

## NHCA Liaison, Task Force and Committee Reports

### Summer 2010

By Timothy L. Rink, President-Elect

The NHCA benefits greatly from our relationships with other related professional organizations (RPOs). For this reason, NHCA has appointed a number of liaisons who have agreed to serve voluntarily as information conduits between the NHCA membership and the RPOs. The purpose of these liaisons is to promote hearing loss prevention in these related organizations, as well as to insure that NHCA is kept apprised of hearing loss prevention efforts undertaken independently by these organizations. These efforts have resulted in numerous joint hearing loss prevention efforts between NHCA and the related organizations, such as the NHCA-NIOSH-OSHA Alliance. In addition, the Executive Council has appointed representatives to two American National Standards Institute (ANSI) committees, S3 and S12. Unlike liaisons, standards organization representative positions are purchased for these two ANSI committees by NHCA and have voting rights on the ANSI committees. Finally, NHCA officers create and oversee Task Forces charged with completing the responsibilities of each officer position. Task Forces consist of an appointed chair and as many members as needed. Task Forces are intended to be task-based and are to be dissolved with the completion of the specified tasks.

Below is a summary of what's currently happening as a result of these important efforts:

- **AAA Liaison Report by Mark Stephenson:** The American Academy of Audiology has decided to update their Position Statement on preventing occupational hearing loss. NHCA member Mark Stephenson has been asked to chair this task force, and he will be assisted by a number of other NHCA members. Discussions are on-going with AAA regarding the scope of this effort. Current plans are to expand the scope to include all causes of occupational hearing loss. As such, the new position statement will be titled, "Preventing Occupational Hearing Loss". The revised position statement is also expected to incorporate other hearing conservation topics that were previously not addressed. These include fit-testing and several issues related to impulsive noise exposure
- **AAOHN Liaison Report by Pegeen Smith:** The American Association of Occupational Health Nurses, Inc. (AAOHN) is "the primary association for the largest group of health care professionals focusing on promotion and restoration of health, prevention of illness and injury and protection from work related and environmental hazards". **Pegeen** attended the AAOHN Annual Conference in Anaheim, CA in April 2010. The conference was titled, "Creating a Positive Business Impact: Engage the Aging Workforce". She noted a lack of conference opportunities related to the subject of hearing conservation outside of a general safety workshop. Pegeen's goal is to work with the AAOHN to heighten the visibility of NHCA within the occupational health nursing profession. This includes, but is not limited to, assisting the NHCA in offering continuing nursing education contact hours at the next NHCA conference. Additionally, she hopes to partner with an occupational health nurse colleague and offer a hearing conservation related concurrent session at the next AAOHN conference in 2011.

- **ACOEM Liaison Report by Bruce Kirchner:** The American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM) represents more than 5,000 physicians and other health care professionals specializing in the field of occupational and environmental medicine (OEM). Occupational and environmental medicine is the medicine specialty devoted to prevention and management of occupational and environmental injury, illness and disability, and promotion of health and productivity of workers, their families, and communities.

ACOEM has appointed Dr. Eric Evenson and Dr. Bruce Kirchner as its representative to CAOHC, with terms ended in 2014. Dr. Evenson is currently the Occupational Staff Officer at the Office of the US Army Surgeon General. Dr. Kirchner is Associate Medical Director at the Procter & Gamble Company.

ACOEM's Position Statement on Noise-induced Hearing Loss is currently under revision. The current position statement can be found on the ACOEM website at: <http://www.acoem.org/guidelines.aspx?catID=1>. Drs. Evenson and Kirchner would welcome any input on this position statement by NHCA members. Please send any comments to Dr. Kirchner at [kirchner.db@pg.com](mailto:kirchner.db@pg.com).

- **AIHA Liaison Report by Laurel Davis:** The **American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA)** promotes “healthy and safe environments by advancing the science, principles, practice, and value of industrial hygiene and occupational and environmental health and safety.” Noise is one of the many occupational hazards that industrial hygienists address, and the AIHA Noise Committee is a focal point for providing information and educational activities through AIHA. The Noise Committee is powered by individuals committed to promoting hearing conservation; this has helped the committee to be recognized by AIHA as one of its Outstanding Volunteer Groups for many consecutive years. As a member of both AIHA and NHCA, liaison **Laurel Davis** provides information to NHCA members about AIHA activities and facilitates the sharing of NHCA information with AIHA members.

