# Workplace health and safety statistics for Scotland, 2020

## Contents

# Introduction

This report represents a profile of workplace health and safety in Scotland and its primary purpose is to provide Scotland specific equivalents of the statistics for Great Britain published across HSE's Health and Safety Statistics pages.

The figures also enable comparisons between Scotland and Great Britain to be made. However, any such comparative analysis should be interpreted with caution since any differences in health and safety outcomes are likely to be at least in part driven by differences in the industry sectors and occupations people work in.

# Key statistics

**99,000**
workers suffering from work-related ill health each year
*Source:* LFS, annual average 2017/18-2019/20

**10**
fatal injuries to workers
*Source:* RIDDOR, 2019/20

**45,000**
non-fatal injuries to workers each year
*Source:* LFS, annual average 2017/18-2019/20

**£1.2 billion**
cost of workplace injury and ill health
*Source:* HSE Costs to Britain, 2018/19

**829**
enforcement notices served
*Source*: HSE Enforcement data, 2019/20

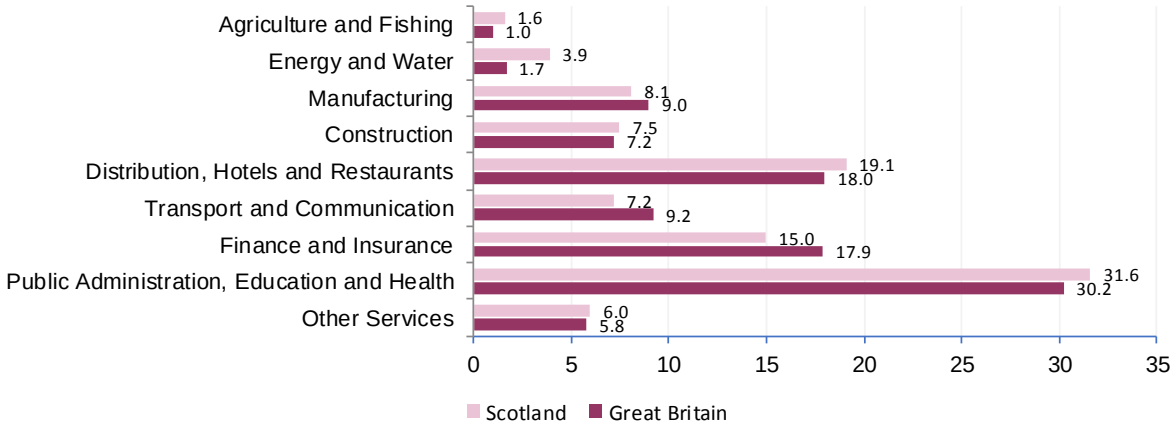
# Employment and business population

According to the 2019 Annual Population Survey, there are around **2.7 million** economically active individuals between the ages of 16-64 in Scotland.

The following charts show how those workers are distributed across industries and occupational groups and how this compares to the distribution across the whole of Great Britain.

It should be noted that the denominator used for computing injury and ill health rates in later sections of this document is different as it counts the total number of jobs, rather than the number of individuals in employment.

**Percentage of workers by industry sector in Scotland and in Great Britain**

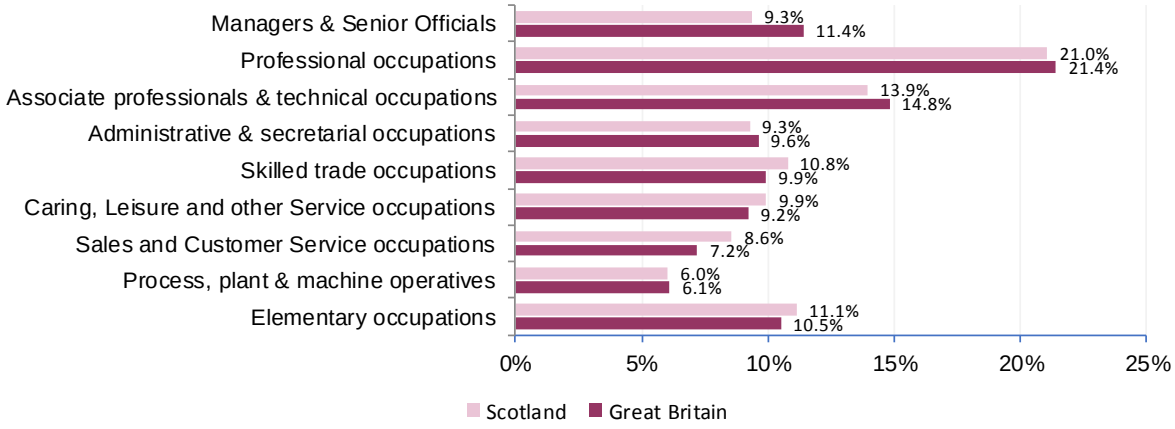



*Source:* Annual Population Survey 2019

The largest industry sector is public administration, education and health, which accounts for almost a third of all workers in Scotland.

