

PRESS RELEASE



Noise prediction stays on track

Hepworth helps Europe quantify the accuracy of railway noise predictions

20 December 2006: Defra has appointed Hepworth Acoustics for a project that will help noise assessment professionals more accurately calculate the environmental impact of railway noise. The assignment is to re-examine and assess the impact on accuracy of predictions of the data and methodologies laid out in the WG-AEN's Good Practice Guide for Strategic Noise Mapping, version 2 of which was published in January 2006. The end result will be recommendations that quantify the impact on accuracy of assumptions made when producing noise maps for railway noise. These recommendations could be used in a future version of The Good Practice Guide. The work for the European Union Working Group is being funded by Defra.

Noise prediction is a practice that is constantly developing and this project makes a close examination of the options in The Good Practice Guide to quantify the level of accuracy that will be achieved where assumptions have to be made, explains Peter Hepworth, managing director of Hepworth Acoustics. This is a follow up to a similar project we completed last year on road traffic noise and we are delighted to be working for Defra again with a similar team. The Good Practice Guide is an excellent source of reference for noise professionals and projects such as this one help it to maintain its relevancy and ensure that it provides data to allow informed choices.

The WG-AEN's Good Practice Guide for Strategic Noise Mapping and the Production of Associated Data on Noise Exposure contains guidelines, procedures and assumptions that can be used when limited data are available for producing noise maps. Predicting environmental noise impact within a large geographical area requires a huge amount of data and there are inevitably data shortages. The Guide offers advice and information to help practitioners choose options when data is lacking. This project will quantify the impact on accuracy of the different options available.

Hepworth Acoustics is lead contractor in this latest project, working in consortium with UK noise consultant Acustica, Dutch consulting engineer DGMR, and the railway technology adviser Delta Rail. The project is due for completion next March and follows on from a similar analysis on road traffic noise made last year.

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Hepworth Acoustics has carried out noise maps of all major types of noise source including roads, railways, industry, quarries and aircraft (and various combinations of these). The company is virtually unique in the UK in having experience of all of the main noise mapping software that implements UK standards. Previous road traffic noise maps produced by Hepworth Acoustics include Westminster City Council. More information on noise maps and all aspects of acoustics consultancy are available at www.hepworth-acoustics.co.uk.

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