

Violence at work, 2015/16

Findings from the Crime Survey for England and Wales and from RIDDOR

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Summary

The information in this document relates to health and safety statistics for 2015/16. The document can be found at:

Findings from the 2015/16 Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) show that:

- The risk of work related violence is similar in 2015/16 to the last five years, with an estimated 1.4 per cent of working adults the victims of one or more violent incidents at work.
- In 2015/16 350,000 adults of working age in employment experienced work related violence including threats and physical assault.
- There were estimated 698,000 incidents of violence at work according to the 2015/16 CSEW, comprising 329,000 assaults and 369,000 threats. The number of assaults was broadly similar to the last few years however the number of threats was significantly higher due to the inclusion of work-related online threats for the first time.
- The 2015/16 CSEW found that 1.3% of women and 1.5% of men were victims of violence at work once or more during the year prior to their interview.
- It is estimated that 56% of victims reported one incident of work related violence whilst 18 % experienced two incidents of work related violence and 26% experienced three or more incidents in 2015/16
- Strangers were the offenders in 46% of cases of workplace violence. Among the 54% of incidents where the offender was known, the offenders were most likely to be clients or a member of the public known through work.
- 67% per cent of violence at work resulted in no physical injury, of the remaining 33% of cases, minor bruising or a black eye accounted for the majority of the injuries recorded.

This report uses two main sources for violence at work: the annual Crime Survey for England and Wales and the statutory reporting system, The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR), which includes Scotland. The RIDDOR reporting system records physical violence only and does not include threats or other verbal abuse. In addition employers are only required to report those injuries that result in over seven days off work. Non-fatal injuries reported under RIDDOR are known to be substantially under-reported.

- RIDDOR reported 4,697 injuries to employees, where the 'kind of accident' was 'physical assault/act of violence' in Great Britain (England, Wales and Scotland). This represents 6.5% of all reported workplace injuries. Of this figure, there was one death. (RIDDOR, 2015/16p)

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is publishing this annual statistical report as part of its responsibility for developing and implementing policy on reduction of work-related violence. HSE has published a wide range of guidance on the prevention and management of work-related violence, and works in partnership with others (including the Home Office, other government departments, employers, trades unions and local authorities), to raise awareness of the issue and share good practice.

Employers have a legal duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of their employees under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. In addition, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 place specific requirements on employers to assess the risks to their employees, and to take appropriate measures to prevent or reduce the risks. These legal duties include protecting employees from exposure to reasonably foreseeable violence at work - both physical attacks and verbal abuse.

In order to develop strategies to reduce the risk of violence at work, the extent and nature of such violence needs greater understanding. This report updates previous data published in Budd (1999), Budd (2001), Upson (2004), Webster et al. (2008), Buckley et al. (2010), Packham (2011), Buckley and Cookson (2011) and Buckley (2013). This report is based on findings from the 2015/16 CSEW which interviewed 34,000 adults selected at random from households in England and Wales

Definition of violence at work in Crime Survey for England and Wales

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) measures respondents' experiences of crime-related incidents and classifies these into offence types (including physical assaults and threats), and also collects detailed information about the nature of the victimisation. The CSEW defines violence at work on the basis of type of offence (assaults or threats); what the victim was doing at the time of the incident (at work or working); and the relationship between victim and offender (domestic violence is excluded).

The term violence is used in this report to refer to both assaults and threats. However, threats are not usually included in other CSEW measures of violence. Physical assaults include assault with minor injury, assault without injury and wounding. Threats include verbal threats made to or against the respondent.

Respondents were asked what they were doing at the time the incident happened. Included here are those incidents where the respondent said they were at work or working, including working at home.

Excluded are incidents in which there was a domestic relationship between the offender and victim (current or former partners, relatives or household members) as these cases are likely to be very different in nature from other experiences of violence at work.

