

Work-related injury fatalities

Key WHS statistics Australia 2022

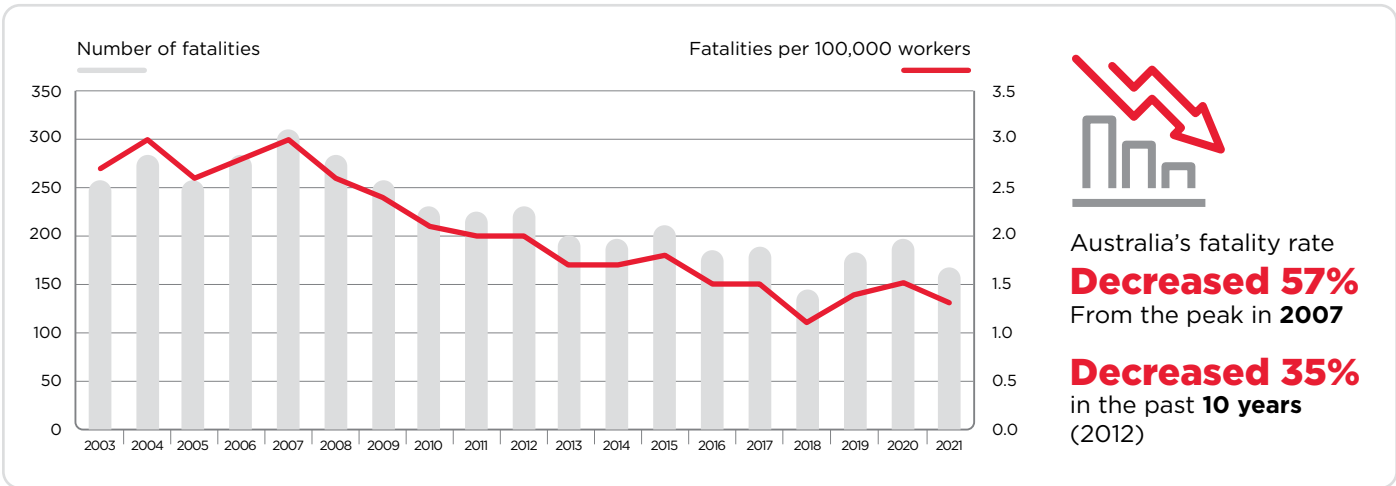
Safe Work Australia compiles the Work-related Traumatic Injury Fatalities data set which provides national statistics on all workers and bystanders fatally injured at work. This data draws on a range of information sources, including:

- 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.

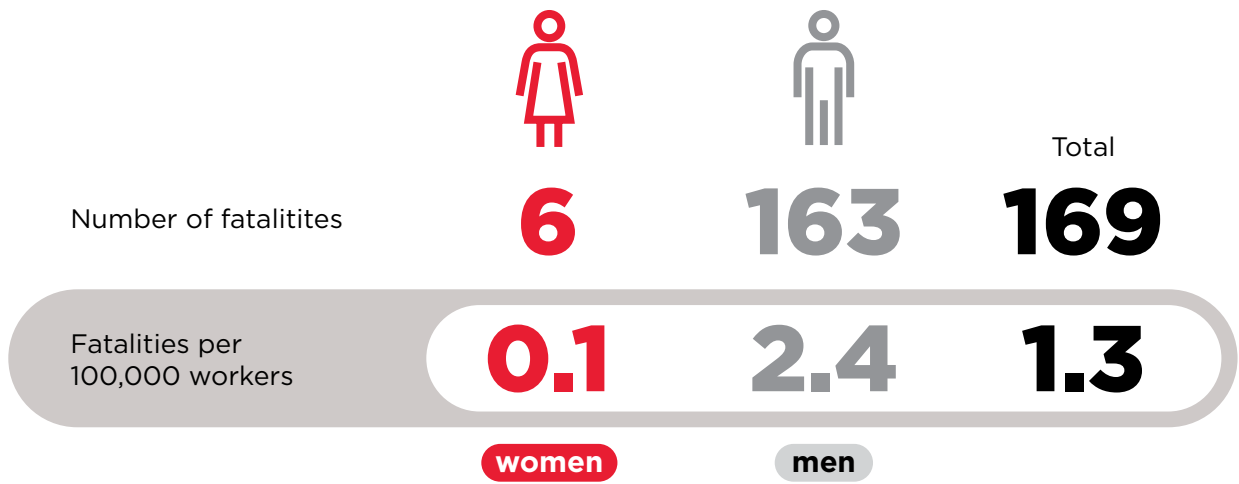
Work-related fatalities resulting from diseases, natural causes and suicides are excluded. Further explanatory notes on the data can be found in the [Explanatory notes for Safe Work Australia datasets](#).

