



 **WorkCoverWA**

INDUSTRY STATISTICAL REPORT 2022/23

Construction
in the Western Australian
Workers' Compensation Scheme

October 2023





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WorkCover WA is the government agency responsible for overseeing the WA workers' compensation and injury management scheme. WorkCover WA undertakes a range of educational, advisory, enforcement and performance monitoring activities to ensure the WA workers' compensation scheme is fair, accessible and cost-effective for all participants.

Industry Statistical Report:
Construction
2019/20 to 2022/23p

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Table of Contents

About this report	4
Construction at a glance	5
Claim numbers	
Claims by lost-time	6
Frequency rate	6
Claims by days lost	7
Claim payments	
Direct compensation payments	8
Service payments	8
Claim costs	
Total claim costs	10
Proportion by days lost	10
Average claim costs	10
Claims by industry subdivision	
Claim numbers by lost-time	11
Lost-time claims and frequency rate	12
Return to work status	13
Claimant characteristics	
Age group	14
Occupation	15
Injury/disease attributes	
Nature of injury/disease	16
Bodily location of injury/disease	17
Mechanism of incident	18
Agency of injury/disease	19
Glossary	20
Disclaimer	24

About This Report



Purpose of the report

WorkCover WA annually publishes eight industry-specific reports covering the following high-risk industry divisions:

- Agriculture, forestry and fishing
- Arts and recreation services
- Construction
- Education and training
- Health care and social assistance
- Manufacturing
- Mining
- Transport, postal and warehousing.

These reports provide insight into claims activity within **the Western Australian Workers' Compensation** scheme over a four-year period.

Changes to the report

WorkCover WA is committed to providing relevant and timely information to stakeholders. In doing so, the 2023 report has been changed to include data up to the most recently completed financial year (i.e. 2022/23p, where the 'p' signifies '**provisional** data' - data that is subject to change over time as further information about the claims are received).

These changes are less likely to affect claim numbers but will have more impact on claim payments.

Things to note

As data for the most recent financial year is subject to develop over time due to the evolving nature of claims, care should be exercised when referencing and comparing against previous years.

Information in the report should also be read with consideration of the statements set out in the disclaimer page provided.

Frequency rates are based on the latest available data sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, which lags by one year from this report's timeframe.

Construction

The Construction industry is classified according to the *Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification 2006* provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

This industry includes building construction, heavy and civil engineering construction, and construction services (land development and site preparation, building structure, building installation, building completion, and other construction services).

