

# Work Health and Safety in the Accommodation and Food Services Industry



2015



**safe work australia**

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# Summary

The rate of serious claims fell by 18% from 9 serious claims per million hours worked in 2000–01 to 7.4 in 2011–12.

**18%**

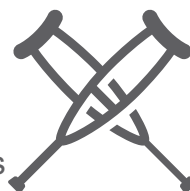
decrease in the rate of serious claims over 12 years



92% of serious claims arose from injury and musculoskeletal disorders, while 8% arose from diseases.

**92%**

of serious claims were caused by injuries & musculoskeletal disorders



Body stressing led to the highest proportion (32%) of serious claims. Nearly half (48%) of all body stressing disorders arose from muscular stress while lifting, carrying or putting down objects.

**32%**

of serious claims arose from body stressing



The bodily location most commonly affected by injuries and diseases that led to serious claims was the hand, fingers and thumb, which accounted for 22% of serious claims.

**22%**

hand, fingers and thumb

**8%**

shoulder

**8%**  
knee

**19%**  
back



The median time lost from work for a serious claim was 4 weeks in 2011–12.

**4 weeks**

was the typical time lost from work for a serious claim



The median payment for a serious claim was \$4 700 in 2011–12.

**\$4 700**

was the typical payment for a serious claim



In 2013–14, the accommodation and food services industry had an incidence rate of 58.6 injuries and diseases per 1 000 workers, which is 38% higher than the rate for the Australian workforce.

**38%**

higher rate of injuries and diseases than the Australian workforce



Vehicle incidents led to the highest proportion (26%) of fatal injuries over the 11-year period between 2003 and 2013.

**26%**

of fatal injuries were the result of vehicle incidents



# Introduction

The accommodation and food services industry was identified as a priority industry in the Australian Work Health and Safety Strategy 2012–2022 (the Australian Strategy) (Safe Work Australia 2012), which was developed through consultation with governments, industry, unions and the public. Priority industries were based on rates of injuries, diseases or fatalities, or due to the nature of hazards found in each industry. The aim of the Australian Strategy is to focus attention on selected priority industries so that causes of workplace injuries, diseases and fatalities can be identified and minimised through appropriate prevention strategies.

This report supports the objectives of the Australian Strategy by profiling the accommodation and food services industry in order to identify the main risks faced by workers in the industry and to highlight areas within the industry that merit the greatest attention. The data used to profile the industry come from the:

- Labour Force Survey
- National Data Set for Compensation-Based Statistics
- Work-Related Injuries Survey, and
- Traumatic Injury Fatalities database.

## Industry inclusions and exclusions

All industry classifications in this report are based on the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification, 2006, which was developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and Statistics New Zealand to enable the standardised collection and analysis of industry statistics in Australia and New Zealand. The classification system groups businesses that undertake similar economic activities.

The accommodation and food services industry is comprised of businesses that are primarily engaged in providing short-term accommodation, and food and beverage services to customers. The industry is divided into four main subdivisions—accommodation; cafes, restaurants and takeaway food services; pubs, taverns and bars; and clubs.

The accommodation subdivision is comprised of businesses mainly engaged in providing short-term accommodation. Primary activities include the operation of camping grounds, caravan parks for visitors, holiday houses, hotels, motels, resorts, serviced apartments, ski lodges, student residences (except boarding schools) and youth hostels. It excludes businesses that rent or lease residential properties and businesses that provide residential caravan accommodation.

The cafes, restaurants and takeaway food services subdivision is comprised of businesses mainly engaged in providing food and beverage services to customers. Primary activities include the operation of cafes, restaurants, juice bars, mobile food vans, takeaway food services, airline food catering services, and other food and beverage catering services. It excludes retail businesses that provide baked goods.

The pubs, taverns and bars subdivision is comprised of businesses mainly engaged in providing alcoholic beverages for consumption on or off the premises (food and live entertainment may also be provided). Primary activities include the operation of bars, night clubs, pubs and taverns. It excludes retail businesses that solely provide alcoholic beverages for consumption off the premises.

The clubs subdivision is comprised of businesses mainly engaged in providing hospitality services (e.g. gambling, sporting, or other social or entertainment services) to members. It excludes businesses that mainly provide alcoholic beverages for consumption on or off the premises, which are classified in the pubs, taverns and bars subdivision.



# Industry characteristics

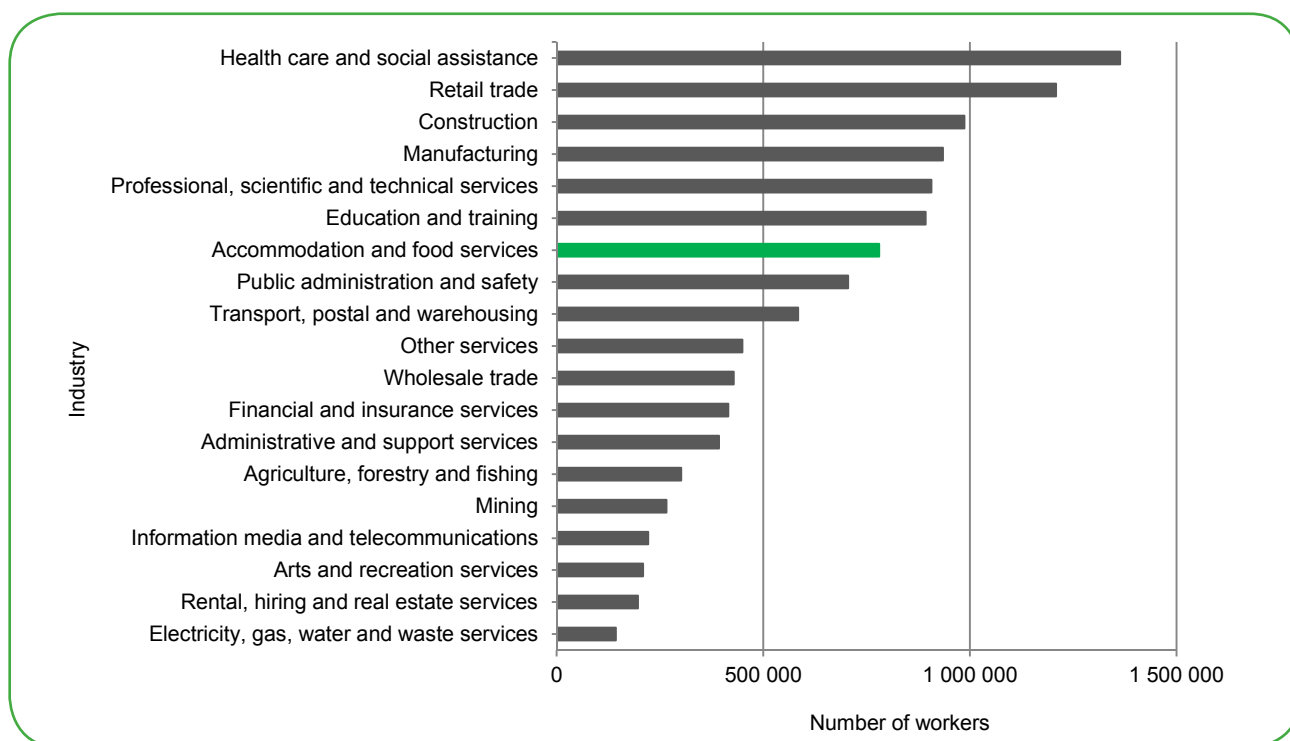
The industry characteristics in this chapter are of Labour Force Survey data that are collected and published by the ABS. The data are derived from monthly surveys and are used to develop a range of statistics about Australian workers. Workers include employees who work for an employer, self-employed people (whether they employ others or not) and those who work without pay for a family business or farm. People who are engaged in voluntary work only are excluded.

This chapter describes key characteristics of workers in the accommodation and food services industry and highlights characteristics that are unique to the industry.

## Workers by industry division

In 2012–13, the accommodation and food services industry employed 780 575 workers, which represents 7% of the Australian workforce for the period. Figure 1 shows the number of workers in each of the 19 Australian industries in 2012–13.

**Figure 1: Number of workers by industry, 2012–13**



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2014a.

## Workers by industry subdivision

Of the 780 575 accommodation and food services workers in 2012–13, 67% worked in cafes, restaurants and takeaway food services, 14% worked in accommodation, 13% worked in pubs, taverns and bars, and 7% worked in clubs.

## Workers by sex

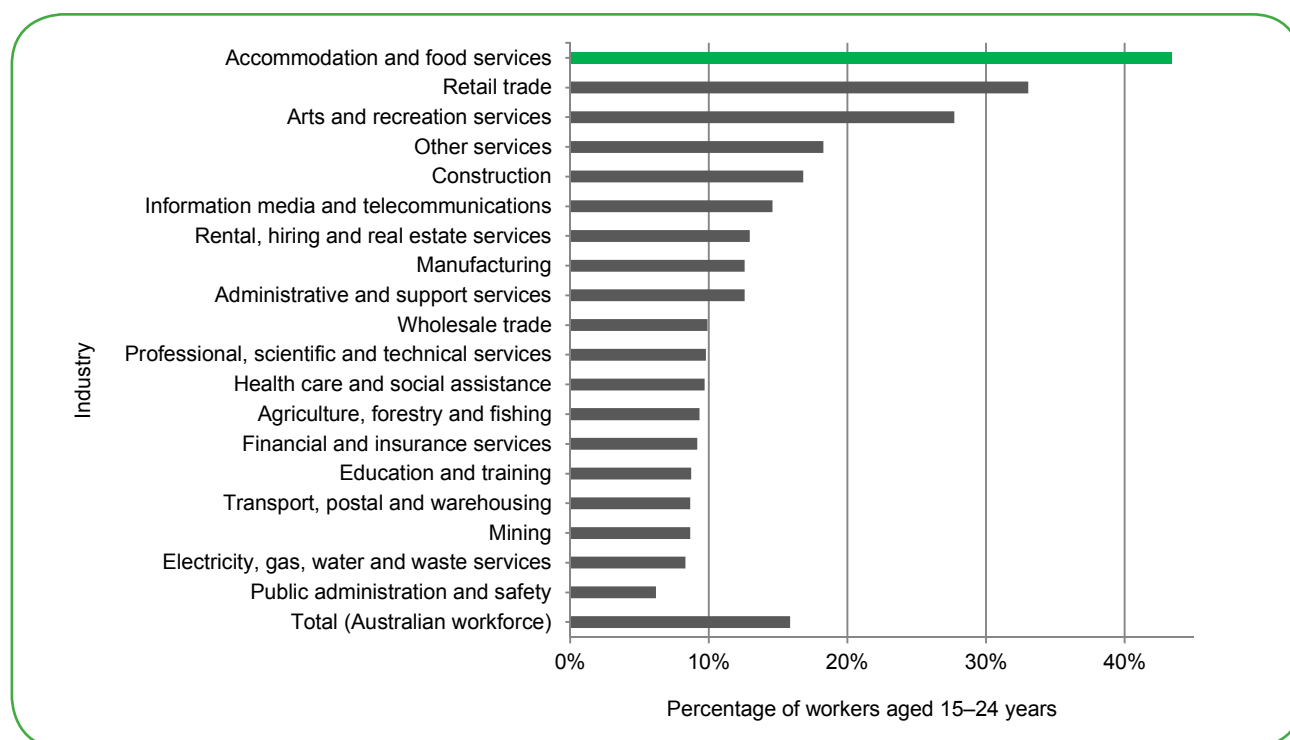
Out of the 19 Australian industries, the accommodation and food services industry is one of six industries that has a higher proportion of female workers than male workers. While female workers comprised 46% of the Australian workforce in 2012–13, they comprised 55% of workers in the accommodation and food services industry.