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 2021



Worker fatalities by gender, 2021



Work-related injury fatalities

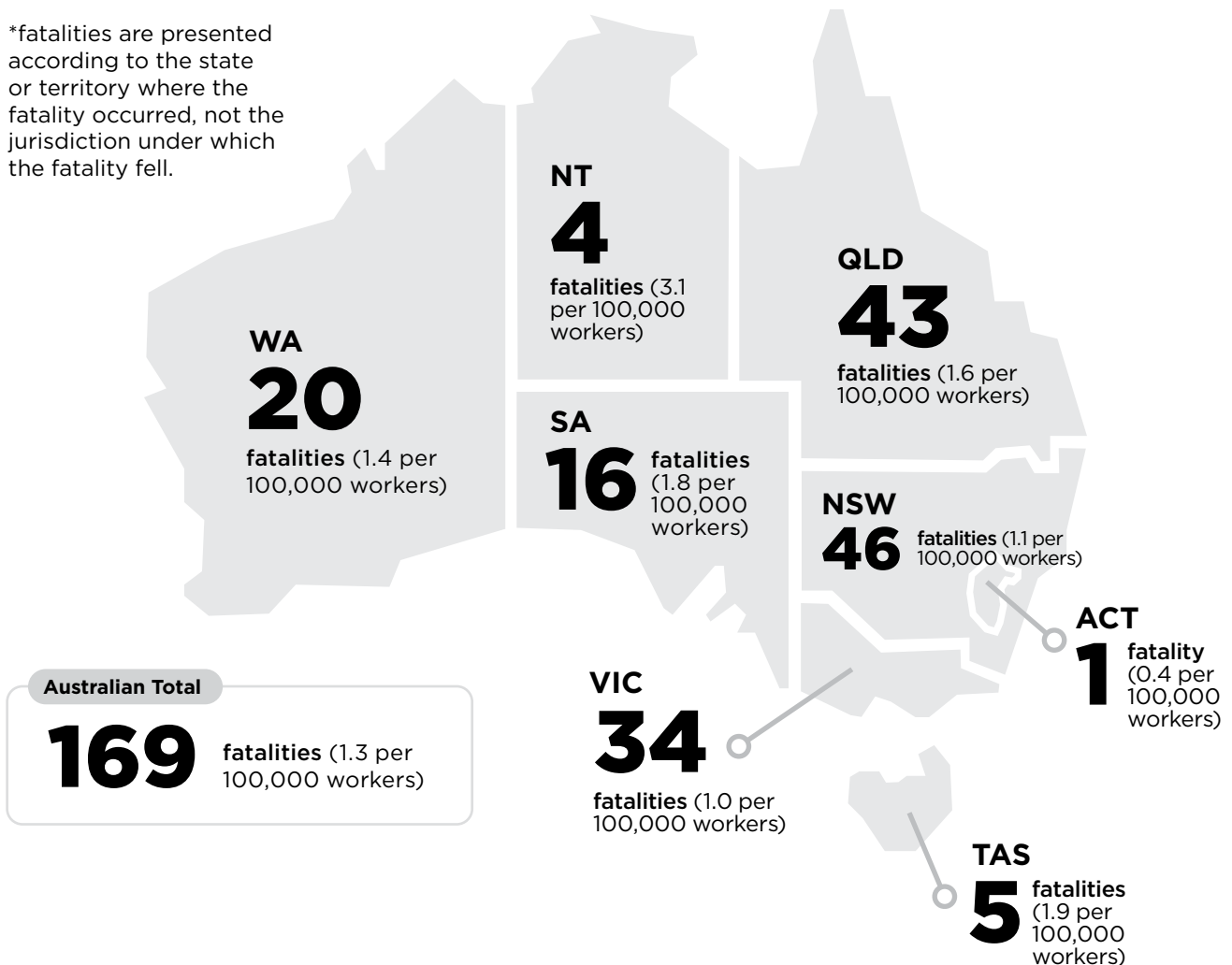
Key WHS statistics Australia 2022

Worker fatalities by age group, 2021

Age group (years)	Number of fatalities	Fatality rate (fatalities per 100,000 workers)
Under 25	16	0.9
25-34	22	0.7
35-44	26	0.9
45-54	33	1.2
55-64	43	2.2
65 and over	29	4.5
