

DEFRA NOISE POLICY STAKEHOLDER UPDATE - AUGUST 2019

1. Interdepartmental Group on Costs and Benefits for Noise

In October 2018 the World Health Organisation (WHO) published its Environmental Noise Guidelines for the European Region. The guidelines provide revised exposure-response relationships primarily regarding the effect of transportation noise on human health and quality of life.

The Government is committed to ensuring that noise is managed effectively and has welcomed the WHO's focus on this important issue. In light of the publication, we have convened the Interdepartmental Group on Costs and Benefits Noise Subject Group (IGCB(N)). This is a group of experts and policy officials from across government that provides advice and analysis relating to the quantification and valuation of the impacts of environmental noise.

The IGCB(N) will be reviewing the existing government guidance on economic analysis and noise pollution to consider whether any updates are necessary. The current IGCB(N) guidance can be found [here](#) and may be used as part of appraisals and evaluation processes. In reviewing its guidance, the Group will give careful consideration to the evidence base for the WHO Guidelines, as well as other identified, relevant, recent research carried out in the UK and abroad. The IGCB(N)'s review is wide ranging and will consider a number of noise sources and impacts. It follows the impact-pathway approach, which involves following the pollutant (the noise emissions) from its source (such as a vehicle) to a receptor.

Since the Group was convened in February 2019 we have already commissioned evidence reviews relating to potential health outcomes from noise exposure to a number of sources. The IGCB(N) will also consider other effects associated with environmental noise. This includes reviewing the productivity costs associated with sleep disturbance and the cost associated with investigating noise complaints, predominantly incurred by Local Authorities. The group may also extend its scope, for example in considering how soundscape concepts could enhance current work on valuing quiet areas. We expect the results of any commissioned work to be published separately over the course of the project's timeline.

The outputs from the evidence reviews will be taken into account by the IGCB(N) in considering whether any updates to relevant government guidance are required. This may be in the form of updating existing recommendations or introducing new recommendations from the identified evidence, providing that evidence is considered sufficiently robust.

Due to the complexity of this programme of work, and the step-by-step process it entails, it is expected to last approximately 2 years. We will provide periodic updates on the progress of the Group's work, and a link to the published IGCB(N) guidance once available.

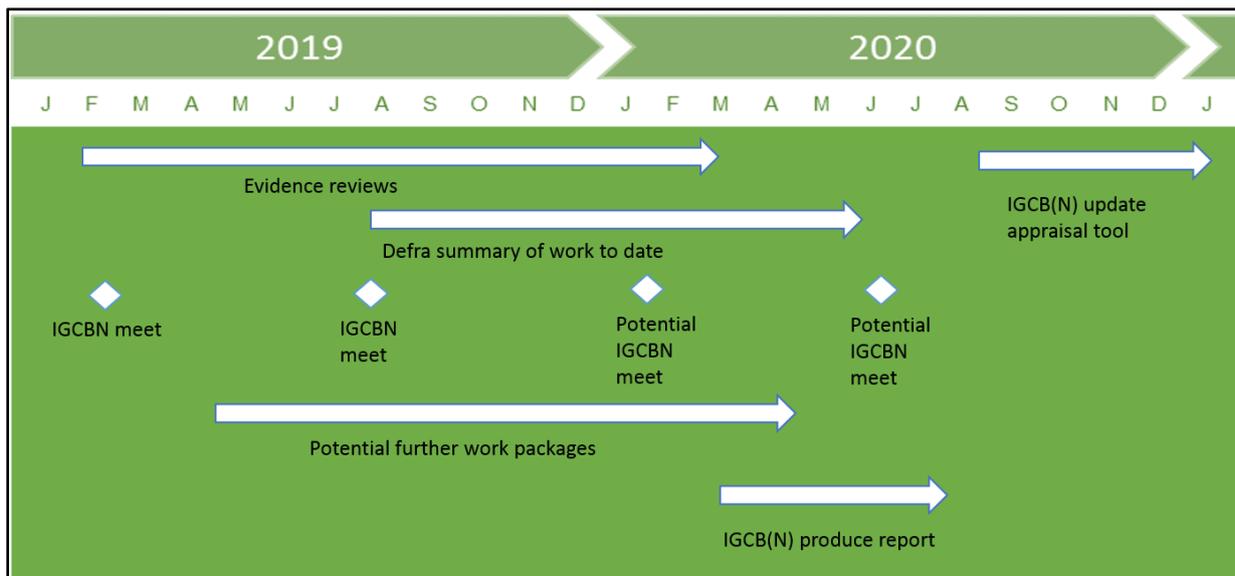


Figure 1.2. Indicative timeline of programme

<p>Membership is open to Government Departments who have an interest in policy related to the noise production and/or its impacts.</p>	<p>Other Members:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department for Environment and Rural Affairs • Department for Transport • Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government • Department of Health and Social Care • Department of Culture, Media and Sport • Department for Education • HM Treasury • Ministry of Defence • Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy • Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in Northern Ireland • Environment and Forestry Directorate Scotland • Environment and Communities Division Wales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Health England • Highways England • HS2 • RSSB • CAA • ICCAN • Environment Agency • Public Health Directorate Scotland • Public Health Wales

Figure 1.1. Membership of the IGCB(N)

2. Publication of Round 3 Strategic Noise Maps

On 2 July Defra published strategic noise maps and noise exposure data for England, as well as Noise Action Plans for roads, railways and agglomerations for the period from 2019–2023 and details of Important Areas (or noise hotspots). This completes the third round of noise mapping and action planning required under the Environmental Noise Directive (2002/49/EC). Details can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/noise-action-plans-large-urban-areas-roads-and-railways-2019>

If you are having problems accessing the maps or other data then please let the Defra Noise Team know via the Defra Noise mailbox: Noise@defra.gov.uk

3. National Planning Policy Guidance

MHCLG published the latest PPG on Noise on 29 July. Details can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/noise--2>