

RIDDOR

Background Quality Report

Injury statistics as reported under RIDDOR

November 2025



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Introduction

This document constitutes a background quality report, for the publication of quarterly and annual data from incidents reported by employers and others in Great Britain under RIDDOR (The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013).

The statistics included in this release are for:

- Quarterly figures on fatal injuries.
- Annual figures on fatal and non-fatal injuries.

Background

Employers and others (also known as duty-holders) in Great Britain have a legal obligation to report certain incidents where a person is killed or suffers a specified injury whilst at work. A full [explanation](#) of RIDDOR is available. [Reporting](#) is made via online forms, and for reports where either HSE or the local authority (LA) is the enforcing authority, a central HSE-managed RIDDOR system is used. Persons covered by RIDDOR are workers (i.e. employees and the self-employed), and persons not at work but still affected by a work activity (often referred to as members of the public).

Whilst RIDDOR data is generally collected and referred to as administrative data, a key use of this information is statistical, enabling trends and areas of higher risk to be identified, with a view to development of accident prevention strategies. Although HSE considers it is aware of virtually all relevant fatal injuries, non-fatal injuries are substantially under-reported.

To produce these statistics, data is regularly extracted from the RIDDOR database, and a copy made for statistical purposes. The statistical data is taken through a series of validation checks, where implausible data values are investigated, and where feasible adjustments are made prior to publication. In the case of fatal injuries, additional detailed checks are made by correlating with other sources of information, usually related to an investigation of the incident.

Currently around 63,000 worker injury notifications are made each year. This data forms part of a statistical series dating back to the 1970's (under separate legislation) and has always been publicly available. For RIDDOR, aggregated statistics are available by planning year (incident date 1 April - 31 March). For most statistical dimensions, we provide injury incidence rates as well as counts. We do this by using employment estimates provided by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) as a denominator.

Data for 2019/20 – 2021/22 include effects of the coronavirus (COVID-19). More details can be found in our reports on the impact of the [coronavirus pandemic on health and safety statistics](#).

These statistics are released through the HSE website, alongside related injury statistics from complementary sources, particularly the LFS (Labour Force Survey). The format of the release is a combination of data tables (e.g. Excel) and written commentary. Many outputs also align with European standards, therefore some comparisons can be made with other European countries.

[Documentation](#) is provided on the statistical processes and known data quality issues. This also describes changes in the reporting system from September 2011; the legal changes to RIDDOR from April 2012 and October 2013; and effects these changes may have on the data series.

Purpose of the document

This paper aims to provide users with an evidence-based assessment of the quality of the statistical output from the RIDDOR system. This approach supports the [UK Statistics Authority \(UKSA\) Code of Practice for Statistics](#), summarised as “Compliance with the Code gives you confidence that published government statistics have public value, are high quality, and are produced by people and organisations that are trustworthy.”

By following the pillars and principles in the UK Code of Practice for Statistics and addressing concerns that arise, it is also possible to collect evidence on statistical process and output quality. The structure of evidence uses the dimensions of quality from the European Statistics Code of Practice, within the European Statistical System’s (ESS) dimensions of Quality as set out in their criteria for assessing the fitness for purpose of statistical outputs. The dimensions form principles 11 to 15 of the European Statistics Code of Practice.

Assessment of statistics against quality dimensions and principles

Relevance

This dimension covers the degree to which the statistical product meets user need in both coverage and content.

HSE has published these statistics for many years. Statistics covered by this publication fall into the following RIDDOR-defined categories:

- Fatal injuries to workers and members of the public.
- Defined 'specified' injuries to workers. This classification changed from 'major' in October 2013.
- Other injuries to workers, resulting in more than seven days off work. The previous over-three-day reporting threshold changed from April 2012.
- The most recent legal change in October 2013 has affected all the non-fatal data series. In addition, as the change happened halfway through the year 2013/14, the full-year statistics for 2013/14 contained data based on the old as well as the new reporting requirements. Outputs for each of these years clearly reference these changes, for example discontinuity lines in charts.

Typical top-level analyses are fatal and non-fatal injuries (including specified/major and over-7-day injuries to workers) over annual (planning year) time periods. Further detail is also available by the following categories:

- Workplace characteristics (type of industry, geographical location of the workplace, and type of incident leading to the accident).
- Person characteristics (age, gender).
- Injury outcome (type of injury and part of body affected).

Statistical outputs are usually in three tranches:

- Fatal injuries are released for the most recent quarter. As this data is based on early results and intended to give an 'emerging picture', the data is not complete or detailed, nor is the data badged as Accredited Official Statistics.
- Fatal injuries are released annually. This data is not as timely as above, partly due to additional information on fatality rates being included, although the data is complete

and allows wider comparisons to be made. The latest year is always 'provisional', with the previous year being 'finalised'.

