### Purpose

To aid in reducing hearing damage due to exposure to excessively loud noises while on the vessel.

### Responsibilities

* Master – Ensure this procedure is carried out as written and to make any changes needed to this procedure to ensure the safety of the crew.
* Crew – Follow the procedure below at the direction of the vessel master.

### Procedure

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| **Step** | **High Noise Levels** |
| **1.** | Assess the high noise levels you are exposed to in carrying out your daily tasks by taking noise level measurements using a sound level meter or dosimeter to read noise levels.  If you don’t have access to one, there are apps available for mobile phones that are able to read decibel levels with some accuracy. Another method of testing noise is to stand at arm’s length from one of your crewmates and attempt to have a conversation. If you have to shout to be heard at this distance, noise levels are most likely high enough to cause hearing damage. |
| **2.** | Identify areas where noise levels are dangerously high and find a means to reduce or eliminate that noise. This often means installing sound insulation, doors or bulkheads to isolate rooms, etc. |
| **3.** | If you are unable to reduce noise to an acceptable level, protect crew members from the source of the noise using hearing protection.  Ear plugs and ear muffs are often able to reduce noise levels by 20-30 decibels which can be enough to prevent hearing damage. They are low cost solutions and can be purchased at most hardware stores. |
|  | ***Remember: hearing damage typically occurs slowly over many years. This slow progression means you usually won’t notice damage is done until it’s too late. This damage is permanent.*** |