

# Work-related injury fatalities

## Key WHS statistics Australia 2021

Safe Work Australia compiles the Work-related Traumatic Injury Fatalities data set which provides national statistics on all workers and bystanders fatally injured at work. This data draws on a range of information sources, including:

- initial reporting of fatalities in the media or on relevant authority websites such as police, road authorities and the Australian Transport Safety Bureau
- notifications to Safe Work Australia from the jurisdictional authorities, and
- the National Coronial Information System which provides confidential access to coroners', police and other investigative reports.

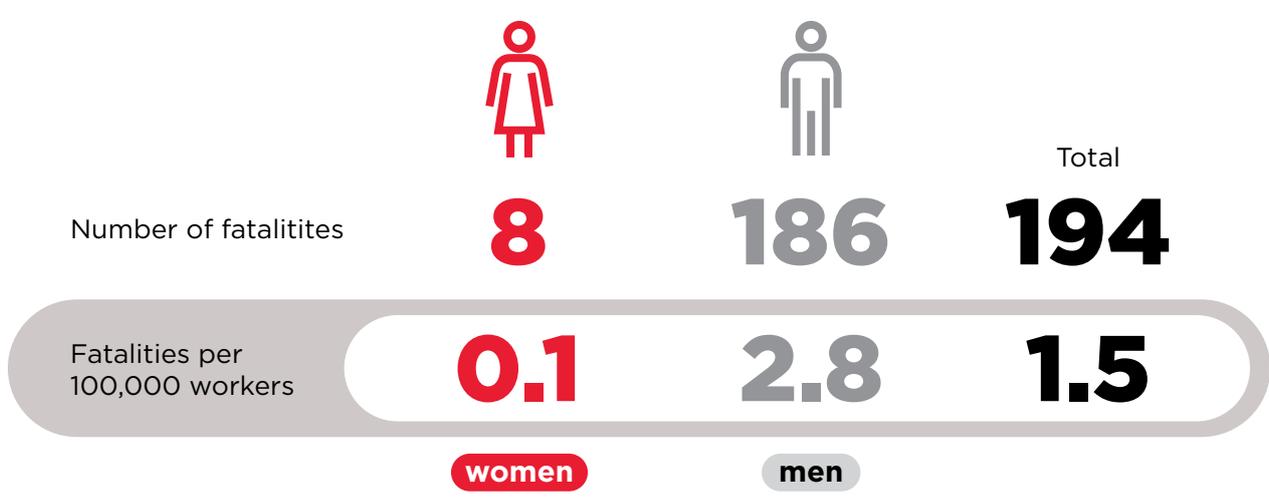
Work-related fatalities resulting from diseases, natural causes and suicides are excluded. Further explanatory notes on the data can be found in the [Explanatory notes for Safe Work Australia datasets](#).

This document provides statistics about people who die from an injury sustained in the course of a work activity (worker fatalities) in Australian territories or territorial seas.

