

Date

December, 2014

Issue:

Noise

KIC Position and Key Messages

- Noise is governed by the Environmental Protection Act 1986 and the Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997.
- Changes to the noise regulations were gazetted on December 5 2013, and amendments relating to blasting, requirements of sound measuring equipment, classification of premises and determination of the influencing factor came into operation on 5 March 2014.
- The reviewed Regulations set assigned noise limits (levels) that provide protection to receivers depending upon the type of premises receiving the noise.
- The regulation of airblast levels from blasting was significantly revised, whilst industry-to-industry noise levels in the Kwinana Industrial Area (KIA) were increased from 65Db to 75Db.
- The noise regulations specify assigned allowable levels for noise when received in residential areas. The assigned levels are based on surrounding land uses and traffic activity on nearby roads, and can vary significantly for the residential areas surrounding the KIA.
- Industry's position is that noise levels should be measured at noise sensitive premises (receptors) rather than at the boundary of the industrial site.
- Despite the change in the allowable noise limits, there have been no new industrial noise issues reported by the community.

Background information

Despite there now being more industries creating more product in the KIA, the overall level of regulated noise has reduced, according to figures released by KIC and collected by Herring Storer Acoustics.

The noise regulation amendments, which occurred in 2013, introduced a new type of receiver- an industrial and utility premise in the KIA- to increase the noise limits for noise received at the boundaries within the KIA. The change recognised the unique features of the KIA. Primarily, these features are the industry to industry boundaries and the presence of a substantial buffer zone that keeps the community a good distance from industry.

In 2011, KIC commissioned Herring Storer Acoustics to update the KIC acoustic model. The tasks included converting from software package ENM to SoundPLAN, updating the model with current KIC client acoustic model data, and comparing measured levels with model outputs for reference locations throughout the KIA.

The use of SoundPLAN for KIC acoustic modelling introduces greater flexibility for addition and upgrade of individual industry models, and provides a much more powerful range of presentation tools, particularly graphic display of predicted and measured noise levels.

The ability to utilise detailed acoustic models of individual industries, while protecting the detail of their acoustic models, by providing only noise contour output, means that KIC member acoustic models can be imported easily as the KIC member industries make changes (such as expansions or the implement of noise reduction projects).

A Noise Reference Group, consisting of representatives from industry, the three local governments, DEC, and the community, was formed by KIC several years ago. Its purpose was to understand the nature of noise complaints and to discuss how the source of the noise might be improved. The Noise Reference Group has an established terms of reference, and consulted on the location and types of noise monitoring undertaken in the KIA. The group is currently in abeyance but will resume when the need arises.

The KIC will continue to liaise with regulators to ensure regulations and the interpretation of regulations are relevant to the needs of industry and the community.

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