# Purpose

The purpose of this standard is to provide a framework and guidance to reduce exposure to hazardous noise and eliminate potential harm to human health and emissions to the environment as far as reasonably practicable and ensure compliance with legislative obligations.

Wannon Water has assets and operations that generate noise. Exposure to excessive levels of noise has the potential to impact directly on the health and wellbeing of employees and contractors (in the form of temporary or permanent hearing loss) and the wellbeing of the wider community if noise we emit impacts their ability to enjoy a normal lifestyle in public or private areas (environmental amenity).

# Scope

This framework applies to:

* All assets or sites owned or managed by Wannon Water where noise has been identified or where there is a likelihood of noise exposure or release above legislated limits
* Any employee or contractor engaged in activities where they could potentially be exposed to hazardous levels of noise
* The design, installation, operation and maintenance of sites, networks, facilities and equipment with potential noise exposure or release above legislated limits

# Standard Requirements

| **Requirements** | **Responsibility[[1]](#footnote-2)** | **Accountability[[2]](#footnote-3)** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Assets and equipment purchased, built and installed must consider, control, and manage noise exposure risks, and ensure its release is within legislated limits. | **Executive People & Resilience**  All Branch Managers | GM People & Business Services |
| All vehicles (e.g., fleet) purchased must consider, control, and manage noise exposure risks, and ensure its release is within legislated limits | BM Corporate Services | GM Community & Corporate Services |
| All assets and equipment with the potential to generate noise in excess of legislated limits must be maintained (e.g., inspected, serviced) in line with the manufacturers recommendations as a minimum.  This includes noise reduction material &/or equipment. | **BM Asset Systems**  All Branch Managers | GM Assets & Service Delivery |
| All activities performed within Wannon Water (e.g., construction) must consider noise generation and where applicable manage noise exposure and release within legislated limits. | **Executive People & Resilience**  BM Asset Creation  BM Maintenance  BM Operations | GM People & Business Services |
| A Noise Assessment process must be in place to measure noise exposure and emissions – with assessments conducted by a suitably competent / qualified person. | **Executive People & Resilience**  BM Operations  BM Asset Creation  BM Maintenance | GM People & Business Services |
| Noise levels must be monitored to ensure that the levels are maintained- records must be kept. | **Executive People & Resilience**  BM Operations  BM Asset Creation  BM Maintenance | GM People & Business Services |
| Suspected licence breaches due to noise events must be investigated, reported and managed in accordance with legislative requirements. | **BM Operations**  BM Maintenance  BM Asset Creation | GM Assets & Service Delivery |
| The hierarchy of control must be used to control noise where reasonably practicable:   * Eliminate the source of noise * Substitute with a lower noise item or use engineering controls (e.g., barrier, soundproofing) * Reduce exposure using administrative controls (e.g., limit time in area) * Reduce exposure using Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) | **Executive People & Resilience**  All Branch Managers | GM People & Business Services |
| All control measures to manage noise risks must be implemented within 6 months from determination, or a defined action plan put in place which is to be recorded and periodically reviewed. | **Executive People & Resilience**  BM Operations  BM Asset Creation  BM Asset Systems | GM People & Business Services |
| Any area or equipment assessed as requiring noise protectors to be worn must be clearly identified (e.g., signage must be clear and prominently positioned in work areas). | **Executive People & Resilience**  BM Asset Creation  BM Maintenance  BM Operations | GM People & Business Services |
| Noise protection must be provided where noise levels cannot be controlled to below exposure limits using other controls. | **Executive People & Resilience**  BM Asset Creation  BM Maintenance  BM Operations | GM People & Business Services |
| Hearing protection must be provided to match the noise which reduces noise below 85 dB (A) at the person.  Hearing protection must be suitable for the work being performed. It must be used correctly (e.g., fitted), and maintained (e.g., cleaned and stored)– according to the standards described in our proceduresor equivalent system[[3]](#footnote-4). | **Executive People & Resilience**  BM Asset Creation  BM Corporate Services  BM Maintenance  BM Operations | GM People & Business Services |
| Training on hearing protection must be provided to employees required to use it. | **Executive People & Resilience** | GM People & Business Services |
| Projects involving construction or modification of wind turbines must be assessed and managed in accordance with applicable legislative requirements. | BM Asset Creation  Project Managers | GM Assets & Service Delivery |
| A **Hazard Report** must be raised for any noise suspected to be harmful to health or which may impact the surrounding environment or community. | **Executive People & Resilience**  Branch Managers | GM People & Business Services |
| An **Incident Report** must be raised for any event involving exposure to noise or complaint raised by the public or community. | **Executive People & Resilience**  Branch Managers | GM People & Business Services |

