

HEARING LOSS AND TINNITUS

EXCEPTIONAL PATTERNS

38 CFR 4.86

A calibrated guide to service connection, audiology evidence, and VA rating rules.

CALIBRATED REFERENCE

FOUR POINTS TO UNDERSTAND

A

ALL FOUR AT 55 dB OR MORE

For one ear, compare Table VI and VIa and use the higher Roman numeral.

B

30 dB OR LESS, THEN 70 dB OR MORE

When 1000 Hz is 30 dB or less and 2000 Hz is 70 dB or more, compare VI and VIa, use the higher numeral, then elevate it one level.

EAR

APPLY SEPARATELY

Evaluate each ear independently for an exceptional pattern.

LIMIT

EXACT TESTS

A steep loss pattern that does not meet either regulatory test does not trigger 4.86.

Apply the exact regulation and evidence to the individual record. A diagnosis, exposure, or test result does not replace the remaining service-connection elements.