Total	169	1.3

Worker fatalities by state/territory, 2021*

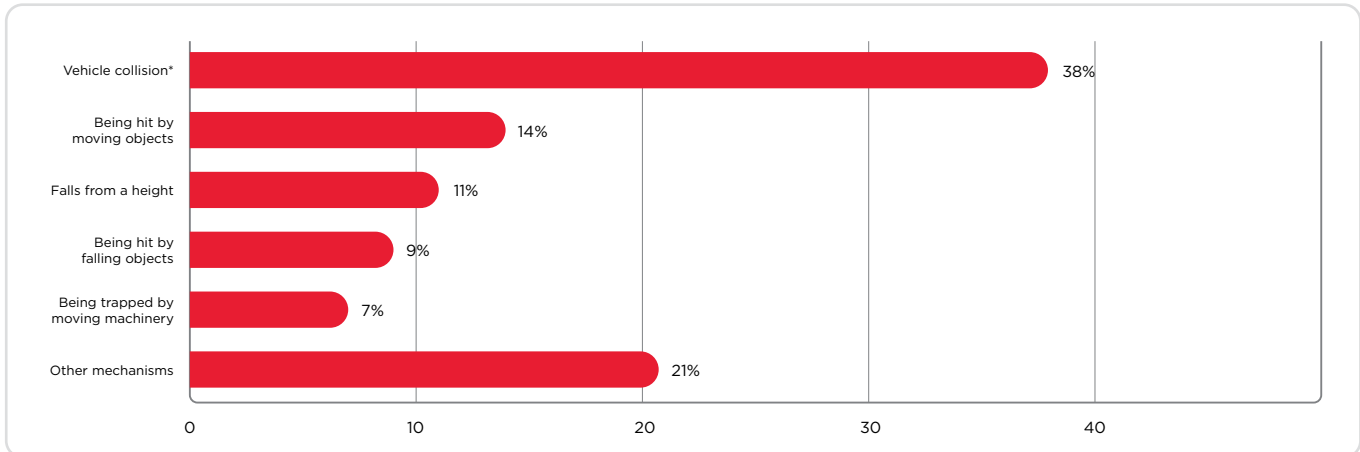
*fatalities are presented according to the state or territory where the fatality occurred, not the jurisdiction under which the fatality fell.



Work-related injury fatalities

Key WHS statistics Australia 2022

Worker fatalities by mechanism of incident, 2021



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.