In partnership with the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH), AIHA held its annual American Industrial Hygiene Conference and Exposition (AIHce) in Denver this past May 2010. Thousands attended the conference, which featured a number of opportunities to learn about noise and hearing conservation, including a roundtable on “buy quiet” programs, a symposium on recent advances in the science of managing noise exposure, and platform sessions where presenters shared information on measuring and controlling noise and on scientific assessment techniques for a variety of concerns including ototoxicity, impulse noise, and construction and residential noise. For the first time ever, NHCA had a booth in the exposition hall. This was the product of much effort on the part of Noise Committee and NHCA members to develop an “in-kind” arrangement for booths at the NHCA and AIHce conferences. Some bugs still need to be worked out, but it is an exciting start.

The conference also included a weekend of over 60 Professional Development Courses (PDCs), including four sponsored by the Noise Committee. Attendee evaluations ranked three of these in the top 10. The top-rated PDC was “Ramping Up Your Hearing Protection and Jazzing Up Your Hearing Conservation,” taught by Elliott Berger, Ted Madison, Laurie Wells, and Lee Hager. This was followed by “Noise Control Engineering” in the #2 position (taught by Dennis Driscoll and Thomas Lloyd). Also in the top 10 was “Noise Exposure Assessment: Sampling Strategy and Data Acquisition,” taught by Lee Hager. The fourth PDC, “Community Noise,” taught by Dennis Driscoll and James Banach, was favorably ranked in the top 20.

AIHA has a strong and active Government Affairs Department, which tracks and reports on federal and state governmental activity and helps prepare public policy statements on issues of concern. In March 2010, AIHA has sent a letter to OSHA urging them to move forward on issuing a standard on hearing conservation programs for construction workers, and had sent a similar request 5 years earlier. Unfortunately, this issue did not make the current OSHA agenda. However, AIHA and the Noise Committee will continue to make their voices heard (no pun intended!) in Washington.

Finally, if you are interested in connecting with an AIHA member near you, try one of the 60 Local Sections in the United States or 6 international sections. While the Local Sections vary in their activities, they all provide a forum for members and non-members to interact and share expertise. There are many opportunities for collaboration, including attending meetings and events, sponsoring events (if you are a vendor), and speaking at events. A great example is a recent symposium on “Green Jobs and other Emerging Issues” held in Menlo Park, California, where one of the featured speakers was Brad Witt of Sperian Protection, which also helped sponsor the event. Brad spoke about the “emerging issue” of hearing protector fit-testing.

NHCA members who are interested in learning more about the AIHA Noise Committee or in connecting with industrial hygienists in their local area are encouraged to contact Laurel Davis at [laurel.davisCIH@yahoo.com](mailto:laurel.davisCIH@yahoo.com) or to visit the AIHA website at [www.aiha.org](http://www.aiha.org). The “Inside AIHA” section has information about AIHA’s committees (“Volunteer Groups”) and the Local Sections.

- **ASSE Liaison Report:** Robert Anderson has recently agreed to apply for membership to the American Society of Safety Engineers and will take on the role of NHCA liaison to ASSE upon becoming an active member of the organization.
- **ASHA Liaison Report by Ted Madison:** On March 31, 2010, ASHA President, Tommie Robinson, Jr. sent a letter to OSHA urging OSHA to adopt the changes proposed by NHCA, ISEA and other organizations pertaining to occupational noise exposure regulations and enforcement policies.

ASHA is continuing as a partner in NIDCD’s “It’s a Noisy Planet” campaign to promote healthy hearing among children and teens. As a part of this public health education effort, ASHA has expanded its Listen to Your Buds Website to include information, activities, and events for parents, educators and kids. [www.listentoyourbuds.org/](http://www.listentoyourbuds.org/)

The scope of ASHA Special Interest Division 8 has been broadened and it has been renamed the Special Interest Division on Public Health Issues Related to Hearing and Balance. Its mission is, “to promote a transdisciplinary approach to addressing public health issues related to hearing and balance. The goal is to be inclusive across the life span and cultural groups, and to address topics including hearing conservation (e.g., military, industrial, recreational), sudden hearing loss, forensic audiology, and epidemiologic and sociologic issues.”

ASHA continues to advocate for improved classroom acoustics in an effort to enhance communication in schools for both children and educators. In addition to providing resources for parents and educators on the web, ASHA is pushing for adoption of ANSI

S12.60 [Acoustical Performance Criteria, Design Requirements, and Guidelines for Schools] by state, local and federal agencies.

