Construction trades industry snap shot

Construction trades serious injury claim rate (per 1,000 employees)

In 2013-2014, the serious injury claim rate for construction trades (18.3) was approximately 10 per cent higher than the construction serious injury claim rate (16.4) and 45 per cent higher than the all industries claim rate (12.6).

Average serious injury claim cost
(for the 2011-2012 financial year)

$22,536 Workers’ compensation costs

$90,145 Other costs

Total costs $112,681

Other costs include business disruption, administrative and legal costs, and other welfare costs.

1 in 2 serious injury claims in construction trades were for musculoskeletal injuries.

Queensland construction trades industry
Action plan – 2014-2017

Common injuries
and causes

Traumatic joint/ligament and muscle/tendon injuries

Body stressing
- Metal objects
- Sawn or dressed timber
- Shovels and spades

Slips, trips and falls
- Moving or working around site
- Steps and stairways
- Ladders

Cuts and lacerations

Striking or being hit by moving objects
- Metal edges
- Knives and blades
- Powered tools for cutting and planing

Fractures

Slips, trips and falls
- Moving around site
- Ladders

Focus areas

- Working with and around moving plant and vehicles
- Systems for managing risk
- Falls prevention
- Housekeeping and managing the site
- Labourers and young workers
- Respirable crystalline silica
- Noise
- UV sun radiation

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Office of Industrial Relations

Queensland Government
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| Healthy and safe by design         | • Structures, plant and substances are designed to eliminate or minimise hazards and risks before they are introduced into the workplace.  
• Work, work processes and systems of work are designed and managed to eliminate or minimise hazards and risks.  
• Industry and researchers help identify and solve specific problems.                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | • Work with industry to develop and implement higher order design controls for high risk activities, including:  
  – working around mobile plant and moving traffic  
  – operating elevated work platforms  
  – loading and unloading trucks  
  – working around electrical installations and apparatus.                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Supply chains and networks         | • Supply chain and network participants understand their cumulative impact and actively improve the health and safety of the supply chain.  
• Commercial relationships within supply chains and networks are used to improve work health and safety.  
• Industry leaders champion work health and safety in supply chains and networks.  
• Industry imports plant, materials and equipment that is safe.                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | • Develop an industry partnership program for the construction supply chain and small business.  
• Engage with relevant stakeholders to incorporate safety in the concept, tendering and procuring stages of a construction project.  
• Manage relationships on significant and major construction projects.  
• Participate in industry events.  
• Increase participation in Safe Work and Return to Work Awards.  
• Raise awareness of the impact of the supply chain on musculoskeletal disorders and work related stress management.                                                                                                                                 |
| Health and safety capabilities      | • Everyone in a workplace has the work health and safety capabilities they require.  
• Those providing work health and safety education, training and advice have the appropriate capabilities.  
• Inspectors and other staff of work health and safety regulators have the work health and safety capabilities to effectively perform their role.  
• Work health and safety skills development is integrated effectively into relevant education and training programs.  
• Industry increasingly uses resources and tools such as the Organisational Systems Benchmarking Tool.                                                                                                                                                             | • Undertake intervention and compliance programs in the construction trades industry to address high potential hazards including:  
  – working at heights (ladders, scaffolds, voids, roofs)  
  – working on and around mobile powered plant  
  – electrical installations  
  – exposure to noise and UV radiation  
  – manual tasks.                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Leadership and culture             | • Effective consultation, cooperation and coordination exists through all levels of the industry.  
• The Safety Leadership at Work program is embedded and leaders drive improved work health and safety.  
• Organisational leaders foster a culture of consultation and collaboration which actively improves work health and safety.  
• Health and safety is given priority in all work processes and decisions.                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | • Improve industry understanding of and confidence in high risk licensing and verification of competency.  
• Encourage good construction work design for young workers (apprentices and trainees) by engaging with supervisors and managers.  
• Increase uptake of the Injury Prevention and Management program in construction.                                                                                                                                                        |
| Worker health and wellbeing        | • Industry adopts a holistic approach to work health and safety and has increased awareness, knowledge and skills for the prevention and management of musculoskeletal disorder and psychosocial risks.  
• Best practice health promotion principles are supported in workplaces with a focus on chronic disease risks such as smoking, nutrition, physical inactivity, alcohol consumption, obesity and mental wellbeing.  
• Industry’s capacity to holistically manage health and safety injuries, and health and wellbeing is increased.  
• WorkCover Queensland is supported in promoting early intervention and injury management.                                                                                                                                                               | • Encourage workers and contractors to be actively involved in the development of safety documents required by regulation (e.g. safe work method statements and work health and safety management plans).  
• Support safety committees and health and safety representatives to work to their full potential.  
• Support boards of tier one companies to drive positive cultural change.  
• Build supervisor/middle management capacity to provide work health and safety leadership and manage musculoskeletal disorder risks.                                                                                                                                 |