### Trends in worker fatalities, 2003 to 2020



### Worker fatalities by gender, 2020



# Work-related injury fatalities

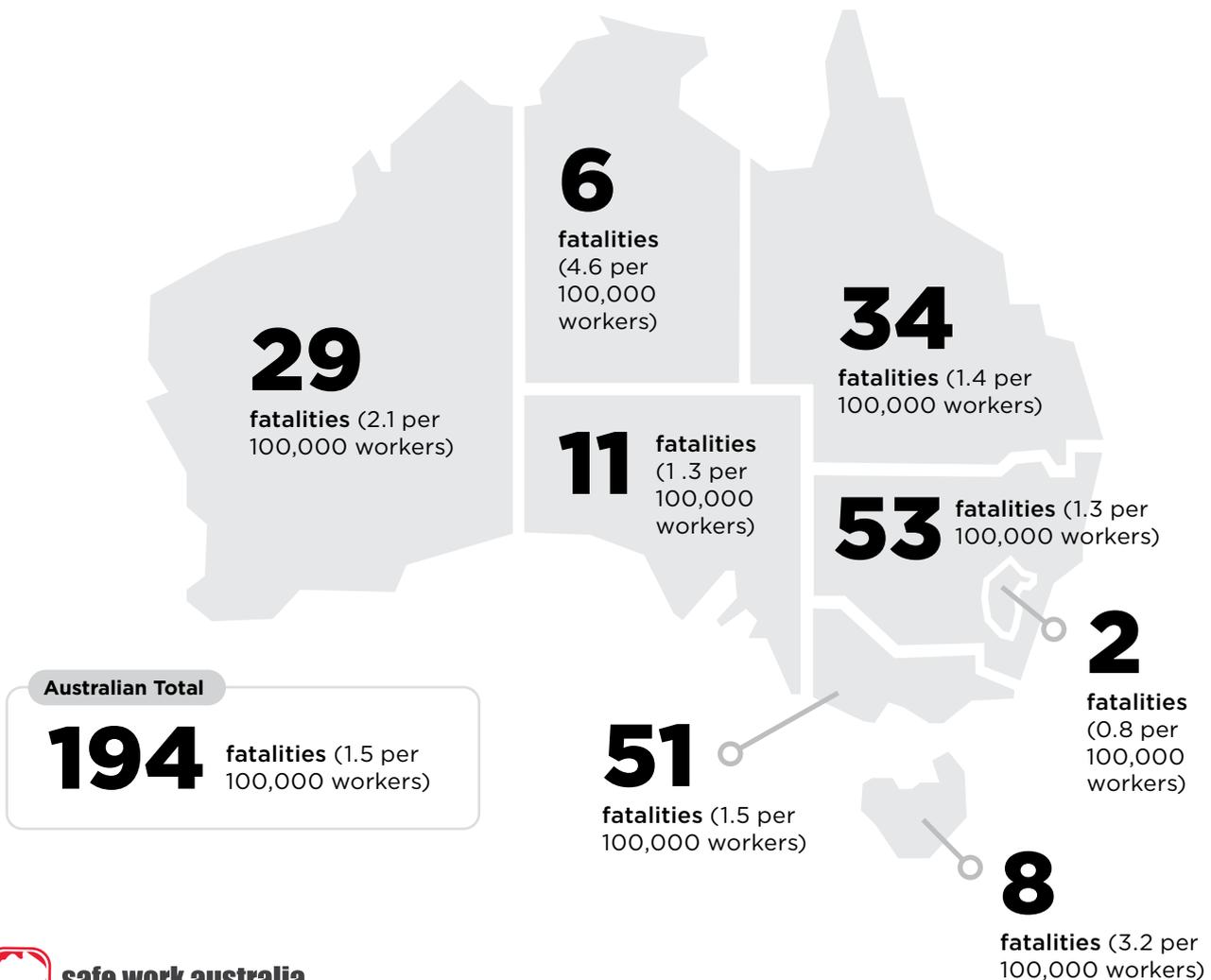
Key WHS statistics Australia 2021

## Worker fatalities by age group, 2020

Age group (years)	Number of fatalities	Fatality rate (fatalities per 100,000 workers)
Under 25	8	0.4
25-34	30	1.0
35-44	34	1.2
45-54	36	1.4
55-64	55	2.9
65 and over	31	5.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>1.5</b>

## Worker fatalities by state/territory, 2020\*

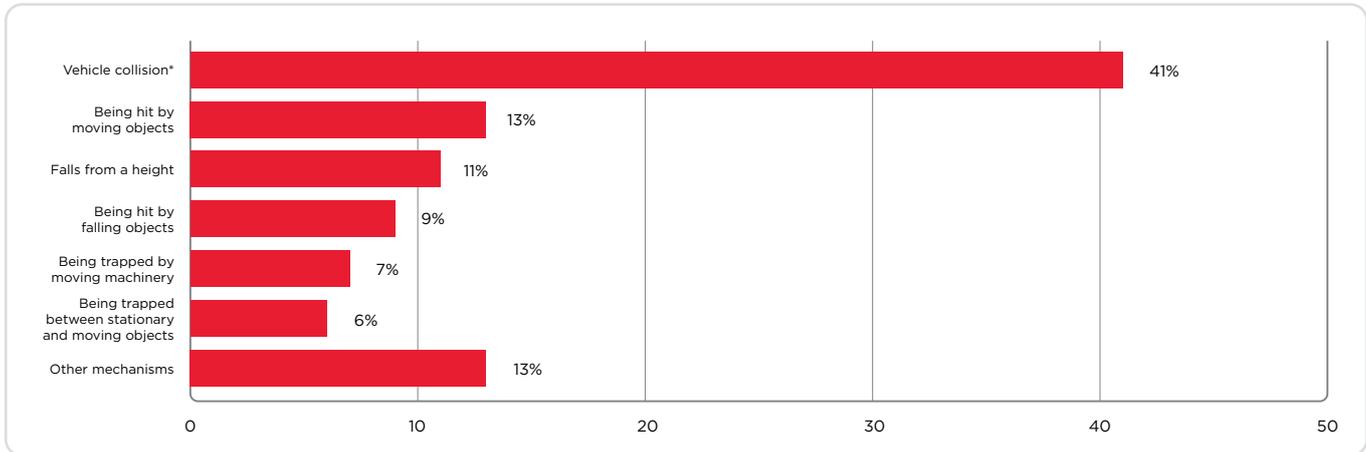
\*fatalities are presented according to the state or territory where the fatality occurred, not the jurisdiction under which the fatality fell.



