Hearing Conservation Program Survey

1. Training and Education

1. Who receives Hearing Conservation Training at your facility? How do you decide who is included/excluded from the Hearing Conservation program?

2. How often is Hearing Conservation Training provided to targeted employees?

3. Over the course of a year, how many hearing conservation training sessions does a targeted employee receive?
   ______# of trainings

4. Describe how the training is given? What, if any interactive components does your training include?

5. What topics are covered in the training?

6. Who conducts the Hearing Conservation Training and what are their qualifications?

7. Does any of the training take place in a one-on-one situation? If so, please describe.

8. How often is Hearing Conservation Training content revised?

9. How does your facility ensure that employees gain the essential knowledge and skill from the training?

   Verify that they receive the training- signatures

10. How does your facility assess when workers need refresher training?

11. What does your facility do to indicate management's support for training and competency in hearing loss prevention?
2. Supervisor Involvement in Hearing Conservation Program

1. What role, if any, do supervisors play in the Hearing Conservation program?

2. What steps are taken to provide supervisors with adequate knowledge required to fulfill their role in the Hearing Conservation program (described in previous answer)?

3. What procedures are in place to ensure that supervisors wear hearing protection devices (HPDs)?

4. What happens if employees fail to wear HPDs?

3. Noise Monitoring

1. What exposure criteria are used to assess noise exposure in your facility?
   ___OSHA   ___NIOSH/ACGIH   ___Other (use 85 for HPDs) 82dB action level

2. What exposure parameters are collected during noise measurements? (Check all that apply)
   ___Average (LAVG or LEQ)   ___maximum (LMAX)   ___Peak (LPEAK)?

3. How is noise monitoring conducted in your facility? (Check one)
   ___Personal dosimetry   ___Area measurements   ___Both   ___Neither

4. How frequently is repeat noise monitoring conducted? (Check one)
   ___More than quarterly   ___Quarterly   ___Annually   ___Less than annually   ___Never
   ___More if change in process or new equipment

5. Of your noise measurements taken, what percentage are area versus personal samples?
   ___% Area samples   ___% Personal samples

6. Approximately how many noise exposure measurements have been conducted in the past year?
7. What sort of training or qualifications has the person or persons doing the noise measurements received?
RN: note that I’ve changed the wording of this question

8. How are targets for annual (or other time interval) noise monitoring set?

4. **Use of noise monitoring data**

1. How do you determine whether noise exposure has changed significantly since it was last measured? What records do you keep of such instances?

2. What happens to employees who have experienced increases in noise exposure? What records are kept regarding such employees?

3. Are the results entered into health/medical records of noise exposed employees? If not, are they available to health/medical personnel?

4. How are the results of your noise monitoring program recorded?

5. How are noise monitoring results used to determine HCP inclusion? Individual results, similar exposure groups, job title, etc.?

6. Who reviews the results of the noise monitoring?

5. **Communication of noise monitoring data**

1. To whom are the noise monitoring results communicated? (Please describe).

2. What triggers employee notification of noise monitoring results?

3. What information is communicated?
6. Engineering/Noise Controls

1. How do noise measurement results influence equipment purchases?

2. How does your facility identify and prioritize noise control needs?

3. Does your facility have a noise control plan with an implementation schedule? (Need to re-word to avoid yes/no response)

4. Has your facility used a noise control specialist to assist in developing a plan? If so, who was used?

5. Are procedures in place to determine cost effectiveness of various noise control options? If so, what are the procedures?

6. Do supervisors have an opportunity to provide input on noise control approaches? Through what mechanism?

7. Do employees have an opportunity to provide input on noise control approaches? Through what mechanism?

8. What measurements are used to determine that engineering controls are required? What is the exposure threshold for requiring engineering controls?

9. How many administrative controls have been evaluated in the past 5 years? How many administrative controls (such as scheduling, worker rotation, and limited exposure durations) have been implemented in the past 5 years? Please describe these administrative controls

10. How many employees are currently protected through administrative controls such as scheduling, worker rotation, and limited exposure durations? RN: note that I have changed the wording of this question
11. How many engineering noise control measures have been evaluated in the past 5 years? How many engineering noise controls measures have been implemented in the past 5 years? Please describe these engineering controls.

12. How many employees are currently protected through engineering noise controls?

13. How many engineering noise control measures are awaiting approval of funding?

14. Has the efficacy of implemented noise control measures been evaluated? How?

15. Have employees been moved out of the HCP because of successful noise control efforts? What were these noise control efforts and how many employees were affected?

7. Hearing Protection Devices (HPDs)

1. How does your facility determine which employees are required to use hearing protective devices?

2. (new question) Under what conditions are hearing protection devices required?

3. How is the attenuation associated with hearing protection devices computed?

4. What are the qualifications of the person(s) who ensure proper selection and initial fit of HPDs?

5. Do you enforce the use of HPDs? If so, what are the penalties for non-use?

6. How many different types of HPDs are available to employees? What are the available HPD options?

7. Do any of your employees use communication headsets or other non-standard HPDs? (Please describe).
any use custom-molded HPDs? How many?