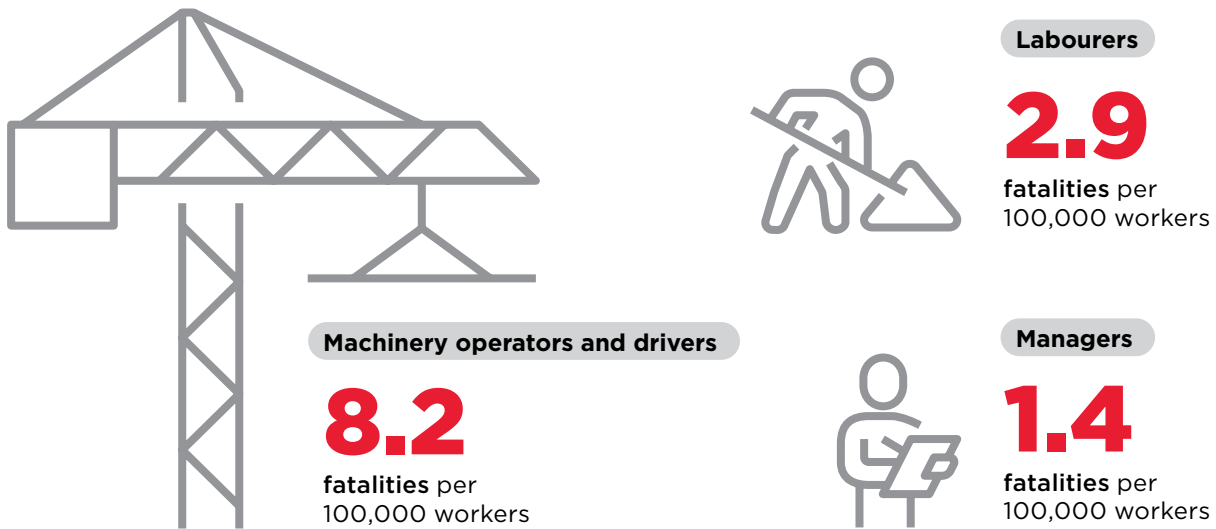
Mechanism of incident	Number of fatalities	% of fatalities
Vehicle collision*	64	38%
Being hit by moving objects	24	14%
Falls from a height	19	11%
Being hit by falling objects	16	9%
Being trapped by moving machinery	11	7%
Other mechanisms	35	21%
Total	169	100%

*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

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Worker fatalities by occupation, 2021



Occupation	Number of fatalities	Fatality rate (fatalities per 100,000 workers)
Machinery operators & drivers	68	8.2
Labourers	34	2.9
Managers	24	1.4
Technicians & trades workers	22	1.2
Community & personal service workers	12	0.8
Professionals	6	0.2
Sales workers	2	0.2
Clerical & administrative workers	1	0.1
Total	169	1.3

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Worker fatalities by industry, 2021



Agriculture, forestry and fishing

10.4

fatalities per 100,000 workers



Transport, postal and warehousing

7.9

fatalities per 100,000 workers



Mining

2.3

fatalities per 100,000 workers

Industry of employer	Number of fatalities	Fatality rate (fatalities per 100,000 workers)
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	33	10.4
Transport, postal & warehousing	52	7.9
Mining	6	2.3
Construction	24	2.1
Arts & recreation services	5	2.1
Electricity, gas, water & waste services	3	2.1
Manufacturing	16	1.8
Administrative & support services	5	1.2
Wholesale trade	4	1.1
Rental, hiring & real estate services	2	0.9
Public administration & safety	6	0.6
Other services	3	0.6
Education & training	4	0.4
Accommodation & food services	2	0.2
Health care & social assistance	2	0.1
Professional, scientific & technical services	1	0.1
Retail trade	1	0.1
Financial & insurance services	0	0.0
Information media & telecommunications	0	0.0
Total	169	1.3

Work-related injury and disease

Key WHS statistics Australia 2022

Safe Work Australian 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 2020-21 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, 2020-21p*