Although female workers make up the majority of accommodation and food services workers, they work fewer hours on average than male workers. In 2012–13, female workers in the accommodation and food services industry worked an average of 24.3 hours per week, while male workers worked an average of 31.2 hours per week.

## Workers by age group

The accommodation and food services industry has the highest proportion of workers aged between 15 and 24 years. The age group accounted for 43% of accommodation and food services workers in 2012–13, which is significantly higher than any other industry and almost three times higher than the proportion for the Australian workforce. Figure 2 outlines the percentage of workers aged 15–24 years by industry for 2012–13.

**Figure 2: Percentage of workers aged 15–24 years by industry, 2012–13**



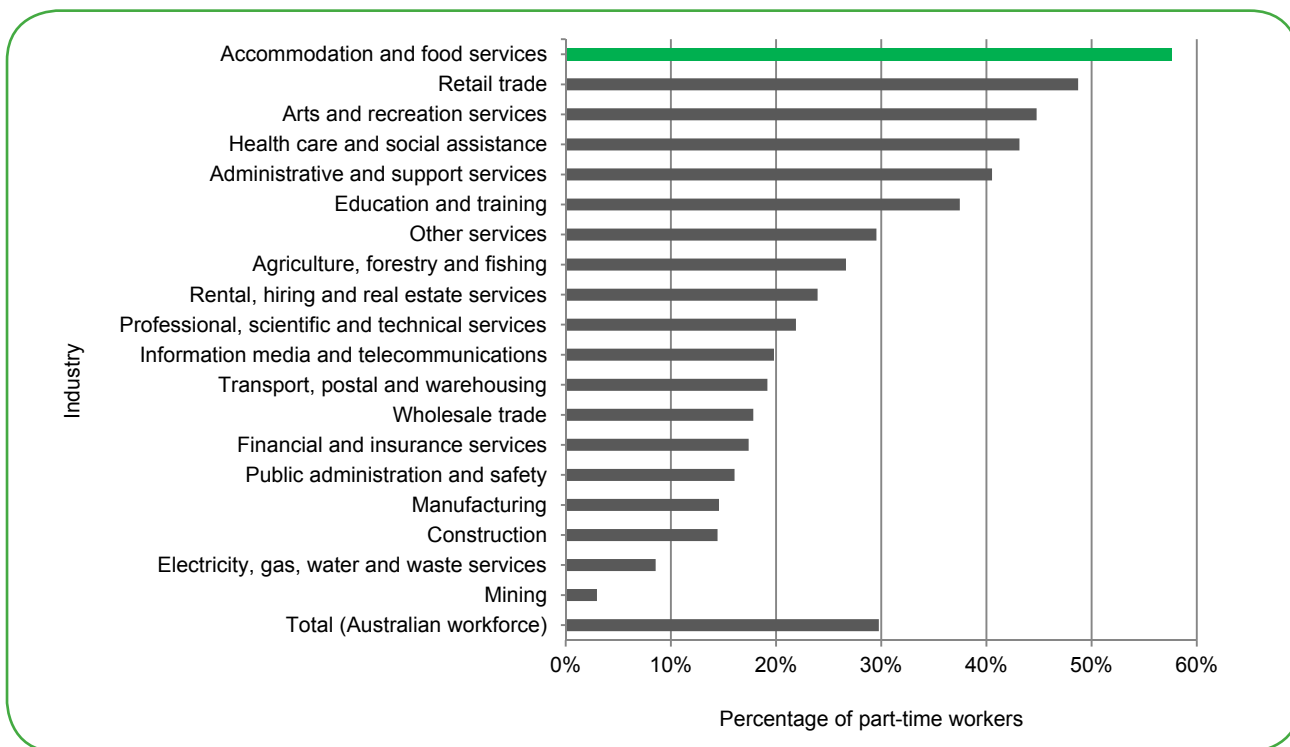
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2014a.

## Workers by part-time status

The accommodation and food services industry has the highest proportion of part-time workers (people who usually work less than 35 hours per week) in Australia. In 2012–13, 58% of workers in the accommodation and food services industry were part-time workers, which is higher than any other industry and almost twice as high as the proportion of part-time workers in the Australian workforce. Figure 3 shows the percentage of part-time workers in each industry in 2012–13.



**Figure 3: Percentage of part-time workers by industry, 2012–13**



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2014a.

## Number of hours worked

Unsurprisingly, the average number of hours worked by accommodation and food services workers is lower than other industries because it has the highest proportion of part-time workers in Australia. In 2012–13, workers in the accommodation and food services industry worked an average of 27.4 hours per week, which is 6.5 hours fewer than the average for the Australian workforce.

When the data are disaggregated by workers status, however, full-time workers (people who usually work 35 hours or more per week) in the accommodation and food services industry work more hours on average than full-time workers in the Australian workforce. In 2012–13, full-time workers in the accommodation and food services industry worked an average of 44.3 hours, while full-time workers in the Australian workforce worked an average of 41 hours per week.

In contrast, part-time workers in the accommodation and food services industry work fewer hours on average than part-time workers in the Australian workforce. In 2012–13, part-time workers in the accommodation and food services industry worked an average of 15.1 hours per week, while part-time workers in the Australian workforce worked an average of 17 hours per week. Figure 4 shows the average number of hours worked by full-time and part-time workers in the accommodation and food services industry and the Australian workforce in 2012–13.

**Figure 4: Average number of hours worked in the accommodation and food services industry and the Australian workforce by worker status, 2012–13**



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2014a.

# Workers' compensation statistics

Safe Work Australia compiles national workers' compensation statistics using data obtained from workers' compensation authorities in each state, territory and the Commonwealth Government. These data are collated into the National Data Set for Compensation-Based Statistics, which is Safe Work Australia's primary source of information on work-related injuries and diseases.

The workers' compensation statistics in this report are restricted to serious claims only. A serious claim is an accepted workers' compensation claim that involves one or more weeks away from work and excludes all fatalities, and all injuries experienced while travelling to or from work or while on a break away from the workplace. These statistics are presented to provide insight into the characteristics of compensated injuries and diseases and to assess changes in serious claims over time.

When analysing trends over time or comparing different groups of employees, incidence and frequency rates are better measures of risk than the number of serious claims because they account for differences in the number employees and the number of hours worked respectively. Because a frequency rate accounts for the number of hours worked, it is a better measure than an incidence rate, particularly when assessing a large proportion of employees who work part-time or lower-than-average hours. Therefore, due to the high proportion of part-time employees and the low average hours worked in the accommodation and food services industry, only frequency rates of serious claims are presented in this chapter.

Serious claims covering a three-year period (2010–11 to 2012–13) were aggregated and are used to describe most of the workers' compensation statistics in this chapter. Data for 2012–13 are preliminary and are subject to revision.

## Serious claims by industry division

A total of 21 000 serious claims were made by accommodation and food services employees between 2010–11 and 2012–13, which represents 6% of serious claims made by all Australian employees. The industry recorded a frequency rate of 7.3 serious claims per million hours worked, which is similar to the frequency rate for all Australian employees (7.1 serious claims per million hours worked).

## Serious claims by industry subdivision

Between 2010–11 and 2012–13, the clubs subdivision had the highest frequency rate (11.3 serious claims per million hours worked) in the industry, followed by the accommodation subdivision (10.6 serious claims per million hours worked). The cafes, restaurants and takeaway food services subdivision had the lowest frequency rate (5.8 serious claims per million hours worked).

While the accommodation subdivision constituted 16% of total hours worked in the industry, it accounted for 24% of the industry's serious claims. Likewise, although the clubs subdivision constituted 8% of total hours worked in the industry, it accounted for 13% of the industry's serious claims. In contrast, despite constituting 60% of the industry's total hours worked, the cafes, restaurants and takeaway food services subdivision accounted for 48% of serious claims in the industry. Table 1 outlines frequency rates and selected percentages for each industry subdivision for 2010–11 to 2012–13.

**Table 1: Serious claims in accommodation and food services industry: frequency rates, percentage of industry's total serious claims and percentage of industry's total hours worked by industry subdivision, 2010–11 to 2012–13 combined**

Industry subdivision	Frequency rate (serious claims per million hours worked)	Percentage of industry's total serious claims	Percentage of industry's total hours worked
Clubs	11.3	13%	8%
Accommodation	10.6	24%	16%
Pubs, taverns and bars	7.5	16%	15%
Cafes, restaurants and takeaway food services	5.8	48%	60%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: National Data Set for Compensation-Based Statistics.