- **CAOHC Liaison Report by Madeleine Kerr:** As a result of their strategic planning process, CAOHC finalized and approved a new vision, mission and goals during the May 2010 Council meeting in Milwaukee. These are summarized below:

External Vision

Occupational hearing loss will be reduced through quality occupational hearing loss prevention practices.

Internal Vision

CAOHC will be the “go to” resource for education, knowledge, and best practices related to quality occupational hearing loss prevention.

Mission

The Mission of CAOHC is to promote hearing loss prevention by enhancing the quality of occupational hearing conservation practices, with particular focus on:

- ◆ Providing oversight and support of those who train hearing conservationists (Course Directors), those who practice hearing loss prevention (OHCs) and those who supervise OHCs and interpret problem audiograms (Professional Supervisors).
- ◆ Increasing quality and consistency among hearing loss prevention programs.

Goal 1

CPOs, regulation agencies and companies/industry will continue to recognize CAOHC as the credentialing body in occupational hearing loss prevention practices and personnel.

Goal 2

CAOHC’s educational programs will be quantifiably valid and effective.

Goal 3

CAOHC products/courses will be accessible in ways that meet the expectations of the consumer and maintain quality/integrity.

Goal 4

Hearing loss prevention programs will be of high quality and will effectively protect the hearing of workers.

In new business related to NHCA, the council approved co-sponsorship of a special journal issue on hearing conservation. They also approved a collaboration with NHCA to produce educational webinars on special topics of interest to the hearing loss prevention community.

- **Military Audiology Association Liaison Report by Vickie Tuten:** The Military Audiology Association (MAA) has had a great year and made some significant changes in the By-Laws to reflect the evolution of the organization over the years. One of the changes includes the addition of a new Member-At-Large starting in 2010 to bring the voting members of the Military Audiology Association Board to four officers. The 2010 Joint Defense/Veterans Audiology Conference (JDVAC) was held 22-24 February 2010 just prior to the National Hearing Conservation Association (NHCA) conference. The conference was a great success with nearly 300 DoD and VA audiologists in attendance. Outstanding presentations included a presentation on “Oto-oxidants” by Dr. Kathleen Campbell, a “Generational Differences” presentation by Dr. Linda Nichols, a presentation on “Vestibular Function and Space Medicine” by Dr. John Allen, a presentation on “Tri-Service Hearing Conservation

Issues” by CAPT Harold Fink, and a presentation on the “Lionesses”. Incoming president of MAA is LT Kirsten Vesey, president-elect is MAJ Nicole Cioni, and new Secretary is Dr. Army Blank. The Member-At-Large will be voted on and selected this year as well. The 2011 JDVAC will be in San Diego, CA in March and a CAOHC Course Director Workshop will be held in conjunction with that meeting for DoD Audiologists. Co-Chairs for the meeting will be Dr. Nancy Duran and LT Kirsten Vesey.

**Music-Induced Hearing Loss (MIHL) Task Force Report by Brian Fligor:** Goal: to promote the mission of NHCA by addressing the risk for hearing loss and other hearing disorders from occupational and recreational exposure to high level music.

Audience: Audio engineers, musicians, music consumers

Action Items:

- The MIHL Taskforce met at NHCA 2010 Conference and moved to change our name to the Music-Induced Hearing Disorders (MIHD) Taskforce. The rationale was that auditory injuries span beyond noise-induced permanent threshold shift, and amongst the professional musicians and audio engineers, tinnitus is typically of greater concern. We would like the approval of the NHCA EC to officially change our name to MIHD.
- The MIHD Taskforce would like to have space on the new NHCA website, providing content related to our taskforce’s goals. Laura Kauth, Director of Communication, has asked for this content and the chair has not provided such content to date. The chair will most certainly delegate this task to members of the taskforce who are willing and able.
- The Audio Engineering Society (AES) Convention is November 4-7, 2010 at the Moscone Convention Center in San Francisco. Shure, Inc., provided funding to NHCA last year to cover the costs of securing the services of a mobile hearing test service to provide pure-tone threshold measures on AES attendees. This data will be analyzed by NHCA and submitted to NHCA, Shure, Inc. and AES executive committee. Michael Santucci, MIHD Taskforce Member, was in charge of setting up the mobile van last year, and will help the chair make appropriate contacts this year. A call for bids will be made as soon as possible, preferably before July 15, 2010. The MIHD Chair will coordinate funding with Michael Lohman, Director of Marketing at Shure, Inc. (who happens to be a friend of Michael Santucci’s).
- **NHCA Scholarship Foundation Liaison Report by Mary McDaniel:** The NHCA Scholarship Foundation continues its efforts to provide research scholarship awards to graduate students focused on applied/practical studies in hearing loss prevention along with conference attendance awards to enable students to attend the annual NHCA conference. This past year we awarded three Student Research Awards (SRA) and five Student Conference Awards (SCA). Presently, the Foundation is accepting applications for the SRAs for the 2010-'11 school year. Applications for the SCAs will be solicited in the fall.

