



Airswift Holdings Ltd.

HSE Management System

Hearing Conservation

REGULATORY STANDARD:

OSHA - 29 CFR 1910.95 – General Industry

OSHA - 29 CFR 1926.52 - Construction

Important Notice:

1. This procedure is a Controlled Document and shall not be amended without the authority of the Operations Manager – North America.
2. Any queries or feedback concerning the contents of this Procedure should be addressed to the Operations Manager – North America.

Version Number	Effective Date	Author	Amendments	Reasons for Amendments
1	02.11.2020	Carol Stallworth		
2	08.23.2022	Kellie Tetley	None	Annual Review
3	07.20.2023	Kellie Tetley		Annual Review

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1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this program is to establish a program and procedures for hearing conservation to protect Airswift employees from potential damage to their hearing from occupational noise exposures.

2.0 SCOPE

This policy covers all employees who may be exposed to noise exposures equal to or exceeding an 8-hour time-weighted average (TWA) of 85 decibels. The company may, however, apply the policy to employees whose exposure is less than this action level.

The written hearing conservation program will include and address the following categories in order to satisfy the minimum requirements of the applicable Occupational Noise Exposure Standard:

- Noise exposure monitoring (area and/or personal)
- Audiometric testing for employees exposed to noise equal to or in excess of 85 dBA, as an 8-hour TWA
- Hearing protection provided and utilized
- Employee training
- Record keeping

The hearing conservation program will include the following:

- Identification of personnel responsible for the program
- How noise levels and employee exposures will be measured
- How audiometric testing will be performed
- How hearing protection will be selected, provided, replaced and use enforced
- How training will be performed
- Procedures to evaluate and update the program
- How records will be maintained

3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

The Operations Department is responsible for the implementation of this program and has the authority to make necessary decisions and changes to ensure its success.

The Safety Specialist will be responsible for administering the program with the necessary training, and otherwise ensuring that this program is effectively implemented to include the following:

- Monitoring noise via sound-level measurements or dosimetry in order to determine employee exposure to noise.
- Making available to employee's copies of the applicable Occupational Noise Exposure Standard and posting a copy of the standard in the workplace, such as on the employee bulletin board.
- Administering the audiometric testing program.
- Providing annual training for employees.
- Notifying employees of noise monitoring and audiometric testing results.

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- Maintaining noise exposure monitoring, audiometric testing and training records.
- Reviewing the effectiveness of the hearing conservation program and making sure that it satisfies the requirements of all applicable federal, state or local hearing conservation requirements.

Managers and Supervisors are responsible for the following aspects of the program:

- Enforcing the use of hearing protection by employees required to wear it.
- Ensuring that the hearing protectors are in good condition and are fitted and used correctly.
- Ensuring that hearing protectors provide adequate attenuation (i.e., the noise reduction rating is adequate).
- Enforcing administrative and engineering controls within the facility to reduce employee noise exposure.
- Proper care of hearing protection, including location of supply, and proper use and replacement of hearing protection equipment.

Employees are responsible for the following aspects of the program:

- Wearing hearing protection in work areas requiring it.
- Knowledge and understanding of the consequences associated with not following company policy concerning the proper use of hearing protection.
- Proper care of hearing protection, including proper use, routine care and cleaning, storage, and replacement.

4.0 EXPOSURE DETERMINATION

To determine employee exposure, noise monitoring will be conducted and repeated whenever there is a change in the work environment, such as changes in production, process, equipment and/or controls.

Noise exposure monitoring will be conducted using the following methods:

- Area monitoring - Measuring the noise levels in an area by use of a sound level meter.
- Personal monitoring - Measuring an employee's noise exposure by use of a dosimeter. A dosimeter is worn by an employee for a representative time frame in order to evaluate noise levels that the employee is exposed to when doing his or her job.

5.0 NOISE MONITORING

All areas of the workplace where there is a possibility of noise levels being over 80 decibels will be tested to determine noise level exposures. Monitoring will be repeated whenever there is a change in production, process, equipment, or controls that may increase noise exposures. This testing will include area sampling and, when necessary, dosimeter testing to determine which employees could be exposed to noise levels at or above the action level of an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 decibels.

Employees affected by this testing, or their representatives will be provided with an opportunity to observe any noise measurements which are conducted. Employees who

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are exposed at or above the action level of an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 decibels will be notified of the results of the noise monitoring.