Construction at a glance 2022/23p


Labour force*

 **91,885**
employees

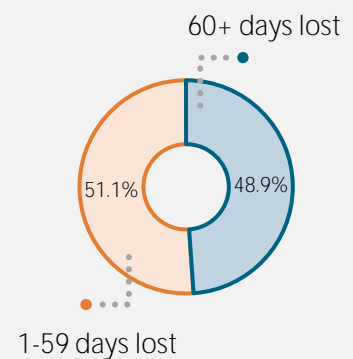
 **183 million**
hours worked

Claims

 **3,215**
workers' compensation
claims lodged


 **62.9%**
of claims involved at least
one day/shift off work

Days lost



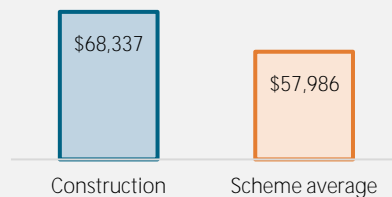
Frequency rate*

 **9.8** lost-time
claims per million
hours worked

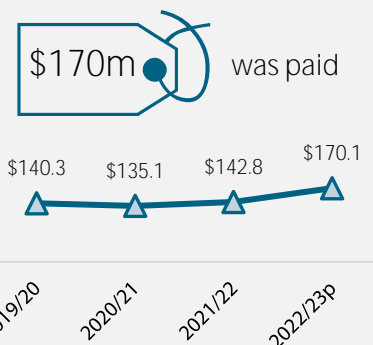
 Higher than the
Scheme average of
6.9

Average claim cost


\$10,351 higher than the
scheme average



Claim payments




Payment type

 **31.5%**
Service
payments

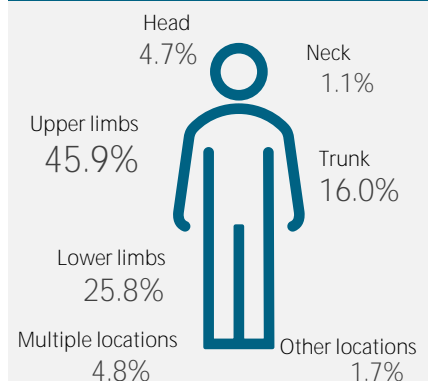
68.5%
Direct
compensation

The most common injury

Traumatic joint/ligament &
muscle/tendon injury

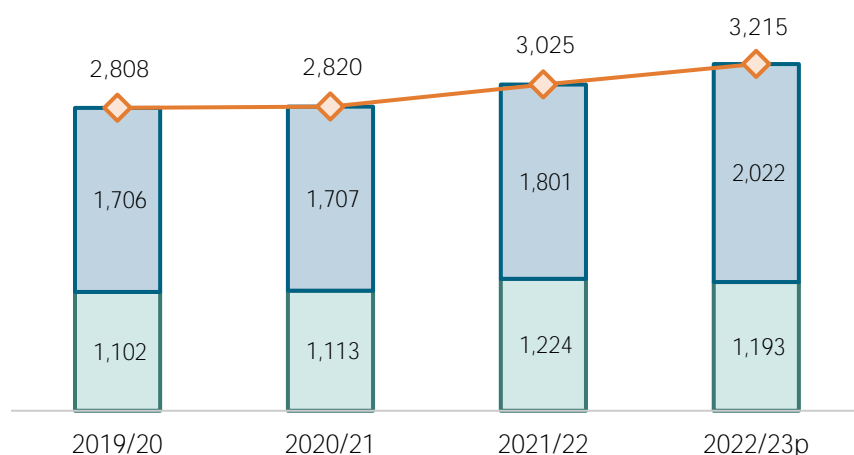
 **44.9%**

Bodily location



* Based on 2021/22, as 2022/23 was not available at the time of report

Claim numbers number of claims lodged by lost-time



■ All claims

Total claims in the Construction industry creased (+14.5%) from 2019/20 to 2022/23p.

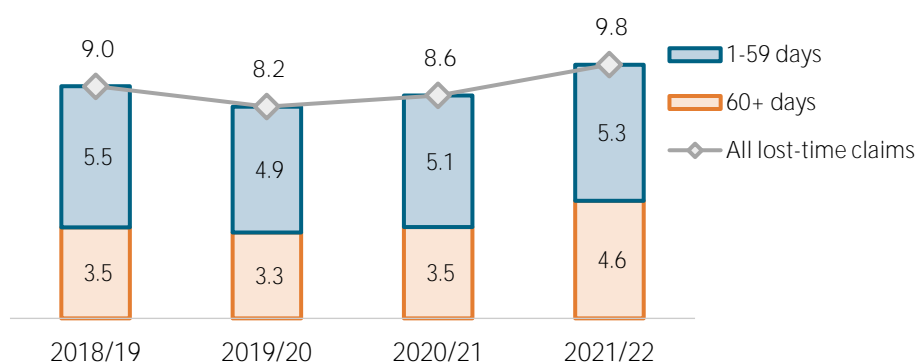
■ Lost-time claims

Lost-time claims in Construction averaged 1,809 claims over the last four years.

■ No lost-time claims

Claims with no time off work averaged 1,158 claims between 2019/20 and 2022/23p.

Frequency rate* lost-time claims per million hours worked



Frequency rate indicates the prevalence of workers' compensation lost-time claims by measuring the number of claims per million hours worked. The number of hours worked by employed persons is supplied by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

* The 2022/23 frequency rates were not available at the time of the report.

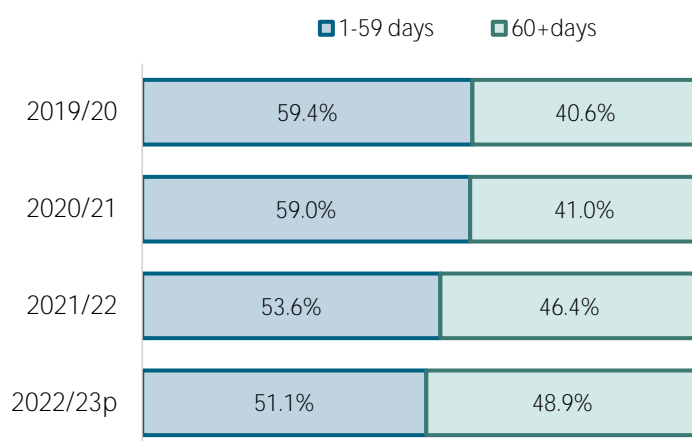


For claims lodged in 2021/22, the frequency rate for the Construction industry was 9.8 lost-time claims per million hours worked, compared to the scheme average of 6.9.

Claim numbers number of claims lodged by days lost

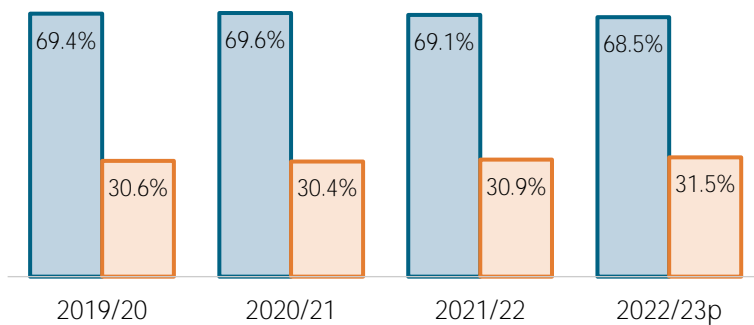
DAYS LOST	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23p
0 days	1,102	1,113	1,224	1,193
1 - 4 days	212	185	181	157
5 - 19 days	413	408	361	371
20 - 59 days	388	414	424	505
60 - 119 days	261	230	290	400
120 - 179 days	103	126	150	218
180+ days	329	344	395	371
Total claims	2,808	2,820	3,025	3,215

Lost-time claims proportions by days lost



Construction accounts for 12.3% of total claims lodged in 2022/23p in the WA workers' compensation scheme.

