

Damage to hearing from exposure to loud noise at work is a significant yet preventable problem. Research estimates that 170,000 people in the UK suffer deafness, tinnitus or other ear conditions as a result of excessive noise at work. The problem occurs in many workplaces, but particularly in the manufacturing and construction industries, as well as farms, transport operations, mines and quarries.

The Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2006 requires employers to assess the risks to their employees caused by noise levels at work and then take the appropriate action to reduce the noise exposure.

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## Key features of the Noise at Work Regulations 2006:

### What are the action levels and limit values?

The Noise Regulations require you to take specific action at certain values.

These relate to:

- The levels of exposure to noise of your employees averaged over a working day or week; and
- The maximum noise (peak and sound pressure) to which employees are exposed in a working day

The values are:

Lower exposure action values:

- Daily or weekly exposure of 80dB
- Peak sound pressure of 135 dB

Upper exposure action values:

- Daily or weekly exposure of 85 dB
- Peak sound pressure of 137 dB

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

- Daily or weekly exposure of 87dB
- Peak sound pressure of 140 dB

The limit values take into account any reduction in exposure provided by hearing protection.

- Employers must provide employees with training and information
  - Employers must carry out regular health surveillance where there is a risk to health
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### Solutions available from BuckHickman InOne:

- Ear plugs (2007/8 catalogue pages 1572 - 1582)
- Ear defenders (2007/8 catalogue pages 1582 - 1590)
- Noise meters (2007/8 catalogue page 500)

For more information on The Noise at Work Regulations visit:  
[www.hse.gov.uk/noise](http://www.hse.gov.uk/noise)