130,195

total serious claims

Frequency rate



6.5

serious claims per million hours worked

Median time lost



7

weeks per serious claim

Median compensation paid**



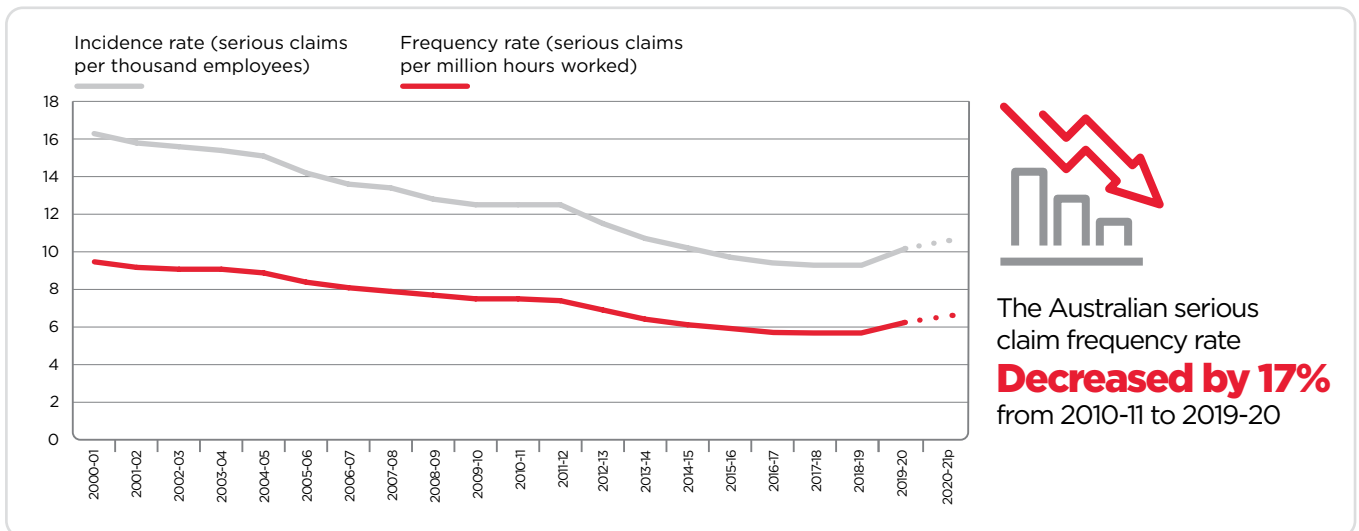
\$15,072

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 2020-21*



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

Work-related injury and disease

Key WHS statistics Australia 2022

Serious claims by gender, 2020-21p*



Frequency rate (serious claims per million hours worked)

6.0

6.9

Median time lost from work (weeks)

7.4

6.8

Median compensation paid**

\$13,638

\$15,950

women

men

Gender	Number of serious claims	Frequency rate (serious claims per million hours worked)	Incidence rate (serious claims per thousand employees)
Female	50,929	6.0	8.5
Male	79,083	6.9	12.5
Total***	130,195	6.5	10.5

*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.

***the totals include serious claims where gender was not collected or is unknown.

Work-related injury and disease

Key WHS statistics Australia 2022

Serious claims by age group, 2020-21p*



Lowest claim rate

workers aged 35-39

5.2

claims per million hours worked



Highest claim rate

workers aged 60-64

9.3

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	4,581	7.5	6.5
20-24	11,905	6.9	9.7
25-29	13,693	5.6	9.4
30-34	13,567	5.3	9.1
35-39	13,035	5.2	8.9
40-44	12,631	5.6	9.8
45-49	15,161	6.6	11.8
50-54	15,908	7.7	13.4
55-59	14,856	8.4	14.1
60-64	10,515	9.3	14.8
65 and over	4,343	7.1	9.2
Total	130,195	6.5	10.5

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

Work-related injury and disease

Key WHS statistics Australia 2022

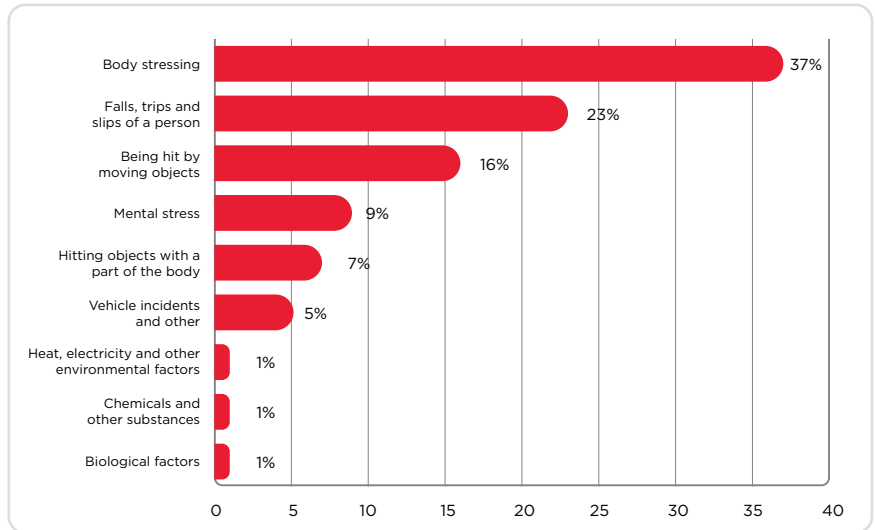
Serious claims by mechanism of incident, 2020-21p*