The same industries are the most prevalent across the whole of Great Britain and the overall distribution of workers is generally similar.

**Percentage of workers by occupation group in Scotland and in Great Britain**




*Source:* Annual Population Survey 2019

The largest occupational group in Scotland is professional occupations, accounting for just over one in five Scottish workers. This is similar to the proportion in Great Britain.

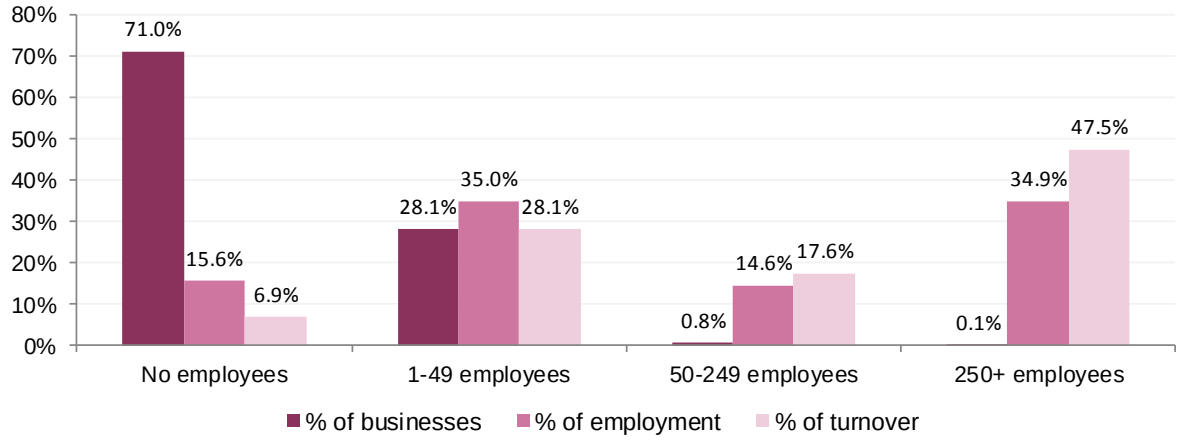
At the occupation level there are some differences between Scotland and Great Britain, with Scotland having lower numbers in those occupational groups at the top end of the classification (managerial and professional occupations) and relatively more people working in the occupational groups at the lower end of the classification (skilled and manual labour occupations).

This may reflect a trend whereby many businesses with sites across the whole of Great Britain situate their largest headquarters in London or the South East of England. Previous analysis, which can be found at www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/adhoc-analysis/examination-health-safety-profile.pdf, has demonstrated the strong impact of excluding London and the South East when making regional comparisons.

Information on the number and type of businesses in Scotland is available via the Business Population Estimates publication, produced annually by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and published at www.gov.uk/government/collections/business-population-estimates.

The 2019 report showed that there are currently around **334,000** businesses operating in Scotland.

**Percentage of the total number of businesses, percentage of all employment and percentage of total turnover by business size in Scotland**




*Source:* Business Population Estimates 2019

The majority of businesses are SMEs, with almost three quarters of all businesses having no employees at all.

However, in terms of the number of people employed, over a third of workers in Scotland are employed by a larger business (with 250 or more employees) and those businesses are responsible for almost half of all turnover across Scottish business.