Where stated, analysis is based on respondents of working age who said they were in paid work in the last seven days at the time of interview (either as an employee or self-employed). From 2010/11 onwards, "working age" includes men and women aged 16-64 years. Before 2010/11, it included women aged 16-59 years and men aged 16-64 years

The CSEW is a large, nationally representative, household survey that has been carried out since 1982. The main purpose of the survey is to measure the extent and nature of criminal victimisation against adults, aged 16 or over, living in private households in England and Wales. Respondents are also asked about their attitudes towards different crime-related issues.

The CSEW has run continuously since 2001/02 with each annual dataset reporting on interviews conducted throughout the year, covering incidents experienced by respondents in the 12 months prior to their interview. On behalf of the Office for National Statistics (ONS), TNS-BMRB carries out the fieldwork for the CSEW, which in 2015/16 had a sample of around 34,000 respondents.

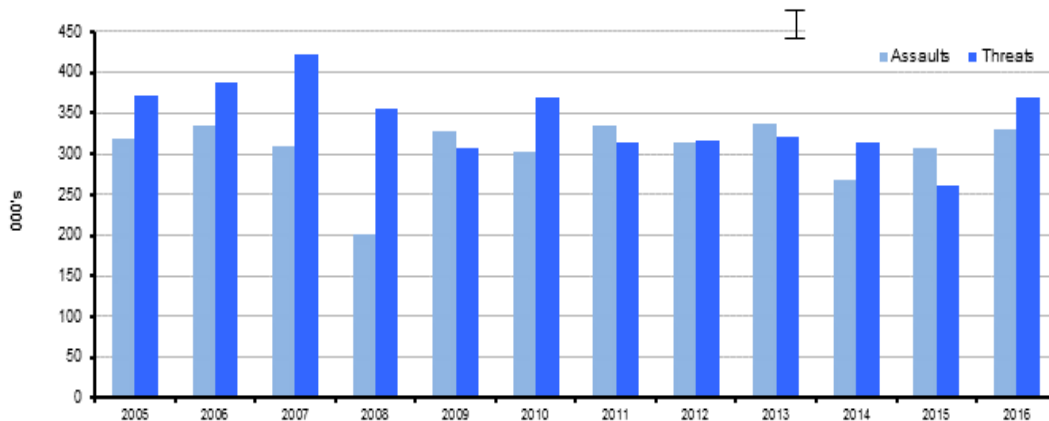
Further details are contained in the CSEW Technical Report www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/specific/crime-statistics-methodology/user-guide-to-crime-statistics.pdf

1. The extent of violence at work

In order to aid the development of policies to reduce violence at work it is necessary to assess how frequently incidents occur and the risk of victimisation. Two main measures of the extent of violence at work are presented – the number of victims and the number of incidents.

The number of incidents of work related violence in 2015/16 was estimated at 698,000 with assaults accounting for 329,000 of these and 369,000 threats to victims.

Figure 1 Number of incidents of violence at work for adults of working age in employment 2004/05 to 2015/16 (CSEW)

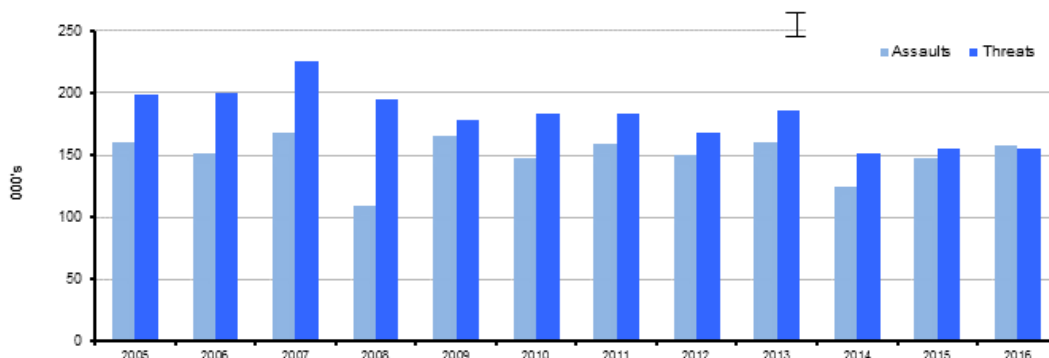


Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales for year ended March 2016

The 2015/16 CSEW estimated that 1.4% of working adults were the victim of one or more violent incidents at work in the year before their interview; 0.6% had been physically assaulted while they were working and 0.9% had suffered threats. This represents an estimated 350,000 workers who had experienced at least one incident of violence at work. 158,000 had been assaulted while they were working and 210,000 had suffered threats.

