

**CONTACT US TO PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING SERVICES FOR YOUR BUSINESS:**

- Occupational Hygiene Surveys
- EHS Risk Assessments
- Ergonomics Risk Assessments
- EHS Management System Development and Implementation
- Environmental Monitoring
- Identification of EHS Legal Requirements and Compliance Audits
- Internal Auditor Training
- Specialised EHS Training



Department of Employment and Labour Approved Inspection Authority (OH0049-CI-09)



OH0049



OHAIA-005 (2026)

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**NEW**

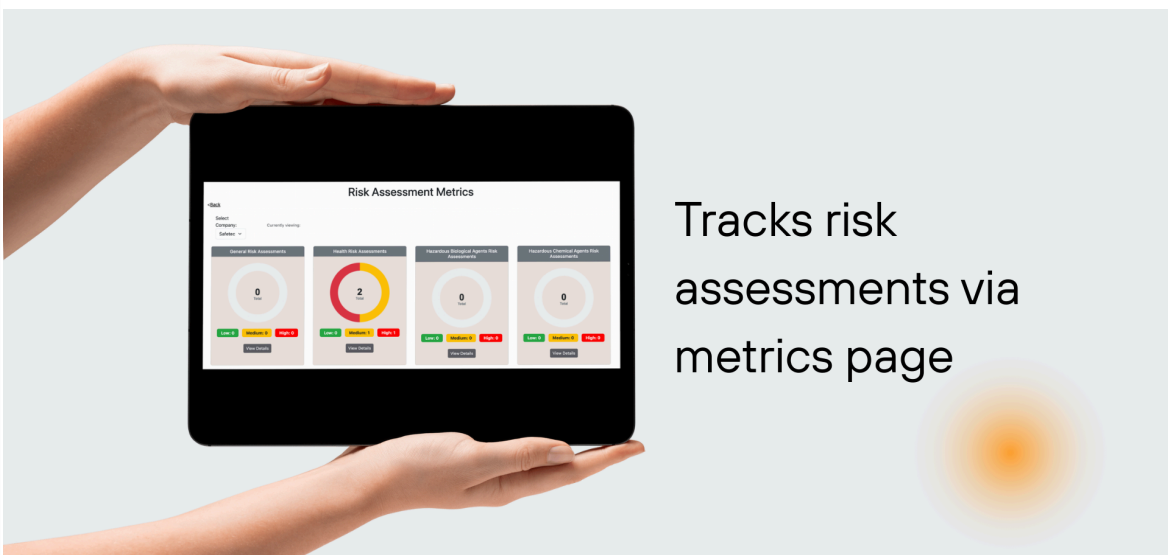
**ONLINE**

**RISK ASSESSMENT DATABASE**

**LAUNCHING IN FEB - 2026**



Includes all nine risk assessments required by HSE Legislation



Tracks risk assessments via metrics page

**WATCH OUT** for our launch invitation, coming soon!

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## HEARING AIDS & HEARING PROTECTION

### CAN THEY WORK TOGETHER?



Noise Standards do not discriminate between workers who do and those who do not have hearing loss, or those who wear hearing aids and those who don't. Two common misconceptions occur amongst those who wear hearing aids: 1) that because they already have hearing loss, they are not affected by noise, or 2) that their hearing aids can be used as hearing protection. Neither of these arguments is correct.

Most hearing-impaired individuals suffer from a sensorineural hearing loss (SNHL), which occurs in the cochlea: the primary hearing organ in the inner ear. The most common cause of this condition is noise exposure, and once it occurs it cannot be reversed. Additionally, the remaining or residual hearing can still be lost. Hearing aids do not restore hearing; they only make use of remaining hearing. It is therefore vitally important to protect residual hearing.

#### HEARING AIDS ARE NOT HEARING PROTECTORS

Individuals who wear hearing aids are mistaken to think that they can just turn them off and use them as earplugs because most hearing aid fittings are vented, which means that they are designed to allow some natural sound to enter the ear. In addition, they amplify specific frequencies to improve overall sound quality and comfort. When there is a pathway for sound leakage, the hearing protection device (HPD) is no longer effective. Most custom hearing aids and earmoulds are made from hard acrylic and cannot change their shape - there could also be additional sound leakage resulting from jaw movement.

#### UNDERSTAND THAT THERE MAY BE A CHALLENGE

Without hearing aids, hearing-impaired workers who wear HPDs are at a disadvantage, because the reduction in sound afforded by the HPD is added to their hearing loss. However, wearing both devices at the same time may cause pressure on hearing aids, awkward button presses, soreness behind the ear, or even generate feedback or whistling.

Balancing amplification with hearing protection may have its challenges, but it can be accomplished. By choosing the right earmuffs, positioning devices carefully, adjusting hearing aid settings and following best practices for care and communication, both safety and connectivity can be achieved.

#### WHEN IS IT SAFE TO WEAR BOTH TOGETHER?

In certain situations, such as light work environments, quiet office noise or when using hearing aids to stream media, wearing a hearing aid together with hearing protection may be feasible. It is important to ensure that the hearing aid is functioning properly, does not cause auditory distortion and is not overly suppressed by the earmuffs. It is also beneficial to consult an audiologist to test comfort and balance.

#### COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

Communication and situational awareness can be more difficult when using both hearing aids and earmuffs.

#### Consider these tips:

- ➔ Face the speaker to maximise visual cues and lip-reading;
- ➔ Use gestures or visual prompts to reinforce spoken words;
- ➔ Ask for repetition or clarification when needed.