The Foundation bid farewell to two outstanding board members at the close of this year’s conference. Leaving the board with the Foundation’s gratitude are past president James Lankford and treasurer Susan Megerson. Their contributions to the Foundation were many, and they will be missed. The Foundation welcomes our newly elected board members, Bob Dobie and Jennifer Tufts. The Foundation’s Board is: Mary McDaniel, president, Jim

Banach, treasurer, Jim Jerome, secretary, along with directors, Bob Dobie, Theresa Schulz, and Jennifer Tufts.

Fund-raising activities at the conference in Orlando were very successful, netting the Foundation just over \$6000. Current assets of the Foundation are approximately \$95,000.

- **ANSI S12 Committee Report by Joe Cissna:** Joe Cissna reports that in the past year, one major effort by the committee was issuance of S12.42-2010, “Methods for the Measurement of Insertion Loss of Hearing Protection Devices in Continuous or Impulsive Noise Using Microphone-in-Real-Ear or Acoustic Test Fixture Procedures”. This standard is an important basis document that the EPA is expected to use in their upcoming revision to the Noise Reduction Ratings rule.

The committee also reaffirmed ANSI S12.60-2002, Acoustical Performance Criteria, Design Requirements, and Guidelines for Schools. Additional work is underway to establish three subparts to this standard to separately address permanent buildings, relocatable classrooms, and computer equipment used in schools. A “Yes” vote was offered on behalf of NHCA for S12.60-201x/Part 1, Permanent, Site-Built Schools.

Cissna monitored committee activity and also voted to reaffirm standards for measurement of outdoor noise, reverberant test rooms, ducted equipment, and train horns.

- **ANSI S3 Committee Report by Theresa Schultz:**

DOC #	ISSUE	DATE	NHCA VOTE
S3/645	<b>Admin/LB</b> revised title & scope for S3/WG 35	2/10/09	Voted yes
S3/646	<b>Doc/LB</b> BSR/ASA S3.22-200x Specification of Hearing Aid Characteristics	2/13/09	Abstained
S3/647	<b>Admin/LB</b> Reaffirm and re-designate S3.21-2004 (R200x) Methods for Manual Pure-Tone Threshold Audiometry	2/27/09	Voted yes
S3/642.2	<b>30-day Review</b> BSR/ASA S3.2-200x Method for Measuring the Intelligibility of Speech over Communication Systems (Revision of ANSI S3.2-1989)	3/24/09	Abstained
S3/656	<b>Admin/LB</b> to disband S3/WG 59 and S3/WG 89.	7/6/09	Voted yes
S3/657	<b>Doc/LB</b> BSR/ASA S3.25-200x <i>Occluded Ear Simulator</i> (Revision)	7/10/09	Voted yes
S3/658	<b>Doc/LB</b> BSR/ASA S3.35-20XX <i>Method of measurement of Performance Characteristics of Hearing Aids Under Simulated Real-Ear Working Conditions</i> (Revision)	7/24/09	Voted yes
S3/659	<b>Doc/LB BSR/ASA S3.22-200x</b> Specification of Hearing Aid Characteristics	8/13/09	Voted yes
S3/660	<b>Admin/LB</b> Disband S3/WG 76 Computerized Audiometry	9/9/09	Voted yes
S3/656.2	<b>30-Day Review</b> to set aside the result of voting on S3/656 a ballot to disband S3/WG 59, Measurement of Speech Levels and S3/WG 89, Spatial Audiometry in Real and Virtual Environments	11/17/09	Voted yes
S3/661	<b>Admin/LB</b> New work item proposal: Rotary Chairs for Vestibular Function Testing	11/17/09	Voted yes