- Non-fatal injuries are released annually. The latest year is always 'provisional' and denoted 'p', with the previous year being 'finalised' and denoted 'r' (to show the previously published figure has been revised). This data series is subject to substantial under-reporting, current levels of reporting for employees is estimated at around a half. No adjustment is made for this, and figures are published as reported.

To ensure these statistics meet the needs of the user, they are reviewed using a variety of methods. HSE has run external user-engagement exercises, showing RIDDOR to be a widely used data source by many different types of user, details can be found at [Statistics - Reports from previous user consultations](#). We also make available on the website a feedback form, to allow users to comment on any aspect of the statistical outputs. In addition, we have an email bulletin service, providing information to users and reminding them of forthcoming releases and other relevant key events.

Accuracy and reliability

This dimension covers, with respect to the statistics, their proximity between an estimate and the unknown true value.

Accuracy

All data are published 'as-is', currently with no adjustment to counts of accidents i.e. no weightings applied, no estimations. However, we sometimes apply rounding and/or data suppression on small counts to avoid disclosure, or if the denominator (employment data) is inconsistent with the numerator (injuries).

For fatal injuries, the data outputs conform to the structure of RIDDOR, as described in 'relevance' above. However, due to the sensitive and serious nature of fatal accidents, additional sources of information are also used by operational staff, just one of which is a formal RIDDOR notification from employers. As all fatal injuries are investigated, the statistics are accurate.

For HSE-enforced fatalities, data is recorded on an internal operational database, and maintained continuously with the most recent information in readiness for publication. For LA-enforced fatalities no central database exists as there are currently around 350 LAs, in these cases HSE statisticians liaise with LAs to confirm details of fatal incidents. For workplace fatalities within scope of RIDDOR enforced by the Office of Rail and Road, or the Office for Nuclear Regulation, they provide HSE statisticians with the relevant data as recorded on their systems.

As we use a variety of sources for fatal injuries, they are not subject to under-reporting so no adjustment to the outputs is necessary.

For non-fatal injuries, numerically there are far more of these reports than fatal injuries. The information provided by the employer when reporting is taken mainly at face value, as we have no efficient ways to verify all the information provided.

Quality assurance is carried out on all data. Case-by-case fatal data is assured as described above, and below is the outline processing for non-fatal injuries. The initial quality focus is to make sure the top-level number of reports is in line with expectations (severity by employment status). Subsequent quality assurance examines individual fields to ensure that any unexpected changes or data values are understood and represent genuine changes.

The main quality assurance strategy can be summarised as follows. The descriptions may run sequentially, if necessary some or all elements may be re-run:

- The original RIDDOR database contains some internal validation checks. These 'hard' checks stop notifiers from entering incorrect data, with a warning message to explain what is wrong so that they can correct it, for example an incident date in the future.
- For the statistical dataset, analysts perform data cleaning checks on data items that are not covered adequately by the database internal validation checks.
- We perform basic checks on file size and characteristics to make sure they are in line with expectation. Checks are run on the raw data such as analysis of the new dataset against previous datasets, looking for changes in means; levels of change in each data item; the incidence of missing values; changes in categorical variables; extreme values.
- Where feasible, records that require re-coding due to inaccuracies are done en-block by automation.
- Tabulations are produced and compared with the outputs generated during the same period the past few years. We look at the statistics from an operational and policy point of view to ensure any unexpected changes or data values are understood and represent genuine changes. Where uncertainties exist in data outputs, these are highlighted and an explanation given, for example possible effects on statistics due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Data published for the most recent year is given a 'p' status (provisional), and a year later is released as final (with an 'r' notation to depict revised). This allows for late reports and where necessary additional quality checks, although the changes are usually small, typically increasing by around 1-2%.

This background quality report includes known data quality issues affecting the analysis in the release and is produced annually as part of the wider Health and Safety Statistics compendium publication. Ultimately users of the data must make their own assessment of the quality of the data for a particular purpose, drawing on these resources. In addition, their own subject knowledge - or other comparative data sources - may be required to distinguish changes in volume between reporting periods that reflect changes in incidents, from those that are an artefact of changes in data quality or reporting practices. Such issues should be kept in mind when viewing time series analysis, since year-on-year changes may sometimes be a product of shortfalls in earlier years, and should not automatically be interpreted as trends in incidents.

Reliability/Known data quality issues

Fatal injury data is highly reliable, due to case-by-case scrutiny by operational and analytical staff. However, non-fatal data is subject to significant under-reporting, with current levels of reporting for employees estimated at around a half. Previous research into reporting levels suggests variation in reporting between different industries, and reporting levels across other dimensions like geographical region may also differ substantially.

