

Festival Event Noise Control Post Pop Code of Practice – Some Thoughts

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A BETTER FUTURE?

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Presentation Outline

- Introduction
- Pop Code of Practice
- Low Frequency
- Licensing v Statutory Nuisance
- Self Regulation



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Impact of Festivals

- Increase of 71 percent in the number of outdoor music events between 2003 and 2007 (Anderton, 2008)
- Since 2007 increase continued but lesser pace (The Guardian 2017)
- Audience numbers increased by 12 percent in 2016, now standing at a record 30.9 million (The Guardian 2017)
- Contributed approximately £4 billion in 2016 to the national economy (New Musical Express 2017)
- The type, size and location of festivals has also become more diverse and vital to the worlds of:
 - rock,
 - classical,
 - folk and
 - jazz music (Webster and Mackay, 2016).

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The Code of Practice on Environmental Noise Control at Concerts (CoP)

- Published by the Noise Council in 1995
- Provides guidance to those
 - licensing,
 - enforcing and
 - planning music events
- Not updated since first published
- Withdrawn by CIEH 2018 BUT nothing to replace it



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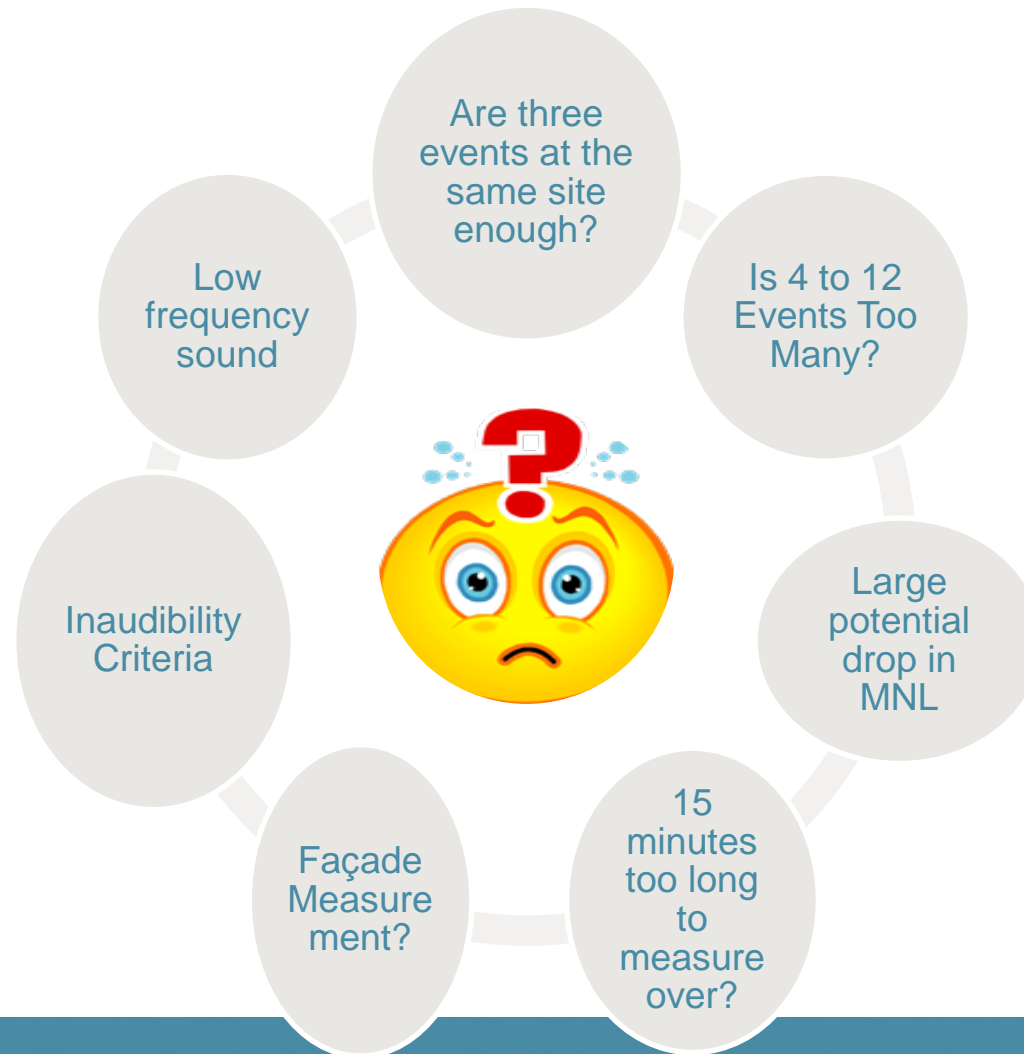
CoP Key Points – Music Noise Levels (MNLs)