Total claim payments proportions by payment group

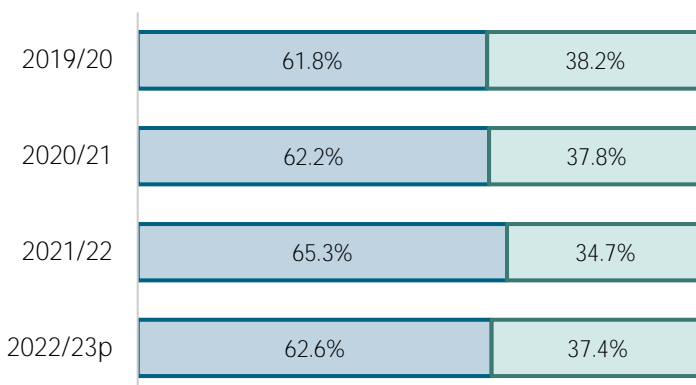
**Direct compensation**

payments made directly to the worker (either by income replacement or lump sums).

**Service payments**

includes medical & hospital, allied health, workplace rehabilitation and legal & miscellaneous payments.

Direct compensation payments proportions by payment type

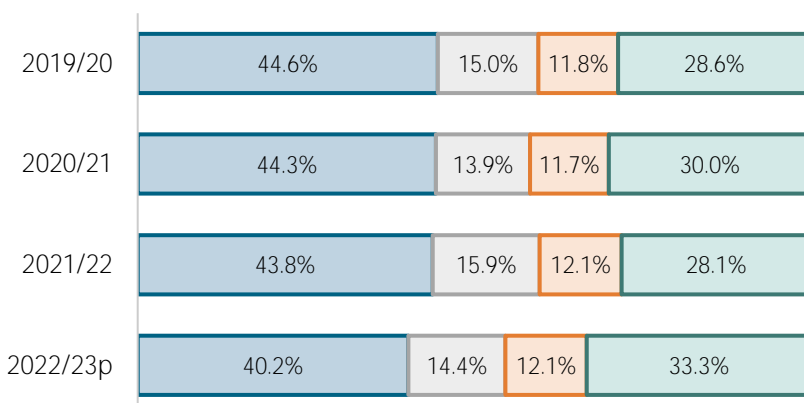
**Income payments**

accounted for 61.8% to 65.3% of direct compensation payments to workers over four years.

**Lump sums**

accounted for 34.7% to 38.2% of direct compensation payments to workers over the last four years.

Service payments proportions by payment type

**Medical & hospital****Allied health****Workplace rehabilitation****Legal & miscellaneous**

Claim payments (\$million adjusted)

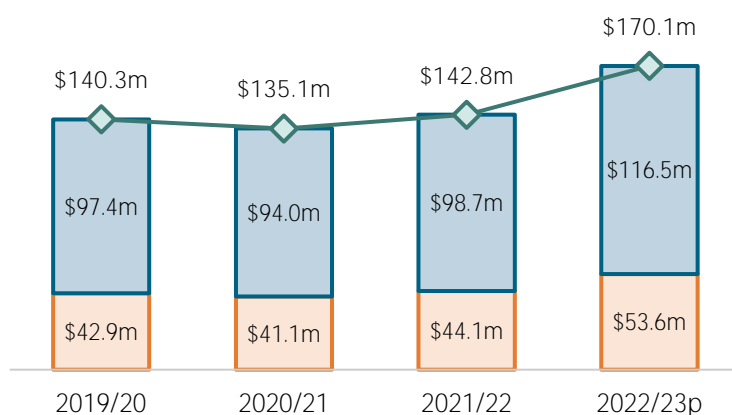
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23p
DIRECT COMPENSATION				
Income payments	\$60.2m	\$58.4m	\$64.5m	\$72.9m
Lump sums	\$37.2m	\$35.6m	\$34.2m	\$43.6m
SERVICE PAYMENTS				
Medical & hospital	\$19.1m	\$18.2m	\$19.3m	\$21.6m
Allied health*	\$6.4m	\$5.7m	\$7.0m	\$7.7m
Workplace rehabilitation	\$5.1m	\$4.8m	\$5.4m	\$6.5m
Legal & miscellaneous	\$12.3m	\$12.3m	\$12.4m	\$17.8m
Total claim payments	\$140.3m	\$135.1m	\$142.8m	\$170.1m



Total claim payments are adjusted to allow meaningful comparisons over time.

* Allied health includes 'other treatment services'.