Note: The overall victimisation risk does not equal the sum of the risks of assaults and threats as some victims will have experienced both assaults and threats within the previous year.

Figure 2 Number of victims of violence at work for adults of working age in employment 2004/05 to 2015/16 (CSEW)

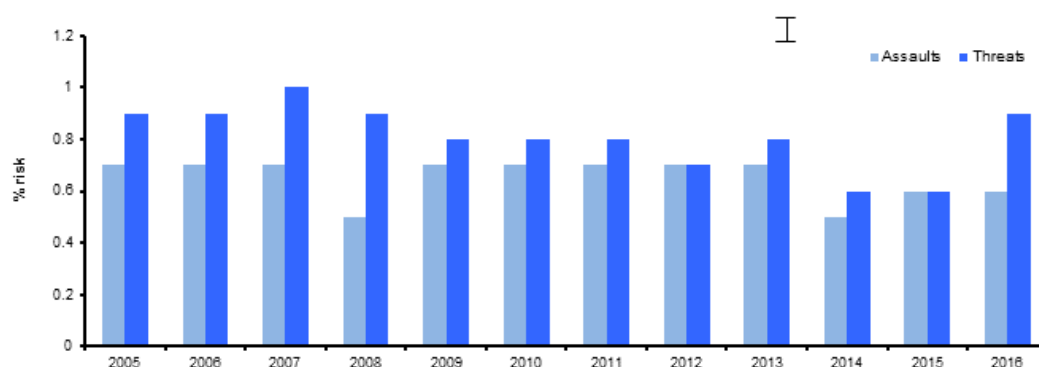


Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales for year ended March 2016

2. Risk of violence

The risk of violence at work remains stable for people of working age in employment, with an overall incidence of assault and threat at 1.4% (0.6% and 0.9% respectively) in 2015/16. The incidence is broadly similar over the last ten years from 1.5% and in 2004/05. However as noted earlier the inclusion of work related on line threats for the first time has increased the rate of threats overall.

Figure 3 Incidence rate of violence at work for adults of working age in employment 2004/05 to 2015/16 (CSEW)



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales for year ended March 2016

3. Occupation

The occupational data presented is based on combined data from year ending March 2015 to year ending March 2016 of the Crime Survey for England and Wales. Due to the detailed nature of the occupational codes, it is necessary to use two years data to achieve sufficient sample sizes for meaningful analysis. Occupational findings are therefore only updated every two years.

National level estimates of violence at work mask variation in risk among workers with different occupational characteristics. Previous research has shown that not all workers share the same risk of violence at work (Mayhew et al., 1989, Jones et al., 1997, Budd, 1999 and 2001, Upson 2004, Webster et al., 2008, Buckley et al., 2010, Packham, 2011, Buckley 2013).

The CSEW assigns a Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) code to the current occupation of all respondents, or if they were not in work in the week prior to the interview, their last main job (ONS, 2010). The individual SOC codes can be grouped into categories to allow analysis of occupational differences in risk. Data in this section is organised using SOC 2010 occupation codes.

The analysis in this publication uses the 25 sub-major occupational groups; (for further details of the SOC classification, see (www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/classifications/current-standard-classifications/soc2010/))

Only respondents who were working in the week prior to their interview are included in the analyses presented in this chapter. Respondents may not have been in employment for the entire 12 months of which the risks are measured; however, the CSEW does not ask respondents how long they had been in the current job. The inclusion of people who had not worked throughout the year may lead to an underestimation of the level of risk. Furthermore, some respondents may have changed jobs during the year; the violent

incident may have occurred in a previous occupation, details of which are not collected. It is not possible to identify these cases.