# Work-related injury fatalities

Key WHS statistics Australia 2021

## Worker fatalities by mechanism of incident, 2020



Note:

- only mechanisms accounting for 5% or more of fatalities are included. The remaining mechanisms are grouped together under other mechanisms.
- the percentages shown in this table have been rounded to the nearest whole number; therefore the sum of percentage figures for each column may not equal the total.

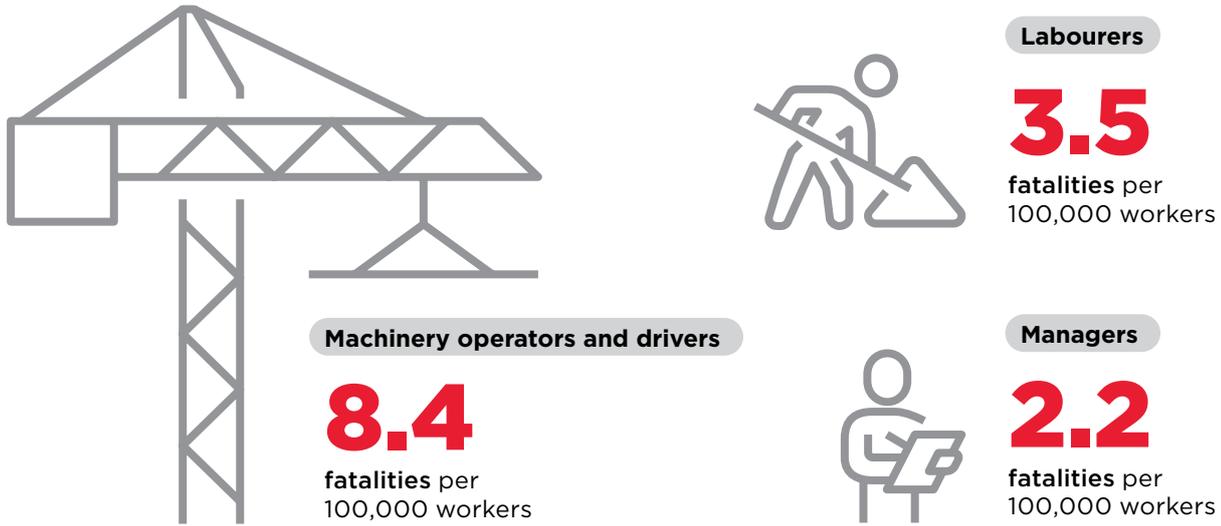
Mechanism of incident	Number of fatalities	% of fatalities
Vehicle collision*	80	41%
Being hit by moving objects	25	13%
Falls from a height	22	11%
Being hit by falling objects	17	9%
Being trapped by moving machinery	13	7%
Being trapped between stationary and moving objects	11	6%
Other mechanisms	26	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*vehicle collisions include fatalities that occurred as a direct result of a vehicle crash. Vehicles include not only road vehicles such as cars and trucks, but also machines such as aircraft, boats, loaders, tractors and quad bikes.