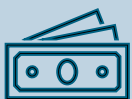
Total claim payments (\$million adjusted) by payment group



Direct compensation payments increased (+19.7%) from 2019/20 to 2022/23p.



Service payments increased (+25.0%) over the last four years.



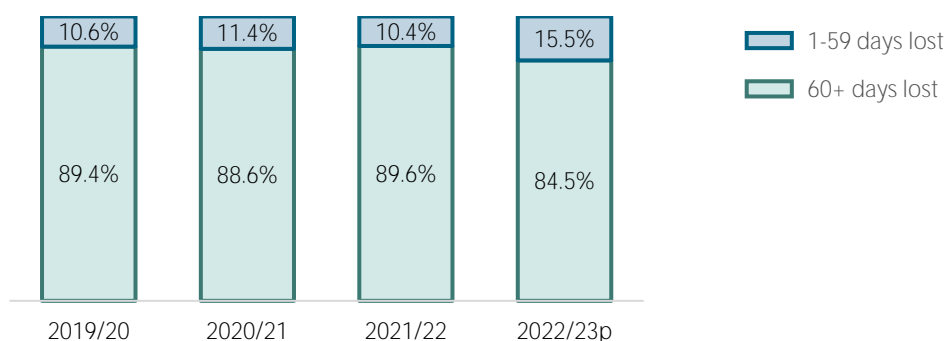
Payments for claims in the Construction industry in 2022/23p totalled \$170.1 million, accounting for 14.3% of total scheme payments.

Claim costs* total claim costs by days lost

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23p
1-59 days lost	\$13.9m	\$15.2m	\$14.8m	\$21.4m
60+ days lost	\$117.0m	\$118.3m	\$127.2m	\$116.8m
Total claims	\$130.9m	\$133.5m	\$141.9m	\$138.2m

* Due to the evolving nature of claims, data is subject to change particularly the most recent year.

Claim costs* proportions of claim costs by days lost



Claim costs* average claim costs by days lost

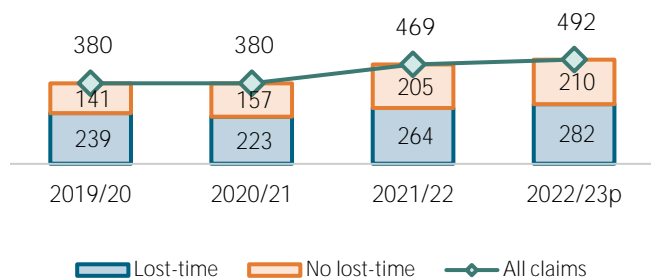
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23p
1-59 days lost	\$13,687	\$15,055	\$15,273	\$20,724
60+ days lost	\$168,895	\$168,999	\$152,320	\$118,069
Total claims	\$76,734	\$78,184	\$78,813	\$68,337



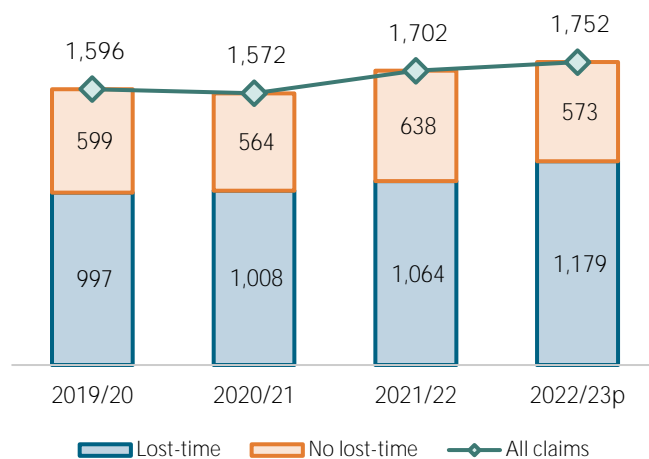
The average claim cost for Construction was \$68,337 in 2022/23p, compared with the scheme average of \$57,986.

Claim numbers by lost-time per industry subdivision

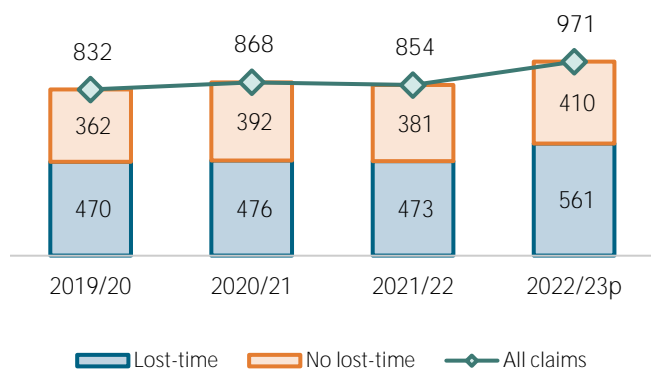
Building construction



Construction services



Heavy and civil engineering construction



Lost-time claims and frequency rate by industry subdivision

SUBDIVISION	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23p	Average* frequency rate
Building construction	239	223	264	282	5.0
1-59 days lost	130	126	147	149	2.8
60+ days lost	109	97	117	133	2.2
Construction services	997	1,008	1,064	1,179	9.2
1-59 days lost	584	606	558	601	5.4
60+ days lost	413	402	506	578	3.8
Heavy and civil engineering construction	470	476	473	561	13.4
1-59 days lost	299	275	261	283	7.8
60+ days lost	171	201	212	278	5.5
Total claims	1,706	1,707	1,801	2,022	8.9

* The average frequency rate is over four years (2018/19 to 2021/22). The 2022/23 frequency rate was not available at the time of the report.