## Trends in frequency rates over time

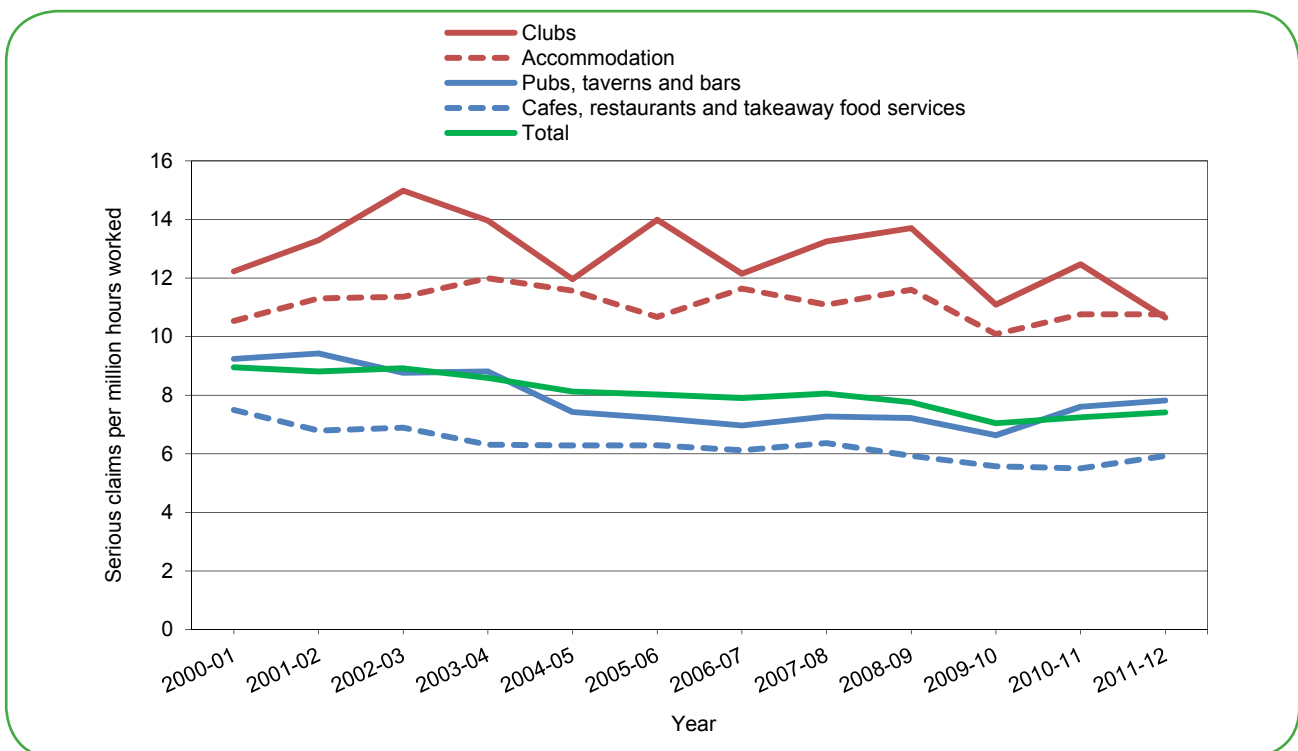
The trends presented in this section exclude preliminary data (2012–13) as they are subject to revision.

The frequency rate of serious claims in the accommodation and food services industry fell by 18% from 9 serious claims per million hours worked in 2000–01 to 7.4 in 2011–12. In comparison, the frequency rate for all Australian employees fell by 24% over the same period.

Within the accommodation and food services industry, each subdivision experienced a decline in frequency rates in 2009–10 and this was driven by an increase in the number of hours worked and a simultaneous decrease in the number of serious claims in each subdivision.

Over the 12-year period, the clubs subdivision had the highest frequency rates in the industry. The cafes, restaurants and takeaway food services subdivision had the lowest frequency rates and experienced the most stable frequency rates out of all subdivisions. Figure 5 shows trends in frequency rates for accommodation and food services subdivisions from 2000–01 to 2011–12.

**Figure 5: Serious claims in accommodation and food services subdivisions: frequency rates, 2000–01 to 2011–12**

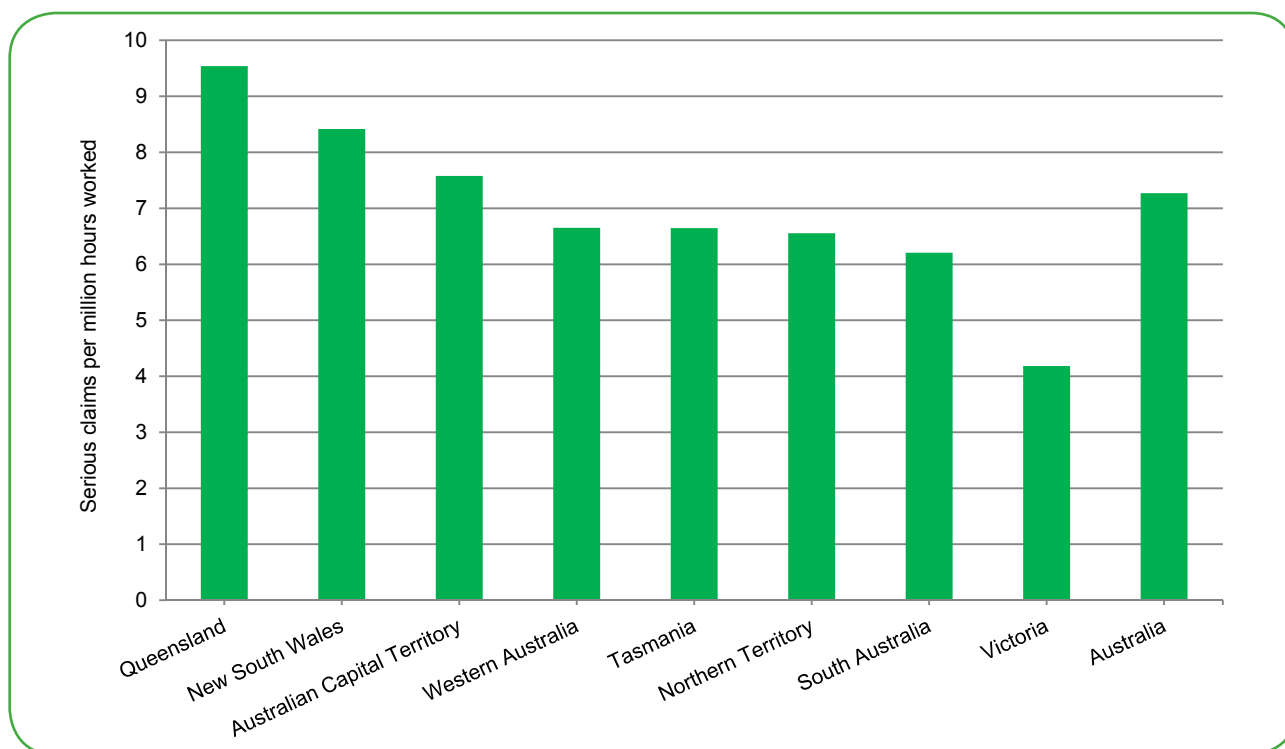


Source: National Data Set for Compensation-Based Statistics.

## Serious claims by jurisdiction

Between 2010–11 and 2012–13, Queensland had the highest frequency rate (9.5 serious claims per million hours worked), while Victoria had the lowest (4.2 serious claims per million hours worked). Figure 6 shows jurisdiction-specific frequency rates for employees in the accommodation and food services industry for 2010–11 to 2012–13.

**Figure 6: Serious claims in accommodation and food services industry: frequency rates by jurisdiction, 2010–11 to 2012–13 combined**



Source: National Data Set for Compensation-Based Statistics.

### Serious claims by sex

Compared with the industry frequency rate of 7.3 serious claims per million hours worked, female employees had a higher frequency rate of 7.9 serious claims per million hours worked, while male employees had a lower frequency rate of 6.6 serious claims per million hours worked. This means that for each hour worked, the rate for female employees was 20% higher than the rate for male employees between 2010–11 and 2012–13.

### Serious claims by age group

Between 2010–11 and 2012–13, older employees had higher frequency rates than younger employees. Employees aged 25–29 years had the lowest frequency rate of 5.8 serious claims per million hours worked, while the highest frequency rate was recorded by employees aged 50–54 and 60–64 years, both of which had 10.4 serious claims per million hours worked. Table 2 outlines frequency rates and selected percentages by age group for 2010–11 to 2012–13.

**Table 2: Serious claims in accommodation and food services industry: frequency rates, percentage of industry's total serious claims and percentage of industry's total hours worked by age group, 2010–11 to 2012–13 combined**

Age group	Frequency rate (serious claims per million hours worked)	Percentage of industry's total serious claims	Percentage of industry's total hours worked
15–19 years	5.9	12%	14%
20–24 years	6.0	17%	21%
25–29 years	5.8	13%	16%
30–34 years	6.8	10%	10%
35–39 years	7.9	9%	8%
40–44 years	8.3	9%	8%
45–49 years	9.5	10%	8%
50–54 years	10.4	10%	7%
55–59 years	10.0	7%	5%
60–64 years	10.4	4%	3%
65 years and above	7.7	1%	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: National Data Set for Compensation-Based Statistics.

## Mechanism of injuries and diseases

Under the Type of Occurrence Classification System, information about the action that inflicted the injury or disease is coded as the mechanism, which identifies “the action, exposure or event that best describes the circumstances that resulted in the most serious injury or disease” (ASCC 2008).

### Mechanism of injuries and diseases by industry division

Between 2010–11 and 2012–13, body stressing led to the highest proportion (32%) of serious claims in the accommodation and food services industry. Body stressing is a disorder that occurs when muscles, tendons, ligaments or bones are placed under stress due to a single traumatic event or multiple events over time. Nearly half (48%) of all body stressing disorders arose from muscular stress while lifting, carrying, or putting down objects.

The second-highest proportion (24%) of serious claims occurred due to falls, trips and slips of a person. The majority (80%) of falls, trips and slips of a person arose from falls on the same level. Hitting objects with a part of the body and being hit by moving objects led to 13% and 12% of serious claims respectively.

A low proportion of serious claims arose from heat, electricity and other environmental factors (7%), vehicle incidents and other (5%), mental stress (4%), and chemicals and other substances (1%).

