

Eqpt Dir/2/7296

26 Mar 09

See Distribution

DEPLOYMENT OF PERSONAL INTERFACED HEARING PROTECTION (PIHP)

1. PIHP has been approved by the CIWG and PJHQ for use in PDT and on operations. As part of the fielding I am required to bring the PIHP's limitations to your attention for dissemination through the chain of command.

Key limitations in summary are:

- a. PIHP should not be worn without either the earplug stoppers or Talk Through System (TTS) fitted. Without these parts fitted the earplugs have an open channel and do not provide hearing protection.
- b. PRR volume should be turned down prior to switching PIHP TTS on.
- c. PIHP should not be turned on inside armoured vehicles and aircraft as it will feed the platform's noise directly into the ear and may exceed the safe levels of continuous noise.

2. Further information is contained in the attached "Safety Instructions and Warnings" document produced by BATCIS IPT

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Attachment:

1. Annex A to BATCIS/17/1712/0047/8 PIHP Safety Instructions and Warnings dated 26 Feb 09.

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SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS AND WARNINGS

General Warning - Risk of Hearing Damage

Users are to be aware that sound levels experienced in operations and training, including:

- Impulse noise from weapons firing,
- Continuous noise from vehicles,
- Radio voice traffic in headsets

will cause either or both of:

- Permanent hearing damage, either from a single event or accumulating over time,
- Temporary hearing damage

General Warning - Risk of Inability to receive Audio Information (lack of Audio Situational Awareness)

Both permanent and temporary hearing damage, and the use of hearing protection equipment, may affect the ability of personnel to receive audio information from their surrounding environment, including orders, warnings or the sound of incoming fire, and could lead to loss of mission effectiveness, personal injury or death.

PIHP Information

The level of hearing protection provided by the Racal PIHP system is generally less than that provided by current devices but this disadvantage is offset by the PIHP capability to restore audio Situational Awareness.

The Racal PIHP system is suitable for use in generally quiet situations, requiring audio Situational Awareness, where protection is required against unpredictable loud noise from weapons and explosives.

The Racal PIHP system should not be used as a substitute for existing protection in other circumstances especially where high levels of protection are required.

The Racal PIHP system might be worn in several configurations:

- Ear plugs only, i.e. "OPEN". (Not to be used in this configuration)
- Ear plugs with stoppers (lanyard ends) fitted ("STOPPED")
- Ear plugs with earpiece transducers fitted, but TTS either switched "Off" at the Electronics Unit, or otherwise not working ("PIHP OFF")
- Ear Plugs with earpiece transducers fitted, TTS switched "On" and working. ("PIHP ON")

PIHP Safety Instructions

PIHP Ear Plugs - Not to be used "OPEN".

Users are not to use PIHP ear plugs in the "OPEN" configuration (without lanyard stoppers or earpiece transducers fitted) as they do not provide hearing protection against either impulse noise, e.g. weapon firing, or continuous noise, e.g. in AFVs.

PIHP - Radio Volume to be reduced

Users are to adjust PRR or other radio volume to as low a level as possible while retaining communications.

PIHP Safety Warnings

PIHP - Audio Situational Awareness.

Users are to be aware that the Racal PIHP system will only provide audio situational awareness and hearing protection when the complete system (ear plugs, earpiece transducers and TTS Electronics Unit) is correctly worn, correctly connected, a functioning battery is correctly fitted and TTS is switched ON.

PIHP - Loss or Impairment of Audio Situational Awareness.

Users are to be aware that use of PIHP will affect the user's ability to hear and assess sounds from the surrounding environment, e.g. orders, warnings or the sound of incoming fire. This may lead to increased hazards to users.

PIHP - Training and Familiarisation.

Users are to be aware that training and familiarisation in the use of PIHP are essential to enable users to become used to the effects of PIHP on their audio situational awareness.

PIHP - Reliability.

Users are to be aware that PIHP reliability has not yet been fully proven.

PIHP - Radio Volume

Users are to be aware that radio voice traffic volume is not limited by PIHP and may easily exceed the permissible noise exposure limits. The reduction of background noise by PIHP should allow effective radio communications at lower radio volume. Users should therefore adjust PRR or other radio volume to a low level when first switched on and whenever possible thereafter.

PIHP - Continuous Noise

Users are to be aware that PIHP "ON" will provide less hearing protection than when "OFF" or "STOPPED". User are recommended either to switch PIHP "OFF" or to use additional hearing protection whenever possible against high levels of continuous noise, e.g. in helicopters, AFVs and heavy 'B' military vehicles.