# Work-related injury fatalities

Key WHS statistics Australia 2021

## Worker fatalities by occupation, 2020



Occupation	Number of fatalities	Fatality rate (fatalities per 100,000 workers)
Machinery operators and drivers	67	8.4
Labourers	41	3.5
Managers	35	2.2
Technicians and trades workers	26	1.5
Community and personal service workers	11	0.8
Professionals	11	0.3
Sales workers	2	0.2
Clerical and administrative workers	1	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>1.5</b>

# Work-related injury fatalities

Key WHS statistics Australia 2021

## Worker fatalities by industry, 2020



Agriculture, forestry and fishing

**13.1**

fatalities per 100,000 workers



Transport, postal and warehousing

**7.8**

fatalities per 100,000 workers



Construction

**3.1**

fatalities per 100,000 workers

Industry of employer	Number of fatalities	Fatality rate (fatalities per 100,000 workers)
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	46	13.1
Transport, postal and warehousing	49	7.8
Construction	36	3.1
Manufacturing	19	2.2
Mining	5	2.1
Electricity, gas, water and waste services	3	2.0
Administrative and support services	6	1.4
Public administration and safety	10	1.1
Rental, hiring and real estate services	2	0.9
Other services	3	0.7
Wholesale trade	2	0.5
Arts and recreation services	1	0.5
Professional, scientific and technical services	5	0.4
Accommodation and food services	2	0.3
Education and training	2	0.2
Retail trade	2	0.2
Health care and social assistance	1	0.1
Financial and insurance services	0	0
Information media and telecommunications	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>1.5</b>



# Work-related injury and disease

## Key WHS statistics Australia 2021

Safe Work Australia compiles the National Dataset for Compensation-based Statistics (NDS) which comprises information on workers' compensation claims provided by each of the jurisdictional workers' compensation authorities.

Data in this report refers to serious claims only. Serious claims include all accepted workers' compensation claims for an incapacity that results in a total absence from work of one working week or more, excluding fatalities and journey claims. Data for 2019-20 are preliminary (denoted by a 'p') and subject to revision in future years as further claims are finalised. Further explanatory notes on the data can be found in the [National data set for compensation-based statistics for Safe Work Australia](#).