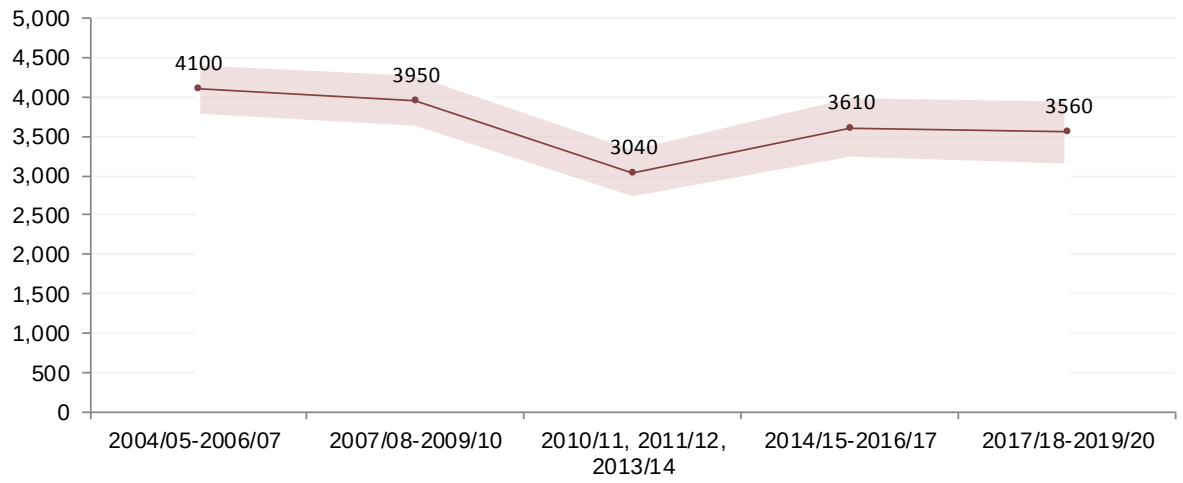
# Work related ill health

## All illness

- There are an estimated **99,000** work-related ill health cases annually,
- including **37,000** new cases per year.
- The total represents a rate of **3,560** cases per 100,000 workers which is statistically significantly lower than the GB rate of **4,330** cases per 100,000 workers.
- An average **3 million** days are lost to work related ill health each year, at a rate of **1.34** days lost per worker.
- **54%** of new or long-standing conditions are stress, depression or anxiety and **29%** are musculoskeletal disorders

*Source:* LFS, annual average 2017/18-2019/20

**Rate of ill health cases per 100,000 workers over time**



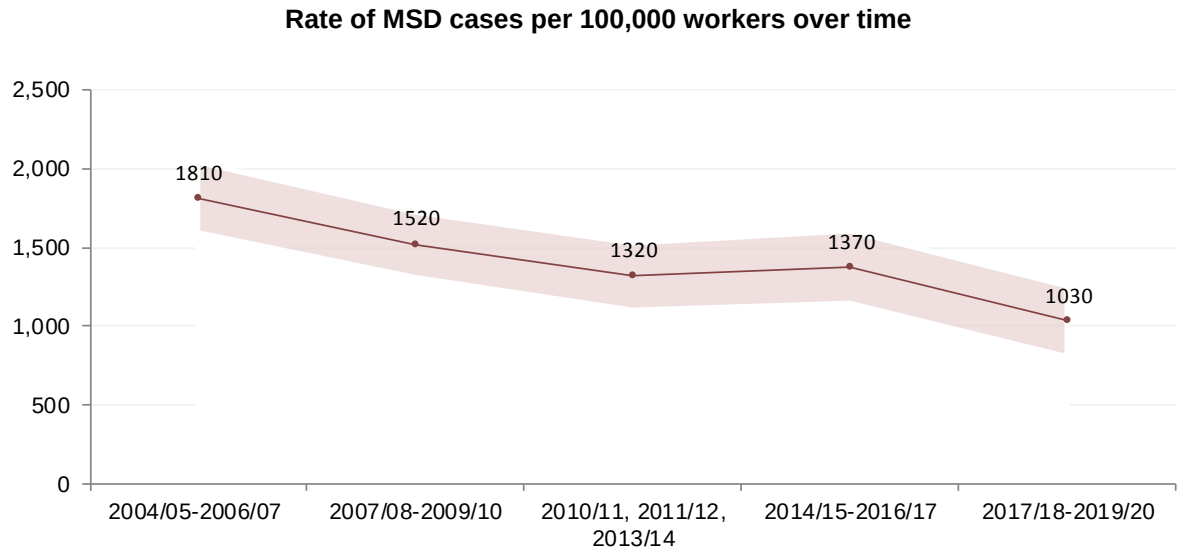

*Source:* LFS three year averages. 95% confidence intervals are shown as shaded area.

The rate for the period 2017/18-2019/20 was not statistically significantly different from the rate from the previous three year period.