### Mechanism of injuries and diseases by industry subdivision

Although 32% of serious claims in the accommodation and food services industry resulted from body stressing, a higher proportion of serious claims in the accommodation (40%) and clubs (37%) subdivisions resulted from the mechanism.

The proportion of mental stress claims was double the industry average among employees in the clubs subdivision (8%) and almost double among employees in the pubs, taverns and bars subdivision (7%). In both subdivisions, serious claims arising from mental stress most commonly involved exposure to workplace or occupational violence.

Employees in the cafes, restaurants and takeaway food services subdivision experienced the highest proportion (11%) of serious claims arising from heat, electricity and other environmental factors, which involved contact with hot objects in almost all (97%) cases. Table 3 outlines the percentage of serious claims for each industry subdivision by mechanism of injury or disease for 2010–11 to 2012–13.



**Table 3: Serious claims in accommodation and food services industry: percentage of serious claims for each subdivision by mechanism of injury or disease, 2010–11 to 2012–13 combined**

Mechanism of injury or disease Mechanism of injury or disease	Clubs	Accommodation	Pubs, taverns and bars	Cafes, restaurants and takeaway food services	Industry total
<b>Body stressing</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>32%</b>
Muscular stress while lifting, carrying, or putting down objects	51%	40%	60%	49%	48%
Muscular stress while handling objects other than lifting, carrying or putting down objects	30%	43%	24%	31%	33%
Muscular stress with no objects being handled	13%	12%	12%	12%	12%
<b>Falls, trips and slips of a person</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>24%</b>
Falls on the same level	81%	75%	76%	83%	80%
Falls from a height	14%	20%	20%	12%	15%
<b>Hitting objects with a part of the body</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>13%</b>
Hitting moving objects	53%	46%	65%	62%	58%
Hitting stationary objects	47%	54%	35%	38%	41%
<b>Being hit by moving objects</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>12%</b>
Being hit by moving objects	34%	35%	31%	41%	37%
Being hit by falling objects	30%	30%	25%	30%	29%
Being assaulted by a person or persons	11%	13%	27%	8%	13%
<b>Heat, electricity and other environmental factors</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>7%</b>
Contact with hot objects	92%	93%	94%	97%	96%
<b>Vehicle incidents and other</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Mental stress</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>4%</b>
Exposure to workplace or occupational violence	32%	15%	46%	23%	30%
Work related harassment and/or workplace bullying	28%	20%	13%	23%	21%
Work pressure	14%	18%	17%	16%	16%
<b>Chemicals and other substances</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Columns may not add up to 100% because the table outlines selected mechanisms of injury or disease.

Source: National Data Set for Compensation-Based Statistics.

## Mechanism of injuries and diseases by sex

There were two marked differences in the way in which female and male employees sustained injuries and diseases that led to serious claims. Compared with male employees, a significantly higher proportion of female employees were compensated for injuries and diseases caused by falls, trips and slips of a person (29% versus 19% for males). Compared with female employees, a substantially higher proportion of male employees were compensated for injuries and diseases caused by hitting objects with a part of the body (16% versus 10% for females). Table 4 outlines the percentage of serious claims for female and male employees by mechanism of injury or disease for 2010–11 to 2012–13.

**Table 4: Serious claims in accommodation and food services industry: percentage of serious claims for female and male employees by mechanism of injury or disease, 2010–11 to 2012–13 combined**

Mechanism of injury or disease	Female	Male	Total
Body stressing	33%	31%	32%
Falls, trips and slips of a person	29%	19%	24%
Hitting objects with a part of the body	10%	16%	13%
Being hit by moving objects	10%	14%	12%
Heat, electricity and other environmental factors	6%	9%	7%
Vehicle incidents and other	5%	5%	5%
Mental stress	5%	3%	4%
Chemicals and other substances	1%	2%	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Columns may not add up to 100% because the table outlines selected mechanisms of injury or disease.

Source: National Data Set for Compensation-Based Statistics.

## Mechanism of injuries and diseases by age group

Older employees were more likely to experience body stressing injuries and diseases than younger employees. The proportion of employees who were compensated for body stressing injuries and diseases increased as age group increased from 16% of employees aged 15–19 years to 43% of employees aged 60–64 years.

Younger employees were more likely to experience injuries and diseases arising from hitting objects with a part of the body, and heat, electricity and other environmental factors than older employees. The proportion of employees who were compensated for injuries and diseases caused by hitting objects with a part of the body increased as age group decreased from 6% for employees aged 55–59 years to 19% for employees aged 15–19 years. The proportion of employees who experienced injuries and diseases caused by heat, electricity and other environmental factors increased as age group decreased from 1% for employees aged 65 years and above to 18% for employees aged 15–19 years. Table 5 outlines the percentage of serious claims for each age group by mechanism of injury or disease for 2010–11 to 2012–13.

**Table 5: Serious claims in accommodation and food services industry: percentage of serious claims for each age group by mechanism of injury or disease, 2010–11 to 2012–13 combined**

Mechanism of injury or disease	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65+
Body stressing	16%	23%	27%	36%	38%	41%	41%	41%	40%	43%	31%
Falls, trips and slips of a person	25%	23%	21%	21%	21%	22%	25%	29%	32%	32%	39%
Hitting objects with a part of the body	19%	18%	17%	12%	10%	10%	8%	8%	6%	7%	11%
Being hit by moving objects	13%	16%	16%	14%	11%	9%	9%	8%	8%	7%	8%
Heat, electricity and other environmental factors	18%	10%	10%	6%	6%	4%	4%	3%	3%	2%	1%
Vehicle incidents and other	4%	4%	5%	6%	7%	6%	7%	6%	6%	4%	6%
Mental stress	3%	4%	4%	4%	5%	6%	5%	5%	4%	4%	2%
Chemicals and other substances	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Columns may not add up to 100% because the table outlines selected mechanisms of injury or disease.

Source: National Data Set for Compensation-Based Statistics.

## Breakdown agency of injuries and diseases

Under the Type of Occurrence Classification System, the breakdown agency identifies “the object, substance or circumstance that was principally involved in, or most closely associated with, the point at which things started to go wrong and which ultimately led to the most serious injury or disease” (ASCC 2008).

### Breakdown agency of injuries and diseases by industry division

Between 2010–11 and 2012–13, non-powered handtools, appliances and equipment led to the highest proportion (33%) of serious claims in the accommodation and food services industry and most commonly involved crates, cartons, boxes, cases, drums, kegs, barrels, and knives and cutlery. Environmental agencies led to 21% of serious claims and most commonly involved wet, oily, or icy internal traffic and ground surfaces, and other types of ground surfaces. Materials and other substances led to 13% of serious claims, most of which involved agencies found in food preparation areas (e.g. food, oil and fat, glass, hot water, and steam).

A low proportion of serious claims arose from animal, human and biological agencies (7%), powered equipment, tools and appliances (6%), mobile plant and transport (4%), and machinery and (mainly) fixed plant (3%).

### Breakdown agency of injuries and diseases by industry subdivision

The proportion of serious claims arising from animal, human and biological agencies (exposure to other people in most cases) was highest among employees in the clubs (8%), and pubs, taverns and bars (11%) subdivisions. Materials and other substances, which most commonly involved contact with agencies found in food preparation areas (e.g. food, oil and fat, glass, hot water, and steam), led to the highest proportion (15%) of serious claims among employees in the cafes, restaurants and takeaway food services subdivision. Table 6 outlines the percentage of serious claims for each industry subdivision by breakdown agency of injury or disease for 2010–11 to 2012–13.

**Table 6: Serious claims in accommodation and food services industry: percentage of serious claims for each subdivision by breakdown agency of injury or disease, 2010–11 to 2012–13 combined**

Breakdown agency of injury or disease	Clubs	Accommodation	Pubs, taverns and bars	Cafes, restaurants and takeaway food services	Industry total
<b>Non-powered handtools, appliances and equipment</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>33%</b>
Crates, cartons, boxes, cases, drums, kegs, barrels	21%	10%	30%	22%	20%
Knives and cutlery	15%	8%	17%	26%	19%
Doors and windows	5%	6%	6%	6%	6%
Beds, hospital beds	1%	18%	1%	1%	6%
<b>Environmental agencies</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>21%</b>
Wet, oily, or icy internal traffic and ground surfaces	19%	19%	25%	30%	25%
Other internal traffic and ground surfaces	20%	14%	20%	19%	18%
Traffic and ground surfaces other	16%	16%	10%	14%	14%
Steps and stairways	14%	15%	19%	9%	12%
<b>Materials and substances</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>13%</b>
Food	13%	9%	16%	20%	17%
Oil and fat (animal or vegetable)	7%	7%	10%	22%	16%
Glass	12%	15%	23%	9%	12%
Hot water, steam	7%	10%	7%	12%	10%
<b>Animal, human and biological agencies</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>7%</b>
Other person	85%	77%	91%	66%	78%
<b>Powered equipment, tools and appliances</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>Mobile plant and transport</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Machinery and (mainly) fixed plant</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Columns may not add up to 100% because the table outlines selected breakdown agencies of injury or disease.

Source: National Data Set for Compensation-Based Statistics.

## Breakdown agency of injuries and diseases by sex

A notably higher proportion of female employees' serious claims involved environmental agencies (25% versus 16% for males). The most common environmental agency among female employees was wet, oily, or icy internal traffic and ground surfaces. A higher proportion of male employees' serious claims involved non-powered handtools, appliances and equipment (35% versus 31% for females), and materials and substances (15% versus 12% for females).

## Nature of injuries and diseases

### Nature of injuries and diseases by industry division

Between 2010–11 and 2012–13, 92% of serious claims in the accommodation and food services industry arose from injury and musculoskeletal disorders, while 8% arose from diseases. Musculoskeletal disorders are a range of conditions that affect joints (arthropathies), spinal vertebrae and intervertebral discs (dorsopathies), the synovium, muscles, tendons and related tissues, soft tissues, and connective tissues.

The most common injury and musculoskeletal disorder was wounds, lacerations, amputations and internal organ damage, which led to 21% of serious claims. The most common disease in the industry was mental disorders, which led to 5% of serious claims.

