



Acoustical Society of America

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STANDARDS SECRETARIAT

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ANSI/ASA S12.6-2008 Approved

(October 21, 2008) The Acoustical Society of America announced the recent publication of **ANSI/ASA S12.6-2008 American National Standard Methods for Measuring the Real-Ear Attenuation of Hearing Protectors**.

This standard will be valuable to manufacturers of hearing protection devices, hearing conservation professionals, and to regulatory agencies. This standard will be heavily referenced in the anticipated Environmental Protection Agency's proposed new rule on labeling hearing protection that should appear later this year or in 2009. The ultimate beneficiary is the user of hearing protection devices.

This Standard specifies laboratory-based procedures for measuring, analyzing, and reporting the passive noise-reducing capabilities of hearing protection devices. The procedures consist of psychophysical tests conducted on human subjects to determine the real-ear attenuation measured at hearing threshold. Two fitting procedures are provided: Method A) trained-subject fit, intended to describe the capabilities of the devices fitted by thoroughly trained users, and Method B) inexperienced-subject fit, intended to approximate the protection that can be attained by groups of informed users in workplace hearing conservation programs. Regardless of test method, the attenuation data will be valid only to the extent that the users wear the devices in the same manner as during the tests. This Standard does not address issues pertaining to computational schemes or rating systems for applying hearing protector attenuation values (see ANSI/ASA S12.68), nor does it specify minimum performance values for hearing protectors, or address comfort or wearability features.

This is a major revision of ANSI S12.6-1997. The Method-A procedure has been modified to make it more specific and less open to interpretation, and has been re-designated as a "trained-subject fit." The Method-B procedure has also been clarified, and has been re-designated as "inexperienced subject fit." The scope and applications have been revised accordingly.

This Standard was developed by Accredited Standards Committee S12, Noise, under operating procedures accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). These procedures assure that the Standard represents the consensus of opinion among those with a direct and material interest in the subject matter. The standard was drafted by a working group comprising experts from all segments of the hearing conservation community.

This standard and many other national and international noise standards can be obtained from the Acoustical Society of America Online Store at:

<http://asa.aip.org>

Or, order by phone, fax or mail from:

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ASA offers the full catalog of **ISO/TC108**, **ISO/TC43**, and **IEC/TC29** standards, as well as a wide range of **American National Standards** on the topics of **Acoustics**, **Mechanical Vibration and Shock**, **Bioacoustics** and **Noise**.

The American National Standards Institute, Inc. (ANSI) is the national coordinator of voluntary standards development and the clearinghouse in the USA for information on national and international standards.

The Acoustical Society of America is a nonprofit organization, founded in 1929. It is the premier international scientific society in acoustics, dedicated to increasing and diffusing the knowledge of acoustics and promoting its practical applications.