### Serious claims statistics, 2019-20p\*



**120,355**

total serious claims

#### Frequency rate



**6.1**

serious claims per million hours worked

#### Median time lost



**6.6**

weeks per serious claim

#### Median compensation paid\*\*

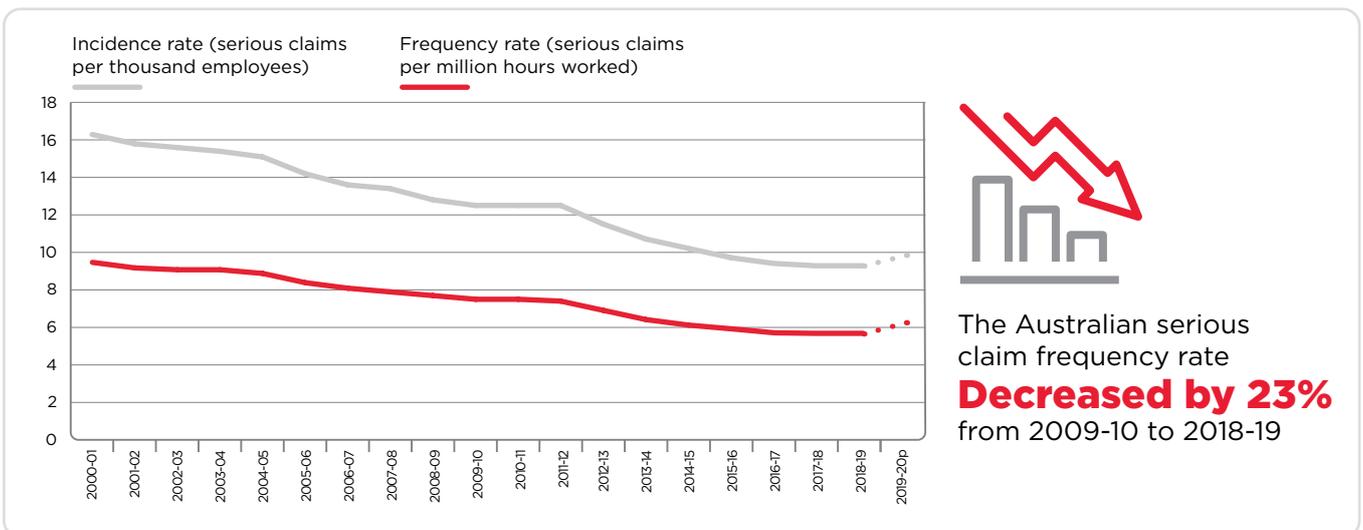


**\$13,500**

per claim

\*preliminary data subject to revision in future years as further claims are finalised.  
 \*\* the median includes serious claims where the payment made was greater than zero.

### Serious claim rate, 2000-01 to 2019-20p\*



\*preliminary data subject to revision in future years as further claims are finalised.

# Work-related injury and disease

Key WHS statistics Australia 2021

## Serious claims by gender, 2019-20p\*



Frequency rate (serious claims per million hours worked)

**5.4**

**6.6**

Median time lost from work (weeks)

**6.8**

**6.4**

Median compensation paid\*\*

**\$11,900**

**\$14,500**

women

men

Gender	Number of serious claims	Frequency rate (serious claims per million hours worked)	Incidence rate (serious claims per thousand employees)
Female	44,982	5.4	7.6
Male	75,240	6.6	12.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>120,355</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>9.9</b>

\*preliminary data subject to revision in future years as further claims are finalised.

\*\* the median includes serious claims where the payment made was greater than zero.

# Work-related injury and disease

Key WHS statistics Australia 2021

## Serious claims by age group, 2019-20p\*



**Lowest claim rate**

workers aged 30-34

**4.9**

claims per million hours worked



**Highest claim rate**

workers aged 60-64

**8.6**

claims per million hours worked

Age group (years)	Number of serious claims	Frequency rate (serious claims per million hours worked)	Incidence rate (serious claims per thousand employees)
Under 20	3,981	6.9	6.0
20-24	11,155	6.3	8.9
25-29	12,974	5.2	8.7
30-34	12,265	4.9	8.2
35-39	11,901	5.0	8.5
40-44	11,882	5.4	9.5
45-49	14,458	6.2	11.1
50-54	14,515	7.2	12.6
55-59	14,163	8.3	13.9
60-64	9,243	8.6	13.3
65 and over	3,815	6.6	8.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>120,355</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>9.9</b>

\*preliminary data subject to revision in future years as further claims are finalised.

# Work-related injury and disease

Key WHS statistics Australia 2021

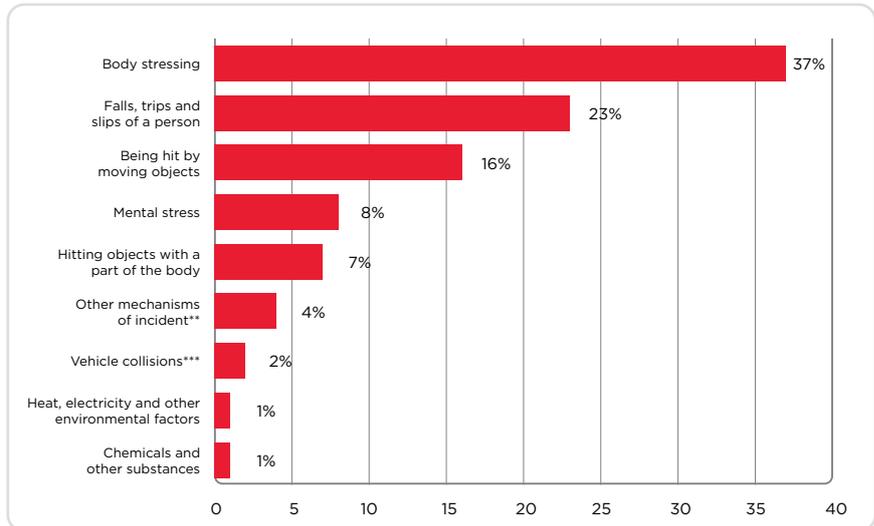
## Serious claims by mechanism of incident, 2019-20p\*