[Documentation](#) on the statistical processes and known data quality issues is provided. This also describes the change in the system used for reporting from September 2011, more recent legal changes to reporting, and possible effects these may have on the data series.

Timeliness and punctuality

Timeliness refers to the time gap between publication and the reference period. Punctuality refers to the gap between planned and actual publication dates.

The relevant 'date' for these statistics is the date individual incidents took place, not the date reported or investigated. Similarly if a death occurs sometime after the incident, again the incident date is used and not the actual date of death. To allow for late reports, data quality checks and preparing for publication, there will be some time lag from the time-period end to actual release.

- Quarterly fatal statistics are released 3-4 months after the period of collection ends, for example Q1 2024 (incidents occurring between 1 April to 30 June 2024) were released October 2024.
- Annual fatal statistics are released about 3 months after the period end, for example the full-year 2024/25 (1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025) were released July 2025.

- Due to the volume of records, annual non-fatal statistics require extra preparation. In addition, they are released alongside other health and safety data to present a more complete picture, especially in respect of reporting levels. Such statistics are released about seven months after the period end. A full year such as 2024/25 (1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025) would be expected for release November 2025.

In accordance with the UKSA Code of Practice for Statistics, HSE pre-announce the [actual date of release](#) of the above series several months in advance on the HSE website, also the Government-wide Statistics Release Calendar. Should a delay to the above release timetables be unavoidable, relevant information will be provided to users in advance.

Accessibility and clarity

Accessibility is the ease with which users can access the data, also reflecting the format in which the data are available and the availability of supporting information. Clarity refers to the quality and sufficiency of the metadata, illustrations, and accompanying advice.

Accessibility

Alongside this data quality statement, relevant summaries of the results included in this publication are accessible via the HSE website, and to which the Government-wide Statistics Release Calendar also directs users.

Given the wide range and depth of these statistics, a variety of web-based publication formats are used (no charges are made to users) and produced in accessible formats for readers using adaptive equipment. Top-level results and commentary are presented as conventional web pages, with further analysis contained in stand-alone PDF and HTML documents. For users requiring more specific data, supporting Excel files containing summary tables are also provided. PDF and Excel files are viewable by anyone using freely available software. For confidentiality reasons suppression rules are employed to avoid inappropriate disclosure. A HSE statistical confidentiality policy is [available](#)

Clarity

The statistics presented as web pages, PDF documents and Excel tables use plain language, and to avoid technical terms use the same RIDDOR descriptors as employers use when filling-in the original notification forms. Where some technical terms are necessary, they are defined through a footnote or annex. Where it is considered helpful to explain analyses, charts and maps are used to supplement text and data tables.

When trends over time are presented, they can show possible discontinuities in the series. Should this occur, it will be highlighted and possible explanations provided, for example because of the change in reporting requirements for over-7-day injuries from April 2012, and for the change from major injuries from October 2013. It should be remembered that non-fatal injuries are substantially under-reported, and where necessary users are reminded in the presentation of the data. This is a key reason why non-fatal statistics are released alongside equivalent data from the LFS, as it enables a more complete picture to be provided to users (see 'comparability' section below).

'Metadata' can be described as "data which provides information about one or more aspects of the original data", for example, what we mean by 'industry classification' and how this dimension may have changed over time [is available](#)

Coherence and comparability

Coherence is the degree to which data derived from different sources or methods, but refer to the same topic, are similar. Comparability is the degree to which data can be compared over time and domain.

Coherence

This publication refers to just one data source (RIDDOR). Where possible, outputs use counts (number of injuries) as well as 'rates' of injury. That is, the number of injuries divided by the number of persons 'exposed' (employed) to the same work activity. Estimates of employment are provided by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). By calculating a rate of injury, this enables fairer comparisons across given dimensions to be made. For example, simply comparing the number of injuries in (say) England would be much higher than (say) Scotland. Dividing each figure by the relevant number of workers in the respective countries puts both on a more comparable footing.

Comparability

There are two relevant aspects when comparing RIDDOR statistics. Firstly, there are comparisons within RIDDOR itself, but over various dimensions. As well as comparing over time, these also include: geographical location of accident; age and gender of injured person; main industry of employer (e.g. construction); employment status of injured person; type of injury and part of body affected (e.g. broken arm); type of accident (e.g. contact with machinery).

For most of the above dimensions, it is possible to make comparisons, but only within each dimension. To enable sensible comparisons, a rate is calculated as in 'coherence' above, and it's the rates that are compared not number of injuries. By convention and as

used by many overseas countries, rates are typically expressed in units of “number of injuries per 100,000 employed”.

