

Violence at Work, 2016/17

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

Contents

Summary	2
1.Violence at Work	2
2 .Definition	3
3. The extent of violence at work	4
4. Occupation	5
5. Repeat Victimization	7
6. Offender-Victim Relationship	7
7. The consequences of violence at work	8
8. Influence of drugs and alcohol	8
9. Injuries to workers as notified under The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations	9
10. The Labour Force Survey	10
11. Conclusions	10
12. References	10
13. National Statistics	11



Summary

The information in this document relates to work related violence. The document can be found at: www.hse.gov.uk/STATISTICS/causinj/violence/index.htm

The number of violent incidents at work has remained broadly flat over the last decade with annual fluctuations.

Findings from the 2016/17 Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) produced on behalf of the Office of National Statistics show that:

- The risk of work related violence is similar in 2016/17 to the last five years, with an estimated 1.3 per cent of working adults the victims of one or more violent incidents at work.
- In 2016/17 326,000 adults of working age in employment experienced work related violence including threats and physical assault.
- There were an estimated 642,000 incidents of violence at work according to the 2016/17 CSEW, comprising 269,000 assaults and 372,000 threats. This compares to an estimated 698,000 incidents in 2015/16.
- The 2016/17 CSEW found that 1.3% of women and 1.3% of men were victims of violence at work once or more during the year prior to their interview.
- It is estimated that 58% of victims reported one incident of work related violence whilst 16% experienced two incidents of work related violence and 26% experienced three or more incidents in 2016/17.
- Strangers were the offenders in 55% of cases of workplace violence. Among the 45% of incidents where the offender was known, the offenders were most likely to be clients or a member of the public known through work.
- The survey found 64% per cent of violence at work resulted in no physical injury. Of the remaining 36% of cases, minor bruising or a black eye accounted for the majority of the injuries recorded.
- RIDDOR reported 4,941 injuries to employees, where the 'kind of accident' was 'physical assault/act of violence' in Great Britain (England, Wales and Scotland). This represents 7% of all reported workplace injuries. Of this figure, there were two deaths. (RIDDOR, 2016/17)

1. Violence at Work

The number of violent incidents at work has remained broadly flat over the last decade with annual fluctuations. □ Findings from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) show that the risk of being a victim of actual or threatened violence at work is similar in 2016/17 to the last few years, with an estimated 1.3 per cent of working adults the victims of one or more violent incidents at work.

- In 2016/17 326,000 adults of working age in employment experienced work related violence, including threats and physical assault.
- There were estimated 642,000 incidents of violence at work according to the 2016/17 CSEW, comprising 269,000 assaults and 372,000 threats. This compares to an estimated 698,000 incidents in 2015/16.
- The 2016/17 CSEW found that 1.3% of women and 1.3% of men were victims of violence at work once or more during the year prior to their interview.
- It is estimated that 58% of victims reported one incident of work related violence whilst 16% experienced two incidents of work related violence and 26% experienced three or more incidents in 2016/17.
- Strangers were the offenders in 55% of cases of workplace violence. Among the 45% of incidents where the offender was known, the offenders were most likely to be clients or a member of the public known through work.
- The survey found 64% per cent of violence at work resulted in no physical injury, of the remaining 36% 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 carried out by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) 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 4,941 injuries to employees, where the 'kind of accident' was 'physical assault/act of violence' in Great Britain (England, Wales and Scotland). This represents 7% of all reported workplace injuries. (RIDDOR, 2016/17)

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 is based on findings from the 2016/17 CSEW which interviewed 34,000 adults selected at random from households in England and Wales.

2 .Definition

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 2016/17 had a sample of around 34,000 respondents.