- Legislative Task Force Report on ASHA Activities by Amanda Azman:** American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) works to “empower and support speech-language pathologists, audiologists, and speech, language, and hearing scientists by advocating on behalf of persons with communication and related disorders, advancing communication science, and promoting effective human communication.” According the May Hearing Review e-newsletter, ASHA has announced the launch of a new website, aimed at empowering parents and protecting children from noise-induced hearing loss and other communication difficulties. The website, [www.listentoyourbuds.org](http://www.listentoyourbuds.org), provides information on the safe use of personal music players, the negative consequences of hearing loss, methods to prevent NIHL, and allows users to “pledge” to protect their hearing by following 3 principles. ASHA states that in the coming months, new site features including downloadable at-home educational resources for families and additional multimedia will be introduced. Additionally, in collaboration with Parent’s Choice Foundation, a coalition of leading musicians has been formed to promote ASHA’s safe listening message to children.

Also, as posted in May 5, 2010 Federal Register, OSHA has asked for comments on modernization of the Injury and Illness data collection process. Details regarding the

proposed modernization can be found within the posting. There will be two stakeholder meetings regarding this issue, one in DC on 25 May and one in Chicago on 3 June. Written comments are due 18 June.

- **OSHA Task Force Report by Alice Suter:** The **Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)** is the federal agency charged with promulgating and enforcing rules to protect American workers against hazards in the workplace. **Alice Suter** has recently agreed to be NHCA's liaison to OSHA, and has communicated with Deborah Gabry of OSHA to learn about OSHA activities. With a new Administration in the White House and a new Assistant Secretary for Occupational Safety and Health, Dr. David Michaels, the agency has become more proactive and is requesting comment in several areas that may be of interest to NHCA members. First, OSHA has requested public comment on the extension of the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) approval of information collection (paperwork) requirements specifically pertaining to the hearing conservation amendment. The notice may be found in the Federal Register, vol. 75, no. 86, pp. 24746-24747. NHCA vice-president Tim Rink is working with Alice, NHCA president Susan Greist, and NHCA past-president Rick Neitzel to prepare a statement of support for the current record-keeping requirements. The deadline for comment is July 6, 2010.

OSHA is also holding a series of stakeholder meetings and is inviting input from the public on (1) the modernization of injury and illness data collection systems, and (2) the development of a proposed rule to require employers to prepare and implement plans or programs to "find and fix" hazards in their workplaces. Meetings on the proposal will be held in East Brunswick NJ, Dallas TX, and Washington DC between June 3 and June 29. Letters to OSHA from NHCA on both topics are being drafted for President Greist's signature.

Unfortunately, OSHA has recently taken off its regulatory agenda the proposal of a regulation for construction workers hearing conservation programs. NHCA members are very disappointed and will contact OSHA about this matter. At this time NHCA is seeking the support of other professional organizations to re-constitute the Coalition to Protect Workers Hearing, which was active several years ago.

- **NHCA-NIOSH-OSHA Alliance Task Force Report by John Allen:** John Allen reports that the hearing conservation toolbox for the shipping industry has been implemented and efforts are now focused on having those materials translated into Spanish. It has been linked to the OSHA/NHCA Alliance web page at the NHCA web site. The Alliance team met to discuss suggestions for improvements to the shipyard tool box talks, that when implemented should lead to NIOSH endorsement of the product, and then rapid completion of the construction and landscape workers toolbox talks (clones of the shipyard product with relevant examples and graphics). In addition, it has been shared with the NASA Occupational Health Program leadership and will be modified for NASA's use.

Additional activities include a presentation by NHCA Past President Rick Neitzel to the Department of Labor about NHCA's participation in OSHA Listens Day. Further, Alice Suter, representing NHCA, responded to Federal Regulation notices on Injury and Illness Prevention Programs and the paperwork burden for noise related issues.

The first meeting was held to develop a document that helps end-users (e.g. workers, employers) understand and work with the pending EPA labels. The Alliance wants to accelerate the provision of information to users as well as provide input that OSHA can use

to update the effected appendices of 1910.95.

The Alliance reported previously that it intended to focus on the development of a position statement on what to record on an audiogram when a threshold cannot be obtained at the maximum output of the audiometer, especially at an STS frequency. Addressing this issue is still in the Alliance plans, but no specific timeframe has been proposed.

A sincere thank you to all of our volunteer liaisons and representatives for their efforts on behalf of NHCA.