Frequency rate indicates the prevalence of workers' compensation claims by measuring the number of lost-time claims per million hours worked.

Work status rate lost-time claims

Return to work rate	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23p
at 1 month	69.3%	68.5%	65.4%	63.0%
at 3 months	80.5%	78.4%	77.6%	76.1%
at 6 months	86.5%	84.7%	85.3%	82.0%
at 12 months	88.9%	88.1%	88.0%	n/a



The return to work rate measures the proportion of claimants who returned to work at any capacity at key intervals from the date of claim lodgement.



For 2021/22, 88% of claimants in Construction returned to work at 12 months after the claim was lodged, on par with the overall scheme (87.3%).

Lost-time claims by age group

AGE GROUP	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23p
15-19 years	75	97	120	164
20-24 years	237	194	200	261
25-34 years	425	446	422	457
35-44 years	372	347	365	382
45-54 years	318	316	366	378
55-59 years	147	149	151	180
60-64 years	93	112	118	141
65+ years	39	46	59	59
Total claims	1,706	1,707	1,801	2,022

Frequency rate by age group

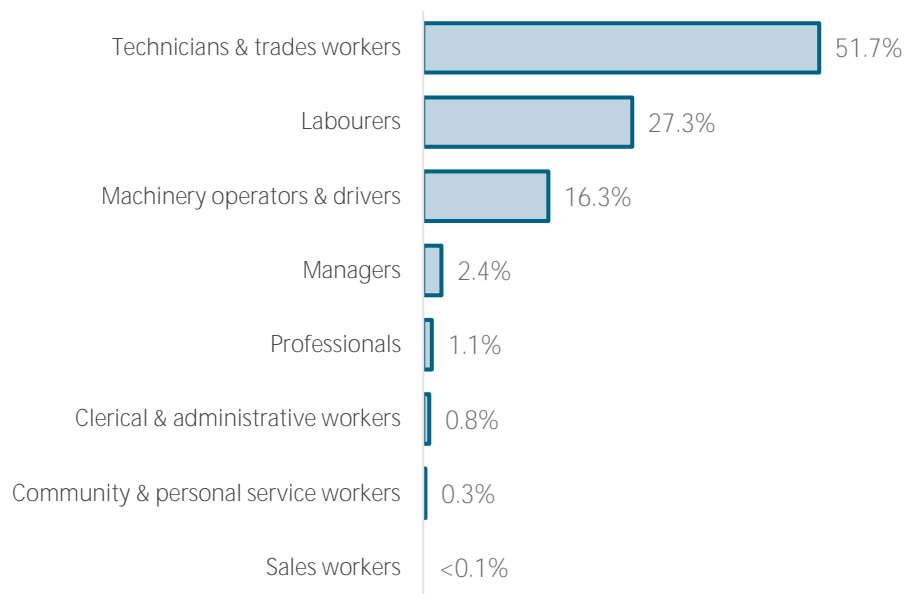
AGE GROUP	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23p
15-19 years	9.8	9.6	14.4	n/a
20-24 years	11.8	8.6	12.1	n/a
25-34 years	7.6	7.9	8.9	n/a
35-44 years	7.5	8.8	7.9	n/a
45-54 years	8.0	7.6	10.3	n/a
55-59 years	7.7	9.6	8.2	n/a
60-64 years	11.4	14.2	18.9	n/a
65+ years	5.0	11.2	11.7	n/a
Total claims	8.2	8.6	9.8	n/a

* The 2022/23 frequency rate was not available at the time of the report.

Lost-time claims by occupation

OCCUPATION	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23p
Technicians & trades workers	874	916	901	1,046
Labourers	441	445	515	552
Machinery operators & drivers	317	281	321	330
Managers	35	34	35	48
Professionals	11	5	8	23
Clerical & administrative workers	22	22	13	16
Community & personal service workers	3	1	3	6
Sales workers	3	3	5	1
Total claims	1,706	1,707	1,801	2,022

