Kinds of accident in Great Britain, 2014/2015

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Summary


This document gives an overview of the kinds of injuries to employees that were reported to all RIDDOR enforcing authorities in 2014/15 provisional (p).

The “kind” is a broad description of how the accident happened. Particular kinds tend to be associated with different levels of injury severity, with limited year-to-year change in the proportions of each kind, although reporting requirements have had an impact.

In 2014/15p:

- over half the fatal injuries to workers were of three kinds: falls from height; being struck by a vehicle and being struck by a moving or falling object (RIDDOR);
- falls and slips & trips, combined, accounted for more than a third (36%) of employee injuries. They accounted for nearly six in ten specified injuries (59%) and almost three in ten (29%) over-seven-day injuries to employees (RIDDOR);
- handling was the most frequent cause of over-seven-day injury (RIDDOR);
- an estimated 2.1 million working days were lost due to handling injuries and slips & trips (LFS).

2014/15p statistics for injury kinds are available on www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/tables/ridkind1.xlsx
Injury severity

Particular injury kinds are associated with different levels of severity of injury, with little year-to-year change in the proportions. However, changes in RIDDOR reporting requirements have had an impact. Slip and trip injuries are now the most commonly reported kind, whereas handling was the most common before changes to the RIDDOR reporting systems and regulations.¹

Figure 1 shows the proportions of each kind of reportable injury that were classed as fatal or specified, indicating which kinds of accident are most closely associated with the most serious outcomes. For example, Figure 1 shows that about half of reported fall injuries are fatal or specified, whereas less than one in ten handling injuries are:

Figure 1 Percentage of total reported injuries that were categorised as fatal or specified, by kind, 2014/15p (RIDDOR)

¹ In 2011/12, the RIDDOR reporting system changed. There were also changes to what injuries had to be reported in 2012/13 (over-3 to over-7-day absence) and mid-way through 2014/15 (from major to specified injuries) The system changes affected the way that incidents were coded by reporters, for example the kind is coded as “other” much more frequently. (www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/sources.htm#riddor provides further explanation).
Fatal injuries to workers

In 2014/15:
- falls from height accounted for nearly three in ten fatal injuries to workers (41 out of 142);
- almost half of fatal falls took place in construction (20 out of 41 fatal fall injuries);
- around half of the fatal fall injuries were to workers aged 55 or over (20 out of 40 falls, where the age was known), but less than a fifth of the working population is in this age band.

Figure 2 Kinds of fatal injuries to workers, 2014/15p (RIDDOR)

Non-fatal injuries to employees

In 2014/15p:
- More than half of reported non-fatal injuries involved handling or slips & trips – these injury kinds rarely result in fatalities;
- there were around three times as many reported over-seven-day injuries to employees as specified injuries (58,7970 over-seven-day and 18,084 specified);
- a new RIDDOR reporting system was introduced in September 2011. One effect of the change has been an increase in the number of injuries classed as unknown or “other kind”. These made up 13% of all injuries in 2014/15p, compared to about 4% in the four years before the change.
- handling is still the biggest category of over-seven-day injuries (16,018 out of 57,970). However, since the RIDDOR system changes, handling is no longer the biggest category overall. 21,331 slips and trips were reported in 2014/15p, compared to 17,262 handling injuries.
- 2.1 million working days were lost due to handling injuries and slips & trips. (LFS)

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2 Workers = employees plus self-employed people. RIDDOR non-fatal injury statistics normally exclude the self-employed because of low reporting levels.

3 Self-reported results suggested that just over half of all non-fatal injuries to employees were actually reported under the old RIDDOR reporting requirements. The self-employed reported a much smaller proportion. Under the new RIDDOR reporting requirements (2012/13 and 2013/14), early indications suggested reporting levels of non-fatal injuries to employees have fallen below half. See www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/tables/

More detailed estimates of reporting levels for earlier years, based on the old RIDDOR requirements, are available by employment status and main industry.
Reported specified injuries to employees (RIDDOR)

From October 2013, a ‘specified injury’ category replaced the previous ‘major injury’ classification of serious non-fatal injuries. Some of the old major categories were removed, other new ones included. In 2013/14 there was an estimated reduction of reports of around 10%, compared to the major category\(^4\). Most specified injuries are fractures. (A full definition of types of injuries that are reportable in this category is at www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/specified-injuries.htm).

In 2014/15:\(^\star\) more than half of reported specified injuries were caused by slips & trips and falls from height (7,682 slips & trips and 2,950 falls out of 18,084, RIDDOR) - a rate of 40.9 specified injuries due to slips, trips and falls per 100,000 employees;

Figure 3  Kinds of specified injury to employees, 2014/15p (RIDDOR)

Numbers and rates of specified injuries vary widely between industries. However, reporting levels also vary between industries. The estimates of reporting level by industry\(^5\) are from 2011/12 – before RIDDOR changes. They do not take injury severity into account. At this time, almost nine in ten injuries in transport & storage were reported. Manufacturing and construction each reported about half.