**Body stressing**  
**37%**



**Falls, trips and slips**  
**23%**



Mechanism of incident	Number of serious claims			% of serious claims		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
Body stressing	16,412	27,970	44,420	36%	37%	37%
Falls, trips and slips of a person	11,574	16,213	27,819	26%	22%	23%
Being hit by moving objects	5,988	13,402	19,417	13%	18%	16%
Mental stress	5,877	4,200	10,084	13%	6%	8%
Hitting objects with a part of the body	1,964	6,734	8,713	4%	9%	7%
Other mechanisms of incident**	1,532	2,950	4,489	3%	4%	4%
Vehicle collisions***	710	1,930	2,640	2%	3%	2%
Heat, electricity and other environmental factors	618	1,054	1,679	1%	1%	1%
Chemicals and other substances	306	787	1,094	1%	1%	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>44,982</b>	<b>75,240</b>	<b>120,355</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*preliminary data subject to revision in future years as further claims are finalised.

\*\*other mechanisms of incident include biological factors, sound and pressure, other multiple mechanisms of incident, roll over, slide or cave-in and unspecified mechanisms of incident.

\*\*\*vehicle collisions include claims where the injury was the direct result of a vehicle crash. Vehicles include not only road vehicles such as cars and trucks, but also machines such as aircraft, boats, loaders, tractors and quad bikes.

# Work-related injury and disease

Key WHS statistics Australia 2021

## Serious claims by nature of injury/disease 2019-20p



**38%**

Traumatic joint/  
ligament and  
muscle/tendon injury



**18%**

Musculoskeletal  
and connective  
tissue diseases



**16%**

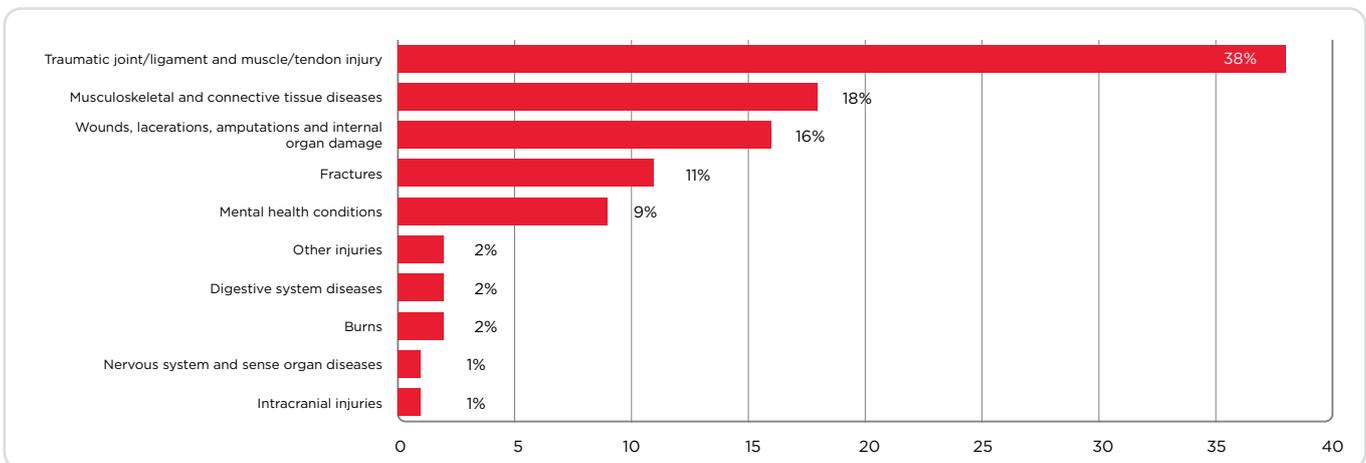
Wounds, lacerations,  
amputations and internal  
organ damage



**69%**  
Injury

**31%**

Disease



Nature of injury or disease	Number of serious claims			% of serious claims		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
Traumatic joint/ligament and muscle/ tendon injury	17,698	27,541	45,285	39%	37%	38%
Musculoskeletal and connective tissue diseases	8,550	13,029	21,605	19%	17%	18%
Wounds, lacerations, amputations and internal organ damage	4,689	14,008	18,729	10%	19%	16%
Fractures	4,275	8,657	12,942	10%	12%	11%
Mental health conditions	6,217	4,552	10,776	14%	6%	9%
Other injuries	1,018	1,811	2,832	2%	2%	2%
Digestive system diseases	135	1,956	2,091	0%	3%	2%
Burns	620	1,194	1,821	1%	2%	2%
Nervous system and sense organ diseases	577	732	1,311	1%	1%	1%
Intracranial injuries	507	588	1,096	1%	1%	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>44,982</b>	<b>75,240</b>	<b>120,355</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*preliminary data subject to revision in future years as further claims are finalised.

