

NEW ALBERTA OCCUPATIONAL NOISE LEGISLATION

Alberta has recently made the following occupational noise regulations:

Alberta Regulation 118/73, effective 15 May 1973
Alberta Regulation 327/73, effective 1 January 1974

Both of the above regulations amend Alberta Regulation 30/71. Regulation 118/73 is on audiometric testing. Regulation 327/73 reduces permitted daily exposures to industrial noise.

Information on other Canadian occupational noise legislation is contained in:

Langford, W.H., 1972-73 Industrial Noise, report C/S/H/3, Legislative Research Branch, Department of Labour,

which may be obtained from:

Legislative Research Branch
Department of Labour
340 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0J2

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MOTOR VEHICLE NOISE PROGRAMMES
IN THE MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT

E.R. Welbourne
Road and Motor Vehicle Traffic Safety Branch
Ministry of Transport, Ottawa, Ontario. K1A 0N5

INTRODUCTION

Under the authority of the Motor Vehicle Safety Act, the Road and Motor Vehicle Traffic Safety Branch develops and enforces the Canada Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (CMVSS). In addition to the more obviously safety-related aspects of vehicle design and performance, these standards cover gaseous pollutant emissions and noise. The Branch also conducts an applied research programme which, while primarily concerned with the mainstream of traffic safety problems, usually includes two or three vehicle noise projects.

This note outlines the current and proposed future activities of the Branch in standards development, enforcement and applied research relating to motor vehicle noise.

CURRENT STATUS OF MOTOR VEHICLE NOISE STANDARDS

Table I summarizes the current and proposed standards so far announced in the Canada Gazette. The figures in the table are the maximum permitted A-weighted sound levels measured at 50 ft. from the vehicle path in accordance with the designated SAE standard or recommended practice.

TABLE I

TYPE OF VEHICLE	CMVSS	SAE TEST	ACTUAL OR PROPOSED DATE			
			1.2.72	1.11.72	1.1.75	1.2.75
Passenger car, light truck	}1106	J986a	-	86	80	→
Heavy truck, bus		J366	-	88	83	→
Motorcycle	}1204	J986a	-	86	78	→
Snowmobile		J192	82	→		78

It may be noted that the SAE Recommended Practice J986a for cars is also used for motorcycles in the absence of an acceptable alternative.

While the requirements have been summarized in terms of maximum permitted levels under SAE test procedures, an acceptable alternative for vehicles other than snowmobiles is compliance with the provisions of Section 6 of ECE Regulation No. 9. In fact, a vehicle which complies with the European regulations will in general be quieter than one which just meets the current requirements under SAE test procedures. Slight reductions in some of the permitted levels under ECE test procedures will be made to ensure that future vehicles certified on this basis are no noisier than those certified under present North American practices.

DEVELOPMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLE NOISE STANDARDS

The first round of vehicle exterior noise level standards was issued in response to demands from various sectors for the federal government to begin to control the 'maximum' noise level or 'noise potential' of the motor vehicle. The first standards were and are essentially state-of-the-art standards giving legal force to current practice in the automotive industry. The noise level reductions now proposed however represent the first stage of development designed to complement national and provincial environmental quality objectives. The division of regulatory authority between the federal and provincial governments will necessitate continuing co-ordination to ensure that standards for new vehicles and for vehicles in operation remain compatible.

The noise emitted by motorcycles and snowmobiles, while indirectly affecting the well-being of many people also has a direct effect on the health and safety of the riders of these machines. At present, the impact on the rider is controlled only implicitly and somewhat loosely through requirements based on pass-by noise measurements. Future regulations for machines with exposed riders may be expected to include both pass-by tests and some more direct control over the noise level at the operator's ear.

The impact of interior noise levels on the health and safety of truck drivers is also a matter of current concern. The U.S. Bureau of Motor Carrier Safety recently added to its regulations a requirement that the maximum noise level in the vicinity of the driver's ear should not exceed 90 dBA during a stationary run-up to maximum engine speed. The effective dates of the regulation are October 1, 1974 for new vehicles and April 1, 1975 for older vehicles in operation. The U.S. regulation is currently under review by the Branch.

ENFORCEMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLE NOISE STANDARDS

Enforcement of the Canada Motor Vehicle Safety Standards is based on the concept of self-certification. The manufacturer or importer of the vehicle certifies by affixing the National Safety Mark and statement of compliance label that the vehicle complies with all relevant provisions of the standards. This concept may be contrasted with that of type certification by a governmental agency which is general in the aviation field. To obtain the necessary documentation of compliance, the manufacturer may conduct tests and record the results himself or use the services of an independent testing laboratory. (The article by Gilles Crepeau and Daryl May in the July 1973 edition of this newsletter describes the latter procedure.)

In addition to a comprehensive programme of inspection visits to manufacturers to examine vehicles and documentation, the Branch also conducts a limited programme of compliance testing. Its primary purpose is simply to provide an independent check on the self-certification process. To date no noise testing of automobiles, trucks or buses has been considered necessary since the current standards do not pose any real problems for the manufacturer. However, a programme of compliance tests on snowmobiles was initiated in 1972-73 and is continuing. The Branch relies at present on the services of independent consultants and testing agencies for its measurements. A number of instances of marginal compliance have been and are being investigated. Active enforcement of noise regulations for other classes of vehicle is scheduled to parallel the introduction of the new limits in 1975.

The enforcement of the noise standards has not been without its problems. The principal difficulty is undoubtedly that of uncontrolled environmental variables within the prescribed limits of the relevant SAE test procedures. Further refinement of these procedures is urgently required so that the regulations can be effectively enforced.

APPLIED RESEARCH ON MOTOR VEHICLE NOISE

The first projects concerned with motor vehicle noise arose directly from the standards development work. The first of these was primarily an evaluation of existing standard test procedures and an assessment of the feasibility of specifying certain noise limits at certain future dates. Reference 1 is the report of this study.

More interesting and controversial was the study undertaken by Cowl Industries Ltd. of the feasibility of achieving substantial reductions in snowmobile noise from the 86 dBA at 50 ft. which was typical of unregulated machines. A package of standard noise control techniques was applied to two different machines and demonstrated the feasibility of a 12 - 15 dB reduction without excessive cost, weight or performance penalties. The scope of the study did not include production engineering development of the noise control package or complete internal aerodynamic redesign of the canopy. The general validity of the results has been questioned mainly on such grounds. Reference 2 is the report of this study.

Routine noise measurements on production snowmobiles were also reported as part of the more general evaluations of snowmobile safety described in References 3 and 4.

Preliminary design of three projects is at present in hand. The first concerns the feasibility of using the ear bug or a similar portable measuring device as the basis of standard noise test procedures for motorcycles and snowmobiles. The objective of the second project is the accumulation of representative noise exposure data for motorcycle and snowmobile riders. Finally, a rather broad study of the rationale for motor vehicle exterior noise standards is planned. The major objective of this study is to provide some yardstick by which the effectiveness of vehicle exterior noise standards can be gauged and improved where necessary.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This note has outlined current and proposed future motor vehicle noise programmes in the Road and Motor Vehicle Traffic Safety Branch of the Ministry of Transport. The permission of the Director, Dr. G.D. Campbell, to publish this note is acknowledged with thanks as is the assistance of several colleagues. Nonetheless, any opinions expressed are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Ministry.

REFERENCES

1. Reif, Z. Evaluation of proposed regulations pertaining to noise created by motor vehicles. Industrial Research Institute of the University of Windsor, 1972.
2. Quiet snowmobiles: A study of the feasibility of reducing snowmobile noise. Information Canada Catalogue No. T46-173, 1973.
3. An evaluation of snowmobile safety. Information Canada, 1971.
4. A second evaluation of snowmobile safety. (To be published by the Ministry of Transport).