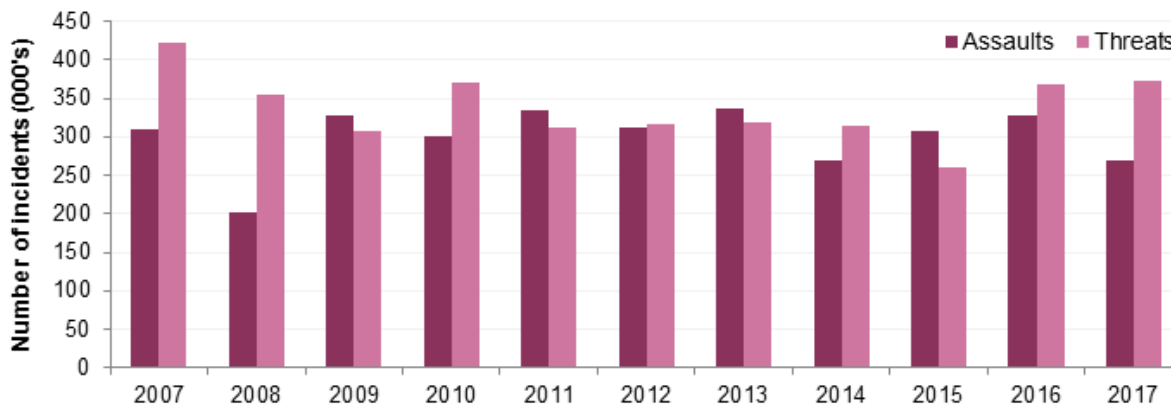
Further details are contained in the CSEW Technical Report www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/specific/crime-statistics-methodology/user-guide-to-crime-statistics.pdf

3. 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 2016/17 was estimated at 642,000 with assaults accounting for 269,000 of these and 372,000 threats to victims.

Figure 1 Number of incidents of violence at work for adults of working age in employment 2007-2017 (CSEW)

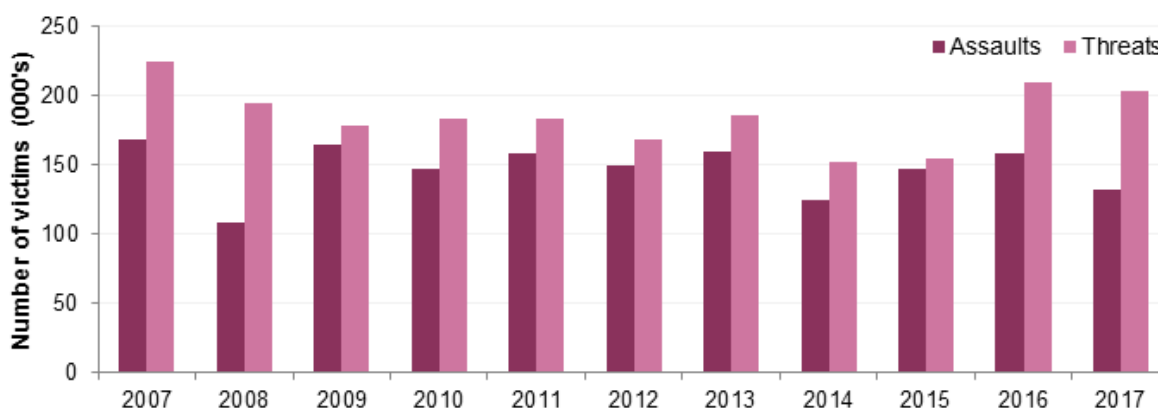


Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales for year ended March 2017

The 2016/17 CSEW estimated that 1.3% of working adults were the victim of one or more violent incidents at work in the year before their interview; 0.5% had been physically assaulted while they were working and 0.8% had suffered threats. This represents an estimated 326,000 workers who had experienced at least one incident of violence at work. 132,000 had been assaulted while they were working and 204,000 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.