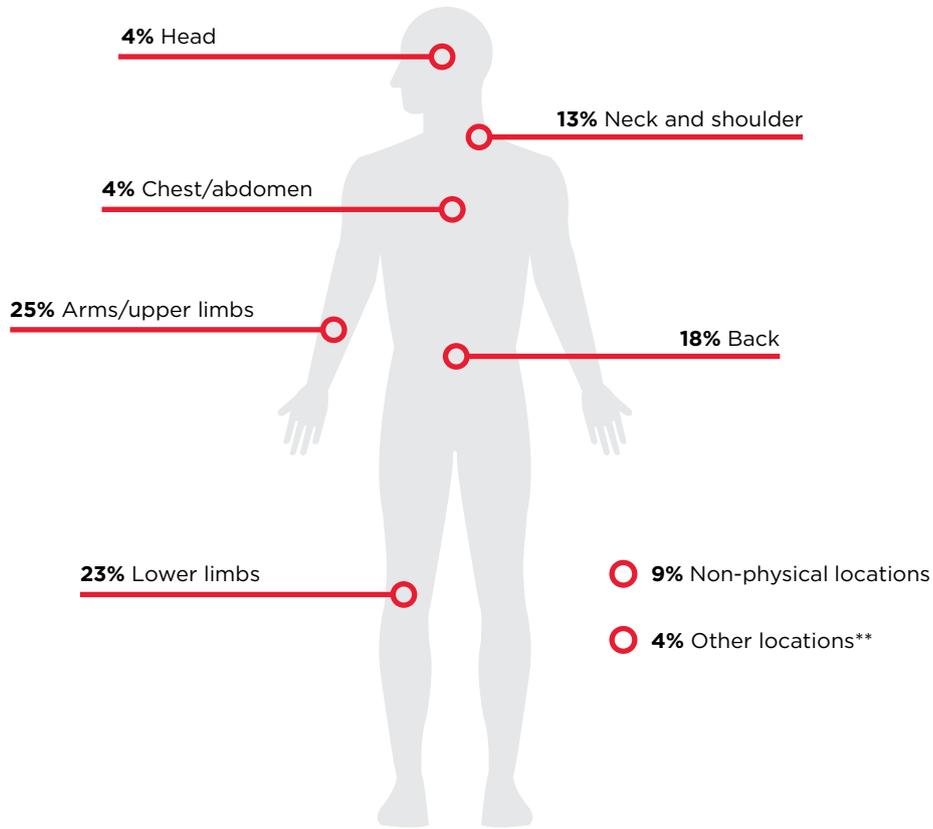
\*\*other injuries include those related to poisoning, electrocution, air pressure, weather conditions, unspecified injuries and injuries not classified elsewhere.

\*\*\*injuries or diseases accounting for less than 1% of serious claims are not included separately, but are included in the total.

# Work-related injury and disease

Key WHS statistics Australia 2021

## Serious claims by bodily location of injury, 2019-20p\*



Bodily location of injury/disease	Number of serious claims	% of serious claims
Arms/upper limbs	29,680	25%
Lower limbs	27,742	23%
Back	21,842	18%
Neck and shoulder	15,510	13%
Non-physical locations	10,766	9%
Chest/Abdomen	4,983	4%
Other locations**	4,746	4%
Head	4,539	4%
<b>Total ***</b>	<b>120,355</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*preliminary data subject to revision in future years as further claims are finalised.

\*\*other locations include multiple locations, systemic locations, and trunk excluding chest and abdomen

\*\*\*claims where the bodily location was unknown are not included separately, but are included in the total.