Comparing RIDDOR statistics over time is normally on a yearly basis, where the year is defined in the ‘timeliness’ section above. Many analyses require the ‘latest picture’, meaning the most recent year or two’s worth of data, although some time series are [available back to 1974](#). Where a long time series shows an unexpected break in the trend, it is highlighted and where possible an explanation provided, for example because of the change in reporting requirements for over-7-day and specified injuries from April 2012 and October 2013.

The actual reporting mechanism has changed twice, initially in 2001, and again in 2011. The 2001 change introduced online reporting for the first time, previously it was mainly paper format. The 2011 change enhanced online reporting further. As often happens with system changes, it can have subtle effects on the data series, and most of the effects of the [2001 change are summarised](#). The 2011 changes are referenced in the ‘reliability’ section above.

When making comparisons, as non-fatal injuries are substantially under-reported this adds to the complexity of analysis, as reporting levels within one dimension can vary. For example within ‘industry’, one category (e.g. construction) could have higher or lower reporting than another (e.g. agriculture), so different adjustments are needed to see the true picture.

For the second aspect to comparisons, it may be possible to compare statistics from RIDDOR, with other sources, of which there are mainly two:

- European countries and beyond, especially fatal injuries. This is sometimes possible, as many of the data fields collected in GB under RIDDOR also align with data collected by many European countries, though note RIDDOR statistics do not capture most work-related road traffic accidents (RTAs) unlike many other European countries.
- As injury-related questions on the annual UK Labour Force Survey (LFS) are designed to match RIDDOR, again comparisons between those sources are helpful. This is true in estimating levels of RIDDOR reporting, which currently run at around half for employees.

Trade-offs between output quality components

This dimension describes the extent to which different aspects of quality are balanced against each other.

The main trade-off is one of timeliness, against accuracy and/or detail.

As mentioned in 'timeliness' above, first releases of fatal and non-fatal data are always provisional ('p'). The following year the figures are then denoted 'r' to indicate a revision. For fatal injuries this means we release as quickly as possible after the period end, as there is considerable interest in such statistics. One trade-off is some finer detail, which must wait until later in the year. Accuracy is balanced against speed of release. As virtually all fatal injuries are investigated, it often takes time for the full facts to be known and reflected in the statistics.

For non-fatal injuries and given the much larger volume of records, they cannot be checked for data quality one-by-one. Although HSE and local authorities are aware of all reported incidents, some may not be investigated, so the data is taken at face value. Even records subject to statistical checks, as described in 'accuracy' above, require considerable resource and time. A balance needs to be struck, between the levels of data accuracy considered acceptable, against speed of publication.

Assessment of user needs and perceptions

This dimension covers the processes for finding out about users and uses, and their views on the statistical products.

We have published a policy on ['user engagement'](#) This policy explains how we engage with and encourage feedback from users, allowing them to provide views in ways that suit them. We have also published the results from various large-scale user-engagement exercises. In addition to the formal consultation exercises, we regularly analyse:

- Statistics web page usage.
- Ad-hoc statistical requests.
- New ideas, and pro-actively engage with our statistical peers, to gain insights into 'what works' with analysis and presentation of statistics.

We also encourage views on different statistical issues from subscribers to our statistics e-bulletin.

Confidentiality, transparency, and security

The procedures and policy used to ensure sound confidentiality, security and transparent practices.

A [Confidentiality Policy](#) including data security is available, also HSE has a [Privacy Policy Statement](#).

To ensure transparency of data release, any revisions to our publications are handled and published in accordance with the Department's revisions policy. This gives details on the circumstances of when a revision might take place, as well as a [log of past revisions](#). These statistics also comply with the UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice on release protocols. Pre-release access to the data is strictly controlled.

To avoid the disclosure of personal information through statistical outputs, disclosure control is implemented where deemed necessary.

Accredited Official Statistics

This publication is part of HSE's suite of Accredited Official Statistics.

HSE's official statistics practice is regulated by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). Accredited Official Statistics are a subset of official statistics that have been independently reviewed by the OSR and confirmed to comply with the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics. Accredited official statistics were previously called National Statistics (and still referenced as such in Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007). See uksa.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/uk-statistical-system/types-of-official-statistics/ for more details on the types of official statistics.

From 7 June 2024 the Accredited Official Statistics badge has replaced the previous National Statistics badge.

These statistics were last reviewed by OSR in 2013. It is Health and Safety Executive's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the OSR promptly. Accredited Official 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.

You are welcome to contact us directly with any comments about how we meet these standards. Alternatively, you can contact OSR by emailing regulation@statistics.gov.uk or via the OSR website.

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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Feedback on the content, relevance, accessibility and timeliness of these statistics and any non-media enquiries should be directed to:

Email: statsfeedback@hse.gov.uk

Journalists/media enquiries only: www.hse.gov.uk/contact/contact.htm

