



| Case Study

RB Health & Safety Solutions Ltd

Monitoring Personal Noise Exposure
in West End Theatres

 **Cirrus**
Research plc
dedicated to noise measurement



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The Client

RB Health & Safety Solutions Ltd
Health & Safety Consultant:
Richard Beale

The Kit

doseBadge⁵ Noise Dosimeter

“ We have found the doseBadge⁵ kits to be very responsive in this environment. We can leave them at the venue, instruct the managers how to use them, turn them on, calibrate and off they go. It is that simple. ”

The Issue

When the audience sits in the stalls of a West End theatre they have very little idea of the technology that goes into giving them the ultimate live show experience.

Some shows enjoy runs that last for years, others aren't so lucky, but each night there is a team of front of house staff and stagehands that bring the magic to life.

The noise risks of working in a live music venue are well known but tend to focus on, for instance, the orchestra where Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will have been assessed and distributed accordingly. Lesser known are the risks to other theatre employees; think about the programme sellers, or customer service staff who may remain in or near the main stage as the orchestra strikes up, night after night.

Awareness is however increasing and H&S Consultant Richard Beale is fortunate enough to work with some of the best-known theatres in the heart of the West End dealing with this specific issue.

Richard has helped to monitor noise levels affecting front of house and backstage staff at award-winning musicals such as Les Misérables, Aladdin, Mamma Mia and Book of Mormon – and none of them are known for the less is more approach when it comes to memorable music scores.

But what is music to the ears of the audience can cause lasting hearing damage to staff and it's Richard's job to ensure they are monitored, advised and protected as much as possible. With more than 19 years of H&S and noise monitoring experience to draw upon, Richard's reputation as a leading acoustic specialist within theatrical circles is well known; the fact he uses the Cirrus doseBadge⁵ for live theatre monitoring is testament to the device's versatility in this specialised environment.





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The Solution

Noise levels and their effect on theatre employees have been in the spotlight recently with the industry following an ongoing civil court case where a member of an orchestra is suing for acoustic shock - a term used when someone is exposed to short bursts of high frequency, high intensity, sounds. A verdict is still to be announced but either way it is a timely wake up call for theatres to ensure their house is in order.

"We have found the doseBadge⁵ kits to be very responsive in this environment," explained Richard. "We can leave them at the venue, instruct the managers how to use them, turn them on, calibrate and off they go. It is that simple."

"We usually leave them in situ Monday to Saturday, 6pm to 11pm, which is a wonderful cost-saving measure for our clients as it negates the need to have a consultant on site for that entire time."

"The data we receive is also very comprehensive and we can drill down quickly to find specifics, even down to where a member of staff would have been standing at a certain time. It also allows us to discount blips where the doseBadge⁵ has been knocked accidentally which is a huge time saver."

He added: *"We can spot some anomalies immediately, for instance, on one occasion we found out that a speaker was facing the wrong way and that was rectified immediately. Other times we have been able to move staff quickly, advise on staff rotations and deliver an immediate recourse that helps negate the effect of long-term noise exposure."*

"Another benefit of the doseBadge⁵ is that it's not cumbersome to wear, the badges look professional and they let the audience know that the venue takes health & safety seriously. We are even looking into how we can incorporate them into costumes for performers on stage."

About RB Health & Safety

RB Health and Safety Solutions Limited has been providing high quality Health and Safety Advice and Training to companies, local authorities and individuals since 2003. It offers a range of training and consultancy services with a reputation for delivering clear, relevant, and robust solutions through its team of tutors and consultants.