# Work-related injury and disease

Key WHS statistics Australia 2021

## Serious claims by occupation, 2019-20\*



Labourers

**18.1**

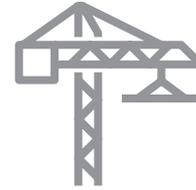
serious claims per million hours worked



Community and personal service workers

**13.9**

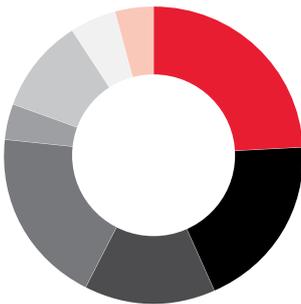
serious claims per million hours worked



Machinery operators and drivers

**11.4**

serious claims per million hours worked



% of serious claims

- 24%** Labourers
- 19%** Community and personal service workers
- 14%** Machinery operators and drivers
- 19%** Technicians and trades workers
- 4%** Sales workers
- 10%** Professionals
- 5%** Managers
- 4%** Clerical and administrative workers

Occupation	Number of serious claims	Frequency rate (serious claims per million hours worked)	Incidence rate (serious claims per thousand employees)
Labourers	28,360	18.1	24.9
Community and personal service workers	23,405	13.9	17.3
Machinery operators and drivers	16,446	11.4	21.3
Technicians and trades workers	22,454	7.9	14.6
Sales workers	5,205	3.8	4.8
Professionals	11,699	2.2	3.8
Managers	5,935	2.1	4.2
Clerical and administrative workers	5,193	1.9	3.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>120,355</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>9.9</b>

\*preliminary data subject to revision in future years as further claims are finalised.

\*\*claims where the occupation was unknown are not included separately, but are included in the total.

# Work-related injury and disease

Key WHS statistics Australia 2021

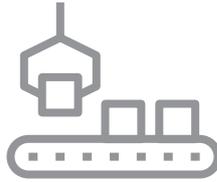
## Serious claims by industry, 2019-20p\*



Agriculture, forestry and fishing

**9.6**

serious claims per million hours worked



Manufacturing

**9.1**

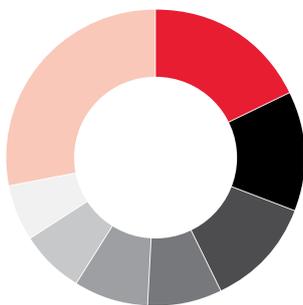
serious claims per million hours worked



Transport, postal and warehousing

**8.9**

serious claims per million hours worked



% of serious claims

- 18% Health care and social assistance
- 13% Construction
- 12% Manufacturing
- 8% Public administration and safety
- 8% Transport, postal and warehousing
- 7% Retail trade
- 6% Education and training
- 28% Other industries

\*preliminary data subject to revision in future years as further claims are finalised.

\*\*other industries include all other industries excluding the top seven industries by number of serious claims.

# Work-related injury and disease

Key WHS statistics Australia 2021

## Serious claims by industry, 2019-20p\*

Industry	Number of serious claims	Frequency rate (serious claims per million hours worked)	Incidence rate (serious claims per thousand employees)
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	3,893	9.6	18.6
Manufacturing	14,014	9.1	16.7
Transport, postal and warehousing	9,190	8.9	16.2
Health care and social assistance	21,603	8.6	12.3
Construction	15,567	8.5	16.3
Arts and recreation services	2,193	8.0	10.1
Wholesale trade	5,144	7.4	13.5
Public administration and safety	9,620	6.9	11.4
Administrative and support services	5,120	6.8	10.5
Accommodation and food services	6,309	6.3	7.4
Other services	3,336	5.2	8.4
Retail trade	8,589	5.1	7.0
Mining	2,555	5.1	10.9
Education and training	7,396	4.3	6.7
Electricity, gas, water and waste services	1,105	3.8	7.2
Rental, hiring and real estate services	1,150	3.3	5.6
Information media and telecommunications	489	1.4	2.4
Professional, scientific and technical services	2,263	1.2	2.2
Financial and insurance services	695	0.8	1.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>120,355</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>9.9</b>

\*preliminary data subject to revision in future years as further claims are finalised.

\*\*other industries include all other industries excluding the top seven industries by number of serious claims.

NB: For some claims information about age, sex, industry and occupation is not available. Stated totals may therefore differ from the sums of rows or columns.