\(^5\) [www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/tables/repind1_3yr.xls](http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/tables/repind1_3yr.xls)  Available estimates of reporting level by industry sector\(^5\) do not reflect recent RIDDOR changes. Under the old RIDDOR reporting requirements self-reported results suggested that just over half of all non-fatal injuries to employees were actually reported. The self-employed reported a much smaller proportion. Under the new RIDDOR reporting requirements (2012/13 and 2013/14), early indications suggest overall reporting levels of non-fatal injuries to employees have fallen below half.
human health & social care was the sector with highest number of specified slip and trip injuries to employees (1,325). However, the highest rates of slip/trip injury were found in water and waste, at 106.1 per 100,000 employees;

construction accounted for more than a fifth of specified fall injuries to employees (643) and had the highest rates of specified falls from height, with almost 49.7 injuries per 100,000 employees;

manufacturing had the highest numbers of specified injuries due to being struck by a moving object (397) and to lifting, handling & carrying (261). However, the highest rates for these kinds were in water and waste (43.9 and 19.9 per 100,000 employees, respectively);

Nearly twice as many men as women suffered a specified injury (11,409 injuries to males and 6,668 to females). However, women had slightly more slips & trips (4,042 injuries to females, 3,640 to males). There are roughly the same number of men and women in the workforce.
Reported over-seven-day injuries to employees (RIDDOR)

The over-seven-day category covers injuries that are not “specified” and which resulted in more than seven days’ absence from work or inability to do one’s normal duties. It was estimated that the April 2012 change from over-three-day reporting reduced the numbers of lost time injuries by 29%.6

In 2014/15p:

- handling and slips & trips were the top two distinct7 kinds across almost all industries;
- handling accounted for nearly three in ten over-seven-day injuries (28%, 16,018 out of 57,970)6.
- around one in seven over-7-day injuries were classified in the non-specific category “Other kind” (8,390);
- almost a quarter were due to slips & trips (13,646);

Figure 5 Over-seven-day injuries to employees, by kind of injury, 2014/15p (RIDDOR)

- health & social work had the highest numbers of handling injuries but this sector’s rates were much lower than water & waste and transport & storage;
- both numbers and rates of handling injury were high in transport & storage and manufacturing sectors;

6 www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/riddor-notification.htm
7 I.e., not classified as “Other kind of accident”.
8 In the last full year of the old RIDDOR reporting system, (2010/11) handling accounted for 36% of over-3-day injuries and “other kind” for 4% (total:40%). It may be that the shrinking number of handling injuries is partly due to changes in reporting practice.
The highest numbers of slips/trips were in health & social work but the highest rates were in water & waste and transport & storage;

Transport & storage had the second highest number and the second highest rate of slips/trips;

Assaults accounted for around one in five over-7-day injuries in both health & social work and public administration & defence. In health & social work, assault was the second highest defined kind of over-7-day injuries (2,370, a rate of 63.3 per 100,000). Assault was the second highest defined kind in public administration & defence (689, a rate of 38.7).
Self-reported non-fatal injuries to workers: Labour Force Survey (LFS)

The LFS is an additional source of kind of accident information, which is not subject to underreporting. It does not provide the same level of detail as employer reports (RIDDOR), but it covers both employees and self-employed and can help to provide a top-level picture of the time off work as a consequence of the kind of accident.

In the latest Labour Force Survey results (3 year average – 2012/13 to 2014/15) an estimated:

- 52,000 new cases of slipping and tripping injuries led to workers being away from work for more than three days - an estimated rate of about 180 injuries per 100,000 workers for all industries. (www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/lfs/injkind1_3yr.xlsx LFS)

- 53,000 new cases of handling, injury led to workers being away from work for more than three days - an estimated rate of about 180 per 100,000 workers. (www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/lfs/injkind1_3yr.xlsx LFS)

- 2.1 million working days were lost due to handling injuries and slips & trips. (LFS, www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/lfs/injkind2_3.xlsx).
Appendix

Injury kind classifications, RIDDOR (2014/15) and LFS.

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<tr>
<th>Code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Contact with machinery</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Struck by moving object</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Struck by moving vehicle</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Struck against</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Lifting and handling injuries</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Slip, trip, fall same level</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Fall from height</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Trapped by something collapsing</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Drowned or asphyxiated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Exposure to harmful substance</td>
</tr>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Exposed to fire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Exposed to explosion</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Contact with electricity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Injured by an animal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Physical assault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Another kind of accident</td>
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Links to data sources and tables

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National Statistics

National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference.

An account of how the figures are used for statistical purposes can be found at www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/sources.htm.

For information regarding the quality guidelines used for statistics within HSE see www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/about/quality-guidelines.htm

A revisions policy and log can be seen at www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/about/revisions/

Additional data tables can be found at www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/tables/.

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