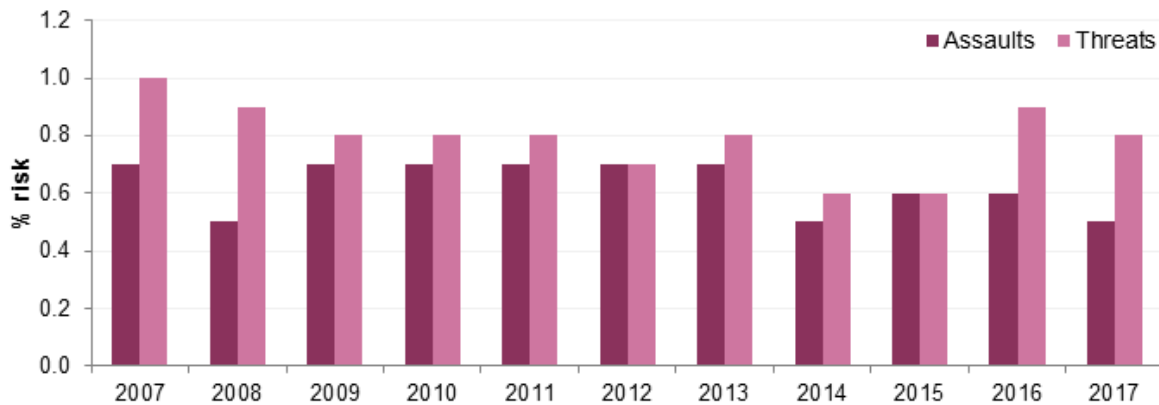
Figure 2 Number of victims of violence at work for adults of working age in employment 2007-2017 (CSEW)



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales for year ended March 2017

The risk of violence at work remains stable for people of working age in employment, with an overall incidence of assault and threat at 1.3% (0.5% and 0.8% respectively) in 2016/17. There has been an apparent rise in the number of threats in the last two years; the reasons for this are not yet clear.

Figure 3 Incidence rate of violence at work for adults of working age in employment 2007-2017 (CSEW)



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales for year ended March 2017

4. Occupation

The occupational data presented here is based on combined data from year ending March 2015 and 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 and this year's table is therefore the same as that presented in the equivalent 2015/16 report

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 9.6% – 8 times the average risk of 1.2%.

Additionally, health care professionals and health and social care specialists had higher than average risk at 3.1% and 3.4% respectively. These professions have consistently had higher than average risk rates over the last number of years.

Other professions with higher risk include transport and mobile machine drivers at 3.0%.

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

Table 1. Risk of violence at work for adults of working age in employment, by occupational category, for year ending March 2015 and year ending March 2016 (CSEW 2016)

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

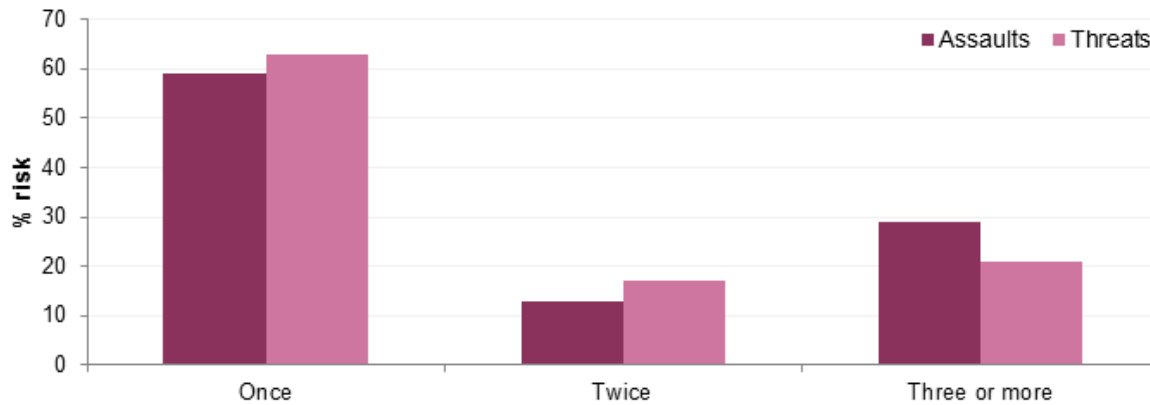
1. Source, Crime Survey for England and Wales, ONS

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.

