

Further Advice


If you would like more information, general or technical advice about hearing loops (or alternative assistive listening systems) please contact the Deafness Forum of Australia.

We will assist you to identify hearing loop manufacturers, distributors, and installers in your area.

A more detailed version of this brochure will be available later in 2005, and also on the Deafness Forum website

www.deafnessforum.org.au

Promotion

- Hearing loops are important to the community and business – are you making the most of yours? Are you making sure that your customers or clients know about your hearing loop and are using it?
- Have you thought about advertising your hearing loop? On your website or in the Yellow Pages? Have you thought about advertising your hearing loop in your general media advertising and in your local newspaper?
- Raising your organisation's profile in this way can do no harm – and probably lots of good.
-  An International Deafness Symbol can be displayed wherever a hearing loop is installed. You can download a copy and read the rules about the symbol's use at www.deafnessforum.org.au/deafnesssymbol.htm
- You should inform a deafness sector organisation about the existence of your hearing loop. These organisations promote awareness of the existence of hearing loops.

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Their **ASSISTIVE LISTENING SYSTEMS**
Purpose,
Installation,
Maintenance, Optimal Use,
Promotion **HEARING
LOOPS**



There are around four million Australians with a hearing impairment. This number is increasing because of noise injury; accidents; the environment; the ageing of the Australian population. Family history and other factors can also lead to hearing impairment, eg being male, having diabetes, and being a smoker.

The majority of Australian families experience hearing impairment in one way or another:

It is increasingly likely that your father, mother, or siblings will have some level of hearing impairment.

The good news is that Australia is doing many things to help.

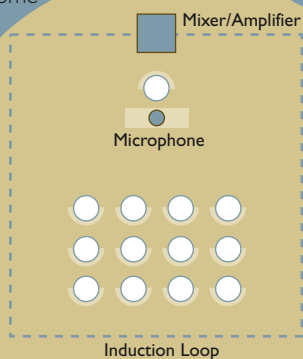
Australia is producing more effective hearing aids, the cochlear implant, and an extensive range of other devices such as special door alerts, smoke alerts, baby cry alarms, telephone alerts, TV listeners, and alarm clocks. All of which benefit people with hearing impairment.

Australia is installing more and more hearing loops

Assistive Listening System

Hearing impaired people use hearing aids and other devices to help with hearing. Hearing aids amplify and process sound. Unfortunately, hearing aids are seldom perfect – they can produce sound reflections, reverberations, or echoes. This means that the user can still have trouble hearing clearly. Assistive listening systems overcome these difficulties when installed and used correctly.

There are three main types of assistive listening system available in Australia.



Infrared Systems

These generally require a direct unblocked line of sight to the user and require users to obtain and wear a receiver with the appropriate attachment. They can be used without hearing aids.

FM Systems

These also require users to obtain and wear a receiver.

Audio-Frequency Induction Loop Systems (Hearing Loops)

These loops are usually installed in meeting rooms or in other places where people gather. They assist people who have hearing aids fitted with a T-switch. They can even assist people without hearing aids if the user is provided with a loop receiver device.

Hearing loops are generally considered the best option, as venues do not need to stock and maintain as many receivers. Users with a T-switch on their hearing aids do not require a receiver (so all hearing aid users should insist on a T-switch.)

Australia already has many hearing loops, although the actual number is unknown.

You can find hearing loops in all kinds of locations: meeting rooms; convention centres; churches; nursing homes; schools and universities; cinemas; theatres and concert halls; retail counters; and even in buses; trains; trams; and taxis. In fact you could find a hearing loop almost anywhere in Australia where someone with a hearing impairment wants to hear what you are saying.

In addition to permanently installed hearing loops, there are portable hearing loops for purchase or hire – these can be used in small spaces such as meeting rooms or motor vehicles.



The International Deafness Symbol is usually displayed to indicate the presence of a hearing loop.

Hearing Loops benefit Business

There are around four million Australians with a hearing impairment – and the number is growing fast.

Like other Australians, people with a hearing impairment make purchases and commercial decisions every day. It therefore makes sense to attract their business. One way of doing this is by making your business more attractive to people with a hearing impairment.

Installing a hearing loop and advertising its existence can do this.

Installation and Maintenance

Hearing loops are like any other piece of electrical equipment – they must be properly installed, properly maintained, and (of course) turned on and used. Everyone can help with this

The way a hearing loop is installed can affect its performance. Employ someone who knows what is required to do the installation – someone with practical experience.

Hearing loops can be affected by electromagnetic interference. Do not allow alterations to the environment once a hearing loop has been installed if you think this might affect the performance of the loop. For example, do not allow an electrician to install anything that would create electromagnetic interference.

Optimal Performance

Hearing loops have to be 'tuned' and maintained if they are to work well. Make sure your staff check the system at least monthly (it only takes five minutes) and that they know enough to be able to 'tune' the hearing loop. Also make certain that the hearing loop is maintained, regularly and by a competent person.

These are the simple things you can do.