## Nature of injuries and diseases by industry subdivision

Employees in the clubs, and pubs, taverns and bars subdivisions experienced the highest proportions of serious claims arising from mental disorders (8% in each subdivision versus the industry average of 5%), while employees in the cafes, restaurants and takeaway food services subdivision experienced the highest proportion of serious claims arising from burns (12% versus the industry average of 8%). Table 7 outlines the percentage of serious claims for each industry subdivision by nature of injury or disease for 2010–11 to 2012–13.

**Table 7: Serious claims in accommodation and food services industry: percentage of serious claims for each subdivision by nature of injury or disease, 2010–11 to 2012–13 combined**

Nature of injury or disease	Clubs	Accommodation	Pubs, taverns and bars	Cafes, restaurants and takeaway food services	Industry total
Wounds, lacerations, amputations and internal organ damage	18%	18%	23%	24%	21%
Trauma to muscles and tendons	18%	21%	18%	13%	16%
Residual soft tissue disorders due to trauma	21%	18%	12%	15%	16%
Trauma to joints and ligaments	9%	10%	8%	8%	9%
Burn	5%	4%	6%	12%	8%
Fractures	7%	8%	9%	8%	8%
Mental disorders	8%	3%	8%	3%	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Columns may not add up to 100% because the table outlines selected injuries and diseases.

Source: National Data Set for Compensation-Based Statistics.

## Nature of injuries and diseases by sex

The proportion of serious claims involving mental disorders was twice as high among female employees as it was for male employees (6% for females versus 3% for males). A considerably higher proportion of male employees' serious claims arose from wounds, lacerations, amputations and internal organ damage (26% for males versus 18% for females).

## Nature of injuries and diseases by age group

The proportion of serious claims that arose from burns was more than double the industry average among employees aged 15–19 years (20% versus the industry average of 8%). The proportion of serious claims involving mental disorders was lowest among employees aged 15–19 years (3%) and highest among employees aged 40–44 and 45–49 years (6% in each age group).

## Bodily location of injuries and diseases

### Bodily location of injuries and diseases by industry division

Between 2010–11 and 2012–13, the bodily location most commonly affected by injuries and diseases that led to serious claims was the hand, fingers and thumb, which accounted for almost a quarter (22%) of serious claims. The back accounted for 19% of serious claims in the accommodation and food services industry.

### Bodily location of injuries and diseases by industry subdivision

The subdivision that had the highest proportion of serious claims involving the hand, fingers and thumb was cafes, restaurants and takeaway food services (27%). The subdivision that had the highest proportion of serious claims involving the back was accommodation (25%). Employees in the clubs, and pubs, taverns and bars subdivisions experienced the highest proportions of serious claims involving the psychological system (8% in each subdivision). Table 8 outlines the percentage of serious claims for each industry subdivision by bodily location of injury or disease for 2010–11 to 2012–13.

**Table 8: Serious claims in accommodation and food services industry: percentage of serious claims for each subdivision by bodily location of injury or disease, 2010–11 to 2012–13 combined**

Bodily location of injury or disease	Clubs	Accommodation	Pubs, taverns and bars	Cafes, restaurants and takeaway food services	Industry total
Hand, fingers and thumb	18%	16%	23%	27%	22%
Back - upper or lower	21%	25%	20%	16%	19%
Knee	10%	8%	8%	8%	8%
Shoulder	10%	9%	6%	7%	8%
Wrist	5%	6%	6%	7%	6%
Psychological system	8%	3%	8%	3%	5%
Ankle	4%	5%	4%	4%	4%
Foot and toes	3%	4%	5%	4%	4%
Elbow	2%	3%	2%	3%	2%
Forearm	1%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Abdomen and pelvic region	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%
Lower leg	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%
Neck	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Chest (thorax)	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Columns may not add up to 100% because the table outlines selected bodily locations of injury or disease.

Source: National Data Set for Compensation-Based Statistics.

### Bodily location of injuries and diseases by age group

Compared with older employees, younger employees who made serious claims were more likely to have sustained injuries and diseases to the hand, fingers and thumb. The proportion of serious claims involving this body part increased as age group declined from 9% of employees aged 60–64 years to 36% of employees aged 15–19 years.

Compared with younger employees, older employees who made serious claims were more likely to have sustained injuries and diseases to the knee and shoulder. The proportions of serious claims involving these body parts increased as age group increased.

Back-related serious claims were least common among employees aged 15–19 years (12%) and most common among employees aged 35–39 years (25%). Table 9 outlines the percentage of serious claims for each age group by bodily location of injury or disease for 2010–11 to 2012–13.

**Table 9: Serious claims in accommodation and food services industry: percentage of serious claims for each age group by bodily location of injury or disease, 2010–11 to 2012–13 combined**

Bodily location of injury or disease	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65+
Hand, fingers and thumb	36%	31%	30%	23%	19%	16%	14%	12%	11%	9%	14%
Back - upper or lower	12%	17%	20%	22%	25%	23%	22%	20%	19%	21%	13%
Knee	8%	7%	6%	8%	7%	9%	9%	10%	10%	11%	11%
Shoulder	3%	5%	5%	6%	8%	9%	11%	12%	13%	12%	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Columns may not add up to 100% because the table outlines selected bodily locations of injury or disease.

Source: National Data Set for Compensation-Based Statistics.



## Time lost from work and compensation paid

In this section, the statistics on time lost from work and compensation paid are for 2011–12 because they are the most recent, non-preliminary data. Data for the preliminary year (2012–13) are not presented because serious claims for that period are likely to be open and claimants may accrue more time off work and compensation payments in subsequent years. The median is used as the measure of central tendency because long-term claims that involve lengthy periods of time lost from work or high amounts of compensation would significantly skew an arithmetic mean.

### Time lost from work and compensation paid by industry division

In 2011–12, the median time lost and median compensation paid in the accommodation and food services industry were considerably lower than they were for all Australian employees. The median time lost for a serious claim in the accommodation and food services industry was 4.0 weeks, which is 1.4 weeks lower than the median time lost for all Australian employees (5.4 weeks). The median compensation paid for a serious claim in the accommodation and food services industry was \$4 700, which is almost half the median compensation paid for all Australian employees (\$8 900).

Although claims arising from mental stress accounted for only 4% of serious claims in 2011–12, the mechanism had the highest median time lost of 13.9 weeks and the highest median compensation paid of \$15 100. Serious claims arising from body stressing, which led to the highest number of serious claims in the industry, led to the second-highest median time lost and median compensation paid of 6.2 weeks and \$7 700 respectively. Serious claims arising from heat, electricity and other environmental factors had the lowest median time lost of 1.8 weeks and the lowest median compensation paid of \$1 400.

### Time lost from work and compensation paid by industry subdivision

The clubs subdivision had the lowest median time lost (3.6 weeks) and the lowest median compensation paid (\$4 300) in 2011–12. The highest median time lost occurred in the accommodation, and cafes, restaurants and takeaway food services subdivisions (4.2 weeks each). The highest median compensation paid occurred in the pubs, taverns and bars subdivision (\$5 000).

### Time lost from work and compensation paid by sex

The median time lost among male employees was 3.6 weeks, while it was 31% higher among female employees at 4.7 weeks. Likewise, the median compensation paid to male employees was \$4 500, while it was 13% higher among female employees at \$5 100. This was largely because, compared with male employees, a higher proportion of serious claims among female employees arose from mental stress, body stressing, and falls, trips and slips of a person (Table 4) and the three mechanisms were associated with the lengthiest absences and highest costs out of the eight mechanisms of injury or disease.

### Time lost from work and compensation paid by age group

The median time lost increased with age group from a low of 2.0 weeks for employees aged 15–19 years to a high of 9.1 weeks for employees aged 65 years and above. Similarly, the median compensation paid increased with age group from a low of \$1 300 for employees aged 15–19 years to a high of \$11 200 for employees aged 65 years and above. This pattern was partly due to differences in the mechanisms that led to serious claims among younger and older employees.

The proportion of body stressing injuries and diseases increased with age group (Table 5) and this mechanism was associated with the second-highest median time lost and median compensation paid. In addition, the proportions of compensated injuries and diseases arising from hitting objects with a part of the body, and heat, electricity and other environmental factors were relatively low among older employees (Table 5) and these mechanisms were associated with the lowest median time lost and median compensation paid. Table 10 outlines the median time lost and median compensation paid by selected characteristics for 2011–12.

**Table 10: Serious claims in accommodation and food services industry: median time lost (weeks) and median compensation paid by selected characteristics, 2011–12**

Selected characteristics	Median time lost (weeks)	Median compensation paid
<b>Industry division</b>		
Accommodation and food services industry	4.0	\$4 700
<b>Industry subdivision</b>		
Pubs, taverns and bars	3.8	\$5 000
Accommodation	4.2	\$4 900
Cafes, restaurants and takeaway food services	4.2	\$4 700
Clubs	3.6	\$4 300
<b>Sex</b>		
Female	4.7	\$5 100
Male	3.6	\$4 500
<b>Age group</b>		
15–19 years	2.0	\$1 300
20–24 years	3.0	\$2 900
25–29 years	3.2	\$4 000
30–34 years	4.0	\$4 800
35–39 years	4.2	\$5 800
40–44 years	5.5	\$6 400
45–49 years	6.8	\$8 600
50–54 years	7.2	\$8 800
55–59 years	6.5	\$8 700
60–64 years	5.8	\$7 800
65 years and above	9.1	\$11 200
<b>Mechanism of injury or disease</b>		
Mental stress	13.9	\$15 100
Body stressing	6.2	\$7 700
Falls, trips and slips of a person	5.1	\$5 100
Vehicle incidents and other	4.8	\$5 800
Being hit by moving objects	2.8	\$3 500
Chemicals and other substances	2.6	\$3 000
Hitting objects with a part of the body	2.0	\$2 000
Heat, electricity and other environmental factors	1.8	\$1 400

Source: National Data Set for Compensation-Based Statistics.

### Number of weeks off work by mechanism of injury or disease

The mechanism of injury or disease had a strong influence on the amount of time taken off work. In 2011–12, serious claims arising from mental stress were associated with the lengthiest absence from work and this was most pronounced in the proportion of claimants who were absent from work for 52 weeks or more. Although 8% of all serious claims involved an absence of 52 weeks or more, 18% of serious claims arising from mental stress involved an absence of the same period.