## Musculoskeletal disorders (MSD)

- There are an estimated **29,000** MSD cases annually, including **11,000** new cases per year.
- The total represents a rate of **1,030** cases per 100,000 workers which is statistically significantly lower than the GB rate of **1,440** cases per 100,000 workers.
- An average **689,000** days are lost to work related MSD each year, at a rate of **0.31** days lost per worker.

*Source:* LFS, annual average 2017/18-2019/20




*Source:* LFS three year averages. 95% confidence intervals are shown as shaded area.

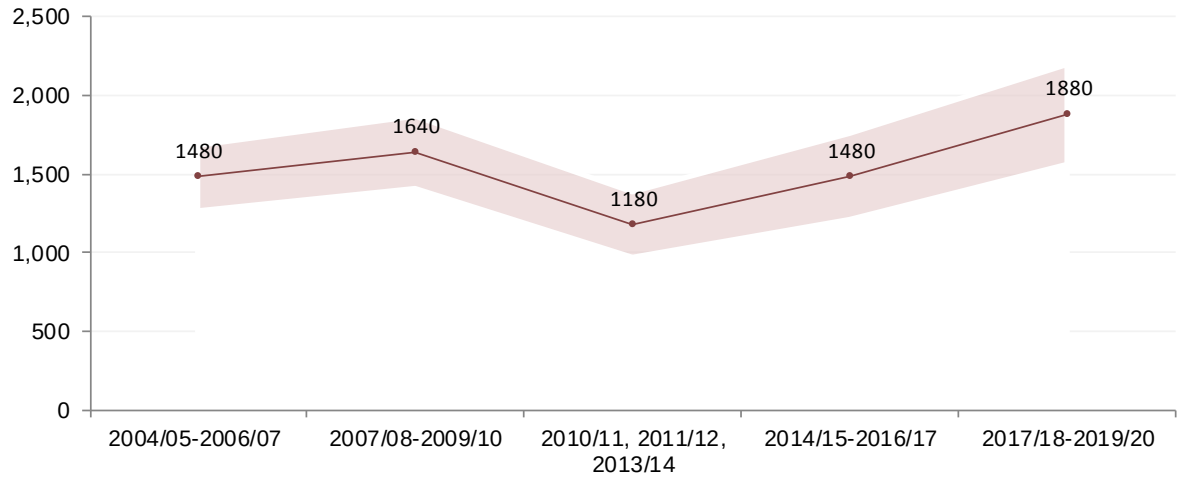
The rate for the period 2017/18-2019/20 was not statistically significantly different from the previous three year period.

## Stress, depression or anxiety

- There are an estimated **53,000** cases of stress, depression or anxiety annually, including **20,000** new cases per year.
- The total represents a rate of **1,880** cases per 100,000 workers which is not statistically significantly different from the GB rate of **2,020** cases per 100,000 workers.
- An average **1.6 million** days are lost to work related stress, depression and anxiety each year, at a rate of **0.73** days lost per worker.

*Source:* LFS, annual average 2017/18-2019/20

**Rate of cases of stress, depression or anxiety per 100,000 workers over time**




*Source:* LFS three year averages. 95% confidence intervals are shown as dotted lines.

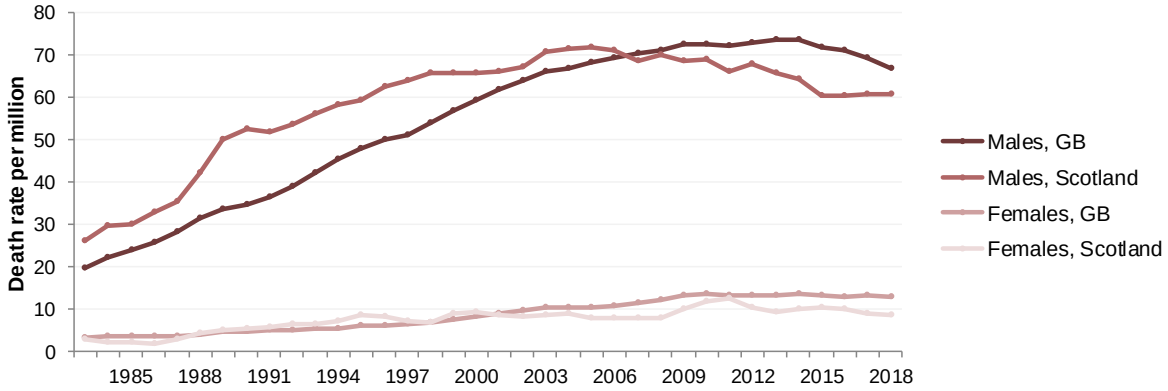
The rate for the period 2017/18-2019/20 was not statistically significantly different from the rate from the previous three year period.