8. How many hours of training do employees receive regarding the use and care of HPDs and how often does that training take place? (how many minutes at baseline,

9. Have any workers complained that HPDs interfere with their ability to do their jobs at your facility? If complaints have arisen, describe any follow-up process

10. Are employees encouraged to take their HPDs home if they engage in noisy non-occupational activities?

11. How is the effectiveness of the Hearing Protector Program evaluated? How often does this occur?

12. How often is HPD fit testing performed for employees in the hearing conservation program?

8. Monitoring Audiometry or Audiometric Testing and Follow-up

1. Which employees receive audiometric testing?

2. Does your facility use in-house testing or contract services?

3. What are the qualifications of the person(s) performing the audiometric testing?

4. What percentage of audiometric testers are CAOHC certified? (Ideally 100%)

5. Are you familiar with the term Professional Supervisor of the Audiometric Monitoring Program? Who is the Professional Supervisor of the audiometric testing program? Has she or he received CAOHC training?

6. Who keeps records of the background levels in audiometer room? Are these available to the professional supervisor or reviewer?
7. How soon is a baseline audiogram established?

8. Are employees notified to avoid noise exposure before the baseline audiogram? If so, what specific instructions do you provide?
9. Are annual audiograms conducted during the work shift or after a period of quiet?

10. How are the results of the audiogram communicated to the employee to ensure the employee understands the results?

11. How are the results of the audiogram communicated to the employee's supervisor?

12. Under what conditions is the baseline audiogram revised?

13. Does your facility use age corrections to calculate the existence of a standard threshold shift (STS)?

14. What steps are taken if an employee develops an STS?

15. How much one on one counseling do employees receive during their audiometric testing?

16. What actions are taken if an employee incurs noise-induced hearing loss?

17. What steps are taken if a worker has difficulty taking the audiometric test or if the resulting audiogram is in some way problematical?

18. Do you have formal referral procedures?

19. If an employee is referred for medical or audiological evaluation, what kinds of records are transmitted? What kind of follow-up occurs? Who determines work-relatedness?

20. How does your facility evaluate your audiometric testing program?

9. Recordkeeping and Recording

1. How long are each of the following kept?
   a. Audiometric tests?
b. Audiometer calibrations?

c. Noise exposure?

d. Engineering controls?

e. HPD records?

2. Is audiometric test data charted over a period of time to see trends? For individuals? For groups of workers? For all workers tested? Are they correlated with noise exposure data? Please attach example data.

3. Who decides whether or not a hearing loss is recordable? Are there established criteria for recordability other than the OSHA criteria?

4. Are there incentives for departments to have few or no recordable hearing losses? If so, please describe.

5. What is the annual incidence of STS incidence in your facility, ex. 15%?

6. What percentage of the annual STS cases are entered into Alcoa IHS as work-related, ex. 50%?

10. Administrative

1. How are company policies and guidelines regarding HCPs communicated to employees?

2. How are Federal or State OSHA regulations with respect to noise communicated to employees?

3. Are requests for special HPDs granted? If not, how is this resolved?

4. When machinery and equipment need to be replaced, are requests for quieter models granted?

5. Are noise levels, HPD use, or hearing loss noted in cases of accidents or injuries?
6. Have any workers been transferred to less noisy jobs because of inability to hear? If so, please describe

7. How do you handle hearing impaired workers?

11. Cost Effectiveness

1. HCP Participants: The number of employees in the HCP and receiving HCP related services.

2. Hearing protection devices: The total accounts payable for hearing protection.

3. Noise surveys: The cost for outside services to conduct the noise surveys, including noise exposure determinations. If the plant conducts these surveys on a bi-annual basis, or more, then prorate the cost to an annual basis.

4. Audiometric testing: Cost to conduct the annual hearing tests, whether conducted by outside services (mobile van) or in-house audiometric test technicians or nurses.

5. Audiometric follow-up and retests: The approximate cost for follow-up testing of workers who missed the annual hearing test, and for conducting retests to verify the persistence of a standard-threshold shift (STS).

6. Recordability determination: The approximate fees paid to complete work-related determinations, perform medical exams, audiology evaluations, etc.

7. Employee training materials: The total accounts payable for hearing conservation related training materials, such as pamphlets, DVDs, samples, guest speakers, etc.

8. Calibration of sound level meters and noise dosimeters: The annual expense for calibration of all acoustical instrumentation. Note: if the equipment Certificate of Calibration is obtained on a bi-annual basis, or more, then prorate this to an annual cost.

10. Employee training time: The approximate wages and benefits cost for all employees during the time dedicated to HCP training. This would include time spent in formal training sessions, as well any individual training conducted on a one-on-one basis.

11. Employee hearing test time: The approximate wages and benefits cost for all employees during the time dedicated to obtaining the baseline or annual hearing test.

