

Quick Guide...

Audio Induction Loops

(Also known as Hearing Loops, AFILS or T-Loop Systems)

Prepared by the Committee on Church Art and Architecture

Introduction to Induction Loops

Induction Loops Systems provide an assistive listening technology for individuals with reduced ranges of hearing. A hearing loop consists of a physical loop of cable or an array of looped cables which are placed around a designated area, usually a room or a building. The cable generates a magnetic field throughout the looped space which can be picked up by most hearing aids (“T” position) and Cochlear Implant (CI) processors.

Assistive listening benefits a large and ever growing section of society - hearing impairment affects one in seven of us, a number that is increasing as the population ages. Providing fair and high quality service to this large group is becoming a high priority for Churches.

Legislation is now in force or in development in most western countries to mandate the use of Induction Loop Systems and ensure that this benefit is available to the hard of hearing. The adoption of this technology is rapidly becoming more widespread around the globe.

The hard-of-hearing community is increasingly aware of the solutions available to assist them, increasing end-user demand for assistive listening solutions.

Standards and Legislation

UK Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act of 2010, which replaced the existing anti-discrimination laws with a single Act, simplifies and strengthens the law to tackle discrimination and inequality

affecting people with 'protected characteristics' covering age, sex, race and disability.

The Building Regulations 2010(12)

UK building regulations inform architects and builders about the requirements for new buildings and how to assist those with a disability.



These regulations mention induction loops with reference to reception desks, performance and discussion areas and prominent use of signage to inform the hard-of-hearing of their presence.

International Performance Standards

The International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) has produced a heavily revised standard, IEC 60118-4, for the performance of induction loop systems in any assistive listening application. This standard is being adopted across the world as the reference for loop system performance.

How does this affect churches?

All installations from 2015 onwards must meet the requirements of IEC 60118-4. This standard must be considered during the specification, design, installation and maintenance of an audio-visual system which supplies any input to an induction loop system.

A recent major revision of this performance standard means better hearing assistance for the hearing impaired. It also changes the way that loop systems are specified, designed, commissioned and maintained.

Whom to Contact

CARTA can supply a hearing loop assessor, who will arrange a site visit to discuss your requirements in detail. The assessor will audit and test any existing equipment, advise on any compliance issues found, and discuss possible solutions.

This is normally a free service, but mileage costs and reasonable expenses may be charged depending on the site's location.

Anyone wishing to contact the Committee should complete an enquiry form which can be found on the Resourcing Mission website (www.resourcingmission.org.uk/resources/carta) and email it to: gentrustees@churchofscotland.org.uk. Alternatively, you can telephone 0131 225 5722 and ask to speak to someone in the CARTA office.

Choosing a Contractor

If initial assessment is not required, there are a number of Approved Contractors who can carry out this service and advise on design, cost of installation and maintenance.

There are several factors to consider before selecting an installation company for your system(s).

- Make sure that the contractor is a member of an associated professional body and that they can supply details of similar compliant works recently carried out.
- Most professional installers will use modelling software (supplied by each equipment manufacturer) to design an optimum and compliant Induction Loop System which will meet the current standards and legislation. Make sure you get a paper copy of this design.

About the Author

John P Turner MInstSCE has been a member of the Institute of Sound and Communications Engineers since 1987 and is an accredited Hearing Loop Assessor.

- Once the system is installed, a stringent testing procedure will ensure that it is fully compliant with IEC 60118-4.
- You must be supplied with a Certificate of Compliance, together with a coverage map, which should note any anomalies (e.g. low coverage areas due to metal loss from radiators, heating pipes, etc). This should be signed-off by both the installer and you before the system is handed over.
- A logbook and loop tester should be given to you at this point, along with instructions for maintaining and regular testing of the system.
- Make sure the contractor is compliant with Health & Safety procedures and carries adequate liability insurance for the work to be carried out.

Cost Considerations

The cost of a Hearing Loop system is proportional to the size and complexity of the loop design, the associated amplifier(s) and the accessories required. It is worth remembering that the cost of installing a system in a medium sized venue, such as a place of worship, will often be less than the cost a single user has paid for their professionally fitted hearing aids!

CARTA Quick Guides

Other Quick Guides include advice on audio visual schemes, dementia friendly church buildings, access for all, stained glass and lighting. These can be accessed on the Resourcing Mission website (www.resourcingmission.org.uk/resources/quick-guides).



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Scottish Charity Number SC011353