5. Repeat Victimization

Figure 4. Repeat Victimization at work for adults of working age in employment 2016/17 (CSEW)



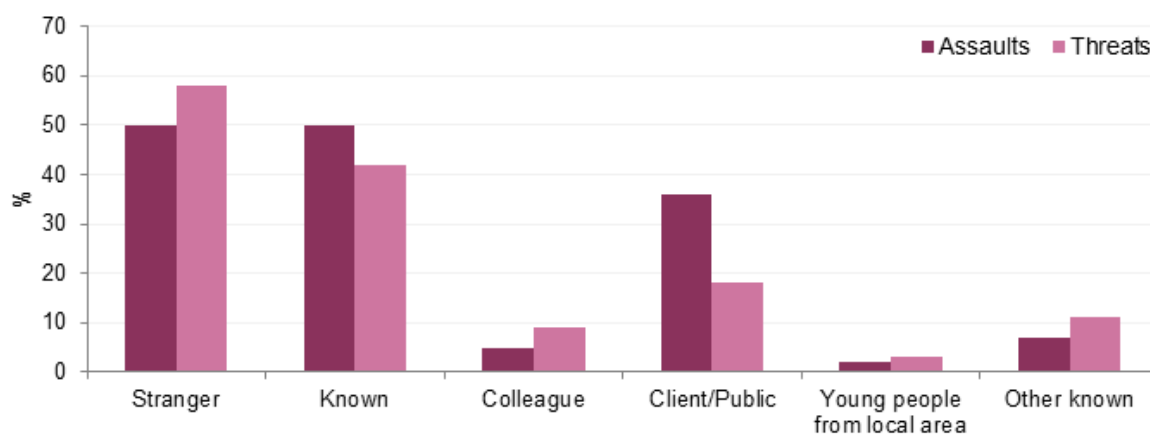
Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales for year ended March 2017

In 2016/17, of those respondents who were the subject of assault or threat in the workplace, 58% were assaulted or threatened once whilst a further 16% reported being threatened or assaulted twice and a further 26% reported being assaulted or threatened three or more times.

6. Offender-Victim Relationship

The 2016/17 CSEW asserts that in all work related violence the offender was unknown to the victim in 55% of incidents, whilst in 45% of incidents the offender was known 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 2016/17 (CSEW)

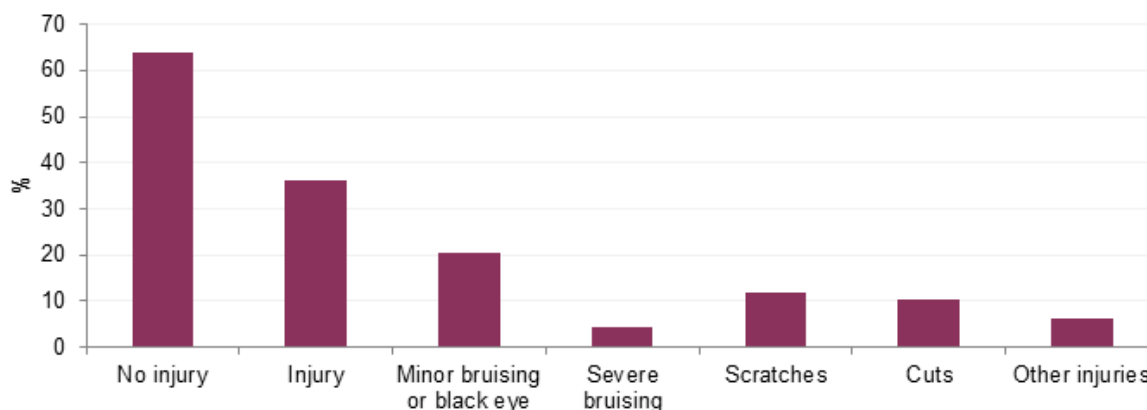


Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales for year ended March 2017

7. The consequences of violence at work

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)). This paragraph examines the physical injuries caused during incidents 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.

