

For the urgent attention of all Safety and Medical Officers

SAFETY WARNING!!!

It has come to our attention that some companies are trying to sell custom-made hearing protection earplugs to industry, without the necessary experience, checks and balances in place. We thought it our duty to inform you of the following important information.

Before investing in custom-made hearing protection devices, it is critically important to know and to understand the following: -

1. All custom-made hearing protection devices are NOT the same
2. By investing in only a custom-made 'plug' without being able to check if the unit actually fits 100% in the ear of the user without any air leaks, can be a very expensive and ineffective investment. Our recommendation would be to then rather continue with your existing hearing protection devices be it disposable earplugs or earmuffs.
3. Not all custom-made 'plugs' fit 100%. Sound travels in air and unless one can check that the unit has a 100% leak-tight fit in the ear of the user the user may be exposed to high noise levels, due to an incorrect fit, that may damage the hearing of the user. This results in a liability rather than an investment.
4. Before investing in any hearing protection device, check that the attenuation levels actual matches or surpasses the required attenuation levels necessary for the particular environment that the units will be used in. In all cases the attenuation level should never be lower than the required minimum as prescribed by the SABS. E.g. one should not use a hearing protection device in an 110dB noise environment when the device only offers an attenuation level of 20dB. ($110 - 20 = 90\text{dB}$) The attenuation given is well below the required minimum safety levels as prescribed by law. This may cause the wearer to suffer from a noise-induced hearing loss due to ineffective attenuation.
5. Custom-made earplugs without filters do not allow for any form of effective communication – an important safety feature.

Research done on the effectiveness of custom-made hearing protection in Zeeland, Holland, by Dr. M. de Koomen, PhD, has concluded the following (report available on request):-

- 1. A leaking custom-made hearing protector results in a major decrease in efficiency (attenuation)***
- 2. The decrease in attenuation is shown in all frequencies***
- 3. When supplying or monitoring a custom-made hearing protector, the testing of its leak-tightness "in situ" (in the ear of the user) is a determining factor in the evaluation of the efficiency (i.e. the attenuation capability) of the hearing protector in a real world situation.***

The only hearing protection device carrying the South African Bureau of Standards Mark of Approved Performance is **Noise-Ban™ Elite** – manufactured and distributed by H.A.S.S. Industrial under licence. The H.A.S.S. Hearing Conservation Programme is audited quarterly by the SABS to ensure that internationally accepted standards are adhered to.



Only H.A.S.S. can offer you the following services and products in one package: -

- **Hearing Conservation Programme** that includes a custom-made hearing protection device (**Noise-Ban™ Elite**) with the **SABS Mark of Approved Performance** – unique to **Noise-Ban™ Elite** since 1999! No other hearing protection device to date has been awarded the SABS Mark of Approved Performance.
- **SABS accredited staff** offer a unique on-site service with group and individual training resulting in minimum downtime for workers – cost saving and unique to H.A.S.S.!
- **100% leak-tight fit** on each custom-made hearing protection unit in the ear of each user and is part of the standard fitting procedure – unique to H.A.S.S.!
- **Adjustable attenuation levels** allow workers to work in noise levels between 85dB and 120 dB without the risk of incurring a noise-induced hearing loss. Saves you having to change filters when workers change from one work area to the other - a major cost saving feature and unique to H.A.S.S.!
- **Noise-Ban™ Elite ensures optimum hearing protection and communication in noise** - both critically important safety features. Isolating workers with ear 'plugs' results in a loss of hearing directionality and a drop in productivity. When you can communicate in noise, the user can also hear warning signals and know from which direction the signal is coming from – an important safety feature! Communication and directional hearing is not possible with earplugs or earmuffs – be it custom-made or not.
- **Computer monitoring** with hard copy printouts – indicating the attenuation setting of each unit in the ear of the user – unique to H.A.S.S.
- **Specialised data management** system allow for regular reports to management on the effective implementation of the Hearing Conservation Programme – unique to H.A.S.S.!
- **Annual monitoring** of the programme ensures ongoing compliance with SABS and international specifications. This is a unique H.A.S.S. service that offers peace of mind to safety officers and management. Monitoring of the continued adherence to SABS specifications ensures that workers are adequately protected against noise-induced hearing loss from year to year. H.A.S.S. is the only company offering this unique SABS approved service in South Africa.
- Noise-Ban™ Elite is manufactured in South African and enjoys **international recognition**. It is widely used in Europe, Australia, New Zealand and a number of other countries.
- Noise-Ban™ Elite forms the **benchmark in custom-made hearing protection devices** throughout the world – including South Africa, Europe and Australasia.

We offer a countrywide service and our client list incorporates various South African blue-chip companies. Please call me if you would like more information or a demonstration on how we can make a real and lasting difference in your companies Hearing Protection Programme.

Yours sincerely,

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This communication was issued by: -

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