



**MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT**  
**PLANNING AND URBAN MANAGEMENT AGENCY**  
Private Bag, Apia, Samoa

**NOISE SURVEY REPORT No. 1**

Reference Number: PC 079 08

5<sup>th</sup> January 2009

**1. BACKGROUND**

Tuala Oli Ah Him lodged a complaint with the Planning and Urban Management Agency (“the Agency”) on the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2008 regarding excessive noise generated from the Samoa Worship Center Church headed by Pastor Viliamu Mafoe at Sogi.

The purpose of the noise survey is to verify and validate the noise nuisances referred to by Mr. Ah Him. The Agency has employed the following noise level equipment to carry out the investigation:

Sound Level Meter  
Manufacturer: Extech Instruments  
Model: HD 600 Type 2  
Serial Number: No. 07127547

**2. NOISE LIMITS – Commercial Area**

<i>Time Period</i>	<i>Noise Limits in Decibels (dB)</i>
Day, 0700 to 1800	63 - 70
Evening, 1800 to 2200	52 - 57
Night, 2200 to 0700	47 - 52

Note: \* On Sundays and public holidays between 0700 and 1800 hours the evening noise limit applies.  
**Source: National Noise Policy 2006**

**3. LEGISLATIVE BASIS**

Pursuant to the Planning and Urban Management Act 2004 (“the Act”) section 63(1)(a) states as follows:

*“Amenity of an area or place-(1) Notwithstanding section 62(1), where the amenity of an area or place, whether such area or place is subject to a development consent (either public or private) or otherwise, is in the opinion of the Agency compromised by: excessive noise”.*

The Planning and Urban Management Board (“the Board”) approved in 2006 the National Noise Policy (“the Policy”) that provides the implementation powers to effectively carry out the above provision.

#### **4. SITE CHARACTERISTICS**

Both properties are located on a flat terrain. The area is predominately within the Coastal Hazard Flood Zone. Based on the assessment made for the area, the land use is categorized as a commercial area.

In accordance with the set noise limits in the Policy, the targeted activity (Church) lies predominantly within the noise limit standards for commercial area.

#### **5. SOUND LEVEL READINGS**

##### **5.1 Background Noise Readings**

###### **Site Visit 1: Reading 1**

*Date:* 13<sup>th</sup> December 2008

*Day:* Saturday

*Time:* 7:13 pm to 7:28 pm

*Climatic Conditions:* slightly cloudy, light breeze, conditions were ideal for survey.

*Average reading:* 56.48 dB

*Maximum reading:* 68.7dB

*Minimum reading:* 47.8 dB

*Comments:* There was too much interference during the background readings. Interferences were mainly from cars belonging to guests of the Hotel driving by, and the band playing in an open Samoan house (Tiafau) located within the complainant’s property. It would be best to re-take background readings from an alternative location where there is little or no activity near or within the hotel property. The sound level meter was located next to the hotel which is 36 meters from the boundary.

###### **Site Visit 2: Reading 2**

*Time:* 7:33pm to 7:48pm

*Average readings:* 59.32 dB

*Maximum readings:* 72.5 dB

*Minimum readings:* 50.6 dB

*Comments:* The maximum value of 72.5 dB was caused by moving vehicles (belonging to hotel guests). Readings are unreliable due to too much interference from factors such as traffic and the band playing. The band recorded an approximate value of about 64 dB.

**Background Noise Level = 50 dB**

## 5.2 Official Readings

### Site Visit 1

*Date:* 14<sup>th</sup> December 2008

*Day:* Sunday

*Time:* 11:29am to 11:36am

*Climatic Conditions:* Clear skies no wind, ideal conditions for survey.

*Average readings:* 59.32 dB

*Maximum readings:* 82.9 dB

*Minimum readings:* 46.5 dB

*Comments:* The sound level meter was located **2 meters** from the boundary facing the church. The 82.9 dB recorded by the sound level meter resulted from the preacher and the drum set which were both amplified using a BA system. **Non-compliant**

### Site Visit 2

*Date:* 18<sup>th</sup> January 2009

*Day:* Sunday

*Time:* 10:18am to 10:50am

*Climatic Conditions:* Slightly cloudy, light wind, ideal conditions for survey.

*Average readings:* N/A

*Maximum readings:* 82.0 dB

*Minimum readings:* N/A

*Comments:* The maximum reading of 82.0dB was observed during church. The source of the noise was from the pastor preaching, musical instruments (mainly drums), and choir and church members singing and clapping (pastor, instruments, and choir were using BA system). The noise meter was located **2 meters** from the boundary. **Non-compliant.**

## 5. FINDINGS

*The findings are as follows;*

1. Background noise readings conducted on the 13 December 2008 between 7:13pm to 7:48pm confirms that the **background noise level** is 50 dB.
  - a) Observed non-compliance:
    - i. 14<sup>th</sup> December 2008 from 11:29am to 11:36 am recorded a maximum of 82.9 dB. The maximum reading was a result of preaching and musical instruments being amplified by a BA system.
    - ii. 18<sup>th</sup> January 2009 from 10:18am to 10:50am observed a maximum of 82 dB. The maximum reading was a result of preaching (amplified), choir singing (amplified), musical instruments, mainly drums (amplified), and church members singing and clapping.
2. The source of noise is a result of religious activities such as preaching, singing, clapping, and playing musical instruments such as drums.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS**

I conclude that noise levels generated from Worship Center's religious activities seriously impacts the enjoyment of adjacent properties and is contrary to section 63 of the Act and the Policy.

It is recommended that the Agency:

1. Receives this report
2. Advise Pastor Viliaum Mafoe of the survey results and direct him to take steps to reduce noise levels by incorporating noise abatement strategies to their church services.
3. Monitor the situation for compliance, if it is confirmed and validated that there is continued non-compliance the Agency must escalate enforcement actions.

*Prepared by: Jeffery Leung Wai, Strategic Planner*

*5/1/09*

**APPENDIX 1: IMAGES**



**Picture 1:** Photo taken from main road  
(Source: Planning and Urban Management Agency, 12/12/08)  
Comments: boundary between Worship Center and Millenia Hotel. JLW



**Picture 2:** Photo taken from within Mr. Ah Him's property.  
(Source: Planning and Urban Management Agency, 14/12/08)  
Comments: The sound level meter was located approximately 2 meters from the boundary facing Worship Center church. The photo show Iosefa Aiolutepa (Snr. UM Officer) conducting a noise survey. JLW