The CSEW shows that there is large variation in the risks at work across occupational groups.

Table 1 lists the occupational groups most at risk of assaults or threats at work. Overall, respondents in protective service occupations (such as police officers) faced by far the highest risk of assaults and threats while working, at 9.2% – 8 times the average risk of 1.3%.

Table 1.05 Risk of violence at work for adults of working age in employment, by occupation, year ending March 2015 and year ending March 2016 CSEW^{1,2}

Percentages	Adults of working age in employment ³			
	Assaults	Threats	All violence at work	Unweighted base
	% victims once or more			
Managers, Directors and Senior Officials	0.6	1.2	1.8	3,770
Corporate managers and directors	0.4	1.1	1.4	2,469
Other managers and proprietors	1.0	1.4	2.5	1,301
Professional Occupations	0.7	0.8	1.4	6,335
Science, research, engineering and technology professionals	0.0	0.0	0.0	1,710
Health professionals	1.7	1.1	2.5	1,446
Teaching and educational professionals	0.9	0.7	1.4	1,718
Business, media and public service professionals	0.3	1.6	1.9	1,461
Associate Professionals and Technical Occupations	1.1	1.0	1.9	4,849
Science, engineering and technology associate professionals	0.1	0.3	0.4	536
Health and social care associate professionals	2.7	3.7	6.1	539
Protective service occupations	8.0	2.0	9.2	442
Culture, media and sports occupations	0.2	0.6	0.8	739
Business and public service associate professionals	0.2	0.5	0.6	2,593
Administrative and Secretarial Occupations	0.2	0.6	0.8	3,695
Administrative occupations	0.2	0.6	0.9	2,934
Secretarial and related occupations	0.0	0.6	0.6	761
Skilled Trades Occupations	0.2	0.3	0.5	3,597
Skilled agriculture and related trades	0.2	0.7	1.0	376
Skilled metal and electrical and electronic trades	0.2	0.1	0.3	1,288
Skilled construction and building trades	0.2	0.5	0.7	1,208
Textiles, printing and other skilled trades	0.4	0.1	0.5	725
Caring, Leisure and Other Service Occupations	1.0	0.6	1.5	3,575
Caring personal service occupations	1.2	0.7	1.8	2,828
Leisure, travel and related personal service occupations	0.2	0.4	0.7	747
Sales and Customer Service Occupations	0.3	0.9	1.1	2,427
Sales occupations	0.2	1.0	1.1	1,953
Customer service occupations	0.6	0.4	1.0	474
Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	0.6	0.6	1.1	2,512
Process, plant and machine operatives	0.1	0.0	0.1	1,158
Transport and mobile machine drivers and operatives	0.9	1.1	1.9	1,354
Elementary Occupations	0.8	0.7	1.3	3,385
Elementary trades, plant and related occupations	0.8	0.1	0.9	428
Elementary administration and service occupations	0.8	0.8	1.4	2,957
All	0.6	0.8	1.3	34,145

