

CONTENTS/TABLE DES MATIÈRES

	<u>PAGE</u>
Ontario's Vehicle Noise Programme.....	1
Report Abstract: Noise Propagation Near Vancouver International Airport..	3
Seminar on Noise in Industry.....	3
Meeting of the Canadian Acoustical Association.....	4
Employment.....	4
Donation.....	4

* * * * *

ONTARIO'S VEHICLE NOISE PROGRAMME

D.N. May
Noise Pollution Control Section, Ministry of the Environment,
880 Bay Street, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1Z8

The Noise Pollution Control Section of Environment Ontario is moving with considerable urgency in the field of vehicle noise abatement. Social survey data has revealed traffic noise as the chief source of noise complaint - since aircraft noise is confined to particular areas.

The Ontario position on vehicle noise has necessarily to start with the federal law which limits the noise output of new vehicles measured according to an SAE drive-by procedure which brings out the maximum noise the vehicle can make. Although we may hope that the various federal limits will be lowered in future years, the law is basically effective as far as it goes - and is necessarily a kind of datum point from which provincial vehicle noise programmes can work. Eric Welbourne described the federal programmes in the April 1974 issue.

The Ontario programme aims to control two noise parameters which the federal law does not cover.

The first parameter is the driver's consideration for others. Noise limits are being researched which will establish the maximum levels which a considerate driver may make - giving limits rather lower than the federal limits since they will apply to reasonable driving habits in various speed zones and not to the maximum noise potential of the vehicle itself. Drivers who accelerate violently, screech tires and squeal their brakes may find themselves in violation of the limits.

The second parameter is the vehicle's maintenance, which will cover, for example, leaking muffler systems and also include matters like the replacement of original equipment with inherently noisy sporty features.

These philosophies are not by themselves very new, but the progress in implementing them does appear to give some encouragement for the hope that traffic noise, one of the more satanic evils of our civilization, may be reduced in Ontario, if not this year, then perhaps this century.

The first point of the programme is the promulgation of Regulations under the Ontario Environmental Protection Act 1971. These are in the final stages of preparation as this report is being written. Several thousands of measurements we have carried out have revealed the statistical distributions of noise for (a) a range of vehicles categories, and (b) a number of combinations of speed zones, grades and distances from signs and stop lights, all measured in real-life conditions at test sites which meet certain acoustic and other criteria. These will allow us to set limits which place a realistic proportion of the more noisy vehicles in violation of the Regulations.

The enforcement just described will take place at a number of sites on city (and rural) streets, but is expected to be supplemented by an off-road test site to which vehicles may be directed if they are believed to be in violation of the Regulations but were not perhaps caught in an on-road test site. A third part of the Regulations may simply prohibit various noisy equipment and driving habits, without specifying noise limits. Among these may be banging-and-clanking trucks and their loads, mufflers with cut-outs, squealing tires and so on. This section of the Regulations will resemble various older laws and by-laws. In contrast to most of those laws and by-laws, however, we expect to enforce ours.

The field operations involved in launching the enforcement activity have begun in Hamilton and Toronto where noise indicators are being used in public awareness campaigns. Drivers have been invited to drive their vehicles in the curb lane past a noise indicator which presents (and holds for a second or two) the sound level recorded on a microphone the vehicle has just passed. The vehicle's sound level may be compared with the proposed limits for the vehicle category in that location, which are indicated on a sign.

The enforcement activities themselves have been introduced in the same cities on a "friendly co-operation" basis. Uniformed noise inspectors in the presence of a police officer stop vehicles exceeding the proposed limits, and give out a "courtesy violation", with an emphasis on voluntary action. At the same time, information is collected on the offending vehicle and its condition for our own data bank.

The measurements are taken in accordance with a procedures manual established to ensure that the public is never prosecuted on the basis of an inadequate set of readings. The manual describes the geometry of the site, the background noise limits and the measurement and communications routine to detect and stop a vehicle.

Time will establish the success we achieve, but a serious and substantial effort is underway.