## Occupational lung disease and cancer

- If past workplace exposures carcinogens were similar in Scotland to the rest of GB then currently there are around 800 deaths and 1600 cancer registrations each year in Scotland where such exposures contributed.
- Annual mesothelioma death rates were higher in Scotland than GB as a whole during the 1980s and 1990s but started to reduce sooner and are now lower than GB.
- There are currently around 185 mesothelioma deaths each year in Scotland, 7% of the total of around 2,500 annual deaths in GB.
- For asbestos-related diseases other than mesothelioma, a higher proportion of Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit cases were in Scotland (around 12% in Scotland) than for mesothelioma (around 7% in Scotland).

*Sources:* HSE Burden of Occupational Cancer estimates applied to Scottish cancer deaths (2014-18) and cancer registrations (2013-2017); HSE mesothelioma register, Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (IIDB) scheme.

**Mesothelioma death rates per million per year in Scotland and GB by gender**




*Source:* HSE mesothelioma register

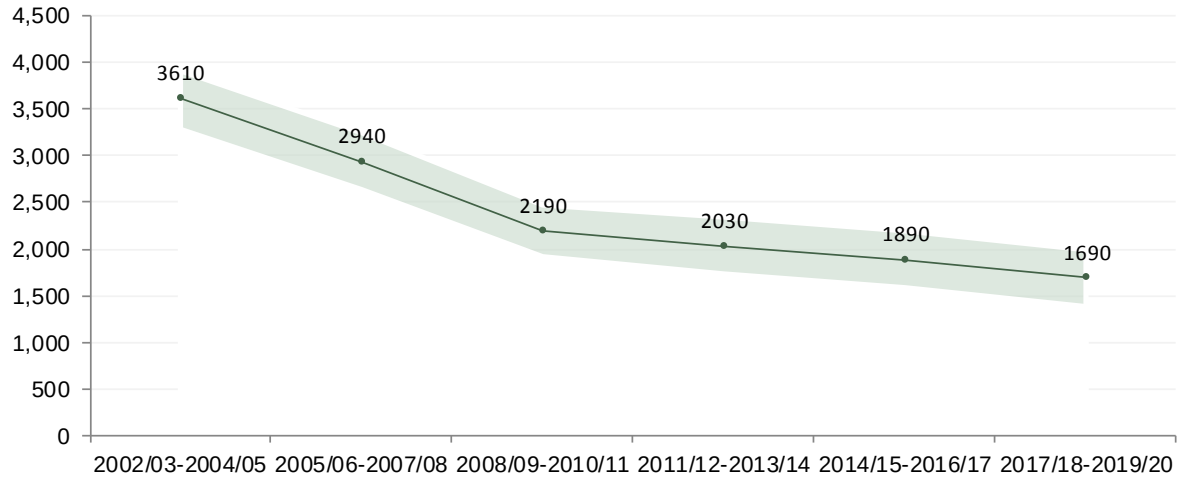
# Workplace injuries

## Non-fatal injuries

- There are an estimated **45,000** workplace non-fatal injuries annually.
- This represents a rate of **1,690** injuries per 100,000 workers which is not statistically significantly different from the GB rate of **1,920** injuries per 100,000 workers.
- An average **375,000** days are lost to workplace injury each year, at a rate of **0.17** days lost per worker.

*Source:* LFS, annual average 2017/18-2019/20

**Rate of non-fatal injuries per 100,000 workers over time**




*Source:* LFS three year averages. 95% confidence intervals are shown as dotted lines.