1. Source, Crime Survey for England and Wales, ONS

2. This data is based on combined data from year ending March 2015 to year ending March 2016.

3. Men and Women aged 16-64 who were in employment in the last 7 days.

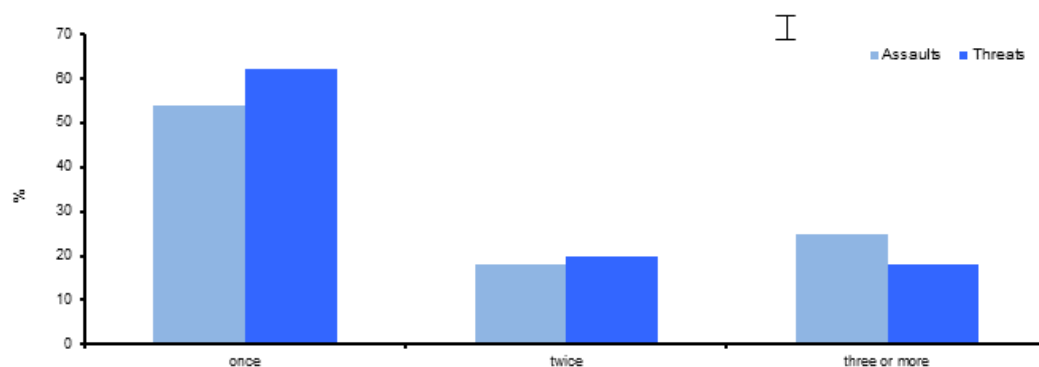
Additionally, health and associate care professionals and health and social care specialists had higher than average risk at 2.5% and 6.1% respectively. These professions have consistently had higher than average risk rates over the last number of years.

Examples of workers least at risk include workers in elementary trades, agriculture plant and storage-related occupations, science and technology professionals and associate professionals and workers in administrative occupations.

3. Repeat victimisation

In 2015/16, of those respondents who were the subject of assault or threat in the workplace, 54% were assaulted or threatened once whilst a further 18% reported being threatened or assaulted twice and a further 26% reported being assaulted or threatened three or more times.

Figure 4 Repeat victimisation at work for adults of working age in employment 2015/16 (CSEW)

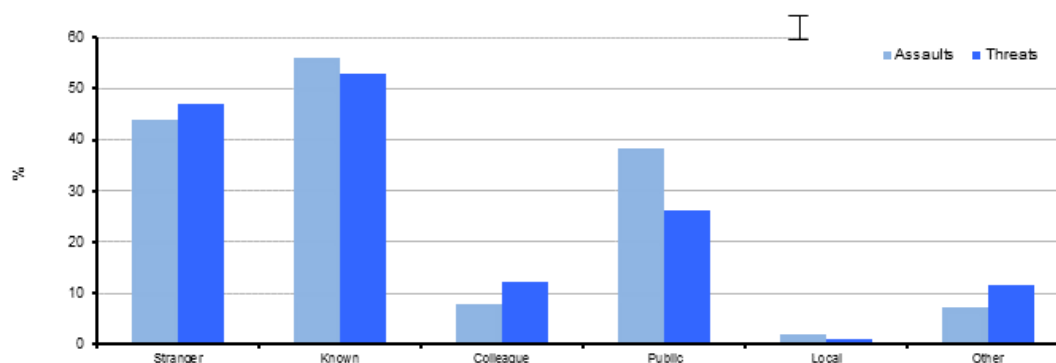


Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales for year ended March 2016

4. Offender-victim relationship

According to the 2015/16 CSEW, the offender was known to the victim in 54% of all work related violence incidents, whilst in 46% of incidents the offender was unknown to the victim. In cases where the offender was known, they were most likely to be either a client, customer or work colleague.

Figure 5 Offender – victim relationship for adults of working age in employment 2014/15 (CSEW)



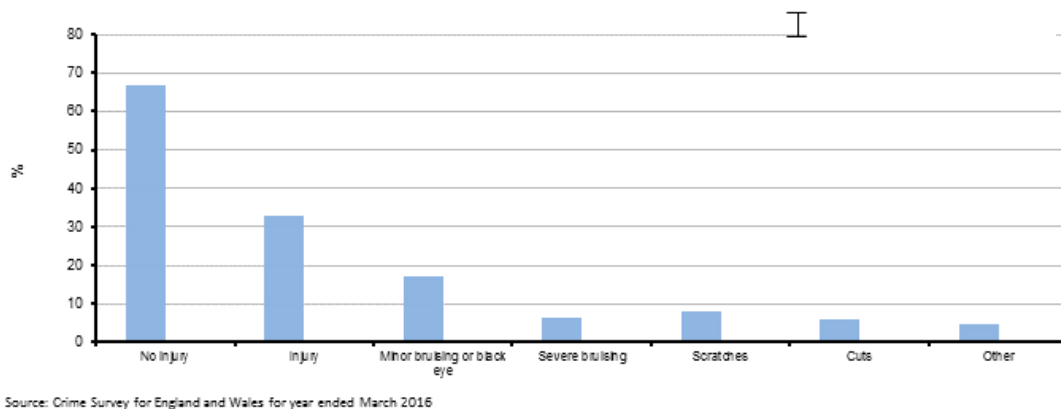
Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales for year ended March 2016

Experiencing violence at work can have both physical and emotional consequences for victims and worry about workplace violence may impact upon people's health (Chappell and Di Martino (2006).