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	18,574	29,710	48,358	36%	38%	37%
Falls, trips and slips of a person	13,071	16,935	30,039	26%	21%	23%
Being hit by moving objects	6,699	13,623	20,339	13%	17%	16%
Mental stress	6,418	4,682	11,109	13%	6%	9%
Hitting objects with a part of the body	2,250	7,260	9,535	4%	9%	7%
Vehicle incidents and other***	2,319	4,786	7,124	5%	6%	5%
Heat, electricity and other environmental factors	717	999	1,721	1%	1%	1%
Chemicals and other substances	408	678	1,086	1%	1%	1%
Total**	50,929	79,083	130,195	100%	100%	100%

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

**the total for serious claims includes other mechanisms of incident such as biological factors, sound and pressure, roll over, slide or cave-in, and other multiple or 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.

****percentages are rounded to the nearest decimal place and may not sum to total.

*****the totals include serious claims where gender was not collected or is unknown.

Work-related injury and disease

Key WHS statistics Australia 2022

Serious claims by nature of injury/disease 2020-21p*



40%

Traumatic joint/
ligament and
muscle/tendon injury



16%

Musculoskeletal
and connective
tissue diseases



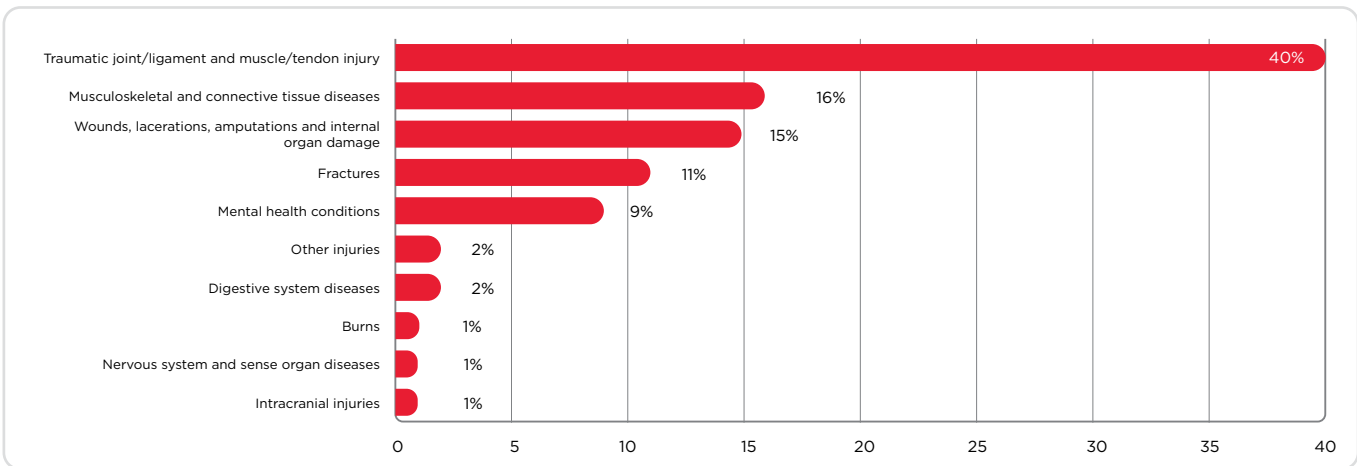
15%

Wounds, lacerations,
amputations and internal
organ damage



71%
Injury

29%
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	20,926	31,310	52,316	41%	40%	40%
Musculoskeletal and connective tissue diseases	9,035	11,901	20,965	18%	15%	16%
Wounds, lacerations, amputations and internal organ damage	5,112	14,348	19,485	10%	18%	15%
Fractures	4,792	8,925	13,732	9%	11%	11%
Mental health conditions	6,899	5,244	12,155	14%	7%	9%
Other injuries**	1,070	1,882	2,952	2%	2%	2%
Digestive system diseases	111	1,874	1,989	0%	2%	2%
Burn	697	1,147	1,850	1%	1%	1%
Nervous system and sense organ diseases	717	755	1,475	1%	1%	1%
Intracranial injuries	577	618	1,199	1%	1%	1%
Total***	50,929	79,083	130,195	100%	100%	100%

*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.

