

NOTIFIED FATALITIES STATISTICAL REPORT

JULY 2007 TO DECEMBER 2007



Australian Government

Australian Safety and Compensation Council

Disclaimer

The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations through the Australian Safety and Compensation Council (ASCC) provides the information given in this document to improve public access to information about occupational health and safety information generally. The vision of the ASCC is Australian workplaces free from injury and disease. Its mission is to lead and coordinate national efforts to prevent workplace death, injury and disease in Australia.

The information provided in this document can only assist you in the most general way. This document does not replace any statutory requirements under any relevant State and Territory legislation. The ASCC accepts no liability arising from the use of or reliance on the material contained on this document, which is provided on the basis that the ASCC is not thereby engaged in rendering professional advice. Before relying on the material, users should carefully make their own assessment as to its accuracy, currency, completeness and relevance for their purposes, and should obtain any appropriate professional advice relevant to their particular circumstances. To the extent that the material in this document includes views or recommendations of third parties, such views or recommendations do not necessarily reflect the views of the ASCC or the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations nor do they indicate a commitment to a particular course of action.

© Commonwealth of Australia 2008

ISBN 978-0-642-32809-0

This work is copyright. You may download, display, print and reproduce this material in unaltered form only (retaining this notice) for your personal, non-commercial use or use within your organisation. Apart from any use as permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, all other rights are reserved. Requests and inquiries concerning reproduction and rights should be addressed to Commonwealth Copyright Administration, Attorney-General's Department, Robert Garran Offices, National Circuit, Barton ACT 2600 or posted at <http://www.ag.gov.au/cca>

SUMMARY

This report provides an analysis of data on work-related deaths notified to OHS jurisdictions under their OHS legislation that occurred during the six month period 1 July 2007 to 31 December 2007.

During this period:

- > There were 72 notified work-related fatalities — 62 workers and 10 bystanders (see Table 1).
- > The majority of fatalities were male — 65 in total (including 4 bystanders). There were 4 female fatalities, all of whom were bystanders. The gender of 3 fatalities were unknown.
- > Workers aged 55 years and over accounted for close to one-quarter (23%) of worker fatalities for which the age of the deceased was known — higher than the proportion of workers in this age group in the Australian workforce (15%).
- > Three industries accounted for close to three-quarters (72%) of all notified work-related fatalities — 28% of fatalities occurred at a workplace primarily engaged in Construction; 28% in Transport and storage; and 17% occurred at an Agriculture, forestry and fishing workplace (see Table 2).
- > The most common causes of work-related fatalities were *Vehicle accident* (16 fatalities); *Being hit by falling objects* (13 fatalities); *Being hit by moving objects* (12 fatalities); *Falls from a height* (7 fatalities); and *Vehicle accident - rollover* (6 fatalities) (see Figure 2).
- > Of the 22 fatalities caused by vehicle accidents (including rollovers), 6 occurred on public roads and 16 occurred elsewhere, including 4 during air travel (see Table 1). Since work-related road traffic fatalities and work-related aircraft crash fatalities are not notified to some OHS jurisdictions, the figures presented in this report are likely to under-report their occurrence.

Table 1 Notified fatalities — 1 July 2007 to 31 December 2007, Australia

Type of fatality	Worker	Bystander	Total
Vehicle accident ^(a) on a public road	4	2	6
Vehicle accident ^(a,b) elsewhere	14	2	16
All other types	44	6	50
Total	62	10	72

(a) Includes rollovers, mobile mechanical equipment such as tractors, forklifts and construction vehicles.

(b) Includes air crash fatalities.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

OHS legislation in each Australian state and territory requires work-related deaths to be notified to the state or territory OHS authority. The Australian Safety and Compensation Council (ASCC) began compiling details of these notifications from each OHS authority on 1 July 2003. Notifications cover workers (both employees and self-employed) who suffered a fatal injury at work and bystanders who suffered a fatal injury as a result of work activity. Fatalities that occurred while commuting to or from work, and those resulting from suicide or natural causes (i.e. stroke or heart attack) are not included in this report.

The compilation of notifications at the national level is complicated by differences across jurisdictions in the definition of a work-related death and the coverage of some incidents. In particular:

- > Several jurisdictions do not include work-related deaths caused by vehicle accidents on public roads in their notification systems. These fatalities are instead notified to and investigated by the police.
- > Aircraft crash fatalities are not notified to all OHS jurisdictions. These fatalities are instead notified to the relevant transport authority.

Table 2 Number of notified fatalities by industry, 1 July 2007 to 31 December 2007

Industry	Industry of workplace ^a			Industry of employer ^{a, b}
	Worker	Bystander	Total	Worker
Construction	20	0	20	15
Transport and storage	16	4	20	16
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	11	1	12	10
Manufacturing	4	0	4	3
Cultural and recreational services	1	3	4	1
Government administration and defence	2	1	3	4
Wholesale trade	2	0	2	1
Property and business services	2	0	2	6
Communication services	1	1	2	2
Mining	1	0	1	1
Retail trade	1	0	1	0
Personal and other services	0	0	0	0
Accommodation, cafes and restaurants	0	0	0	0
Education	0	0	0	0
Electricity, gas and water supply	0	0	0	1
Finance and insurance	0	0	0	0
Health and community services	0	0	0	0
Industry unknown	0	0	0	2
Private residence	1	0	1	na
Total	62	10	72	62

na denotes 'not applicable'.

a: *Industry of workplace* identifies the main industry conducted at the workplace where the fatal incident occurred. *Industry of employer* identifies the main industry conducted by the employer of the fatally-injured worker, which will sometimes differ from the *Industry of workplace* — for example, where a worker is employed under a labour hire arrangement to provide services at a workplace. *Industry of workplace* would therefore more accurately reflect the actual work tasks and circumstances associated with a fatal workplace incident.

b: Industry of employer is not applicable for bystanders.