Concert days per calendar year, per venue	Venue Category	Guideline
1 to 3	Urban Stadia or Arenas	The MNL should not exceed 75dB(A) over a 15 minute period
1 to 3	Other Urban and Rural Venues	The MNL should not exceed 65dB(A) over a 15 minute period
4 to 12	All Venues	The MNL should not exceed the background noise level by more than 15dB(A) over a 15 minute period

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MNLs – Some thoughts



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Advantages

- Clarity to those who live in the area
- Easier to assess than using noise monitoring equipment (Eade, 2009)

Disadvantages

- Limited research at time
- Doesn't account for different levels in sensitivities
- Access to NSPs
- No objective measure

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Low Frequency Sound

CoP says :

“may be necessary to set an additional criterion in terms of low frequency noise’ for certain types of concert “(Noise Council, 1995)

CoP suggests that:

‘a level of up to 70dB in either the 63Hz or 125Hz octave frequency band is satisfactory’ (Noise Council, 1995)

- Based on Griffiths et al (1993) BUT only a problem 2 km or more.
- Peirce (2004) found many LAs set ‘unachievable’ low frequency levels at the nearest NSP as they may well be a lot closer than 2km,
- negatively affect the audience’s experience of the music
- Causes ambiguity and inconsistencies in how different local authorities seek to deal with low frequency noise.

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What Levels for Low Frequency?

- To provide consistency Peirce (2004) suggested the CoP be updated to recommend low frequency levels should be assessed by measuring in the 40, 50, 63 and 80Hz third octave bands at any NSP that should not exceed:
 - $L_{eq}(15 \text{ min})$ 75 to 80 dB for rural areas
 - $L_{eq}(15 \text{ min})$ 80 to 85 dB for urban areas
- Griffiths and Staunton (2006) supports these but only at NSPs located at a distance of at least 2km from the venue
- McNally (2012) suggests use of L_{Ceq} to assess low frequency MNL
-

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Licensing

Licensing:

- The prevention of public nuisance (Home Office, 2018)
 - Conditions to minimise noise nuisance
 - Large scale time-limited events require a premises licence
 - The environmental health department are the experts in noise control
 - Any conditions should be proportionate, enforceable and appropriate
 - The organisers of major festivals, carnivals or concerts should approach the licencing authority and work collaboratively to attempt to solve any issues (Noise Management Plan – NMG)
- If minded to grant license then LA is accepting there will be sound emanating from event
- Minimum of 95 dB at mixing desk ($L_{Aeq}(1 \text{ min})$)

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Statutory Nuisance

Statutory nuisance:

Duty to

- Inspect
- Investigate complaints
- Determine statutory nuisance
- Serve abatement notice

BUT

- BPM
- Compliance with licensing conditions
- Potential impact on Event Manager

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Self Regulation?

- Limited resources
- NMP approved
- Require post event report with breaches
- Independent acoustic consultant
- Real time response

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Conclusions

- CoP needs revision
 - EHP and Licensing input is essential
- Audibility not appropriate condition
- Low frequency only a problem over 2 km – further research?
- Reduce measurement period
- Self regulation

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