5 Consequences of violence at work

Looking at the physical consequences of assault in the workplace, 67% resulted in no physical injury, whilst 33% resulted in a physical injury. Minor bruising or a black eye 17% and scratches 8% were the most common physical injuries. Severe bruising from heavier trauma was suggested in 6% of physical assaults. Other injuries accounted for 5%. This category includes broken bones, broken nose, broken, lost or chipped teeth, concussion or loss of consciousness, facial or head injuries or other injuries.

Figure 6 Percentage of violence at work incidents by injury type 2015/16 (CSEW)



7. Influence of drugs and alcohol

In the 2015/16 CSEW, respondents suggested that, in the incidents in which they experienced a threat or physical assault, they considered the offender to be under the influence of alcohol in 27% of instances and drugs in 14% of incidents.

Figure 7 Offender under the influence of alcohol for adults of working age in employment 2015/16 (CSEW)

Figure 7 Offender under the influence of alcohol for adults of working age in employment 2014/15 (CSEW)

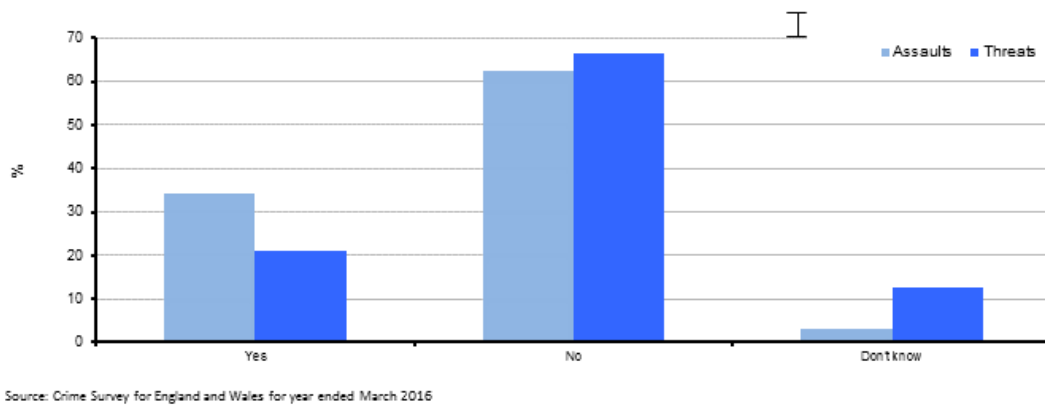
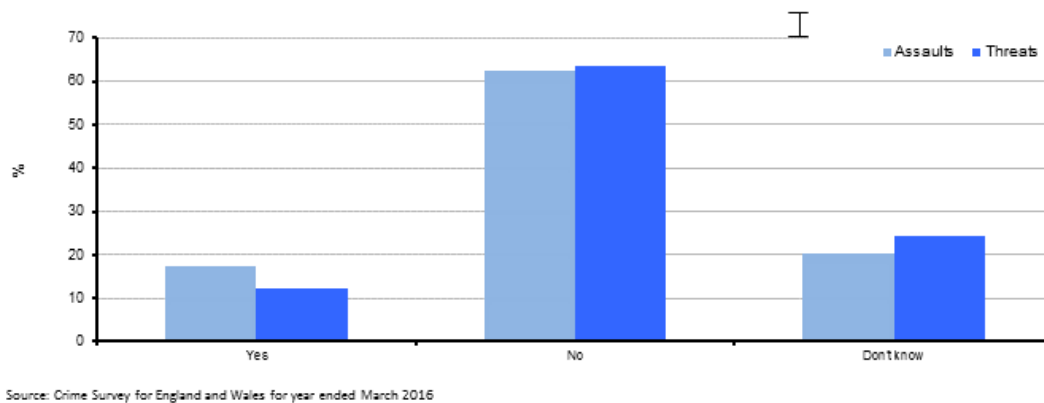


