Noise Procedure

Education Centre of Australia Pty Ltd is committed to reducing noise levels to conserve the hearing of all workers.

The *Workplace Health and Safety Act 2011* (Cth) defines ‘worker’ broadly and includes those who work as:

- an employee;
- a contractor or subcontractor;
- an employee of a contractor or subcontractor;
- an employee of a labour hire company who has been assigned to work in the person’s business or undertaking;
- an outworker;
- an apprentice or trainee;
- a student gaining work experience; or
- a volunteer.

**Identification of noise hazards**

A survey of all plant, equipment and processes making significant noise should be undertaken to identify:

- equipment or work processes that are suspected of emitting a continuous noise level above 85 dB(A); and
- equipment with a suspected impact noise emission of greater than 140 dB(lin) Peak for impact noise.

**Audiometric testing:**

Where a worker is frequently exposed to noise levels above the exposure standards above, and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is provided as a control measure, the worker is to have audiometric testing completed within 3 months of commencing the work, and then at least every two years.

**Noise assessment**

Noise surveys are to be conducted where:

- reliable noise data on plant and equipment is not available;
- the environmental or work process conditions have the potential to increase the noise exposure hazard; and
- there is a change in operating conditions.

Noise surveys involve the use of equipment to systematically measure noise levels and noise exposure.
**Noise control measures**

Strategies which can be used to keep noise levels as low as possible and below the policy limits are as follows:

- **Purchase of plant and equipment**
  Preference will be given when purchasing goods, to those that do not exceed the general 85dB(A) limit or 55dB(A) for office and computing equipment.

- **Reducing the noise level at source**
  This is the preferred method of controlling noise. By reducing the amount of noise produced by a machine or during a task, workers are exposed to less noise and therefore less risk of hearing damage.

- **Blocking the transmission of noise**
  If noise cannot be controlled at the source, the next approach is to prevent the noise being transmitted.

- **Preventing exposure to noise**
  Separating workers from the noisy equipment or tasks is the least preferred strategy for controlling noise because it does not remove the noise risk.

  However, in circumstances where it is impractical to enclose, relocate or modify equipment, preventing noise exposure can be achieved by:
  - enclosing employees/workers in a noise control booth
  - rotating employees/workers through tasks with reduced noise level exposures or
  - providing personal hearing protection devices.

- **Safety warning signs**
  Safety warning signs are required when noise levels are in excess of a level equivalent to 85 dB(A) over an 8 hour working day. These signs are to be placed at the entrance to the noisy area and attached to noisy plant.

  Safety warning signs inform people that hearing protection must be worn while in the noisy area.

  All safety warning signs are to comply with Australian Standard AS 1319 *Safety Signs for the Occupational Environment*.

**Training**

All Managers and Supervisors responsible for workers exposed to noise are to receive training in:

- the effects of noise exposure;
- hearing conservation strategies — identification, assessment and control of workplace noise (including correct fitting of any PPE for hearing protection); and
• the resources available to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities.

Workers who are exposed to noise at work are to receive training in:

• the effects of noise exposure;
• authority action to control noise in the workplace;
• their responsibilities as defined in the Hearing Conservation Program; and
• the correct use and maintenance of noise control equipment, including personal hearing protection devices.

New workers who will be exposed to noise are to receive training.

**Personal Protective Equipment**

All workers (including visitors) will wear hearing protection in noisy work areas or when undertaking noisy tasks, as identified by [Company Name] and/or indicated in the Job Safety Analysis and Safe Work Procedures.

**Review**

This procedure will be reviewed annually during the WHS/OHS Audit Program through consultation with workers and when legislative requirements change.

**Records**

- Noise Identification Checklist
- Noise Register
- Job Safety Analysis
- Safe Work Procedures