Crime Commissioner			
Police Federation			
Superintendents Association			
UNISON			
Other Relevant Partners (if applicable)			

4.2 Authorisation of this version

Version No: 1.8	Name	Rank/Role	Date
Prepared:	Robert Aiston	HR Specialist (Health and Safety)	25/3/2015
Quality assured:			
Authorised:	Pete Channon	Head of Personnel Services	2.4.15
Approved:	Pete Channon	Head of Personnel Services	2.4.15

5 Version Control

5.1 Review

Date of next scheduled review	Date: 07 June 2017
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5.2 Version History

Version	Date	Reason for Change	Created / Amended by
1.0	12/06	Initial Document	Mr. R. Aiston
1.1	09/07	Update	Mr. R. Aiston
1.2	12/06	Addition of Form	Mr. R. Aiston
1.3	13/07/0	Minor review to reflect changes to restructure	Mr. R. Aiston
1.4	August 2012	Minor review to reflect title change to HR Specialist (Health & Safety) and amend assessment form added	Mr. R. Aiston
1.5	May 2013	The review included the following: the transition from Dorset Police Authority to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. Incorporate the various minor recommendations made from the health and safety audit. Inclusion of the statutory action value and limit tables. Clarification on the definition of noise assessments and noise surveys	Mr. R. Aiston
1.6	March 2013	Reviewed to reflect the following changes; second stage transfer arrangements and the reorganisation of the health and safety unit.	Mr. R. Aiston
1.7	13/11/14	The policy has been reviewed in preparation for NICHE implementation (April 2015), no changes necessary.	Policy Co-ordinator (6362)
1.8	25/03/2015	Policy name abbreviated. The following paragraphs have been rephrased to provide clearer guidance to managers 3.9.2 and 3.11.1	Mr. R. Aiston

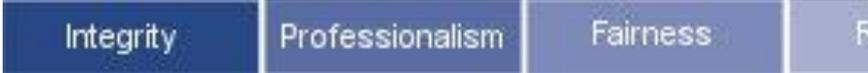
5.3 Related Forms

Force Ref. No.	Title / Name	Version No.	Review Date
Form A4777	Noise assessment form	V1	In line with policy

5.4 Document History

Present Portfolio Holder	Director of Human Resources
Present Document Owner	HR Specialist (Health & Safety)
Present Owing Department	Human Resources
Details only required for version 1.0 and any major amendment ie 2.0 or 3.0:	
Name of Board:	
Date Approved:	December 2006
Chief Officer Approving:	Director of Human Resources

Template version January 2013



Noise Assessment Form
(Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005)

This initial noise assessment may identify the need to have a more in-depth noise assessment undertaken by a competent person.

1. Work Area _____

2. Work Activity _____

3. Date of Assessment _____

4. Noise Assessor _____

5. Piece of Work Equipment/Activity _____

6. Persons at risk of Exposure _____

7. Information supplied by supplier _____

8. Initial noise readings taken _____

9. Persons present during the taking of noise readings _____

10. Need for further in-depth assessment required: Yes/No

11. In-depth assessment undertaken by _____

12. Report dated _____

13. Report provided to: Staff Associations Yes/No Date _____

Employees: Yes/No Date _____

Local Manager: Yes/No Date _____

14. Any relevant best practice guidance, industry, HSE information available?

Give details: _____

15. Are noise levels above permitted exposure limits? Yes/No

If yes, control measures required, consider:

- ◆ Avoid/suspend work activity
- ◆ Eliminate equipment
- ◆ Substitute equipment
- ◆ Enclose noise source
- ◆ Reduce exposure time
- ◆ Establish noise zones
- ◆ Barriers
- ◆ Maintenance
- ◆ PPE (ear protection)
- ◆ Information, training signs
- ◆ Health monitoring

16. Length of potential exposure time _____

17. Period of exposure _____

18. Assessment to be reviewed:

Date _____

Significant change, reported ill health _____

Signed Assessor: _____ Date _____