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Press Release: Noise Off

## **Tougher Penalties Unlikely To Silence Boy Racer Hoons**

Increased fines and new demerit points which take effect from today will do little to curb the nationwide problem of noisy exhausts, according to New Zealand lobby group Noise Off.

From today (Monday, 16 January), tougher new penalties will apply for boy racer car noise caused by modified exhausts.

There are two major changes aimed at boy racer hoons:

- The fine for creating excessive car noise increases from \$150 to \$250
- Offenders will now incur 10 demerit points

Noise Off supports a tougher stand on motorists who deliberately modify their exhausts to create more noise. However, spokesman Jonathan Gillard says the new measures do not go far enough, and could lead to increased appeals from boy racers to the court.

"The increase in the penalties is recognition of the problem," he says.

"But turning Police into noise control officers is creating a battle the police will never win".

"The current problem will only be solved once the Government's new Vehicle Equipment Rule is scrapped".

### **The Best Option**

Noise Off has been lobbying to have the existing Vehicle Equipment Rule (introduced by Transport Minister Harry Duynhoven in February 2005) replaced with a new noise test.

The organisation believes the new test should require that noise from a modified exhaust is:

- a.. Less than, or similar to the manufacturers original equipment
- b.. No louder than 90 decibels (stationary tail pipe test measured at 4000 rpm); the level that has applied in Australia since 1983.

Mr Gillard says until these changes are made vehicles with loud modified exhausts will continue to obtain warrants of fitness under the existing Vehicle Equipment Rule.

"The new penalties will not remove the offending noisy exhaust vehicles from the road."

"Once the driver has been ticketed, they can drive off immediately. The problem continues as long as the owner is willing to risk another ticket".

### **New Zealand - The Wild West of Exhausts**

Compared to Australia and European countries, New Zealand is the wild west of noisy exhausts.

The modification to the noise level of exhaust systems is not permitted in many other countries, and objective tests are in place to catch offending vehicles.



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This was the case in New Zealand from 1976 to 2005 when any modification that increased the noise level was illegal.

But since 2005 the Government has considered the "rights" of the car enthusiasts and boy racers to fit trombones to the back of their vehicles, as paramount to the rights of the rest of the community.

### **Noise Off**

Noise Off is a charitable trust, campaigning to have an exhaust noise test introduced as part of the standard warrant of fitness test.

The Trust was established in last year, to tackle the nationwide epidemic of exhaust noise. Noise Off has no political affiliation and is a non profit organisation.

In recent months, the Noise Off Website - [www.noiseoff.co.nz](http://www.noiseoff.co.nz) - has attracted thousands of visits and hundreds of messages from exasperated business and homeowners.

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