



Australian Work Health and
Safety (WHS) Strategy
2023-2033

One-year performance update

July 2025

Disclaimer

Safe Work Australia is an Australian Government statutory agency established in 2009. Safe Work Australia includes Members from the Commonwealth, and each state and territory, Members representing the interests of workers and Members representing the interests of employers.

Safe Work Australia works with the Commonwealth, state and territory governments to improve work health and safety and workers' compensation arrangements. Safe Work Australia is a national policy body, not a regulator of work health and safety. The Commonwealth, states and territories have responsibility for regulating and enforcing work health and safety laws in their jurisdiction.

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Introduction

The data used in this report represents the latest information available in 2024.

The Australian Work Health and Safety Strategy 2023–2033 (the Strategy) sets an ambitious vision for work health and safety (WHS) outcomes in Australia - *safe and healthy work for all*.

Achieving the goal of reduced worker fatalities, injuries and illnesses will require sustained effort across identified priority action areas, including information and awareness, national coordination, data and intelligence gathering, health and safety leadership, and compliance and enforcement.

The Strategy was launched in 2023 and is agreed by Safe Work Australia Members and ministers with responsibility for work health and safety (WHS), demonstrating the commitment of all parties to work cooperatively to drive continual improvements in Australia's WHS performance.

Safe Work Australia will periodically report on progress throughout the life of the Strategy. This will assist to ensure Australia remains on track to realise its vision and also identify any new focus areas or emerging issues.



Interpreting this update

The rate of change may be slow for some quantitative measures presented because three-year averages are being used to smooth the inherent volatility in the data. For more information on methods and data sources, please refer to the technical report [About the data](#).

Green indicates improvement in measure

Yellow indicates limited change in measure

Red indicates worsening in measure

Grey indicates no notable change in measure or insufficient data

Data sources:

1. Safe Work Australia, Traumatic injury fatalities, 2023
2. Safe Work Australia, National dataset for compensation-based statistics, 2022–23p
3. Australian Bureau of Statistics, Work-related injuries survey, 2021–22
4. Department of Health and Aged Care, National Occupational Respiratory Disease Registry, May 2024 (commencement of the registry) to December 2024


Summary

One year on from the baseline of the Strategy, initial signs of progress are positive, however further years of data are required before a trend can be established. There have been reductions in the fatality rate and the frequency rate of work-related respiratory disease, with action also taken by Safe Work Australia Members to address priority exposures in the workplace concerning psychosocial hazards and harmful substances.

Whilst the frequency rate of serious claims increased from the baseline, there may be early signs of change – the reporting methodology is based on a three-year rolling average, however the year-on-year change in the latest data shows a decline for the first time since 2015-16. Successive reporting periods will help to assess longer term trends.

This update provides a summary of changes for the quantitative targets to reflect the latest available data.

Targets for performance monitoring*

	Baseline (2023)	Current (2024)	End target (2033)
 Quantitative targets			
↓ A reduction in the number of worker fatalities ¹ caused by traumatic injuries of at least 30%	1.43 fatalities per 100,000 workers	1.39 fatalities per 100,000 workers	1.00 fatalities per 100,000 workers
↓ A reduction in the frequency rate of serious claims ² resulting in one or more weeks off work of at least 20%	6.34 serious claims per million hours worked	6.60 serious claims per million hours worked	5.07 serious claims per million hours worked
↓ A reduction in the frequency rate of permanent impairment ² by 15%	0.78 permanent impairment claims per million hours worked	Update not published due to impact of yearly revisions on permanent impairment claims data [^]	0.66 permanent impairment claims per million hours worked
↓ A reduction of the overall incidence of work-related injury or illness ³ among workers to below 3.5%	3.5%* incidence of work-related injury or illness in working population	No new data	Below 3.5%
✗ No new cases of accelerated silicosis ⁴ by 2033	Not available	<5 new cases reported [‡]	0
↓ A reduction in the frequency rate of work-related respiratory disease ² by 20%	0.040 claims per million hours worked	0.031 claims per million hours worked	0.032 claims per million hours worked

* For more information about the data sources and methodology used to monitor performance of the Strategy, please see the technical report About the data, available at <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/australian-whs-strategy-2023-2033-baseline-report-about-data>

* The target of reducing the overall incidence of work-related injury or illness amongst workers to below 3.5% was set in the Strategy prior to the release of the latest data, which then showed this figure for the 2021-22 period was 3.5%. The data will continue to be monitored closely over the course of the Strategy to understand where further improvements may be made.

[^] The frequency rate of permanent impairment claims should be interpreted with caution as the data are subject to significant upward revision over time. Whilst an update for this target has not been published one year on from the baseline, the data will be assessed in future reporting.

[‡] The National Occupational Respiratory Disease Registry commenced operation in May 2024. As a result, baseline data for this target is not available.