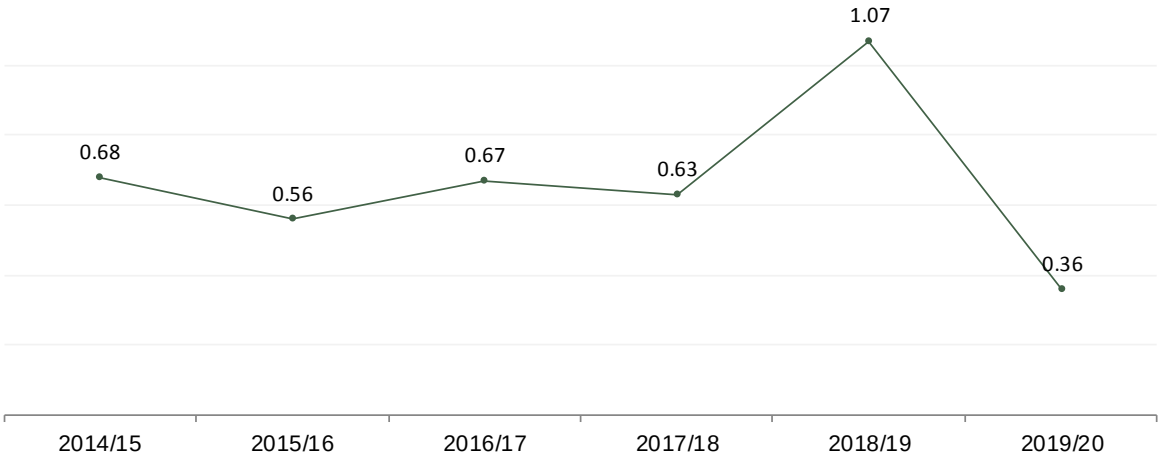
The rate for 2017/18-2019/20 was not statistically significantly different from the previous period, but the overall trend is downward.

## Fatal injuries

- There were **10** fatal injuries to workers in Scotland reported in 2019/20.
- There has been on average **18** fatal injuries to workers annually over the last five years, but with marked fluctuations from year to year.
- This represents a rate of **0.66** fatalities per 100,000 workers, which is higher than the GB rate of **0.42** per 100,000 workers.

*Source:* RIDDOR, annual average 2015/16-2019/20

**Rate of fatal injuries per 100,000 workers over time**




*Source:* RIDDOR

The rate in 2019/20 was lower than recent years, in contrast to the particularly high figure in the previous year. Both figures remain within the bounds of the variation that can be expected from one year to the next due to the overall numbers being relatively small. Fatal injury rates for Scotland are consistently statistically significantly higher than those of Great Britain.

## Fatal injury standardisation

Over recent years, the fatal injury rate in Scotland has been consistently higher than that of Great Britain, but there is no difference in the rate of non-fatal injuries.

One explanation is that in Scotland, a greater proportion of workers are employed in higher risk industry sectors or higher risk occupations, compared with Great Britain as a whole.

It is possible to standardise fatal injury rates by adjusting them to account for differences in industry composition between countries and regions and a recent research report shows the effect this has on the relative rates of the countries and regions of Great Britain. The table below shows estimates of the un-standardised and standardised country-specific fatal injury rates for the period 2015/16-2019/20 and the full report can be found at www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/adhoc-analysis/updated-standardised-fatals.pdf.

**Number, un-standardised rate and standardised rate of fatal injuries per 100,000 workers (2015/16 – 2019/20)**

| Country | Number of fatalities | Rate of fatal injuries per 100,000 workers | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Un-standardised | Standardised |
| Scotland | 88 | 0.65 | 0.57 |
| England | 529 | 0.38 | 0.39 |
| Wales | 58 | 0.81 | 0.65 |
| Great Britain | 675 | 0.42 | |

The standardised rate for Scotland is lower than the un-standardised rate, demonstrating that its different industry composition does have an effect on the comparison between Scotland and Great Britain.

However, even after standardisation the rate is still significantly higher in Scotland. It is likely that other factors, such as a different occupational distribution and other factors not related to employment, are also affecting the comparison. However, at present there is insufficient data available to enable the quantification of these effects.

# Enforcement

## Prosecutions by the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS)

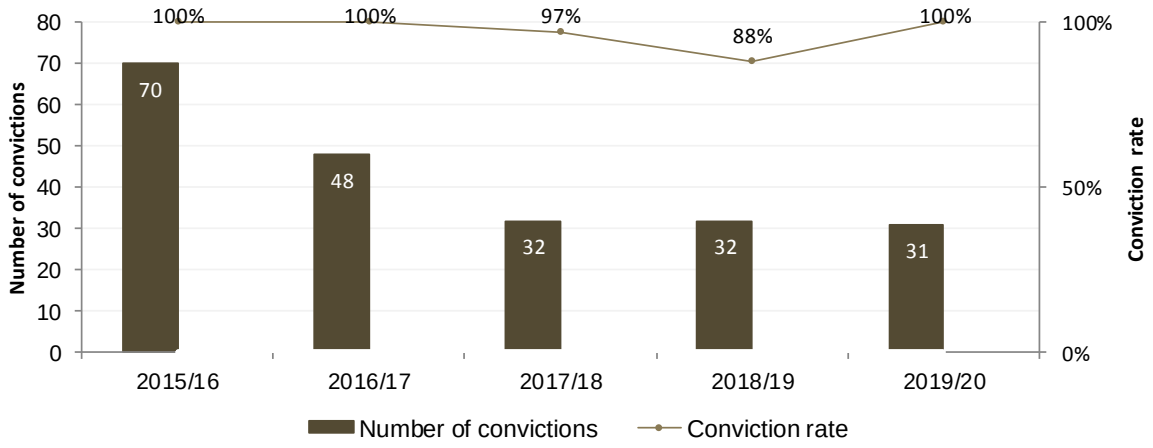
In 2019/20, verdicts were reached in relation to **31** prosecution cases, with all **31** of these resulting in a conviction for at least one offence.