# Training and Assessment

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| **Requirements** | **Responsibility** | **Accountability** |
| All managers with Responsibilities & Accountabilities within this document must be made aware of this standard. | Executive People & Resilience | GM People & Business Services |

# Monitoring

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| **Requirements** | **Responsibility** | **Accountability** |
| Hearing tests must be conducted, and records kept for employees who are required to wear hearing protection within 3 months of starting employment and every 2 years thereafter.  Hearing tests must be reviewed, and audiological examinations are provided where criteria are met under OHS Regulations | Executive People & Resilience | GM People & Business Services |
| Compliance with and effectiveness of this standard  must be verified at least every four years by including periodic audits in the **Audit Program**. | Executive People & Resilience | GM People & Business Services |
| All records required by this standard must be maintained in our records management system – **(CM)**. | Information Services Manager | Chief Information Officer |

# Definitions

| **Term** | **Means** |
| --- | --- |
| dB | The decibel (dB) is the unit of measurement for sound (the unit used for sound pressure levels on a logarithmic scale). The higher the decibel level, the louder the noise. |
| dBA | A-weighted decibels, abbreviated dBA, or dBa, or dB(a), are an expression of the relative loudness of sounds in air as perceived by the human ear. In the A-weighted system, the decibel values of sounds at low frequencies are reduced, compared with unweighted decibels, in which no correction is made for audio frequency (used to express noise limits and occupational noise exposure levels). |
| ISO | Internal Organisation for Standardisation |
| PPE | Personal Protective Equipment |
| Task Risk Assessment (TRA) / Job Safety Analysis (JSA) | Job Safety Analysis Procedure and eForm |

# Governance

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| **Parent policy / standard** | * Zero Harm Policy |
| **Associated procedures / standards** | * Task Risk Assessment (JSA) Procedure and eForm |
| **Legislation mandating compliance** | * Victorian Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004 * Victorian Occupational Health & Regulations 2017 - Part 3.2 – Noise * Victorian Compliance Code – Noise * Australian Standards * ISO 14001: Environmental Management Systems * ISO 45001: Occupational Health and Safety management systems * ISO 31000: Risk Management * Environment Protection Act (2017), General Environmental Duty, * Environmental Protection Regulations (2021) * Environmental Reference Standard (2021) * Planning and Environment Act (1987) * Public Health and Wellbeing Act (2008) * WorkSafe, EPA, DH compliance codes * EPA publication 1826.4 Noise Limit Assessment protocol for the control of noise (2021) * EPA Publication 1411 Noise from industry in regional Victoria (2011) * EPA publication 1412 SEPP N-1 NIRV Explanatory notes. (2011) * EPA Publication 1518, Industry Separation Distances (2013) * Water Corporation best practice (equivalent size/scope) |
| **Approval** | Executive Committee |
| **Owner** | GM People & Business Services |
| **Content enquiries** | Safety Field Officer  Environmental Risk Compliance Officer |

# Document version history

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| **Version** | **Changes made to document** |
| 1 | New document created as part of the new IMS Standard Framework. |
| 2 | * Updated Responsibilities and Accountabilities to align with other recently published standards. * Minor administrative changes. * Reordered the requirements in line with standard formatting as per other standards recently published. * Updated Section 4 “Training & Assessment” to “Training, Competence and Awareness” and changed requirements to align with other standards. * Removed reference to the Noise Management Procedure. |

1. The nominated person who is responsible for ensuring there is the system in place to meet a requirement or delivering a task to an acceptable level of performance. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. The Executive are collectively accountable for the standard. The individual GM is the nominated person who will approve any capital/operating expense requests (within the Instrument of Delegation) and any material changes to current work practices to meet requirements of the standard. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. For contractors, an equivalent system (e.g., **Safe Work Procedure**, **JSA**, **SWMS**) must be of equivalent or higher standard [↑](#footnote-ref-4)