Figure 6. Percentage of violence at work incidents by injury type 2016/17 (CSEW)

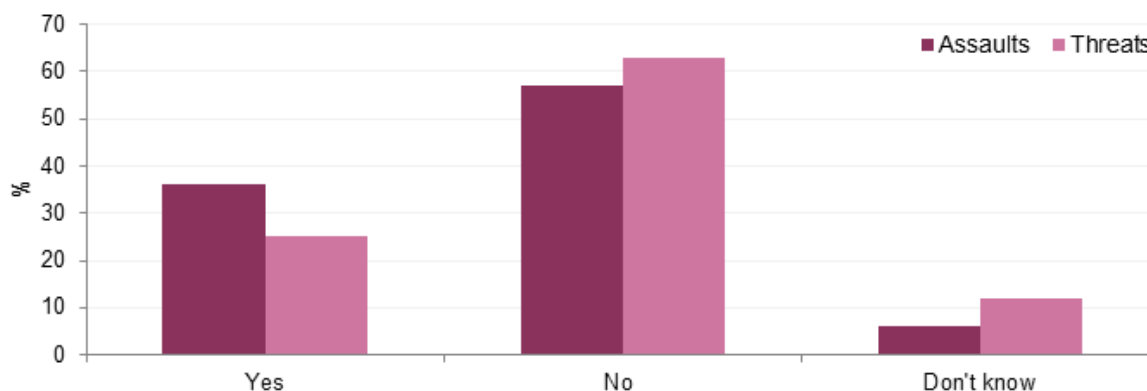


Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales for year ended March 2017

8. Influence of drugs and alcohol

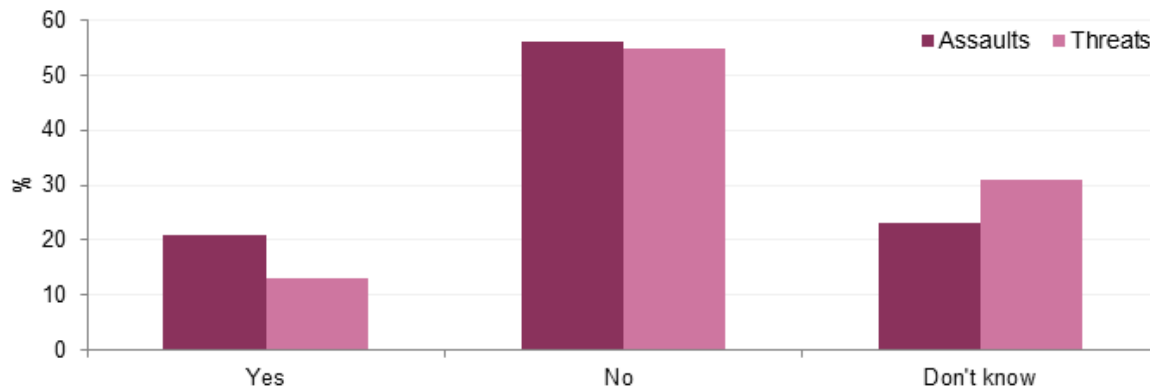
In the 2016/17 CSEW respondents suggested that in the incidents in which they experienced a threat or physical assault that they considered the offender to be under the influence of alcohol in 36% of assaults and 25% of threats. It was considered offenders were under the influence of drugs in 21% of assaults and 13% of threats.

Figure 7. Offender under the influence of alcohol for adults of working age in employment 2016/17 (CSEW)



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales for year ended March 2017

Figure 8. Offender under the influence of drugs for adults of working age in employment 2016/17 (CSEW)



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales for year ended March 2017

9. 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, 2016/17p:

RIDDOR reported 4,941 injuries to employees, where the 'kind of accident' was 'physical assault/act of violence' in Great Britain (England, Wales and Scotland). This represents 7% of all reported workplace injuries. (RIDDOR, 2016/17p). This was broadly similar to 6.3% of all reported workplace injuries reported in the previous year.

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.

10. 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 non-fatal injuries to workers as a result of acts of physical violence at work (all injuries, not just those resulting in more than seven days off). This accounted for around 7% (614,000) of all of non-fatal injuries (LFS, covering 3-year average (2014/15-2016/17)).

An estimated 364,000 working days were lost due to workplace injuries as a result of physical acts of violence at work, around 8% (4.7 million) of all working days lost due to workplace non-fatal injuries (LFS, covering 3-year average 2014/15-2016/17).

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

11. Conclusions

The risk of work related violence in the workplaces of England and Wales in 2016/17 was 1.3% (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.

12. References

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13. National Statistics

National Statistics status means that statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value. They are produced in compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). The OSR 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 OSR 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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