Figure 8 Offender under the influence of drugs for adults of working age in employment 2014/15 (CSEW)



8. Injuries to workers as notified under The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations

Employers have a legal duty to report certain workplace accidents, required under RIDDOR (The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations). RIDDOR applies where an accident to a worker results in death; in a non-fatal specified injury (typically most bone fractures or amputations); or in over-7-days' off work.

In relation to RIDDOR, an accident is a separate, identifiable, unintended incident, which causes physical injury. This specifically includes acts of non-consensual violence to people at work. Hence 'verbal' assault is excluded, even if it results in time off work. Physical assaults in the workplace that are not work-related are also excluded (for example, an assault over a domestic matter that takes place at work, but is not over a work matter). Suicides and self-harm are excluded.

Non-fatal injuries reported under RIDDOR are known to be substantially under-reported. Currently it is estimated that just under half of all types of non-fatal reports that should be made, are actually reported. There is no separate estimate of whether violence-related RIDDOR incidents are differently reported than all types of injury.

For more details on reporting requirements under RIDDOR, see www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/index.htm. For details on specific 'kinds of accidents', including workplace violence, see www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causinj/kinds-of-accident.htm and www.hse.gov.uk/Statistics/tables/ridkind1.xlsx.

For the latest year in Great Britain, 2015/16p:

RIDDOR reported 4,697 injuries to employees, where the 'kind of accident' was 'physical assault/act of violence' in Great Britain (England, Wales and Scotland). This represents 6.5% of all reported workplace injuries. Of this figure, there was one death. (RIDDOR, 2015/16p)

In order to see breakdown of RIDDOR violence by industry please see link below

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/tables/ridkind.xlsx>

With its broader scope, the CSEW shows higher levels of workplace violence. However, CSEW and RIDDOR reporting show broad similarity in terms of the main occupations and industry areas.

9. The Labour Force Survey

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is an alternative source of workplace injury statistics. The LFS is based on the views of the individual worker, so unlike RIDDOR, is less affected by under-reporting. The LFS is able to provide estimates of all workplace injuries (not just those resulting in over-7-days off work), as well as the number of working days lost as a result of the accident.

There were an estimated 41,000 injuries as a result of acts of physical violence at work (all injuries, not just those resulting in more than seven days off). There were an estimated 622,000 injuries of all types of accident 6.6%. (LFS, covering 3-year average 2013/14-2015/16)

The 41,000 injuries resulted in an estimated 229,000 working days lost. This compares to around 4.3m working days lost for all types of workplace accident 5% (LFS, covering 3-year average 2013/14-2015/16)

For more details on LFS statistics, see www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/sources.htm

10 Conclusions

The risk of work related violence in the workplaces of England and Wales in 2015/16 was 1.4% (CSEW). Protective service is the occupational group with by far the highest risk of experiencing workplace violence. Occupations in health and health & social care also had a higher than average risk. A significant number of individuals suffering violence at work were subject to multiple incidents. This may pertain to the nature of the job situation or to an endemic problem within a particular area of work. In many cases, individuals are likely to know the offender.

RIDDOR reports the highest number of injuries from the human health, residential care industries, with nurses and nursing assistants amongst the occupations with the highest numbers reported. The CSEW and the RIDDOR reporting show broad similarity in terms of the main occupations and industry areas which have the higher levels of workplace violence. Whilst the majority of injuries sustained in a violent incident are classified as minor injuries, a proportion is of a more serious nature that may cause longer term physical and psychological harm to the individuals involved.

National Statistics

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is Health and Safety Executive's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected by National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

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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