****percentages are rounded to the nearest decimal place and may not sum to total.

*****the totals include serious claims where gender was not collected or is unknown.

Work-related injury and disease

Key WHS statistics Australia 2022

Mental health conditions, 2020-21p*



12,155

Serious claims
for Mental health conditions



9.3%

Proportion of all serious claims due to Mental health conditions

Median time lost



30.7

weeks per serious claim

Median compensation paid**



\$55,270

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.

- Mental health conditions account for a relatively small but increasing proportion of serious claims, rising from **6.2%** of all serious claims in 2014-15 to **9.3%** in 2020-21p.
- In 2020-21, the largest share related to anxiety or stress disorders (**36%**) or reaction to stressors – other, multiple or not specified (**34%**).
- Workplace mental health conditions are one of the costliest forms of workplace injury. Our data show that they lead to significantly more time off work and higher compensation paid when compared to physical injuries and diseases. In 2019-20:
 - The median time lost for mental health conditions was **30.7 working weeks** per serious claim, compared to **6.2 working weeks** per serious claim for physical injuries and diseases.
 - The median compensation paid was **\$55,270** per serious claim, compared to **\$13,883** for physical injuries and diseases.
- The median time lost (in working weeks) for mental health conditions has increased markedly in recent years, from **18.8 working weeks** in 2015-16 to **30.7 working weeks** in 2019-20.

COVID-19 claims***



In 2020-21p,

474

workers' compensation claims for COVID-19 were accepted.

Of these claims



76%

Women

24%

Men



16%

workers aged 25-29 years lodged the **highest proportion of claims**



83%

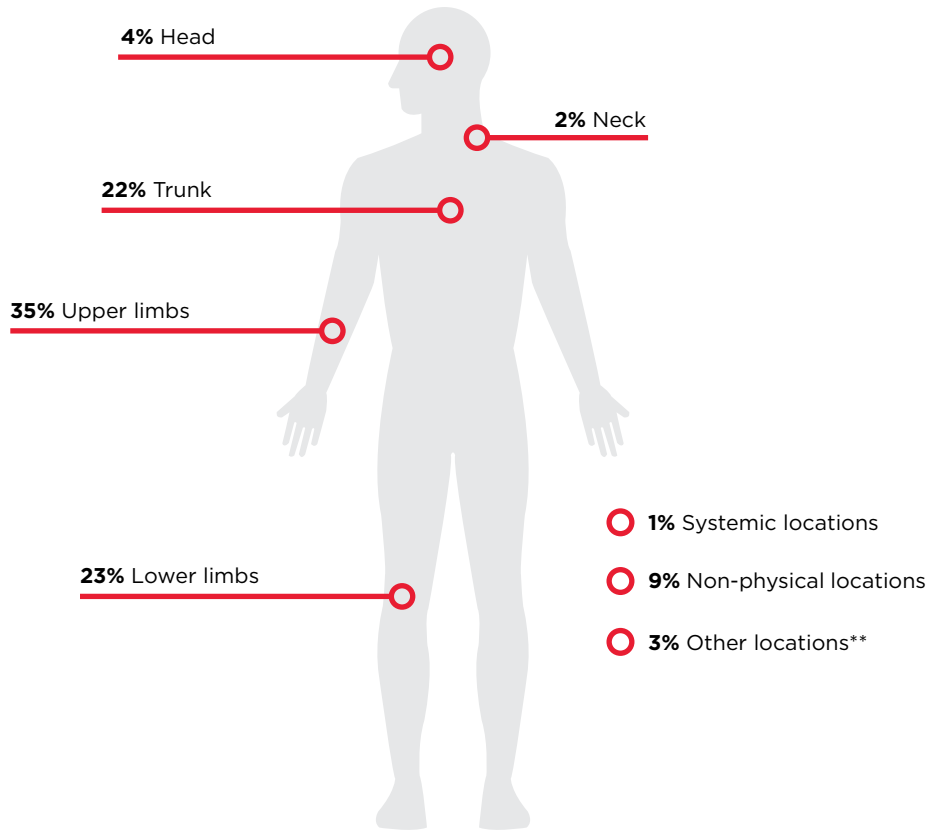
health care and social assistance industry had the **highest proportion of claims**

***the COVID workers' compensation claims data need to be interpreted carefully in the context of the reference period for this data, the difficulty in establishing a work connection to transmission of the virus and the possibility that workers with COVID-19 may not have applied for compensation and instead used personal leave.

