

Minutes of the 1st Meeting of Sub Group Constituted to formulate draft noise standards for siren & sound signals, held on 15/01/2014 .

During the 1st Sub-Group Committee Meeting held on 15/1/2014, the following Members were present.

1. Shri Dhanesh Manik
Professor,
IIT Bombay. Member
2. Shri S.B. Sahastrabudhe,
Additional Transport Commissioner,
Transport Commissioner Office,
Bandra (East), Mumbai-400 051. Member
3. Ms.Sumaira Abdulali
Awaaz Foundation, NGO. Member
4. Shri D. T. Devale
Sr.Law Officer
MPCB, Mumbai. Member
5. Shri V.M. Motghare,
Joint Director(APC),
MPCB, Mumbai. Member
6. Shri S K Purkar
Law Officer
Maharashtra Pollution Control Board
Mumbai
7. Shri S.C. Kollur
Scientific Officer((JD[APC] Section).
MPCB, Mumbai. Member Convener

Sr.Law Officer welcomed the Members of Sub-Group and introduced all of them with brief details in respect of terms of reference made to the Sub-Group for submission of its report alongwith draft standards for siren & sound signals, to be fitted in the various vehicles, to be finalized by Sub-Group, pointing out that since Hon'ble National Green Tribunal directed the MPCB to prescribe standards for sirens & multi-toned horns (sound signals) in a time bound manner, in consultation with the CPCB, the Sub-Group will have to give report on the subject matter at the earliest.

JD(APC) informed the Sub-Group that Shri Dhanesh Manik, Professor, IIT Powai, who is also Member of Sub-Group sent a email to all the Members of

Sub-Group, a publication of the National Institute of Justice, US Deptt. of Justice, namely 'Technology Assessment Program-Emergency Vehicle Sirens' for reference. Prof.Dhanesh Manik given brief details in respect of the standards

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formulated by the Law Enforcement Standards Laboratory of the National Bureau of Standards and Technology Assessment Program Information Centre(TAPIC) operated by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), which supervises a National Compliance Testing Program conducted by independent agencies. The standards developed by LESL serve as performance benchmarks against the commercial equipment are measured. He has also referred to the fall off sound outdoors in level at 6 dB per doubling of distance assuming the siren level at 10' in front of vehicle is 100 dBA at 20' **to 64 dBA at 640'**. In this regard the Members of Sub Group were of the opinion that we should develop indigenous standards for sirens & sound signals.

Shri S.B. Sahastrabudhe, Additional Transport Commissioner given the details in respect of existing provisions, which are being enforced under the Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989 as amended from time to time. He told that every motor vehicle, agriculture tractor, power tiller and construction equipment vehicle at the manufacturing stage shall be fitted with an electric horn or other devices conforming to the requirements of IS:1884-1992 specified by the Bureau of Indian Standards. He made it clear that while prescribing standards for siren & sound signals, care should be taken that such sounds are capable of giving audible & sufficient warning of the approach or position of vehicle. He also pointed out that multi-toned horns giving a succession of different notes or with any other sound-producing device giving an unduly harsh, shrill, loud or alarming noise are prohibited. However, as far as Ambulance or Fire Fighting or Salvage vehicles used by Police Officers, Operators of construction equipments vehicles or Motor Vehicles Deptt. during their duties, the prohibition is not applicable to them. He also made it clear that by GSR 111 (E) dtd.10/2/2004, the amendment has been added that every motor vehicle shall be constructed and maintained, so as to conform to noise standards specified in Part-E of the Schedule-VI to the Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986. Shri Sahastrabudhe, Addl.Transport Commissioner specifically pointed out that mandate in respect of measurement of noise / sound signals at various stages for various vehicles is required to be finalized, which includes the calibration of sound measure devices, method of measurement and the agencies which approves the sound meters. This needs to be done under the Central Motor Vehicle Rules by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, Govt. of India.

Ms.Sumaria Abdulali suggested that till such protocol is finalized in respect of measurement of sound with the standard devices for the same, the prevailing standard sound meters, which are approved by the Competent Authorities and are available with the Transport Commissioner, should be followed up.

The prevailing standards under various Laws were circulated to the Members of the Sub Group including Noise Pollution (Regulation & Control) Rules, 2000, as amended from time to time applicable to Ambient Noise in various categories of areas (Industrial, Commercial, Residential and Silence Zone), provisions under the Air (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 and Vehicles -Specific Noise Standards applicable at manufacturing stage prescribed under the Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986.

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Sr Law Officer (SLO) gave the details of existing noise limits for Automobiles (Free Field) at 1 mtr. in dBA at the manufacturing stage to be achieved by the year, 1992, pointing out that different standards are prescribed for different vehicles including two-wheelers, three-wheelers, passenger cars, commercial vehicles with different capacity and therefore, the Sub-Group will have to decide which of the standards are to be made applicable uniformly or different standards are to be made applicable to different vehicles. SLO pointed out that the prevailing practice is that uniform standards are prescribed at the Ministry of Environment & Forests, Govt. of India throughout India and SPCB cannot relax those standards, but can make it more stringent level. Therefore, it was suggested that whatever standards are prescribed for siren & horns with different sound signals can be sent for further approval to the CPCB, so that MoEF, GoI can decide whether those standards are to be made applicable at the national level uniformly or otherwise. Ms.Sumaira Abdulali pointed out that multi-toned horns are banned and therefore, the Sub-Group shall not recommend any standard for multi-toned horns.

However, Prof.Dhanesh Manik, made it clear that multi-toned horns are banned, provided that these provisions are not applicable to the sirens. Similarly, different standards are prescribed for different vehicles and therefore, standards for sound signals will have to be considered and fixed up.

After due deliberations, it was decided that onsite actual monitoring of Noise Levels of some of Horns and Sirens fitted on vehicles will be carried out by the Team of representatives of Transport Commissioner Office, Regional Office-Mumbai, Shri S.C. Kollur, Scientific Officer.

Ms.Sumaira Abdulali, Awaaz Foundation, NGO was of the view that the monitoring reports shall be discussed in the 2nd Meeting of the Sub-Group to be held on 17/1/2014.

The Meeting was terminated with the vote of thanks to the chair.