Lost-time claims proportions by occupation 2022/23p



Lost-time claims by nature of injury/disease

NATURE	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23p
Traumatic joint/ligament & muscle/tendon injury	821	863	859	907
Wounds, lacerations, amputations & internal organ damage	400	386	395	461
Fractures	283	253	317	395
Musculoskeletal & connective tissue diseases	53	67	73	93
Other injuries	38	37	31	38
Burn	34	22	18	34
Mental diseases	8	17	15	27
Digestive system diseases	35	27	32	26
Nervous system & sense organ diseases	16	16	10	19
Intracranial injuries	5	8	21	16
Injury to nerves & spinal cord	2	0	0	2
Infectious & parasitic diseases	1	0	18	1
Circulatory system diseases	3	2	2	1
Skin & subcutaneous tissue diseases	6	6	8	1
Other diseases	0	1	2	1
Respiratory system diseases	1	2	0	0
Total claims	1,706	1,707	1,801	2,022

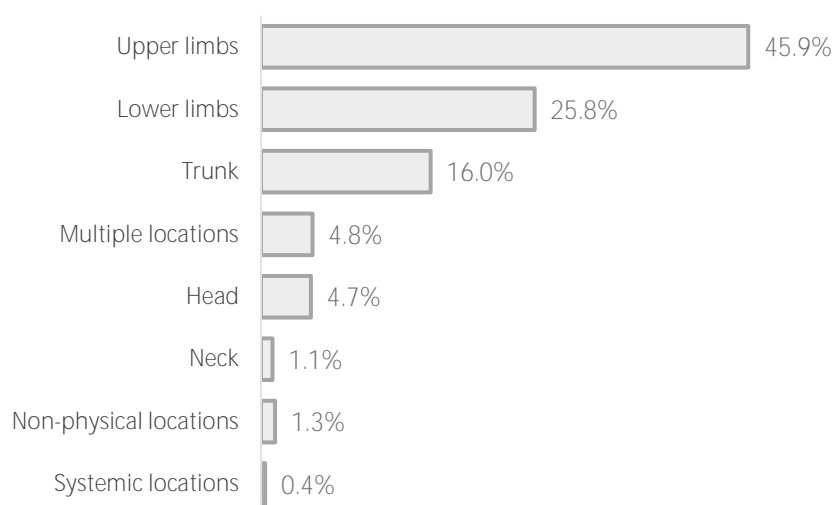


In 2022/23p, Sprains and strains (traumatic joint/ligament and muscle/tendon injury) continue to be the leading type of injury for claims lodged in the Construction industry (44.9%) and the overall scheme (49.5%).

Lost-time claims by bodily location of injury/disease

LOCATION	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23p
Upper limbs	739	735	742	928
Lower limbs	472	453	494	521
Trunk	324	309	329	323
Multiple locations	65	98	91	98
Head	73	78	82	95
Neck	17	15	22	22
Non-physical locations	8	17	15	27
Systemic locations	8	2	26	8
Total claims	1,706	1,707	1,801	2,022

Lost-time claims proportions by bodily location of injury/disease 2022/23p

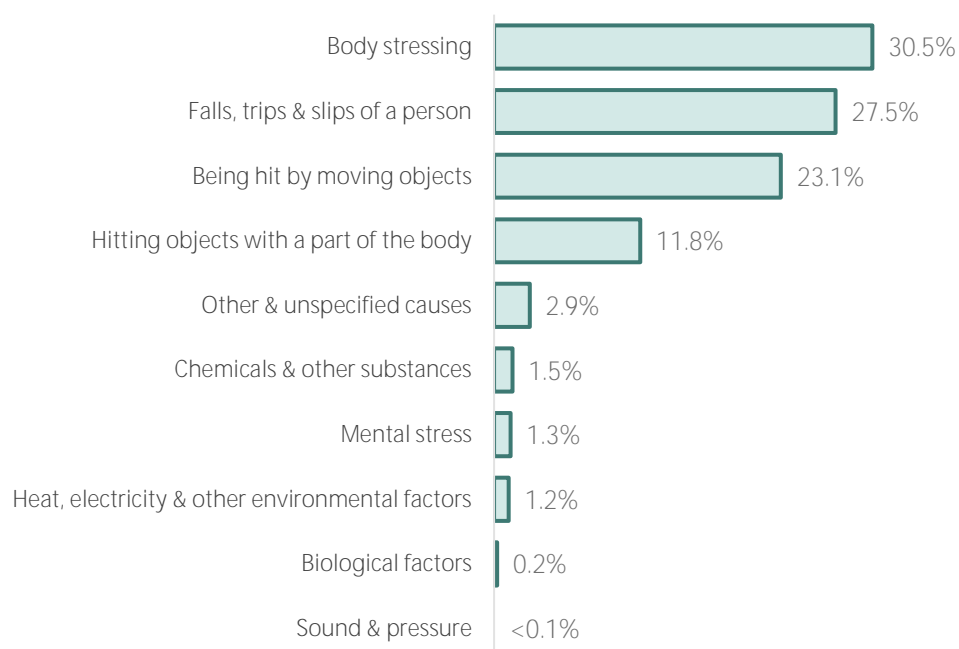


Upper and lower limb injuries accounted for 71.7% of total claims lodged in 2022/23p

