

Lost time injury frequency rates (LTIFR) and benchmarking



Safe Work Australia frequently receives requests from organisations for national benchmark data to use as a comparison to Lost Time Injury Frequency Rates (LTIFRs) recorded by their organisation. A lost-time injury is defined as an occurrence that resulted in a fatality, permanent disability or time lost from work of one day/shift or more¹.

The LTIFR is the number of lost-time injuries per million hours worked, calculated using this equation:-

$$\frac{\text{Number of lost-time injuries} \times 1\,000\,000}{\text{Total hours worked in accounting period}}$$

Safe Work Australia is unable to supply the national number of lost-time injuries involving the loss of one day/shift or more from work. Instead *Safe Work Australia* publishes rates based on accepted workers' compensation claims that involved the loss of one or more working weeks (termed serious claims). The reason for this data scope is explained below.

Data used by *Safe Work Australia* is from the National Data Set of Compensation based Statistics (NDS). *Safe Work Australia* asks jurisdictions to supply data scoped broadly the same as that set out in the Australian Standard: claims that involved either a death; permanent incapacity; or a temporary incapacity for which payments have been made (including common law claims).

However, there are differences between the jurisdictions in the amount of time the employee must be off work before the employer can claim against their workers' compensation policy: known as the employer excess. Employer excesses range from one day to ten days across the jurisdictions. Although an employer should inform the relevant Workcover organisation of incidents that fall within their excess period, this does not happen in all cases. This results in under-reporting of short-term work-related incidents. To improve comparability across jurisdictions, the standard *Safe Work Australia* publication scope is limited to serious compensation claims: thus excluding claims of less than one working week.

Companies could benchmark the occupational health and safety performance of their industry against *Safe Work Australia* national data if they calculate their frequency rates using injuries resulting in one week or more off work. National data by industry can be obtained by accessing the online database, NOSI (<http://nosi.ascc.gov.au>). Data for some industries can be found in the *Compendium of Workers Compensation Statistics* (<http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/swa/AboutUs/Publications/CompendiumofWorkersCompensationStatistics.htm>).

Alternatively, the individual Workcover organisations listed overleaf publish their own LTIFR state/territory figures.

1. Workplace injury and disease recording standard (Australian Standard 1885.1– 1990), published by Standards Australia.

<http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/swa/AboutUs/Publications/NationalStandards/IndexofNationalStandardsCodesofPracticeandrelatedGuidanceNotes.htm>





The following jurisdictions publish LTIFR information

Worksafe Western Australia has an informative section on definitions and calculations and a downloadable table showing three-year averages of Lost Time Frequency and Incidence rates by industry. These pages can be accessed via their 'Facts & Figures' page.

Facts & Figures page:

http://www.docep.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/Content/Services/Facts_and_figures/Facts_and_figures.html

Benchmark data page:

http://www.docep.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/Content/Services/Facts_and_figures/Benchmarks.html

Workcover New South Wales publishes a table of Lost Time Injury Frequency Rates by Industry in its annual statistical bulletin (see Appendix E, Table 6.1).

http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/Publications/WorkersComp/Claims/Pages/statistical_bulletin_2006_2007.aspx

Workcover Tasmania publishes a time series table of Lost Time Injury Frequency Rates. The PDF links can be found on the following page.

http://www.workcover.tas.gov.au/resources/statistics/frequency_rates