Work-related injury and disease

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Serious claims by bodily location of injury, 2020-21p*



Bodily location of injury/disease	Number of serious claims	% of serious claims****
Head	4,784	4%
Lower limbs	30,081	23%
Multiple locations	4,467	3%
Neck	2,652	2%
Non-physical locations	12,134	9%
Systemic locations	938	1%
Trunk	28,560	22%
Upper limbs	45,993	35%
Total***	130,195	100%

*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.

****percentages are rounded to the nearest decimal place and may not sum to total.

Work-related injury and disease

Key WHS statistics Australia 2022

Serious claims by occupation, 2020-21*



Labourers

21.9

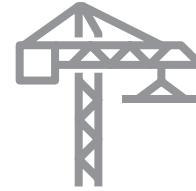
serious claims per million hours worked



Community and personal service workers

15.2

serious claims per million hours worked



Machinery operators and drivers

11.7

serious claims per million hours worked



% of serious claims

- 26%** Labourers
- 13%** Machinery operators and drivers
- 17%** Technicians and trades workers
- 20%** Community and personal service workers
- 4%** Sales workers
- 11%** Professionals
- 4%** Clerical and administrative workers
- 5%** Managers

Occupation	Number of serious claims	Frequency rate (serious claims per million hours worked)	Incidence rate (serious claims per thousand employees)
Labourers	33,309	21.9	30.5
Community and personal service workers	26,245	15.2	19.2
Machinery operators and drivers	16,443	11.7	21.8
Technicians and trades workers	22,255	7.9	14.5
Sales workers	4,825	3.6	4.4
Professionals	14,126	2.6	4.3
Managers	5,925	2.0	3.9
Clerical and administrative workers	5,536	2.1	3.2
Total**	130,195	6.5	10.5

*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

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Serious claims by industry, 2020-21p*



Agriculture, forestry and fishing

11.1

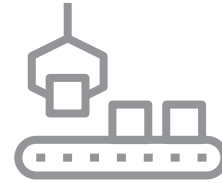
serious claims per million hours worked



Health care and social assistance

10.2

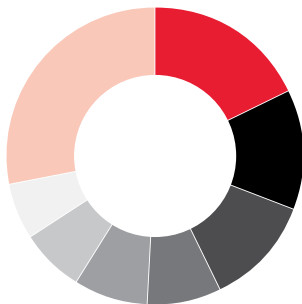
serious claims per million hours worked



Manufacturing

9.6

serious claims per million hours worked



% of serious claims

- 20% Health care and social assistance
- 12% Construction
- 11% Manufacturing
- 8% Public administration and safety
- 7% 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 2022

Serious claims by industry, 2020-21p*

Industry	Number of serious claims	Frequency rate (serious claims per million hours worked)	Incidence rate (serious claims per thousand employees)
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	4,159	11.1	20.2
Health care and social assistance	26,239	10.2	14.6
Manufacturing	14,663	9.6	17.6
Construction	16,088	8.8	16.9
Transport, postal and warehousing	9,122	8.8	15.8
Wholesale trade	5,352	8.0	14.7
Administrative and support services	5,364	7.9	12.1
Arts and recreation services	2,195	7.6	9.7
Public administration and safety	10,481	7.1	11.8
Accommodation and food services	6,890	7.0	8.2
Other services	3,648	5.5	8.9
Mining	2,806	5.2	11.2
Retail trade	8,986	5.1	7.0
Education and training	8,212	4.7	7.1
Electricity, gas, water and waste services	1,313	4.5	8.8
Rental, hiring and real estate services	1,128	3.2	5.7
Information media and telecommunications	574	1.8	3.1
Professional, scientific and technical services	2,290	1.2	2.1
Financial and insurance services	614	0.7	1.3
Total**	130,195	6.5	10.5

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

**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.