6.0 AUDIOMETRIC TESTING AND ANALYSIS

- Audiometric testing is used to determine each employee's hearing threshold by determining the employee's response to noise at several frequencies. A baseline audiogram will be conducted within six months of the employee's first exposure to noise at or above the action level.
- The initial audiogram will be used as a baseline measurement to which all subsequent audiograms will be compared. Audiometric testing will be completed annually for all employees whose exposures equal or exceed an 8-hour TWA of 85 dBA. The program shall be provided at no cost to employees.
- All employees routinely exposed to hazardous noise shall be placed in a hearing-testing program. That program shall include pre-placement, periodic (at least once, annually), and termination audiograms. Employees who infrequently or incidentally enter designated hazardous noise areas need not participate in the audiometric testing program.

All audiometric testing shall:

- a. Be performed by a licensed or certified audiologist, otolaryngologist, or other physician; or by a technician who is certified by the Council of Accreditation in Occupational Hearing Conservation. A technician who performs audiometric tests shall be responsible to an audiologist, an otolaryngologist, or a physician.
- b. Employees who are to receive audiograms during a workday must wear hearing protection prior to their tests or have been exempt from workplace noise for a period of 14 hours prior to the testing procedures. During the 14 hours prior to the testing, the employees shall refrain from any noisy non-work exposures such as listening to loud music, mowing the lawn, target practice and woodworking.

The annual audiogram will be compared to the baseline audiogram to determine if the audiogram is valid and if a standard threshold shift (STS) has occurred. An STS is defined as the average hearing loss of 10 dB or more at the tested frequencies of 2,000, 3,000 and 4,000 Hz in either ear.

- Sound pressure levels shall be measured in all potentially noise hazardous work areas at least once and within 30 days of any change in operations effecting noise levels.
- TWA noise level shall be established for all employees working in noise hazardous areas at least once and within 30 days of any change in operations effecting noise levels.

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- A current inventory of all noise hazardous areas and operations shall be maintained to include, minimally, TWAs, names of employees at risk, and the types of control measures used.
- Only qualified employees shall conduct noise surveys. e. Instrumentation used for those surveys must meet or exceed requirements in ANSI Standard S1.41983.
- Those instruments must be calibrated, and the calibration checked with an acoustical calibrator, accurate to within plus or minus 1 decibel (dB), before and after each day's measurements and must have been subjected to a complete electro acoustical calibration no more than 1 year before the survey.
- Every effort should be made to conduct a reference audiogram on workers before they are assigned to duties involving hazardous noise exposure. In no case shall a reference audiogram be conducted more than 1 month from the date of a worker's initial exposure to hazardous noise.
- Regardless of the time of initiation, the first valid hearing test administered is the reference audiogram and shall be preceded by at least 14 hours without exposure to workplace noise. The worker shall be cautioned to avoid high levels of nonoccupational noise exposure during a 14hour period preceding the examination.
- Employees who continue to work in designated hazardous noise areas shall receive annual audiograms.
- Termination audiogram shall be conducted on each worker about to stop working in designated hazardous noise areas. Employees moving to other jobs involving hazardous noise exposure need not be given a termination audiogram.
- Follow up audiograms shall be conducted when an individual's audiogram shows a threshold shift relative to the original or revised reference audiogram of an average of 10 dB, or more, at 2000, 3000, and 4000 Hz in either ear. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) age corrections may be applied in cases of positive threshold shift (29 CFR 1910.95) (reference (k)). Medical evaluation is required to validate the existence of a permanent noise induced threshold shift and shall be done by an audiologist, otolaryngologist, or physician. Any determination that the noise induced threshold shift is not work related or has not been aggravated by occupational noise exposure shall be made by a physician.
- If the threshold shift is confirmed as permanent, the individual shall be notified in writing within 21 days of such determination, and the condition entered in the individual's medical record.

If an STS is identified, the following steps will be taken:

1. Employees will be notified of the results in writing within 21 days (miners must be notified within 10 days) of the determination. Employees will also be fitted and trained in the use of hearing protection equipment.
2. Employees already wearing hearing protection will be refitted and retrained in

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the proper use of hearing protection. Hearing protection offering greater noise reduction will be provided to the affected employees.

3. An employee may be referred for a clinical audiological evaluation or an autological examination for additional testing.
4. The safety coordinator, along with management, will review the effectiveness of any engineering and administrative controls to identify and correct any deficiencies.

Evaluation of the results of the audiograms will be performed by the testing agency's designated medical provider. Airswift will follow all recommendations made for each employee by the tester.