Figure 1 Number of notified fatalities of known age by age group, 1 July 2007 to 31 December 2007

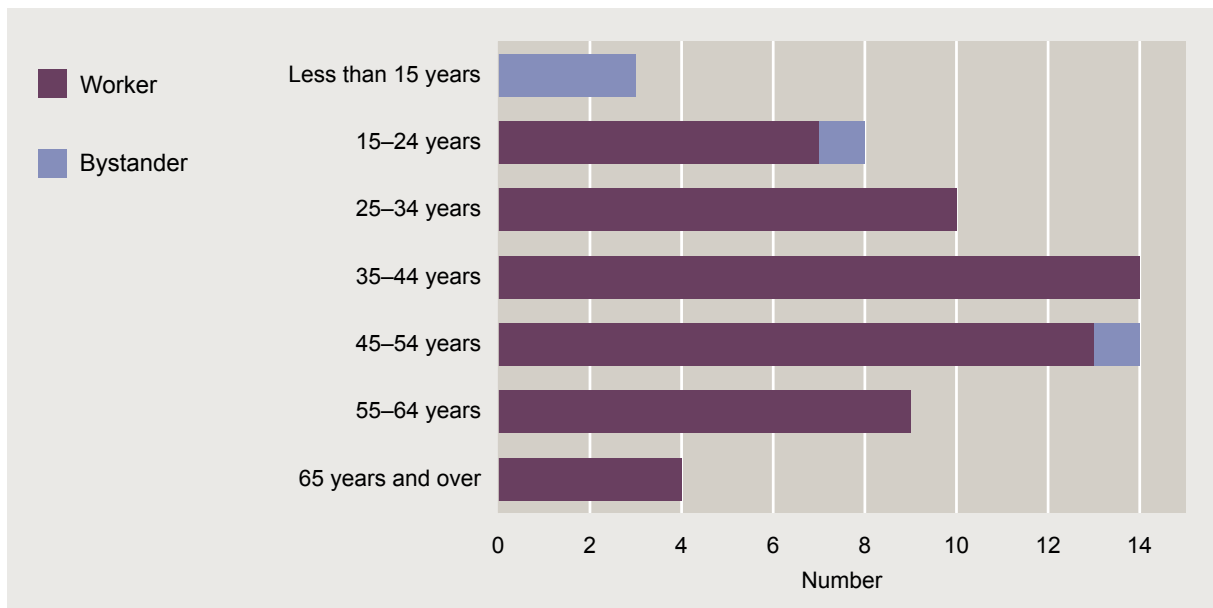
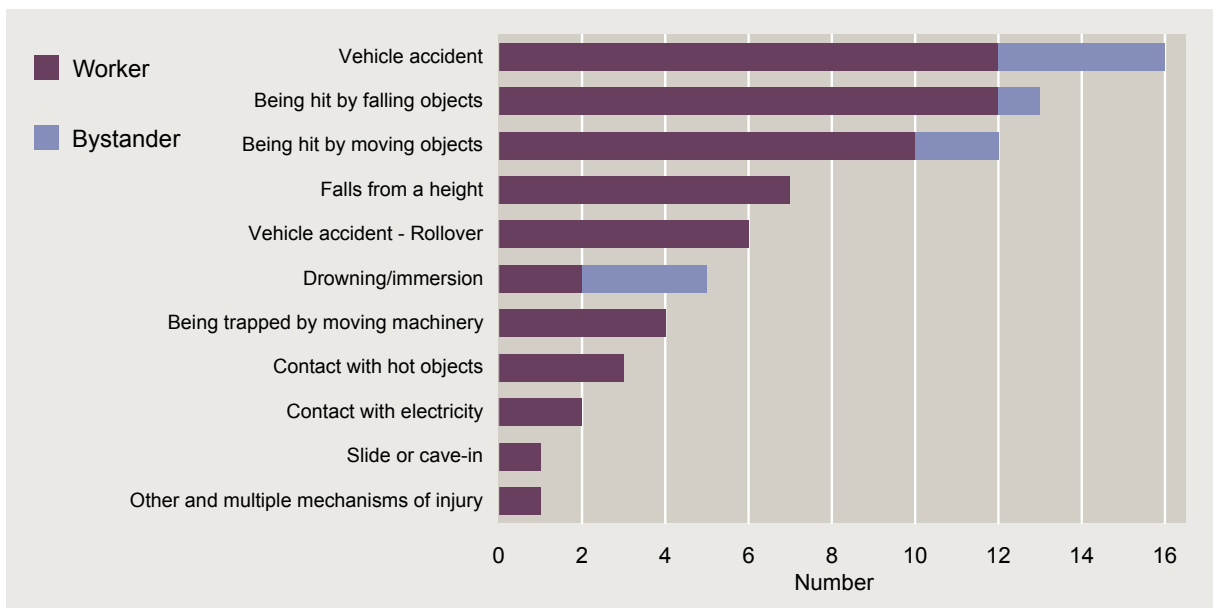


Figure 2 Number of notified fatalities by mechanism, 1 July 2007 to 31 December 2007



INQUIRES

For further information regarding the contents of this publication contact:

Office of the Australian Safety and Compensation Council

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

(02) 6121 9152

