"Buy Quiet" environmental noise policy for Australia

Buy Quiet Symposium - Paris, July 2011

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The Noise Problem – changing communities

Perth in the 1960's...

Perth 2011 -

- **Current population 1.65m**
- increasing to 2.2m by 2031



Note that -

- > 47% of the new population will be in infill areas
- > avge residential density to increase from 10 to 15 dwellings/ha in infill areas

The Problem – DEC Community Survey 2006



The Noise Problem – WA perspective

Residential noise impacts -

- *~46% of population 'hear' noise from portable household equipment
- *~13% of population 'a little annoyed' or more

Estimate 550,000 people in new homes to be built in next 20 years:

13% of these: ~72,000 new people 'a little annoyed or more'



Australia-New Zealand Survey – AECOM 2011

Portable garden equipment	
Proportion of population annoyed or bothered	35%
Ave duration per incident	1 h 31 min
Airconditioners	
Proportion of population annoyed or bothered	5%
Ave duration per incident	5 h 50 min

Drivers for a national policy on noise labelling

Federal Mutual Recognition Act 1992

- main driver for national scheme
- limits effectiveness of the existing noise labelling schemes in NSW and WA
- requirements cannot be enforced for product that is manufactured in or imported via other jurisdictions that don't have these requirements

Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Act 1997

similar problems re product manufactured or imported via New Zealand

Drivers for a national policy on noise labelling

Organisations calling for labelling

- Australian enHealth Council
- Australian Consumers Association

Industry Groups supportive

- Outdoor Power Equipment Assoc
- Aircon and Refrig Manufacturers Assoc

Markets – items sold in Australia per year

- ❖ ~1.2m items of outdoor garden equipment
- ~1m airconditioners in houses

National Working Group – 2008

Council of State/Territory, Federal and NZ Environment Ministers (EPHC) set up -

'working group to scope out a consistent noise labelling scheme for Australia which could include maximum noise limits for certain noisy household articles such as leaf blowers'

NSW took lead, with ACT, South Aust and WA

Scope -

Leaf blowers, lawn mowers (including ride-on mowers), edge cutters, brush cutters, line trimmers, chainsaws and hedge trimmers – labels and limits

Airconditioners – labels only

National Working Group – Tasks

Existing provisions

- ❖ WA, NSW regulations
- EU Directive

Industry consultation

Individual ind groups

Test procedures

Consultant

Regulatory options

Regulatory Impact Statement



National Working Group - Industry Consultation

Airconditioners

- Discussion paper to AREMA
- 4 manufacturers responded
- Supportive of mandatory labelling scheme
- Meeting raised tech issues re testing

PGE

- Discussion paper to individual groups
- OPEA supportive, provided harmonised with EU Directive

National Working Group - Tasks

Testing procedures for airconditioners

- Contract with consultant (Day Design)
- Reviewed test methods and facilities
- Numbers of units to be tested
- Label content
- Concluded that noise labelling of domestic airconditioners up to 30kW is feasible and desirable

National Working Group – Tasks

Airconditioners - labelling issues

- ❖ Who is it for buyer or installer?
- ❖ What number L_w/L_p, max/MEPS/night?
- Where indoor/outdoor, website?
- ❖ Tonality?
- Do different immission criteria matter?



Regulatory Options

- Status quo NSW and WA continue existing schemes
- Replace NSW and WA schemes with voluntary industry scheme
- > Educate community and installers
- States increase regulation
- Mandatory labelling for aircons and regionspecific labels/limits for Portable Garden Equip't
- ➤ Mandatory labelling for aircons and EU Directive labels/limits for PGE
- Noise tax on aircons and PGE

National Working Group – Recommendations

Portable equipment

- Adopt Noise Directive for PGE
 - -Definitions, tests, labels and limits
- Provide for offences
 - -No label, format, data, tampering, obstruction

Airconditioners

- Definitions up to 30KW
- Sound power label, no limits
- Test procedures

National Working Group - Current Situation mid-2011

NEPHC decision May 2011 to wind up working group by June 2011!

Where do we go from here?



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