Serious claims arising from body stressing were associated with the second-highest absence from work after mental stress. Compared with all serious claims, a lower proportion of body stressing claims involved the relatively short absence of 1 to 5 weeks (48% versus 58% for all serious claims) and a higher proportion involved the relatively lengthy absence of 6 weeks or more.

Serious claims arising from heat, electricity and other environmental factors involved the shortest absence periods and this was most pronounced in the higher proportion of claimants who were absent for the relatively short period of 1 to 5 weeks (88% versus 58% for all serious claims). Table 11 outlines the percentage of serious claims for each mechanism of injury or disease by absence period from work for 2011–12.

**Table 11: Serious claims in accommodation and food services industry: percentage of serious claims for each mechanism of injury or disease by absence period from work, 2011–12**

<b>Mechanism of injury or disease</b>	<b>1-5 weeks</b>	<b>6-11 weeks</b>	<b>12-25 weeks</b>	<b>26-51 weeks</b>	<b>52+ weeks</b>	<b>Total</b>
Body stressing	48%	17%	13%	10%	11%	100%
Falls, trips and slips of a person	53%	17%	14%	8%	8%	100%
Hitting objects with a part of the body	78%	13%	6%	2%	2%	100%
Being hit by moving objects	68%	15%	8%	4%	5%	100%
Heat, electricity and other environmental factors	88%	7%	2%	1%	2%	100%
Vehicle incidents and other	54%	14%	15%	7%	9%	100%
Mental stress	31%	16%	16%	19%	18%	100%
Chemicals and other substances	70%	10%	11%	5%	3%	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table excludes absences of less than one week as they fall outside the scope of serious claims.

Source: National Data Set for Compensation-Based Statistics.

# Work-Related Injuries Survey

While the workers' compensation statistics in the previous chapter provide valuable information on the characteristics of compensated work-related injuries and diseases and their changes over time, these data do not capture information about employees who do not lodge claims for workers' compensation, nor do they provide information about workers who are ineligible for workers' compensation. In order to bridge this information gap, Safe Work Australia partially funded the Work-Related Injuries Survey (WRIS), which sampled people aged 15 years and above who had engaged in work in the preceding 12 months. The survey was administered by the ABS and the results were weighted to reflect the Australian population.

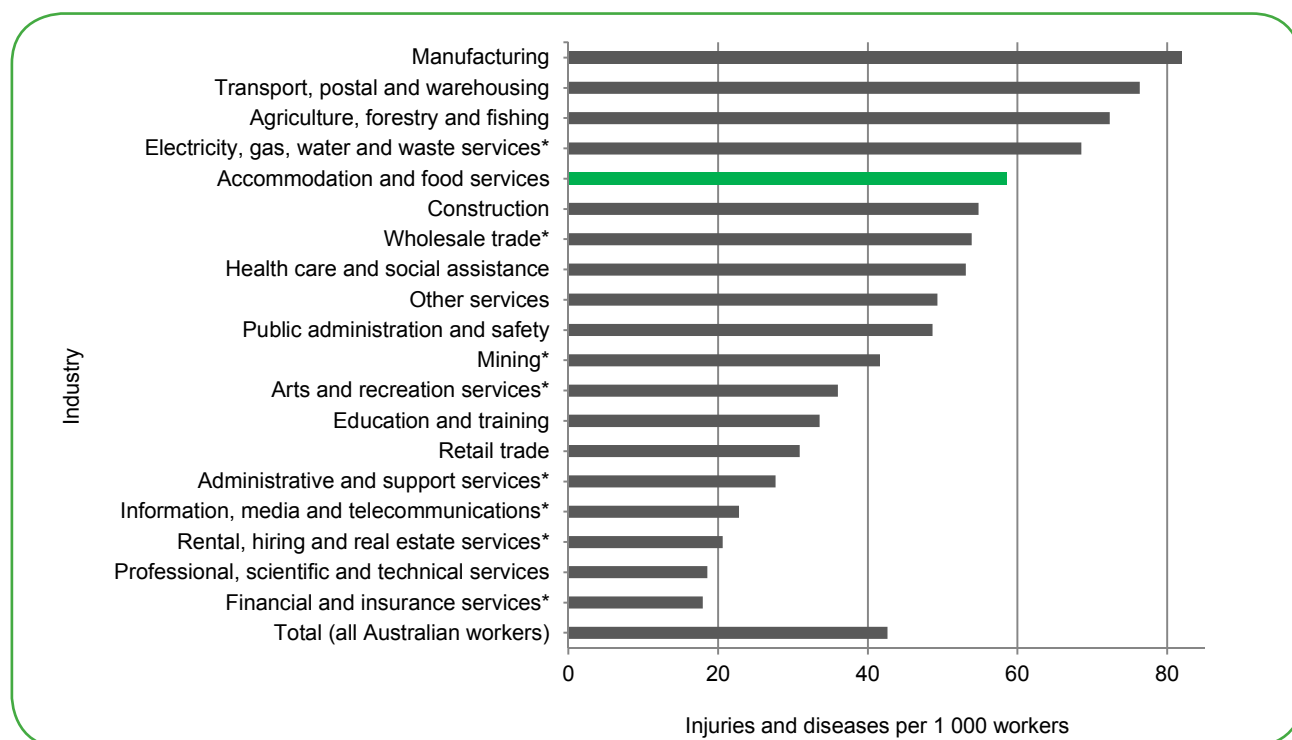
Since the WRIS is a survey, which relies on respondents' personal recollections of work-related injuries and diseases, the data are not directly comparable to workers' compensation data, which are based on work-related injuries and diseases that have been assessed by medical practitioners. The primary purpose of presenting findings from the WRIS is to provide a more detailed account of injuries and diseases in the accommodation and food services industry, which are based on a more diverse group of workers than those captured by workers' compensation data.

## Survey results by industry division

In 2013–14, the number of accommodation and food services workers who experienced an injury or disease was 44 250, which represents 8% of the total number of workers who experienced an injury or disease in Australia. The industry recorded an incidence rate of 58.6 injuries and diseases per 1 000 workers, which is 38% higher than the incidence rate for all Australian workers (42.6 injuries and diseases per 1 000 workers).

Out of the 19 Australian industries, the accommodation and food services industry had the fifth-highest incidence rate of injuries and diseases. Figure 7 shows incidence rates by industry for 2013–14.

**Figure 7: Work-Related Injuries Survey: incidence rates by industry, 2013–14**



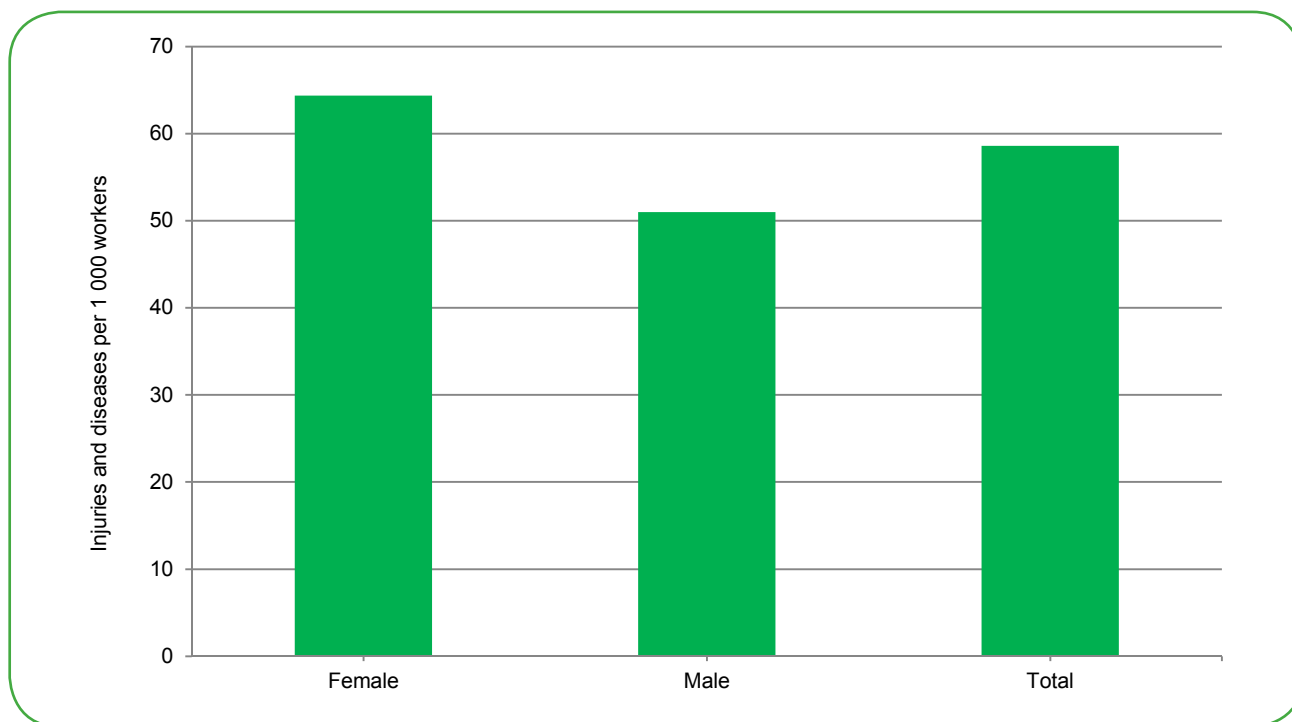
\*—Estimate has a relative standard error between 25% and 50% and should be used with caution.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2014b.

## Survey results by sex

The incidence rate among male workers in the accommodation and food services industry was 51.0 injuries and diseases per 1 000 workers, while it was 26% higher among female workers at 64.4 injuries and diseases per 1 000 workers. Figure 8 shows incidence rates for female and male workers in 2013–14.

**Figure 8: Work-Related Injuries Survey: incidence rates in the accommodation and food services industry by sex, 2013–14**



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2014b.

Compared with female workers in other industries, female workers in the accommodation and food services industry had the second-highest incidence rate after female workers in the transport, postal and warehousing industry (85.7\* injuries and diseases per 1 000 workers).

