

LRADs: What They Are and How To Protect Yourself

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LRADs: What They Are

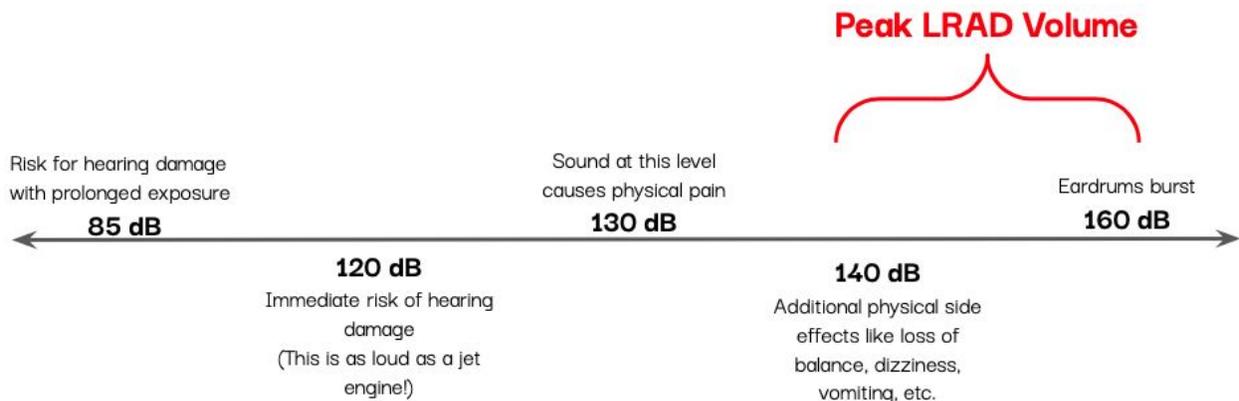
“Long-Range Acoustic Devices”, or LRADs (also called “sound cannons”), were designed as a military weapon for use in Afghanistan. They were designed to communicate with a potential threat over a very long distance, and also to be able to “disperse” a potential threat with a high-pitched “deterrent tone.”

LRADs have now been acquired by police departments whose officers have used these acoustic weapons against Black Lives Matter protesters in cities around the U.S., against protestors at Standing Rock, and against protestors at the G20 summit in 2009, and the Republican National Convention in 2004.

Recently, LRADs have been used against Black Lives Matter protesters in Rochester.

Why They Are So Dangerous

LRADs are designed to produce VERY loud sound, and loud sound can cause significant damage to our auditory (hearing) and vestibular (balance) systems.



How You Can Protect Yourself from LRADs

It is not possible to fully protect yourself from potential hearing damage from an LRAD! (The only way to protect civilians from LRADs is to not use LRADs.)

However, the following information could help:

- Be prepared! Bring protective earmuffs or foam earplugs with the highest decibel

rating you can find with you to the protest.

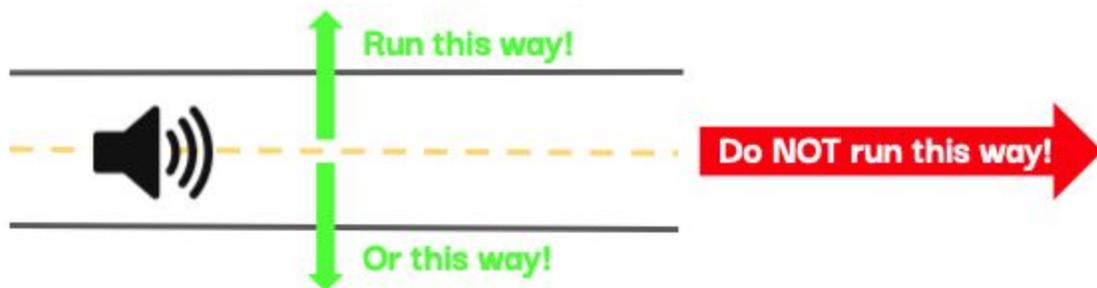
- Protective earmuffs are better because they are easier to put on quickly. Most people also do not know how to insert earplugs properly, and so you are unlikely to be able to get foam earplugs into your ears quickly enough and correctly, especially if you are in a panic.
- (Noise-cancelling headphones are NOT the same as protective earmuffs. Noise-cancelling headphones are good at cancelling low-frequency sound, but the deterrent tone of an LRAD is high frequency.)
- Know what an LRAD looks like, and be aware of your surroundings so that you will notice if there is an LRAD nearby.
 - LRADs may be worn/carried by an officer, or mounted on a vehicle or helicopter



- If you see an LRAD, warn those around you, put on/in your earmuffs or earplugs, and look for a place nearby where you might be able to “hide” from the sound
 - If you do not have earmuffs or earplugs, be prepared to cover your ears with your hands - this will not work as well as earplugs or earmuffs, but it will be better than nothing
- Sound bounces off hard surfaces, so if you can move behind a brick wall or concrete structure this will help protect you somewhat from the sound
- Police will often “warn” protestors by using the loudspeaker function of the LRAD before deploying the deterrent tone - if you hear officers using the LRAD to talk to the crowd, be aware that they may be preparing to use the deterrent tone next
- LRADs produce a highly-focused “beam” of sound that can be directed as a target. Sound that comes from an LRAD is highly “directional,” which means it

does not spread out in the way that sound usually does. This means that people behind or to the side of the device will still *hear* the sound, but it won't be as loud as it is for people in the path of the beam of sound produced by the LRAD.

- If an LRAD is deployed, do everything you can to move away from the beam of sound
- Run away **perpendicularly** from an LRAD (do **not** try to “outrun” an LRAD by running away in the same direction as the sound)



- Remember, **the only way to protect civilians from LRADs is to not use LRADs**
 - Tell your representatives that you think the weaponized use of LRADs against U.S. citizens should be banned and deemed a violation of 14th Amendment rights!
 - [This form](#) makes it very easy to send a letter directly to your representative about this!

What To Do If You've Been Hurt by an LRAD

- Unfortunately, many impacts of LRADs (such as hearing loss or ringing in the ears) can be permanent.
- However, it is still important to see an audiologist if you are experiencing difficulty hearing and/or ringing in your ears after being exposed to an LRAD.
 - If you are a Nazareth College student and you are experiencing these symptoms, you can contact me (Carly Alicea) for a hearing test on campus. You can email me at cmaldon0@naz.edu.
- If you are experiencing physical symptoms, such as bleeding or other discharge from your ears, you should seek medical attention.