

This document is the consultation response on behalf of the Association of Noise Consultants. I have used the section numbers and headings from the consultation document to make this easier to follow.

7.1 Scientific review of health effects of noise

An expert network will be essential as the HPA is unlikely to have all necessary skills in house. The recommendations in Box 1 represent a good starting point for future research; however, these should be prioritised in the work plan.

7.2 Provide advice and input to planning and other decisions

As a result of the National Planning Policy Framework there is a large gap in the advice and guidance for planning with respect to noise. This is one area that should be considered as a high priority.

7.3 Research into mechanism of noise effects on health

There consensus is that being research active would be extremely advantageous. The most appropriate way forward would be for the HPA to form a research steering committee and to place tenders for the research that external organisations can bid for. This has the benefit of giving HPA access to all the appropriate equipment and expertise without carrying that overhead.

7.4 Assessment capability and advice on noise dosimetry

This level of expertise already exists in outside bodies and it is questionable whether recruiting the appropriate staff would be a sensible use of resources.

7.5 Engage in technical standardisation committees

This is in the ANC's view essential and we consider that BSI and other bodies will want to receive input from HPA.

7.6 Develop a suite of web material

This is indeed a minimum fallback position and it is the ANC's view that much more than this can be realised.

7.7 Answer enquiries from members of the public

This is a potential minefield because of the complexity of noise issues and is best left alone.

7.8 Research and advice about mitigation techniques

There already exists a large body of research and design work for the control and reduction of noise. Expertise on this subject could be incorporated in a steering committee. Perhaps more importantly will be the issue 'tranquillity' and defining what constitutes "quiet areas".

8 Potential role for HPA

The articulated role seems perfectly sensible. Our only concern is whether this will be funded at a viable level. Great care will need to be taken over the recruitment of technical staff as that is a critical item, which if wrong, could render this initiative ineffective.

11 Key external stakeholders

Please add the Association of Noise Consultants to your list.

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The Association of Noise Consultants