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**Methods for rating and assessing  
industrial and commercial sound**

**bsi.**

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# Foreword

## Publishing information

This British Standard is published by BSI Standards Limited, under licence from The British Standards Institution, and came into effect on 31 October 2014. It was prepared by Sub-committee EH/1/3, *Residential and industrial noise*, under the authority of Technical Committee EH/1, *Acoustics*. A list of organizations represented on these committees can be obtained on request to their secretary.

## Supersession

BS 4142:2014 superseded BS 4142:1997, which has been withdrawn.

BS 4142:2014+A1:2019 supersedes BS 4142:2014, which is withdrawn

## Information about this document

BS 4142 was first published in 1967, and was revised in 1990 to align it with elements of ISO 1996. The 1997 edition clarified aspects of the standard in the light of comments from users.

This edition has been prepared under the direction of the Health and Environment Sector Board. The general basis for the standard is derived from the application of previous editions, together with accumulated experience. Some aspects, including guidance on character corrections, are based upon research which has been reported since publication of the previous edition of this standard.

This edition clarifies the application of the standard. New to this edition is the introduction of uncertainty, including good practice for reducing uncertainty. The examples in [Annex A](#) have been considerably expanded.

Response to sound can be subjective and is affected by many factors, both acoustic and non-acoustic. The significance of its impact, for example, can depend on such factors as the margin by which a sound exceeds the background sound level, its absolute level, time of day and change in the acoustic environment, as well as local attitudes to the source of the sound and the character of the neighbourhood. This edition of the standard recognizes the importance of the context in which a sound occurs. Great care has, therefore, been taken in the use of the words “sound” and “noise”. Sound can be measured by a sound level meter or other measuring system. Noise is related to a human response and is routinely described as unwanted sound, or sound that is considered undesirable or disruptive.

Text introduced or altered by Amendment No. 1 is indicated in the text by tags A1 A1. Minor editorial changes are not tagged.

## Use of this document

It has been assumed in the preparation of this British Standard that the execution of its provisions will be entrusted to appropriately qualified and experienced people, for whose use it has been produced.

## Presentational conventions

The provisions of this standard is presented in roman (i.e. upright) type. Its recommendations are expressed in sentences in which the principal auxiliary verb is “should”.

*Commentary, explanation and general informative material are presented in smaller italic type, and does not constitute a normative element.*

Where words have alternative spellings, the preferred spelling of the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary is used (e.g. “organization” rather than “organisation”).

**Contractual and legal considerations**

This publication does not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract. Users are responsible for its correct application.

**Compliance with a British Standard cannot confer immunity from legal obligations.**

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## 1 Scope

**1.1** This British Standard describes methods for rating and assessing sound of an industrial and/or commercial nature, which includes:

- a) sound from industrial and manufacturing processes;
- b) sound from fixed installations which comprise mechanical and electrical plant and equipment;
- c) sound from the loading and unloading of goods and materials at industrial and/or commercial premises; and
- d) sound from mobile plant and vehicles that is an intrinsic part of the overall sound emanating from premises or processes, such as that from fork-lift trucks, or that from train or ship movements on or around an industrial and/or commercial site.

The methods described in this British Standard use outdoor sound levels to assess the likely effects of sound on people who might be inside or outside a dwelling or premises used for residential purposes upon which sound is incident.

**1.2** This standard is applicable to the determination of the following levels at one or locations:

- a) rating levels for sources of sound of an industrial and/or commercial nature; and
- b) ambient, background and residual sound levels,  
for the purposes of:
  - 1) investigating complaints;
  - 2) assessing sound from  $\boxed{A_1}$  existing,  $\boxed{A_1}$  proposed, new, modified or additional source(s) of sound of an industrial and/or commercial nature; and
  - 3) assessing sound at proposed new dwellings or premises used for residential purposes.

**1.3** The determination of noise amounting to a nuisance is beyond the scope of this British Standard.

Sound of an industrial and/or commercial nature does not include sound from the passage of vehicles on public roads and railway systems.

The standard is not intended to be applied to the rating and assessment of sound from:

- a) recreational activities, including all forms of motorsport;
- b) music and other entertainment;
- c) shooting grounds;
- d) construction and demolition;
- e) domestic animals;
- f) people;
- g) public address systems for speech; and
- h) other sources falling within the scopes of other standards or guidance.

$\boxed{A_1}$  The methodology set out in [Clauses 7, 8, and 9](#) of this standard is not intended to be used to assess the extent of the impact at indoor locations. Internal sound levels can be taken into account as outlined in [Clause 11](#).  $\boxed{A_1}$

$\boxed{A_1}$  The standard is not intended to be applied to the assessment of indoor sound levels.  $\boxed{A_1}$