If the results of the audiogram demonstrate an STS, the company reserves the right to conduct a second audiogram within 30 days and consider these results as the annual audiogram.

7.0 ADMINISTRATIVE AND ENGINEERING CONTROLS

- To the extent that it is possible and feasible, the company will use engineering controls to reduce noise levels below the action level. Examples of engineering controls are machinery maintenance, sound absorption materials, vibration isolating devices, lowering air pressure, alternative equipment, etc.
- If engineering controls are not feasible or are insufficient to reduce the noise to acceptable levels, administrative controls will be utilized. This may include rotating employees from one job or one area to another to reduce the time-weighted average of the total exposure for an employee.
- If engineering and administrative controls fail to reduce the noise level to acceptable levels, personal protective equipment will be provided and used to reduce sound exposure to acceptable levels.

8.0 PERSONAL PROTECTION EQUIPMENT

Employees included in the hearing conservation program will be provided with hearing protection for the specific noise environments in which the protector will be used, as follows:

- Hearing protection will be provided at no cost to employees
- Employees will be able to select their hearing protection from a variety of suitable hearing protectors (Note: Employees must be provided with a choice of at least one type of ear plug and one type of earmuffs at the very minimum)
- Employees will receive training in the use and care of hearing protection
- The use of hearing protection will be required for employees who have not yet had a baseline audiogram, who have experienced an STS, or whose exposures exceed an 8-hour TWA of 85 dBA

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- Employees working in or entering designated hazardous must always carry hearing protectors. When noise sources are operating, employees shall wear their hearing protection devices regardless of exposure time.
- Employer shall assess the adequacy of hearing protectors when used in very high noise environments or for extended exposure periods.
- All levels of supervision and management, by personal example and precept, shall enforce the use of hearing protectors. For noncompliance, management shall consider disciplinary action as a corrective measure against the offender and the supervisor.

9.0 SAFETY SIGNS AND LABELS

- All hazardous noise areas must be clearly identified by signs located at their entrances or boundaries.
- Each tool or piece of equipment producing hazardous noise shall be conspicuously marked to alert personnel, except when an entire space is designated a hazardous noise area, and the equipment is stationary. Professional judgment and discretion should be exercised when labeling tools and equipment.
- Signs and decals that describe (verbally or with other visual symbols) the hazard and the protective measures to be taken shall be used to designate hazardous noise areas and equipment; e.g., "DANGER," "Hazardous Noise," "Hearing Protection Required When in Operation."

10.0 TRAINING

Airswift will provide the training necessary to implement this program. Training will be provided to all Airswift employees and Contractors who may be exposed to noise at or above an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 decibels. Outside resources will be used to provide or assist with the required training.

The training will include, but not be limited to the following:

- The effects of noise on hearing
- The purpose of hearing protection devices
- The advantages, disadvantages, and attenuation of various types of hearing protection devices
- Selection, fitting, use and care of hearing protection devices
- The purpose of audiometric testing, and an explanation of the test procedures
- Employee's rights to information, training materials and records

The training will be provided to all new employees and will be repeated annually for all employees exposed above the action level of an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 decibels.

11.0 RECORDKEEPING

All personnel who routinely work in designated hazardous noise areas shall be identified, and a current roster must be maintained. The company will maintain records of all

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audiometric tests for at least the duration of the affected employee's employment plus 30 years.

Results of hearing test performed for hearing conservation, as well as exposure documentation, shall be a permanent part of an individual's health records. These records will be provided upon request to the employee, former employee, and representatives designated by the individual employee. The following records will be maintained:

- Noise exposure monitoring results
- Audiometric testing records
- Certificates of training
- Warnings issued to employees for not following the hearing conservation program

12.0 EMPLOYEE ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Employees affected by this policy will be given copies of the OSHA Occupational Noise Exposure standard (CFR 29 1910.95) and this company policy. A copy of the OSHA standard will also be posted in the workplace.

On request, the employer shall provide affected employees with any information type materials on the hearing conservation program that are supplied by the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health.

On request, the employer shall provide personnel, former personnel and representatives designated in writing by the individual employee, with copies of all records pertaining to the audiometric testing and noise exposure to the specific worker.

On request, the employer shall provide representatives of the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health with all records pertaining to the companies hearing conservation program

13.0 KNOWLEDGEMENT

I, (Insert Contractor's) Name have read and understand the hearing conservation program at Airswift, LLC.

Employee Signature: _____

Date: _____