

WHAT IS NOISE?



SafeWork Australia and affiliated state bodies use a Code of Practice that defines exposure safe limits for noise of 85 dB(A) over an 8 hour period and/or a peak level of 140 dB(C).

What is noise? Noise is familiar, it comes from music, speaking, thunder, cars and air planes and is all around us. Our ears can hear a whisper and a jack hammer and everything in between. But very loud sounds of even a short duration can cause hearing damage or loss, as can prolonged exposure to loud sounds. **The legislated SafeWork NSW safe limits are given above.**



What are its consequences? Excessive noise levels are known to cause to hearing damage, or even permanent hearing loss after multiple or extended exposure. Noise-induced hearing loss and associated disorders are irreversible. Excessive noise can produce damage that goes undetected, progresses unnoticed, and finally manifests itself long after the fact. This costs those affected, their employers, their families, and the health system.

How can you reduce its effects? Noise reduces with distance from the source. For example, the motor sports peak body, CAMS, authorises races and allows the racing cars to produce a maximum of 95 dB(A) at 30 metres from a vehicle. This could mean up to 110 dB(A) at 5 metres from a vehicle. This is more than 40 times the safe allowable exposure for 8 hours of continuous exposure and has been confirmed by independent noise modelling. At this level the allowable exposure time is less than 2 minutes. The main races at Supercars run for over 2 hours. There are novelty and pre-race events over the rest of the day, and these may be just as loud.

The best way to avoid the risk of hearing damage or hearing loss is to not expose yourself to the noise at all. For most Supercars events, people are well removed from the circuit, so noise levels are significantly lower than levels immediately beside the track.

But, in Newcastle numerous homes and businesses are directly adjacent to the circuit. Many are just 4 to 5 metres away.



What should you do if you have concerns?

Talk to SafeWork NSW, talk to Council, talk to Supercars and its sponsors, talk to Destination NSW, talk to your parliamentary representatives. Ask them what you should do about the noise on behalf of your family and friends, your employees and your customers.

This is a SERIOUS ISSUE. It demands action by your representatives, the company running the event, their sponsors, and the agencies that have authorised it.