This equates to a conviction rate of **100%**. In total, there were **33** offences prosecuted across these cases, with a successful conviction for all **33**.

The convictions resulted in a total of **£2.3 million** worth of fines being issued, at an average of **£75,000** per conviction.

*Source: HSE enforcement data. Includes prosecutions recommended to the COPFS by HSE in relation to businesses falling within their regulatory remit, but not those recommended by local authorities in relation to businesses in local authority enforced sectors.*

**Number of cases for which convictions secured and conviction rate over time**



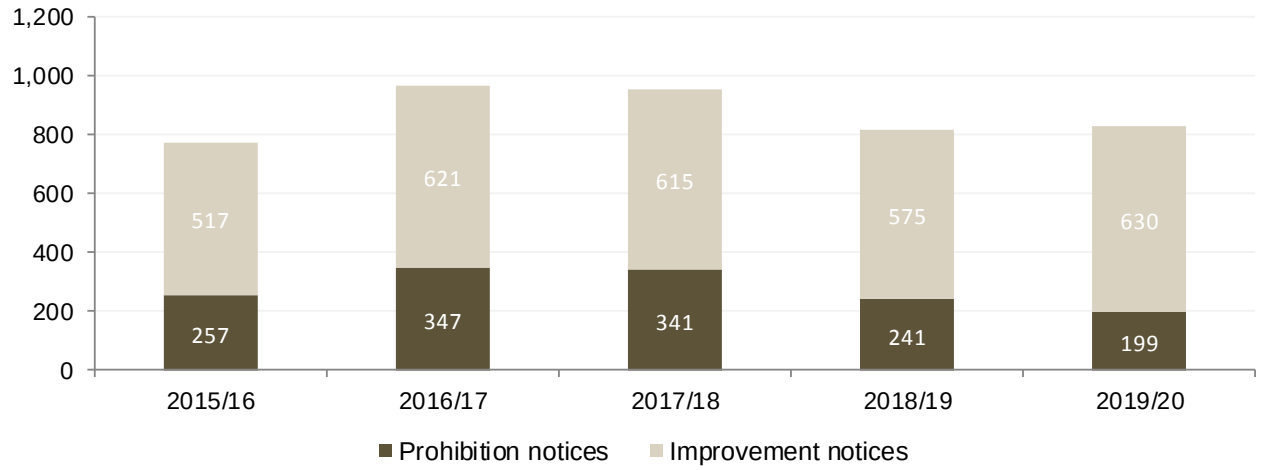

The number of prosecutions taken by COPFS has been lower since 2016. This could be for a variety of reasons including the impact of Scottish sentencing policy. However, there have been no changes to HSE's enforcement policy.

## Notices

- In 2019/20, HSE issued **829** notices in Scotland, including **630** improvement notices and **199** prohibition notices.
- Almost three quarters of these notices were served at workplaces in the manufacturing and construction sectors (**369** and **225** notices, respectively).

*Source:* HSE enforcement data

**Number of notices served by HSE (by type) over time**




The number of notices is similar to the average from the last five years. Notices served in Scotland accounted for around 12% of the total for Great Britain, which is slightly higher than the proportion over the last five years.

