

Work-related injuries and ill health statistics for the construction industry

- In 2018–19 there were 30 fatal injuries to workers (49% as a result of falls from height). There were also seven fatal injuries sustained by members of the public.
- On average, each year over the last five years, there were 36 fatalities to workers and five to members of the public.
- In 2018–19 the fatal injury rate to workers was 1.31 per 100,000 workers. (This is significantly higher than the rate of 0.45 per 100,000 workers across all industries.)
- The estimated annual average across 2016/17–2018/19 for non-fatal work-related cases of injuries to workers is 54,000. (This is about 2.4% – significantly higher than the rate of 1.7% across all industries.)
- The estimated annual average across 2016/17–2018/19 for work-related ill health cases is 3,400 (3.4%) per 100,000 workers. (This is similar to the rate of 3.2% across all industries.)
- In 2018–19 there were 4,872 reported non-fatal injuries to employees. (Reported non-fatal injuries are categorised as either specified (a pre-defined list of certain injury types, for example fractures, amputations and serious burns) or injuries resulting in over seven-days off work.)
- In 2018–19 there were 1,697 specified injuries: Slips, trips and falls on the same level accounted for 30%, lifting and handling injuries 7%, falls from height 32% and being struck by an object 13%.
- In 2018–19 there were 3,175 over seven-day injuries: Slips, trips and falls on the same level accounted for 22%, lifting and handling injuries 27%, falls from height 11% and being struck by an object 11%.
- In 2016/17–2018/19 around 79,000 workers suffered from an illness they believed was caused or made worse by their work.
 - 42,000 were cases of musculoskeletal disorders (MSD), about three fifths of all ill health in this sector
 - 16,000 were cases of stress, depression or anxiety, about one quarter of all ill health in this sector
- Around 2 million working days were lost each year between 2016/17–2018/19.
 - Work-related illness accounted for 1.6 million.
 - Workplace injury accounted for 0.4 million.

Breathing and lung problems

- In 2016–2018 workers suffering with breathing and lung problems they believe were caused or made worse by their work was equivalent to 0.49% of workers in the construction sector and was slightly higher than the rate of 0.3% per 100,000 workers across all industries.
- Those suffering from asthma identified airborne materials from spray painting, welding, or cutting and grinding metals as being among the contributory factors to their ill health.

Occupational cancer

- Occupational cancer burden research indicates past occupational exposure to known and probable carcinogens is estimated to account for about 5% of cancer deaths and 4% of cancer registrations currently occurring each year in Great Britain. This equates to about 8,000 cancer deaths and 13,500 new cancer registrations annually across all industries.
- The construction industry has the largest estimate of occupational cancer cases, with about 3,500 cancer deaths and 5,500 cancer registrations each year.
- Mesothelioma, contracted through past exposure to asbestos, killed 2,526 people in Great Britain in 2017, similar to each of the previous five years. The latest projections suggest that there will continue to be around 2,500 deaths per year for the rest of this decade, before numbers begin to decline.

Skin disease

- Data on new assessments for industrial injuries disablement benefit (IIDB) suggest the incidence of contact dermatitis for workers has been reducing over the last decade.
- Painters and decorators, carpenters and joiners and construction building trades all suffer from more than twice the all industry rate of contact dermatitis, but the rate for construction, as a whole, is similar to that for all industries – 2.4 compared to 2.8 per 100,000 workers (2016–2018).

Other conditions

- Other conditions giving cause for concern are occupational deafness (sometimes referred to as noise-induced hearing loss) and hand-arm vibration syndrome, which is largely made up of two conditions (vibration white finger and carpal tunnel syndrome).
- The main source of information on both of these conditions is from new claims from the industrial injuries disablement benefit (IIDB) scheme. The relative frequency of new IIDB assessments for these conditions is higher for workers in the construction industry than most other sectors.



[For further statistical information refer to the HSE health and safety statistics webpages.](#)