12. HCP administration time: The approximate wages and benefits cost for the person(s) administering the HCP. This includes all the time for:

   In addition to 40 hours above,

   1.1. Contracting for audiometric test services

Examinetics: $/ audiogram

   1.2. Contracting for noise survey services

   1.3. Recordkeeping

   1.4. Purchasing hearing protection devices

   1.5. Dispensing hearing protection devices

   1.6. Notifying workers of their noise exposure

   1.7. Notifying workers with STS

   1.8. Managing the audiometric follow-up

   1.9. Any miscellaneous tasks that can be solely attributed to administering the HCP.

13. Equipment maintenance: All costs related to repair and servicing of sound level meters and noise dosimeters, above and beyond calibration.
14. Lost production: Any lost production costs due to employees needing to participate in HCP related services, such as hearing tests, training sessions, noise surveys, etc.

15. Space allotment: Cost for building space dedicated to in-house audiometric tests, such as a dedicated room with an audiometric test booth.

16. Expense to certify CAOHC technicians: Fees and expenses related to training internal occupational hearing conservationists (a.k.a., hearing test technicians) under CAOHC certification.

17. Medical record retention: All costs related to retaining audiometric test and other related medical records, such as back up, security, servers, contract services, etc.

18. Workers' compensation: Approximate cost for Workers' Compensation insurance related to hearing loss, and all compensation paid on an annual prorated basis.
Hearing Conservation Employee Survey

Please fill out this anonymous questionnaire to the best of your ability.

1. When you had your most recent hearing test, did anyone talk to you about your hearing?
   ___Yes  ___No

2. When you had your most recent hearing test, did anyone talk to you about how to best use your hearing protective device?
   ___Yes  ___No

3. What percentage of time does your supervisor wear his/her hearing protective device while on the floor?
   ___%  ___Don’t know

4. In areas where hearing protection is required, how often do other workers wear their hearing protective devices?  (Circle one)
   1. Never  2. Less than half the time  3. Half the time  4. More than half the time  5. Always

5. How would you rate the level of commitment to preventing hearing loss at your workplace?  (Circle one)

6. How much of a personal concern do you have about losing your hearing because of on the job noise exposure?  (Circle one)

7. How much of a personal concern do you have about injuries or accidents occurring because of noise, hearing loss or wearing hearing protective devices?  (Circle one)

8. On average, how many times during each work day do you have to remove your hearing protective device in order to communicate?
   ____times
1. What steps do you take to protect your hearing?

   What kind of hearing protection/plugs does everybody prefer to wear?

   If customs at plant, does everyone have access to them?

   How many of you have customs? Do you use them?

   So outside of customs, is there a good variety of other types of earplugs, or other hearing protection?

   Do you have access to a good supply of earplugs in your department?
Focus Group Questions / Response Sheet

Do you have to wear your hearing protection all the time or just in certain areas or when doing certain tasks?

2. How about outside of work – does anybody wear earplugs at home for anything? What kind of activities? (concerts, motorcycle, lawn mower, etc.)

   Does management allow you to take earplugs home?
   If yes, do they encourage you to bring them home with you?

3. So what are some of the steps that management takes to protect your hearing? What are some of the things they do?

   Do you guys feel you’re properly educated about the hazards of noise, and how noise can affect your ears? Do they go over stuff like that?

   Where/when does that take place?
   How do they teach you that information? Is someone telling you about it, a video, or some other way?

   Do you feel you’re properly trained on how to wear and earplug? What do they tell you?
Focus Group Questions / Response Sheet

(If not mentioned) Can you tell me about testing your hearing?
   How often is it done?
   Where is it done?
   Is it a quiet location?
   Do they give you the results of the test?

How about noise sampling? Do they ever put those little recorders of you to measure noise around you?
   If yes, do they ever go over the results of the sampling with you guys, or is it posted anywhere for you guys to see?

Are there certain areas at the site that are louder than others?

4. So on a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 being not at all and 10 being very), how committed are each of you in protecting your hearing at work?

What about at home?

5. So on a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 being not at all and 10 being very), how committed is management in protecting your hearing?

Why do you say X?
6. What changes have you seen at your facility to reduce noise exposures? Maybe changing the rules, engineering controls, retrofitting machines to make them quieter?

Any other machines that have been made quieter that you can think of?

Do you feel that there is communication back and forth between workers and management about either changes that are going to be made or maybe changes that you’d like the see happen?

7. How concerned are you about accidents occurring as a result of noise, hearing loss, or wearing hearing protection devices?

Have you ever heard of accidents caused by this?

8. So what’s one part of the hearing program that you think is working well? What’s one part that you like about it?
Focus Group Questions / Response Sheet

9. So what’s one part of the program that’s not working well? Where is there room for improvement?
   Anything else they could improve on?

10. Any final thoughts on the hearing program? Would you say you’re generally satisfied with the job they’re doing or not?