Lost-time claims by mechanism of incident

MECHANISM	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23p
Body stressing	588	595	571	616
Falls, trips & slips of a person	455	474	540	556
Being hit by moving objects	398	370	383	467
Hitting objects with a part of the body	164	174	177	238
Other & unspecified causes	33	33	53	58
Chemicals & other substances	29	20	18	30
Mental stress	8	16	15	27
Heat, electricity & other environmental factors	23	17	17	24
Biological factors	5	6	24	5
Sound & pressure	3	2	3	1
Total claims	1,706	1,707	1,801	2,022

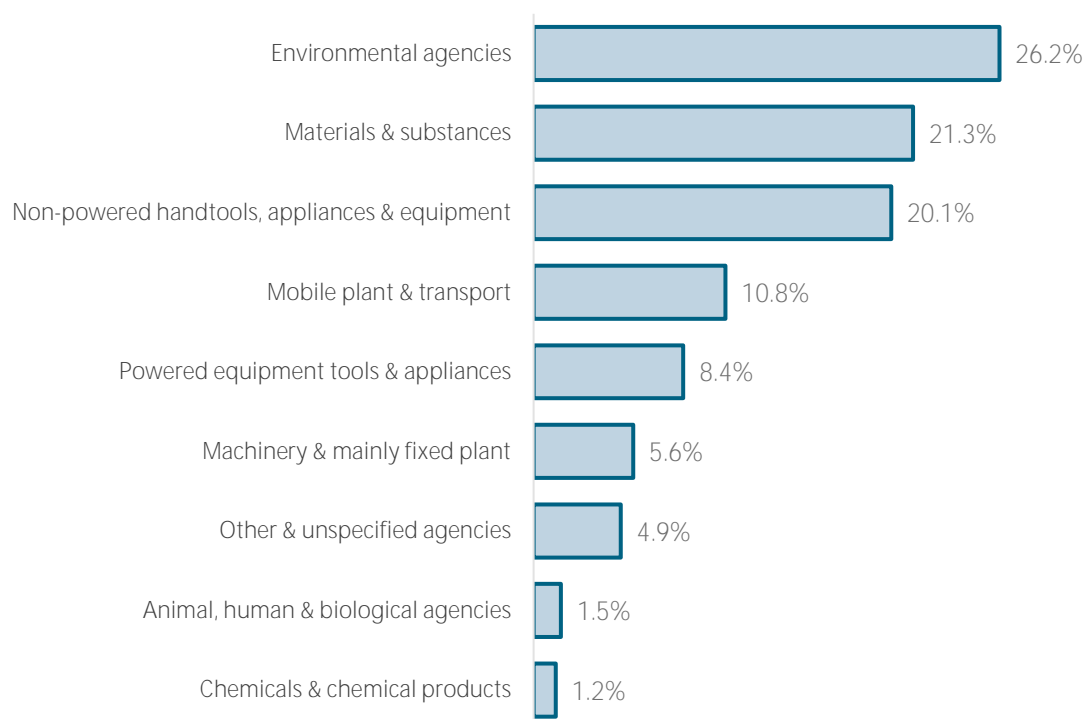
Lost-time claims proportions by mechanism of incident 2022/23p



Lost-time claims by agency of injury/disease

AGENCY	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23p
Environmental agencies	460	467	530	529
Materials & substances	358	344	344	431
Non-powered handtools, appliances & equipment	361	362	390	406
Mobile plant & transport	185	169	189	218
Powered equipment tools & appliances	114	120	136	170
Machinery & mainly fixed plant	119	113	81	113
Other & unspecified agencies	68	83	76	99
Animal, human & biological agencies	20	30	35	31
Chemicals & chemical products	21	19	20	25
Total claims	1,706	1,707	1,801	2,022

Lost-time claims proportions by agency of injury/disease 2022/23p



Glossary

TERM	DEFINITION / EXPLANATION OF TERM
Act	The <i>Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act 1981</i> .
Age	Chronological age (in years) of the worker at the date of injury or disease.
Agency of injury or disease	The object, substance or circumstance that was principally involved in or most closely associated with the circumstances which ultimately led to the most serious injury or disease. A comprehensive list of this classification is available from <i>Safe Work Australia Type of Occurrence Classification System 3rd edition</i> (safeworkaustralia.gov.au).
Bodily location	The part of the body affected by the most serious injury or disease. A comprehensive list of this classification is available from <i>Safe Work Australia Type of Occurrence Classification System 3rd edition</i> (safeworkaustralia.gov.au).
Claimant	A person who lodges a claim in the WA workers' compensation scheme.
Claim costs	An estimate of costs for unfinalised claims, and total cost of finalised claims attributed to the year in which a claim was lodged. Due to the evolving nature of claims, data is subject to change particularly the most recent year. Claim costs are not adjusted for inflation.
Claims data	<p>Information pertaining to workers' compensation claims is reported to WorkCover WA by approved insurers and self-insurers. Information is collated based on the financial year in which a claim was lodged with the insurer. For the purposes of this report, certain types of claims were excluded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▲ lost-time journey claims between home and work▲ asbestos-related diseases, including mesothelioma and pneumoconiosis, caused by asbestos exposure▲ duplicated or disallowed (by an insurer). <p>Due to the evolving nature of claims, data is subject to change particularly the most recent year.</p>

