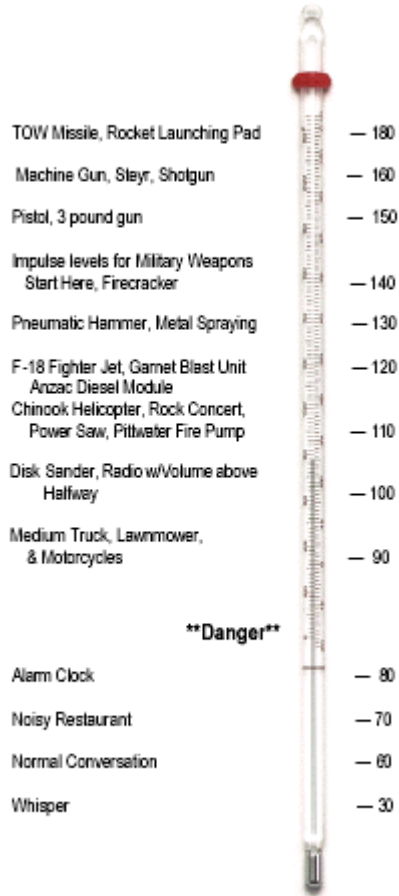




# Just the Facts...

## Noise and Hearing Loss



### WHAT is it?

- Hearing loss caused by loud noise is a common long term injury.
- Noise is a common hazard military personnel and civilians could face in the workplace and during training.
- The most destructive occupational and recreational noise is from firing weapons and from aircraft noise.
- The first clues of a noise-induced hearing loss may be turning up the TV or asking family members to repeat what was said or having difficulty understanding conversations with a lot of background noise.

### WHEN and WHERE can it damage your hearing?

- At work, at home and at play.
- Anytime there is noise and you have to raise your voice to be heard at one metre – and this is not only when you are at work.
- At 85 decibels (dB(A)) or more for continuous (steady) noise and 140 dB(C) or more for impulse (short duration such as impact) noise.

### WHY protect your hearing?

- Hearing loss caused by noise can be permanent.
- Loud noise can cause ringing in your ears, increase stress and fatigue.
- Impaired hearing can cause serious or fatal mistakes in combat and at work.

### HOW can you protect your hearing?

- Seek and use equipment which produces / emits low noise levels.
- Utilise noise reduction procedures and ensure they are effective – ensure doors are closed.
- Use properly fitted and maintained hearing protection (i.e. approved ear plugs, ear muffs or helmets).
- Cotton wool, tissues and fingers are not good hearing protectors!
- If you are about to start a noisy task, let those nearby know so they can either leave the area or use hearing protection.

### REMEMBER the four "P"s:

Hearing loss from noise is

**PAINLESS,  
 PROGRESSIVE,  
 PERMANENT and  
 PREVENTABLE!**

Notes: The sponsor for this Fact Sheet is the Directorate of Preventive Health within the DHSB. All comments and questions should be forward to DHSB, DPH, Campbell Park Offices (CP 2-7-154), Canberra ACT 2600 or email DPH.DHS@defence.gov.au. This Fact Sheet was developed with the cooperation of the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine.

**WHO can help?**

- You can by wearing hearing protection when required and as directed.
- The following personnel can provide advice on the prevention of hearing loss: audiologists, doctors, nurses, preventive medicine and environmental health personnel, industrial hygienists, advisors or a Defence Occupational Noise Officer (DONO).
- The Defence Health Service Branch (DHSB), the Defence Safety Management Agency (DSMA) and the Service Safety Management groups can also provide assistance.