# Costs to Scotland

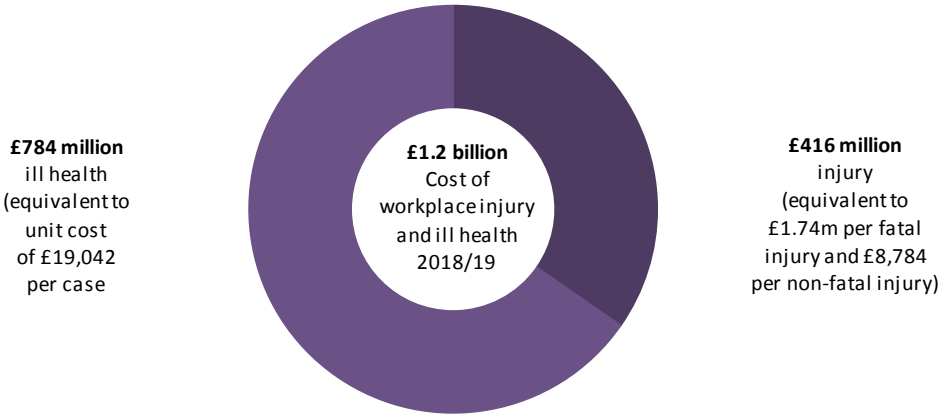
Workplace injuries and ill health have serious effects on the individuals involved and their families, as well as employers, government and wider society. The impacts can be measured in terms of direct financial costs such as loss of production and healthcase, as well as human costs such as the impact on an individual's quality of life and, for fatal injuries, loss of life.

HSE's estimate of the total costs of workplace injuries and ill health includes both financial costs and a valuation of human costs.

- The total cost to Scotland of workplace injuries and ill health in 2018/19 was £1.2 billion.

*Source:* HSE Costs to Britain model

**Cost to Scotland of workplace injury and ill health 2018/19**



# Annex 1. Sources and definitions

**The Labour Force Survey (LFS**): The LFS is a national survey run by the Office for National Statistics of currently around 33,000 households each quarter. HSE commissions annual questions in the LFS to gain a view of self-reported work-related illness and workplace injury based on individuals' perceptions. The analysis and interpretation of these data are the sole responsibility of HSE.

- Self-reported work-related illness: People who have conditions which they think have been caused or made worse by their current or past work, as estimated from the LFS. Estimated total cases include long-standing as well as new cases. New cases consist of those who first became aware of their illness in the last 12 months.
- Self-reported injuries: Workplace injuries sustained as a result of a non-road traffic accident, as estimated by the LFS.

**RIDDOR:** The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations, under which fatal and defined non-fatal injuries to workers and members of the public are reported by employers.

Certain types of work-related injury are not reportable under RIDDOR, hence excluded from these figures. Particular exclusions include fatalities and injuries to the armed forces and injuries from work-related road collisions.

**HSE Costs to Britain Model:** Developed to estimate the economic costs of injury and new cases of ill health arising from current working conditions. The economic cost estimate includes estimates of financial (or direct) costs incurred (either in terms of payments that have to be made or income/output that is lost) and the monetary valuation of the impact on quality and loss of life of affected workers.

**HSE Enforcement data:** The main enforcing authorities are HSE and local authorities. In Scotland, HSE and local authorities investigate potential offences but cannot institute legal proceedings and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) makes the final decision whether to institute legal proceedings and which offences are taken.

Enforcement notices cover improvement, prohibition and deferred prohibition. Offences prosecuted refer to individual breaches of health and safety legislation; a prosecution case may include more than one offence. Where prosecution statistics are allocated against a particular year, unless otherwise stated, the year relates to the date of final hearing with a known outcome. They exclude those cases not completed, for example adjourned.

**Rate per 100,000:** The number of annual workplace injuries or cases of work-related ill health per 100,000 employees or workers.

**95% confidence interval:** The range of values within which we are 95% confident contains the true value, in the absence of bias. This reflects the potential error that results from surveying a sample rather than the entire population.

**Statistical significance:** A difference between two sample estimates is described as 'statistically significant' if there is a less than 5% chance that it is due to sampling error alone.

**Employment data:** Annual Population Survey estimates are taken from the Office for National Statistics official labour market statistics web pages at www.nomisweb.co.uk.

# Annex 2. Further information

Headline figures for ill health and injuries by country and region can be found at www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/regions, which includes a link to a suite of additional tables of regional comparisons. The injury, ill health, costs and enforcement statistics presented within this report can all be found within those tables. Further information on data sources can be found at www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/sources.pdf.

**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 assessment and compliance checks by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). The last compliance check of these statistics was in 2013.

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. Details of OSR reviews undertaken on these statistics, quality improvements, and other information noting revisions, interpretation, user consultation and use of these statistics is available from www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/about.htm

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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First published 11/20.

Published by the Health and Safety Executive