## Survey results by selected characteristics

Of the 44 250 accommodation and food services workers who were injured or ill in 2013–14:

- 91% experienced the injury or illness in the workplace, while the remainder were either travelling on business, travelling to or from work, or on lunchtime or break activities.
- 97% reported the injury or illness to someone in the workplace.
- 53%\* did not lose a day or shift from work, while the remainder lost at least a day or shift from work.
- 42% received some form of financial assistance (e.g. workers' compensation, sick leave, etc.).
- 72%\* did not apply for workers' compensation. Of these, the majority (59%\*) did not apply for workers' compensation because they considered the injury or disease to be minor.

\*—Estimate has a relative standard error between 25% and 50% and should be used with caution.

# Work-related injury fatalities

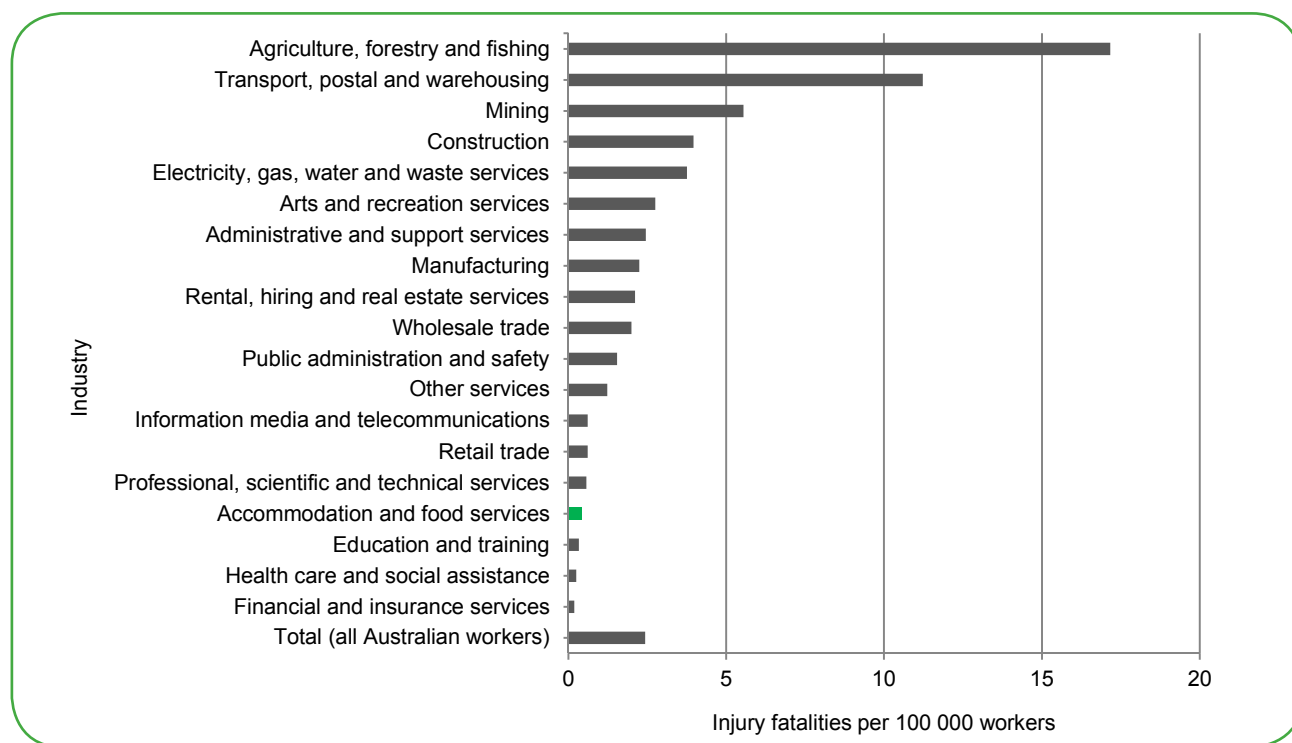
Safe Work Australia compiles national statistics on work-related injury fatalities in the Traumatic Injury Fatalities database. The work-related fatalities are identified using workers' compensation data, fatality notifications from jurisdictions, the National Coronial Information System and the media. Work-related fatalities attributable to diseases, natural causes and suicides are excluded. Deaths of people undertaking criminal activity are also excluded. Fatality rates were calculated using Labour Force Survey data from the ABS, which provide counts of workers in Australia.

In order to minimise the volatility that is associated with low counts of data, the total number of worker fatalities in the database (2003 to 2013) are used to describe the characteristics of worker fatalities in this chapter.

## Work-related injury fatalities by industry division

The accommodation and food services industry has one of the lowest number of worker fatalities in Australia. Between 2003 and 2013, there were 34 fatalities in the industry, which represents 1% of the 2 810 work-related injury fatalities in Australia. Out of the 19 Australian industries, the accommodation and food services industry had the fourth-lowest fatality rate of 0.44 fatalities per 100 000 workers. In comparison, the financial and insurance services industry had the lowest fatality rate of 0.19 fatalities per 100 000 workers, while the agriculture, forestry and fishing industry had the highest fatality rate of 17.16 fatalities per 100 000 workers. The fatality rate for all Australian workers over the 11-year period was 2.42 fatalities per 100 000 workers. Figure 9 shows fatality rates by industry for 2003 to 2013.

**Figure 9: Fatality rates by industry, 2003 to 2013 combined**



Source: Traumatic Injury Fatalities database.

## Work-related injury fatalities by industry subdivision

Although most (19 out of 34) of the fatalities in the accommodation and food services industry occurred in the cafes, restaurants and takeaway food services subdivision, the subdivision had a lower fatality rate (0.38 fatalities per 100 000 workers) than the accommodation (0.75 fatalities per 100 000 workers), and the pubs, taverns and bars (0.40 fatalities per 100 000 workers) subdivisions. The clubs subdivision had the fewest fatalities (2) and lowest fatality rate (0.33 fatalities per 100 000 workers) in the industry.



## Work-related injury fatalities by sex

Consistent with other industries in Australia, male workers comprised the majority (25 out of 34) of fatalities in the accommodation and food services industry between 2003 and 2013. The fatality rate among male workers was 0.72 fatalities per 100 000 workers, which is over three times higher than the rate for female workers (0.21 fatalities per 100 000 workers).

## Work-related injury fatalities by age group

Fatality rates increased with age group from a low of 0.06 fatalities per 100 000 workers among workers aged 15–24 years to a high of 6.03 among workers aged 65 years and above, which is over 13 times higher than the industry average. Table 12 outlines fatality rates and number of fatalities in the accommodation and food services industry by selected characteristics for 2003 to 2013.

**Table 12: Injury fatalities in the accommodation and food services industry: fatality rates and number of fatalities by selected characteristics, 2003 to 2013 combined**

Selected characteristics	Fatality rate (fatalities per 100 000 workers)	Number of fatalities
<b>Industry division</b>		
Accommodation and food services industry	0.44	34
<b>Industry subdivision</b>		
Accommodation	0.75	9
Pubs, taverns and bars	0.40	4
Cafes, restaurants and takeaway food services	0.38	19
Clubs	0.33	2
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	0.72	25
Female	0.21	9
<b>Age group</b>		
15–24 years	0.06	2
25–34 years	0.19	3
35–44 years	0.52	6
45–54 years	0.86	9
55–64 years	1.36	8
65 years and above	6.03	6

Source: Traumatic Injury Fatalities database.

## Mechanism and breakdown agency of fatal injuries

Between 2003 and 2013, vehicle incidents led to the highest number (9) of fatal injuries in the accommodation and food services industry. Of the 9 vehicle incidents, almost all (7) occurred on public roads and typically involved delivery workers. The second-highest number of fatalities were caused by being assaulted by a person or persons, and falls from a height, which led to 6 fatalities each. With the exception of one case where a worker assaulted another worker, all fatalities caused by being assaulted by a person or persons involved workers being assaulted by patrons or people undertaking criminal activity. Workers who sustained fatal injuries due to falls from a height were typically undertaking maintenance work or carrying objects when they fell. Table 13 outlines all the mechanisms and breakdown agencies that led to the 34 fatalities in the accommodation and food services industry between 2003 and 2013.

**Table 13: Injury fatalities in the accommodation and food services industry: number of fatalities by mechanism and breakdown agency of fatal injury, 2003 to 2013 combined**

<b>Mechanism of fatal injury</b>	<b>Number of fatalities</b>
<b>Breakdown agency of fatal injury</b>	
<b>Vehicle incident</b>	
Cars, station wagons, vans, utilities	7
Trucks, semi-trailers, lorries	1
Tractors, agricultural or otherwise	1
<b>Being assaulted by a person or persons</b>	
Other person	6
<b>Falls from a height</b>	
Ladders	3
Steps and stairways	2
Buildings and other structures	1
<b>Being hit by moving objects</b>	
Abrasive, planing, cutting powered tools	1
Knives and cutlery	1
Cars, station wagons, vans, utilities	1
<b>Contact with electricity</b>	
Refrigeration plant	2
Distribution lines: low tension	1
<b>Single contact with chemical or substance</b>	
Industrial gases, fumes	1
Food	1
<b>Falls on the same level</b>	
Traffic and ground surfaces other	1
Steps and stairways	1
<b>Being hit by falling objects</b>	
Ploughs, harrows, cultivators	1
<b>Being trapped between stationary and moving objects</b>	
Lifts, dumbwaiters	1
<b>Hitting moving objects</b>	
Weather and water	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>

Source: Traumatic Injury Fatalities database.

# Conclusion

In support of the Australian Strategy, this report analysed data from a variety of sources in order to identify the main risks faced by workers in the accommodation and food services industry and to highlight areas within the industry that merit the greatest attention.

Workers' compensation data indicate that employees in the accommodation and food services industry experience injuries and diseases at a rate that is similar to the rate for the Australian workforce. However, data from the 2013–14 WRIS, which are based on a more diverse group of workers than workers' compensation data, show that workers in the accommodation and food services industry experienced injuries and diseases at a rate that was 38% higher than the rate for the Australian workforce and the industry had the fifth-highest incidence rate out of the 19 Australian industries. These findings reinforce the need for measures to reduce injuries and diseases in this industry.

Workers' compensation and WRIS data show that female workers in the accommodation and food services industry have higher rates of injuries and diseases than their male counterparts. This was most pronounced in findings from the 2013–14 WRIS, which showed that female workers had an incidence rate that was 26% higher than the rate for male workers. Compared with female workers in other industries, female workers in the accommodation and food services industry had the second-highest incidence rate out of the 19 Australian industries.

