



One-pager on standards on Personal Music Players (PMPs)

What is the problem?

At the moment, no technical standard defines a maximum sound limit for PMPs, despite we complained about it in the past. Those now on the market can generate a sound level as high as 115 dBA. By comparison, pedestrians are exposed to a sound level of 90 dBA from passing heavy traffic. The October 2008 European Commission Scientific Opinion showed that 5-10% of the users of Personal Music Players risk permanent hearing loss within the next 5 years due to excessive use. In 2009, the European Commission requested the elaboration of standards on safe sound pressure limits.

What did we ask for?

ANEC lobbied for the revision of EN60065:2002/FprAC:2010 « "Audio, video and similar electronic apparatus - Safety requirements" and EN60950-1:2006/FprAD:2010 « "Information technology equipment - Safety - Part 1: General requirements" to fix limits for maximum sound pressure by default. We also asked for child-appealing PMPs to have lower limits. And warnings such as "do not listen at a high volume" or "do not listen for a long period of time" should not be used instead of safe sound limits, as they do not always make sense to consumers.

What did we get?

Fixed sound limits are specified for the protection against excessive sound pressure from PMPs, as requested by ANEC. The general limit is 85 dBA. It can be switched to 100 dBA only after active action and acknowledgement by the user although a deliberate manual activation would have been suitable. The maximum cumulative time without warning and acknowledgement is 20 hours. The requirements are valid for music and video mode for all portable equipment for personal use (e.g. MP3 players, mobile phones with MP3, etc). And for PMPs designed for children, the lower sound pressure limits of the toys standard EN 71-1 applies.

ANEC in Brief

ANEC is the European consumer voice in standardisation, defending and representing consumer interests in the development of technical standards and in the creation or revision of legislation on products and services. ANEC brings together national consumer organisations from the EU Member States and EFTA countries and Croatia. ANEC receives funding from the European Union and the EFTA Secretariat.