

Providing specialist headsets

How are you going to comply with the new Noise at Work Directive?

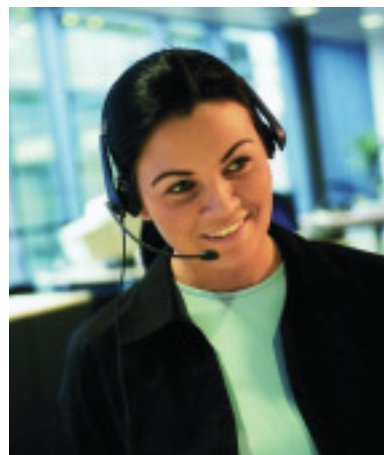
The effect of noise in the workplace is an issue in the spotlight and soon to be recognised in new regulations coming into effect from 16th February 2006. The new European Noise at Work Directive not only sets limits regarding noise levels in the workplace but it also defines the length of time staff are permitted to work at certain noise levels.

The new regulations are particularly relevant to government contact centres, where staff wear telephone headsets for long periods of time. At present, reputable CE approved headsets have built-in protection to meet only the current acoustic shock standards. However, the new regulations pose more difficult problems for management. How do you regulate the ongoing noise exposure a person experiences over the working day? The Directive defines not only a maximum noise level of 135dB but an average sound level of 85dB over an eight hour day. This means, for example, that, if the average sound level were greater than 85dB, the number of hours a person could work would have

to be reduced. Such a reduction would undoubtedly cause staffing problems, would be extremely difficult to manage and cause a substantial increase in labour costs.

For headset users in a contact centre, where much of a person's noise exposure is derived from the headset, there is a solution. The leading European headset manufacturer, GN Netcom, has developed a headset amplifier using digital technology that protects the user from dangerously unacceptable noise levels. The amplifier, the GN8210, also ensures that contact centres comply with the new regulations. To achieve the noise 'reduction', which will be the case for many users, the amplifier compensates by dramatically improving the sound quality and clarity of the call for both parties. This is because the GN8210 digital amplifier has the unique property of filtering out background noise, both into the earpiece and from the microphone.

Communications Solutions UK is a specialist headset company with a



wealth of expertise in the field of contact centre headset provision and management. As one of GN Netcom's leading distributors, they are focusing on health and safety in government. Successful trials have already been undertaken with some police forces and councils. In the commercial sector, BT has already chosen to safeguard its workforce by installing the GN8210 digital amplifier in all 42 of its call centres, bringing benefits to over 11,000 staff, so it must certainly be worth finding out more.

For further information on the GN8210, contact Communications Solutions UK Limited.



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