

Media Release

New generation of hearing protection expected to drastically slash number of workers affected by Noise Induced Hearing Loss in aviation

Sensear gives new hope to those who work on airport ramps - widely acknowledged as one of the world's most dangerous workplaces

Sydney, Feb 26, 2009 – Noise in the workplace has been elected the world's largest occupational health problem by the World Health Organisation (WHO). Studies by Defense Research and Development Canada indicate that noise induced hearing loss (NIHL) is clearly evident after three to five years of continued or repeated exposures to levels in excess of 85 dBA. The highly-regulated aviation industry, while renowned for its focus on safety, has still been powerless to prevent the steady growth in incidences of noise induced hearing loss (NIHL) within its labour forces, until now. Australian company Sensear has come up with a brand new solution to this life-impacting ailment, officially launching its award-winning hearing devices into the aviation industry next month.

Sensear takes an entirely different approach to traditional hearing protection devices, which simply block out all sound, so are frequently removed by the wearer to enable work-related interaction. The Sensear Earmuff and Earplugs with SENS® (Speech Enhancing Noise Suppression) technology work instead by suppressing dangerous levels of noise while simultaneously isolating and elevating speech, allowing normal conversation.

“Rather than eliminate background noise, our technology suppresses it down to a safe 82 decibels – below the legislated maximum level of 85 decibels – so the user is still aware of their working environment, which is critical in the aviation industry. Most importantly, it allows for face-to-face conversation, mobile phone and two-way radio, none of which are possible when wearing traditional hearing protection or no protection at all,” explains Justin Miller, CEO, Sensear, adding that “many people are still unaware just how vital hearing protection is - NIHL is 100% preventable but once acquired, it’s permanent and irreversible!”

The Sensear Earmuffs and Earplugs are to be released into the aviation industry worldwide during March 2009, using upcoming events in Australia and the US as launch pads.

At the Australian International Air Show at Avalon airport, Geelong, March 10-15, Sensear plans to stage ‘The World’s Noisiest Press Event’ – a live demonstration beside the runway during the air show on Thursday March 12 at 2pm. (Interested parties contact Kayleigh Ford Kayleigh@bondpr.com / m: 0450 925 245).

Sensear will also launch to the US aviation market at The Aviation Industry Expo, Las Vegas, March 10-12.

A recent study by Aviation India found workers performing ground duties at airports are becoming victims of NIHL due to exposure to high pitched volumes emanating from aircraft engines. The study, which involved scientists recording sound levels at on-duty hours, found

maximum noise level at the time of taxiing and take off of the aircraft was a dangerous 109.3 decibels. The Sensear devices are currently being sold in the mining and manufacturing industries, and now companies like Qantas and Boeing are early adopters in the aviation industry because they tackle an old problem with a brand new solution.

“Qantas selected Sensear smart hearing protection devices because they enable our staff who work in high noise environments to communicate effectively while remaining protected. This ensures staff no longer need to remove hearing protection to communicate with each other while working, improving productivity and ensuring best practice safety procedures are followed,” says Brian Smith, Snr Occupational Hygienist Group OHS|Qantas Airways Limited.

Adam Coulby of US organisation, NATA (National Air Transportation Association) claims, “Hearing Protection is a critical safety consideration for companies who have employees working out on the line, one of the noisiest working environments in the world. Finding the best communication devices that enable clear communication while maintaining hearing protection is a big challenge for FBO’s.”

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About Sensear

Founded in 2006, Sensear Pty Ltd has offices in Perth, Melbourne, Sydney, San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Sensear’s world first technology is based on sophisticated algorithms, which isolate, clean and package speech while suppressing background noise to a safe level. Sensear has incorporated the technology into the world’s first electronic ear plug and now a ear muff which enable face to face, mobile phone and two-way radio communication.

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iAward Winner 2007 – HealthCare
iAward Winner 2007 – R&D
2008 Safety In Action Best Newcomer to Industry
2008 Dupont Innovation Award Medical & Healthcare
2008 AIDA – Scientific & Healthcare
2008 AIDA – Powerhouse Museum Award