Glossary

TERM	DEFINITION / EXPLANATION OF TERM
Claim payments	<p>Categories are based on WorkCover WA's Guidelines for Completing Form WC 101. Claim payments are in contrast with claim costs as they do not reflect liabilities incurred but not yet paid. Claim payment information is collated based on the financial year during which payment was made, regardless of when the claim was lodged with the insurer. In this report, claim payments are reported both in adjusted and unadjusted formats. In relation to the former, payments are adjusted for inflation to allow for meaningful comparisons over time.</p>
Days lost	<p>The number of hours off work divided by the number of hours usually worked each day. If the claim is finalised, actual hours off work are used, otherwise if the claim is not finalised, estimated hours off work are used.</p>
Direct compensation	<p>Payments made directly to the worker either by income replacement (payments made for absences from work) or lump sums such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ redemption payments made under Schedule 1 ▲ specific injury payments made under Schedule 2 ▲ fatal payments including funeral expenses ▲ common law and other Acts payments.
Frequency rate	<p>The number of lost-time claims per million hours worked and indicates the prevalence of workers' compensation claims. It is based on the number of hours worked by employed persons in Western Australia as supplied by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.</p>
Industry	<p>Based on the <i>Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) 2006</i> published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The ANZSIC system groups together businesses that carry out similar economic activities and structured into a hierarchy of units reflecting different levels of description (abs.gov.au).</p>
Long duration claims	<p>Workers' compensation claims for which the injury or disease results in an absence from work of at least 60 days or shifts.</p>
Lost-time claims	<p>Claims for which the injury or disease results in an absence from work of at least one day or shift.</p>

Glossary

TERM	DEFINITION / EXPLANATION OF TERM
Mechanism of incident	The action, exposure or event that best describes the circumstances that resulted in the most serious injury or disease. The full list of this classification is available from <i>Safe Work Australia's Type of Occurrence Classification System 3rd edition</i> (safeworkaustralia.gov.au).
Nature of injury or disease	The most serious injury or disease suffered by the worker. The full list of this classification is available from <i>Safe Work Australia's Type of Occurrence Classification System 3rd edition</i> (safeworkaustralia.gov.au).
Occupation	Based on the <i>Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO)</i> published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. It is a skill-based classification which encompasses all occupations in the Australian workforce (abs.gov.au).
Service payments	<p>Service payments include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. medical and hospital payments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ medical practitioner and specialist payments (consultation and treatment expenses rendered by general practitioners and medical specialists) ▲ hospital expenses (hospital accommodation and hospital treatment) 2. allied health payments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ other treatment and appliance payments (comprises payments made under clauses 17(1)(3), (4), (5) and (6) of Schedule 1 of the Act, other than medical and hospital expenses) 3. workplace rehabilitation payments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ workplace rehabilitation payments (comprises payments made under clause 17 (1a) of Schedule 1 of the Act in respect of counselling, occupational training, work assessment, aids and appliances) 4. legal and miscellaneous: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ legal expenses (comprises the cost of legal advice and representation incurred by approved insurers or exempt employers, witness fees and the costs of these services incurred by the worker where the approved insurer or exempt employer is ordered to meet the costs) ▲ miscellaneous (includes general items that do not fit in any other category, for example travelling, meals and lodgings, under clause 19 of Schedule 1).

Glossary

TERM	DEFINITION / EXPLANATION OF TERM
Worker	<p>As defined in Section 5 of the <i>Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act 1981</i>, a worker is defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) any person to whose service any industrial award or industrial agreement applies; andb) any person engaged by another person to work for the purpose of the other person's trade or business under a contract with him for service, the remuneration by whatever means of the person so working being in substance for his personal manual labour or services.

- 1 Due to the dynamic nature of **workers'** compensation claims, the interpretation of data contained within this report (the data) must be undertaken with some caution. Data users are cautioned to consider carefully the provisional nature of the data before using it for decisions that concern personal or public safety or the conduct of business that involves substantial monetary or operational consequences.
- 2 The accuracy or reliability of the data is not guaranteed or warranted in any way. WorkCover WA has made a reasonable effort to ensure that the data is up-to-date, accurate, complete, and comprehensive at the time of disclosure. This data reflects data reported to this agency by insurers and self-insurers for the reporting periods indicated. Data users are responsible for ensuring by independent verification its accuracy, currency or completeness.
- 3 Neither WorkCover WA, or its agencies or representatives are responsible for data that is misinterpreted or altered in any way. Derived conclusions and analysis generated from this data are not to be considered attributable to WorkCover WA.
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- 5 Information concerning the accuracy and appropriate uses of the data or concerning other **workers' compensation data may be obtained by contacting WorkCover WA.**