

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. In what situation should the VistaPlus DM15 Digital Adapter be used?

- A. The VistaPlus DM15 digital is designed to improve the Health & Safety of employees. It delivers unsurpassed levels of acoustic protection and exceptional sound quality, using DSP technology to:
- Provide ‘anti-startle’ protection which identifies & suppresses sudden loud sounds to reduce the probability and intensity of acoustic startle¹ incidents or loudness-induced discomfort – a hazard of increasing concern for many employers.
 - Limits the average noise exposure over a working day to help employers comply with new EU legislation²

Q. What is the red light that comes on?

- A. The red light indicates that the ‘anti-startle’ protection is active and the sound level has been reduced. This means the DM15 has detected a sudden loud noise and has reduced the volume of the signal to prevent loud, uncomfortable, noises from being heard by the headset user.

Q. The red light is coming on regularly during normal speech, not just when there is a loud noise, what should be done?

- A. If the red light comes on a lot it indicates that the volume setting is too high and the anti-startle feature is limiting the sound to ensure there is no discomfort. In this situation, the anti-startle function will be active almost continuously so the headset volume may be too quiet. Speech will become clearer and louder if the volume is reduced until the red light is off, or only flashes occasionally.

Q. Call Announce tones cannot be heard?

- A. A call announcement tone, by its nature, is a sudden noise. If sufficiently loud, it may therefore activate the DM15’s anti-startle protection, which will make the tone start more gradually or restrict its volume. Your telecoms department may be able to adjust the tone to reduce the likelihood of this happening, using the DM15’s red light to assess whether the call-announcement tone is being limited.

¹ Acoustic startle is a reflex reaction caused by loud sounds or sudden, unexpected increases in sound level. Like any other startling incident it causes the headset user to flinch or jump and may cause some temporary discomfort or stress. Acoustic startle can occur at sound levels below the limits imposed by European product safety legislation.

² European Physical Agents Noise Directive (2003/10/EC)



Q. Is there a recommended way to set up the DM15 to get the best performance with my phone?

A. All phones systems are slightly different. Plantronics recommends that, where possible, the phone volume be set to mid-point. Also ensure that the compatibility switch and transmit volume control are set up correctly in line with the details given on the Plantronics compatibility database. Make a test call to ensure that transmit and receive speech quality are good.

Q. What phone volume setting should I use?

A. The DM15 contains an automatic volume leveller (AVL) to reduce variations in speech level heard in the headset. This reduces the need for the user to change the volume manually to account for different volume levels from call to call.

AVL is only active above a certain threshold to prevent very low level signals such as background noise from being amplified. So it is important to ensure that normal speech is above the AVL threshold. To do this, check the volume on your telephone: we normally recommend that this is set to mid way but with some phone models this may be too high or low. If setting the phone to mid-volume does not provide good speech quality, proceed as follows:

While on a call adjust the volume on the phone starting at minimum and gradually increasing. At first you will hear a steady increase in loudness for each increment of the phone's volume control. At a certain point further increases in the phone's volume will result in much smaller increases in perceived loudness. Set the phone volume one or two clicks beyond this point. This will ensure that the AVL is active. You should then leave the phone volume at this setting, and set the loudness of the call using the DM15's volume control.

Q. The headset is quieter than my old one and I cannot make it as loud as I would like. What can be done?

A. The new legislation specifies the maximum level of sound you should be exposed to over a working day for your long term health & safety. You may currently be listening at a level higher than that stipulated by this legislation and the VistaPlus is specifically designed to stop that happening for your health & safety. Any change from your normal working practise requires getting used to, but most users adjust quite quickly.



Q. I understand that the volume is reduced for Health & Safety reasons but I cannot hear over the noise around me. What can be done?

A. There is a strong link between background noise level and the headset volume needed to hear a conversation easily- typically a difference of 20dB(A) is required. This means that if background noise level is above 65dB(A), call centre agents may find the VistaPlus (or any similar product) too quiet relative to the noise around them

In this situation, it is necessary to take action to reduce background noise to a more appropriate level. There are numerous things to consider, including:

- Binaural headsets can be considered as they help block-out background noise.
- Ensure that headset microphones are correctly positioned - the tip of the voice tube or noise cancelling boom should be an inch from the users mouth and directed towards their voice. An incorrectly positioned voice tube will result in lower transmit level, so the natural response is to talk louder to compensate. A simple rule of thumb is that the distance from the mouth is doubled, the sound level is halved (2 inches from the mouth will result in a drop of 6dB). If many people have wrongly positioned microphones, this can impact overall background noise levels.
- Develop an action plan to reduce background noise by the use of appropriate sound reduction techniques (see note).

Note: As a short term measure as part of this action plan, customers may choose to disable the daily personal noise exposure control feature of VistaPlus. This will NOT effect the acoustic startle protection provided by the product.

Once the background noise level has been reduced, this feature of VistaPlus can be enabled to ensure the headset volume will not go above the levels specified by legislation.

This adjustment should only be made by authorized personnel. The procedure to change this setting can be obtained by contacting your distributor.

Q. Background noise is very low. Does that mean there is no need for a product like VistaPlus?

A. Even when background noise is very low, some agents will choose to listen at high volume where there is no need to because it's a quiet environment- this could result in a workplace being non-compliant. Whilst employers will need to continue to manage background noise levels, using VistaPlus they can then be confident that headset listening levels cannot exceed the level specified by legislation.



Q. I hear my own voice in my ear at a level higher than I like?

- A. This is called Sidetone and is higher on headsets that have an amplifier compared to direct connect headsets. The sidetone can be reduced however by:
- Check that the person on the other end of the phone can hear your voice at similar level to when you use the handset. If louder when using headset, reduce the transmit gain on the bottom of the VistaPlus by sliding it left. You should check the far-end listener can still hear you well.
 - Once the transmit level is set correctly, sidetone can be further reduced by increasing the receive volume on the telephone slightly (adjust the phone, not the VistaPlus).

Q. The headset does not sound like my old one, I prefer a different tonal quality, is there anything I can do to change this?

- A. The DM15 has a tone control which allows the sound to be changed to match your preferences. It is located on the front of the unit, between the headset and handset connectors.

Q. Is the DM15 compatible with my telephone system?

- A. A list of manufacturers and specific phones is available on Plantronics compatibility database, available online.

Q. Do I need anything extra to be compatible with my phone?

- A. In general no, the DM15 comes with everything required to install & use. Exceptions to this are noted below:

System	Model	Additional Equipment	Part #
Mitel	4015	Spare, VistaPlus to Mitel 4015/4025	38335-01
Mitel	4025	Spare, VistaPlus to Mitel 4015/4025	38335-01

