



## Sound Management Plan for The Lara Big Band Inc.

### 1. Occupational Health & Safety (OH&S) Considerations

#### a. Sound Levels in Rehearsal Space:

- **Victorian Regulations:** According to WorkSafe Victoria, the maximum allowable sound level for exposure over an 8-hour period is 85 dB(A). For shorter exposure times, the sound level must be adjusted accordingly. For example, a sound level of 88 dB(A) is allowed for 4 hours, 91 dB(A) for 2 hours, and 94 dB(A) for 1 hour.
- **Monitoring:** Regular monitoring of sound levels using a calibrated sound level meter during rehearsals is essential to ensure compliance with these regulations. The band should aim to keep sound levels below 85 dB(A) to avoid potential hearing damage.
- **Hearing Protection:** Musicians should be encouraged to use hearing protection, such as earplugs designed for musicians, which reduce the sound level without distorting the quality. This is especially important for those seated near loud instruments, such as brass or percussion sections.
- **Rehearsal Duration:** Limit rehearsal sessions to a maximum of two hours at a time, with a break in between, to minimise continuous exposure to high sound levels.

#### b. Rehearsal Times:

- **Regulated Hours:** Rehearsals must take place between 9:00 AM and 10:00 PM on weekdays and Saturdays, and between 10:00 AM and 10:00 PM on Sundays, in line with the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) Victoria's guidelines on noise control.

### 2. Neighbourhood Amenity

#### a. Noise Regulations and Local Laws:

- **EPA Victoria Guidelines:** The EPA provides guidance on acceptable noise levels in residential areas, particularly in the evenings and at night. The recommended limit is 40 dB(A) for outdoor areas in residential zones after 10:00 PM.
- **Council Bylaws:** The Lara Big Band maintains an awareness of local laws relating to noise and will comply with local requirements, particularly in relation to sound levels in surrounding residences. Specifically, musical instruments are a "Category 5" noise, which are generally permitted in the regulated hours in Section 1b above.
- **Compliance:** To ensure compliance, the band should avoid playing amplified music or conducting loud rehearsals outside of the regulated hours. All rehearsals are scheduled to conclude by 9:00 PM to avoid any complaints from nearby residents.

#### b. Communication with Neighbours:

- **Notification:** Inform nearby residents of rehearsal times and any upcoming performances, particularly if they fall outside normal hours or involve amplified music. A template letter for informing residents is provided at Appendix A.
- **Feedback Mechanism:** A feedback mechanism is provided so local residents can lodge concerns or complaints directly with the band. The template letter provided for informing residents includes information on how to communicate with the band.

### 3. Sound Level Testing Procedure

#### a. Equipment Required:

- **Sound Level Meter:** A calibrated, Class 2 sound level meter should be used to measure the sound levels during rehearsals and performances. This device should be capable of measuring in dB(A) and dB(C) for different types of sound, including peak levels.

#### b. Testing Procedure:

1. **Setup:** Place the sound level meter at ear height and at a distance of at least 1 meter from the source of sound (e.g., instruments, speakers).
2. **Baseline Measurement:** Begin by measuring the ambient sound level in the rehearsal space before the start of the session. Record this value as the baseline.
3. **During Rehearsal:** Measure sound levels at regular intervals throughout the rehearsal, focusing on the peak levels during loud passages. Ensure that readings are taken from various points in the room to account for differences in sound dispersion.
4. **Documenting Results:** Record the date, time, and sound levels for each session. If any reading exceeds 85 dB(A), immediate action should be taken to reduce the volume. A log sheet for documenting results is at Appendix B.

#### c. Reporting:

- **Weekly Log:** Maintain a weekly log of sound level readings, including any corrective actions taken. This log can serve as evidence of compliance with OH&S standards and local noise regulations. A log sheet for documenting results is at Appendix B.
- **Sound Level Plan:** A plan of the usual rehearsal space is at Appendix C, outlining the various areas where measurements are taken.
- **Annual Review:** Conduct an annual review of sound management practices, including sound level readings, to assess the effectiveness of the current plan and make any necessary adjustments.

### 4. Additional Considerations

#### a. Equipment Placement:

- **Speaker Positioning:** Place speakers at an appropriate height and angle to direct sound away from walls and towards the centre of the rehearsal space. This helps to prevent excessive sound reflection and can reduce the overall volume needed.
- **Sound Absorption:** Consider installing sound-absorbing panels or curtains in the rehearsal space to reduce echo and minimise sound transmission to adjacent areas.

#### b. Volume Control:

- **Instrument Amplification:** Encourage musicians, particularly those using electric instruments, to keep their amplifiers at a moderate volume. Balance the sound levels across the ensemble to avoid the need for excessive volume.

#### c. Resident Engagement:

- **Open Rehearsals:** Periodically invite residents to attend open rehearsals. This engagement can foster goodwill and reduce the likelihood of noise complaints.

### 5. Responding to Claims of Excessive Noise

- **Documentation:** Maintain records of all sound level readings, rehearsal times, and any communications with neighbours. This documentation can be used to respond to claims of excessive noise and demonstrate the band's commitment to complying with regulations.
- **Third-Party Verification:** If necessary, engage a third-party sound consultant to conduct independent assessments of sound levels during rehearsals or performances.

## Appendix A: Letter to neighbouring residents



The Lara Big Band Inc.  
hello@larabigband.org  
0427 294 197

[Date]

Dear Neighbour,

I am writing to inform you about the regular rehearsals of The Lara Big Band, a community music ensemble that has met in your area since March 2023. We value our relationship with the local community; for this reason, the band has recently implemented a Sound Management Plan to ensure our rehearsals and activities do not cause inconvenience to residents.

### The band's usual rehearsal schedule is:

- **Location:** The Lion's Den, Lara Community Centre, 9-11 Waverley Rd, Lara
- **Days:** Every Wednesday and Thursday evening
- **Times:** 7.00-9.00pm

We are committed to adhering to all relevant noise regulations, including keeping our sound levels within permissible limits and rehearsing only during the hours approved by the EPA regulations, including measuring and logging sound levels. We take our responsibility to the community seriously and aim to minimise any potential disruption.

### Registering a Complaint or Inquiry:

Should you have any concerns about the noise levels or any other aspect of our rehearsals, we encourage you to reach out to us directly. We have established a feedback mechanism to address any complaints or inquiries, by contacting me directly via one of the methods below:

- **Email:** hello@larabigband.org
- **Phone:** 0427 294 197
- **Online Form:** <https://larabigband.org/contact>

Please include your contact information and details of your concern so that we can address it promptly and effectively.

We greatly appreciate your understanding and support as we continue to bring music to the community. Your feedback is invaluable in helping us maintain a positive relationship with our neighbours.

Thank you for your attention, and please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. You can also view the band's Sound Management Plan by scanning the QR code to the right. You are also very welcome to drop by a rehearsal to have a listen!

Yours in music,

**Dr Cameron Anderson**  
President, The Lara Big Band Inc.

## Appendix B: Log sheet for documenting sound levels

[illegible]

## Appendix C: Measurement location map



### Location list:

1. Inside the rehearsal space
2. Immediately outside the rehearsal space
3. Bus stop on Waverley Road, outside the Community Centre
4. Property boundary to 13 Waverley Road, at the footpath (55m from door of rehearsal space)
5. Property boundary to 19-20 Gillean Place, at the wooden bollards (25m from back wall of rehearsal space)