In addition to higher rates of injuries and diseases, workers' compensation data show that female employees in the accommodation and food services industry experienced more negative outcomes than male employees in terms of time taken off work (31% longer than male employees in 2011–12) and compensation paid (13% higher than male employees in 2011–12). This was largely because a higher proportion of serious claims among female employees arose from mental stress, body stressing, and falls, trips and slips of a person and the three mechanisms were associated with the lengthiest absences and highest costs out of the eight mechanisms of injury or disease.

Workers' compensation data show that accommodation and food services employees who experience mental stress endure the most negative outcomes in terms of their absence from work and the amount of compensation paid. The absence from work and compensation paid was over three times higher than the industry average among employees who experienced mental stress in 2011–12. While the proportion of mental stress claims in the accommodation and food services industry was relatively low (4% between 2010–11 and 2012–13), the proportion was twice as high among employees in the clubs subdivision (8%) and almost twice as high among employees in the pubs, taverns and bars subdivision (7%). In both subdivisions, most mental stress claims arose from exposure to workplace or occupational violence. The two subdivisions also had higher-than-average proportions of serious claims arising from exposure to other people. These findings, coupled with the fact that the two subdivisions are comprised of businesses that are primarily engaged in providing alcoholic beverages and hospitality services to patrons, indicate that the higher proportions of mental stress are largely due to the human interactions that are unique to these subdivisions.

Workers' compensation data show that body stressing is the most common cause of injuries and diseases in the accommodation and food services industry and accounted for 32% of serious claims between 2010–11 and 2012–13. In addition, employees whose serious claims arose from body stressing needed more time off work (55% longer in 2011–12) and higher amounts of compensation (64% higher in 2011–12) than the industry average. Within the industry, the proportions of body stressing injuries and diseases were notably higher among employees in the accommodation (40%) and clubs (37%) subdivisions. Body stressing injuries and diseases were also more common among older employees than younger employees. Due to the large number of workers who are affected and the comparatively worse outcomes involved, a reduction in the number of body stressing injuries and diseases would have a wide, positive impact for employees and employers in the accommodation and food services industry.

The accommodation and food services industry has one of the lowest number of fatalities and fatality rates in Australia. Out of the 19 Australian industries, the accommodation and food services industry had the fourth-lowest fatality rate between 2003 and 2013. However, within the industry, the fatality rate among male workers was over three times higher than the rate for female workers. Fatality rates increased markedly with age and peaked among workers age 65 years and above who had a fatality rate that was over 13 times higher than the industry average.

# Explanatory notes

## National Data Set for Compensation-Based Statistics

### Scope and coverage

The workers' compensation statistics in this report are compiled annually from serious claims made under state, territory and Commonwealth Government workers' compensation acts. The data shown for each financial year refer to accepted claims for which payments were made (apart from payments for goods and services, such as medical treatment) lodged from 1 July to 30 June of the reference year.

The statistics in this report do not cover all cases of work-related injuries and diseases for the reasons below:

- Fatalities and work-related injuries and diseases involving temporary incapacity and resulting in an absence from work of less than one working week are excluded.
- Claims arising from journeys to or from work or during recess periods are excluded.
- While state, territory and Commonwealth Government workers' compensation legislations provide coverage for the majority of employees, some specific groups of workers are covered under separate legislations. Claims lodged by police in Western Australia and military personnel of the Australian Defence Forces are not included in this report.
- Most mesothelioma cases (associated with work-related exposure to asbestos) are compensated through mechanisms other than workers' compensation. As a result, mesothelioma claims in this report are known to be understated.
- Workers' compensation schemes do not generally provide coverage to self-employed workers and this results in an understatement of the number of work-related injuries and diseases of self-employed workers. Estimates of hours used to calculate frequency rates include only those hours worked by employees eligible for workers' compensation.

### Age of employee

The age of an employee is derived from their date of birth and the date on which the injury occurred or the disease was first reported to the employer. Data related to the open-ended age group of 65 years and above should be used with caution as claims can be made by people who are no longer in the workforce, particularly for work-related diseases that arise after employees retire. The employee estimates only count people who are currently working. It is possible that frequency rates for this age group overstate the actual rates.

### Time lost from work

Time lost from work is measured in working weeks and excludes estimates of future absences. Time lost from work comprises the total period of time for which compensation was paid. The time lost is not necessarily continuous and may occur over a number of separate periods. Where an employee returns to work on a part-time basis, they may continue to receive pro-rata payments and the total number of hours for which compensation has been paid is included in calculating the time lost.

### Compensation paid

Amounts of compensation paid are rounded to the nearest \$100. The calculation of median payments excludes serious claims where only payments for goods and services, such as medical treatment, have been made.

### Confidentiality

Claim numbers in this report are rounded to the nearest 5 to help protect confidential information about employers and employees. Rates and percentages are calculated using unrounded numbers.

### Time-series analyses

Only non-preliminary data are used in time-series analyses as they are more likely to have been finalised and are generally more accurate than preliminary data.

When analysing trends over time, consideration needs to be given to legislative changes that may influence trends in workers' compensation data. Information on workers' compensation arrangements can be found in Safe Work Australia's Comparison of Workers' Compensation Arrangements in Australia and New Zealand.

## Denominator data used to calculate frequency rates

Estimates of the number of employees and hours worked for each Australian workers' compensation jurisdiction are supplied annually by the ABS. The data are primarily derived from the Labour Force Survey, which are adjusted to account for differences in scope between the Labour Force Survey and workers' compensation coverage. The ABS provides two sets of estimates for each jurisdiction—one is split by sex, age and industry and the second is split by occupation. This restricts presentation of frequency rates to the categories supported by the ABS data. Therefore, it is not possible to calculate rates for occupational groups within specific industries.

In 2008, the ABS conducted a review of the methodology used to calculate the number of employees in each industry and the number of hours worked by each employee. After the review, the ABS implemented a number of changes to their methodology, which increased their estimates. As the ABS could only supply new estimates back to 2005–06, estimates for earlier years were adjusted based on the movement between the old and new estimates for 2005–06 to avoid a break in the time series. Reports from 2007–08 have used these new estimates. Therefore, comparison with previous reports should not be made.

Following the review, the major change to the estimates was in the industry coding of 'jobs other than the main job' of multiple job holders. Where previously the second job was combined into the industry of the first job, these have now been separated to be shown in the industry in which the employee works in each separate job. This resulted in changes to the incidence and frequency rates in some industries. In particular, a decrease in employee estimates occurred in public administration and safety, manufacturing, and health care and social assistance as these were the industries where a greater proportion held a second job. An increase occurred in arts and recreation services, and accommodation and food services as these were the industries where the second job was most commonly worked.

While the ABS is able to adjust the employee estimates to account for the industries where the second job was worked, it is unable to adjust the hours worked in a similar manner. All hours worked have been allocated to the industry of the main job.

Because eligibility for workers' compensation varies from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, further adjustments are necessary. The most significant adjustments are outlined below:

- Police in Western Australia, who are covered by a separate scheme that does not report to Safe Work Australia, are excluded from the denominators.
- Under the Queensland legislation, owner-managers of incorporated enterprises (OMIEs), who are included in the standard definition of 'employee', have the option of purchasing workers' compensation insurance for themselves. Based on 2006 census data, 10% of employed people in Queensland were OMIEs, an unknown number of whom were covered by workers' compensation. This population has been excluded from the denominators and their claims have been excluded from the numerators.

## Adjustment of Victorian and South Australian data

Safe Work Australia uses one working week of time lost from work as the cut-off for the classification of accepted claims as serious claims. This cut-off was chosen because most jurisdictions have an employer excess of one week or less. Since claims with an absence of at least one week are generally processed by the workers' compensation authority, the use of a one-week cut-off ensures comparable data are compiled from all jurisdictions so that an accurate national estimate can be produced.

However, under the Victorian workers' compensation scheme, the employer can be liable for the first 10 working days lost by the injured or ill worker (for an employee working two days per week, for instance, that would amount to five weeks' pay), plus the first \$582 (as of 1 July 2010) of medical services, unless the employer elected the 'excess buy-out' option. Since information on claims paid solely by employers are not always provided to the workers' compensation authority, the national count of serious claims is affected.

To correct for this under-counting, Victorian claims of one to two weeks' duration are increased by a factor to represent the 'missing claims'. The factor is calculated by comparing the percentage of claims of one to two weeks' duration for Victoria with the percentage of claims of one to two weeks' duration for all other Australian jurisdictions at the industry division level and by nature of injury or disease. The factoring makes the percentage of claims in each industry and nature group in Victoria match the Australian average for claims of this duration. This factoring increases Victorian claims by around 20% and the Australian count by less than 3%.

While South Australia also has a 10-day excess, a waiver of the first two weeks of income maintenance is an incentive that was introduced for employers to forward claims to WorkCoverSA within 5 days of receiving claims from injured or ill workers. This incentive has been operational since 2009–10 and has significantly improved the data quality and accuracy of time-lost information for the majority of short-duration claims.

## Reliability of data

The data in this report are subject to two types of errors—non-sampling errors and sampling errors.

### Non-sampling error

Non-sampling errors may occur in any statistical collection due to:

- incorrect inclusion or exclusion of respondents or cases.
- non-response of respondents.
- inaccurate information from respondents.
- inaccurate recording of information by data collectors.
- deficiencies in data collection materials and processes.
- errors that occur during the entry, coding and editing of data.

Non-sampling errors may affect the numerator and denominator data. It is difficult to quantify non-sampling error.

### Sampling error

Sampling error is a measure of the variation that occurs when a sample, rather than an entire population, is surveyed. Standard error indicates the extent to which an estimate of a sample varies from the estimate of the population from which it is drawn. When a standard error is expressed as a percentage of the estimate to which it relates, it is known as a relative standard error (RSE).

The denominator data used to calculate frequency rates of serious claims are subject to sampling error. Frequency rates that are calculated using denominators with high RSEs are annotated with one asterisk (\*) to indicate that the RSE of the denominator is 25% or higher and two asterisks (\*\*) if the RSE is 50% or higher.



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