

SECTION A

NOISE-INDUCED HEARING LOSS IN THE POWERLOOM WORKERS OF SRI LANKA

M. Ponnambalam

(Division of Occupational Hygiene, 97, Jawatta Road, Colombo 5)

Noise-induced deafness is insidious in its onset ; the victim is frequently unaware that anything is wrong until irreversible damage has been sustained.

The working environments of selected powerloom factories were investigated for their noise levels. The noise levels in these factories exceeded 90dB (A), the permissible level for the work environments, where the workers work 8 hour, 5 day week. The audiometric measurements of workers belonging to ages varying from 30 to 55 years compared with those of the controls for corresponding age groups, reveal substantial hearing losses due to occupational exposure to noise over the frequencies in and around 4kHz.