

Notified fatalities

January to June 2016

Workplace Health and Safety Queensland (WHSQ) and the Electrical Safety Office (ESO) report monthly to Safe Work Australia about notified fatalities that have occurred at a workplace or resulted from a work activity. This report includes fatalities resulting from work related trauma at the workplace only—a full explanation is provided at the end of the report.







Main issues

- Queensland notified 18 fatalities to Safe Work Australia for the period January to June 2016.
- Seventeen of the fatalities were male workers.
- The Agriculture, forestry and fishing sector had the highest number of fatalities (seven).
- Being hit by moving objects (four) and being hit by falling objects (three) were the most common mechanism groups with seven fatalities reported in total.
- Southwest, Logan and Gold Coast had the highest number of fatalities (eight).



Summary tables

The charts and graphs in this summary provide fatality data for the period January to June 2016.




Fatalities by industry

Industry					
	Agriculture, forestry and fishing	7		Construction	2
	Transport, postal and warehousing	3		Accommodation and food services	2
	Arts and recreation services	3		Rental, hiring and real estate services	1
Total 18 fatalities					

Fatalities by gender

Gender		
	Male	17
	Female	1
Total		18

Fatalities by region

Region		
	Southwest, Logan and Gold Coast	8
	Brisbane, Sunshine Coast and Wide Bay	5
	North and Central Queensland	5
Total		18

Fatalities by incident mechanism

Incident mechanism	Total
Being hit by moving objects	4
Being hit by falling objects	3
Drowning/immersion	3
Vehicle accident	3
Falls from a height	2
Contact with hot objects	1
Being bitten by an animal	1
Contact with electricity	1
Total	18

Fatalities by occupation

Occupation	Total
Bystanders	7
Farm workers	3
Painting trades workers	2
Tree faller	1
Sales, marketing and public relations professionals	1
Truck drivers	1
Inspectors and regulatory officers not elsewhere classified	1
Earthmoving plant operators	1
Miscellaneous labourers	1
Total	18

Narratives

Narrative data provides a basic description of what caused the fatal incident. This data can be used to identify common factors that bring about fatal incidences and therefore the types of risks that need to be identified and controlled.

The below summaries of fatal incidents indicate circumstances that should be avoided in a workplace.

Note: Industry coding of fatalities in this report is based on the incident location, not the industry of the employer. These may be different.

Accommodation and food services

North and Central Queensland

A male guest was found deceased in a resort pool.

Southwest, Logan and Gold Coast

A male hotel guest was trapped in a fire which engulfed the building.

Agriculture, forestry and fishing

Brisbane, Sunshine Coast and Wide Bay

A male worker was using a nine inch grinder (unguarded) when the disc shattered. A shard of the shattered disc pierced his chest area causing fatal injuries.

A male tree faller received fatal injuries while forest harvesting.

North and Central Queensland

A male snake catcher attended a residential address to remove a snake for a client. During the removal the worker received a bite on the left palm from the snake, believed to be a coastal taipan.

Southwest, Logan and Gold Coast

A two year old boy on the family farm entered the area where his father was removing the farrowing cages that were attached to a besser brick wall. The father has then opened a gate which was also attached to a besser brick wall. The wall has fallen on the child causing injuries which led to his death.

A male farmer was spraying sorghum crops on a farm. It appears the worker lowered the arm on the sprayer he was operating and the arm came into contact with a single wire earth return line running across the property.

A home owner was struck by a piece of falling tree outside his unit which caused fatal injuries. The work was being carried out by professional tree loppers.

A child who was working on a farm sustained fatal injuries when he fell from a platform fixed to the drawbar of the trailer into the path of the fully loaded trailer.

Arts and recreation services

Brisbane, Sunshine Coast and Wide Bay

A bystander was travelling in an easterly direction in his vehicle while a truck with a large steel supporting arm swing was travelling in a westerly direction. The bystander's vehicle struck the arm of the truck, which caused significant damage to the vehicle, including tearing the roof from the vehicle. The steel arm also struck the deceased in the head. The deceased's vehicle has then driven off the road, left the road way and come to a rest after striking a tree.

North and Central Queensland

A female was scuba diving with her family. She was found in water at a depth of seven metres with her regulator out.

Southwest, Logan and Gold Coast

A male worker was participating in a federal employment 'work for the dole' program and he either fell or jumped from a trailer, causing him to hit his head on the roadway and sustaining fatal injuries.

Construction

Brisbane, Sunshine Coast and Wide Bay

The incident occurred at a construction workplace involving the construction of residential units. A worker has fallen from a one story scaffolding causing fatal injuries.

North and Central Queensland

A male painter working for a contractor has removed a temporary barricade to a second floor void and has in the course of his work fallen approximately three metres to the concrete floor below. He received serious head injuries and was transported to hospital where he died.

Rental, hiring and real estate services

Southwest, Logan and Gold Coast

A male worker received serious injuries while using a nine inch angle grinder fitted with a cutting disc which disintegrated, lodging a piece of the disc in his head.

Transport, postal and warehousing

Brisbane, Sunshine Coast and Wide Bay

A male worker was driving a Prime Mover and B-Double combination. As the vehicle entered the on-ramp the rear/second trailer began to lift from the bitumen surface and rolled towards the driver's side of the vehicle, finally coming to rest in the outside lane of the on-ramp on its right side against the railing.

North and Central Queensland

A male was located floating face down in the ocean. He was transported to the site as part of a group and the alarm was raised when he didn't return to the vessel. (This incident involved a charter service.)

Southwest, Logan and Gold Coast

A child was caught under the tyre of the first rear axle of a trailer. He sustained fatal injuries and was declared deceased at the scene.

Considerations

'Being hit by moving objects' and 'being hit by falling objects' were the most common mechanisms of injury in this period.

Further information regarding being hit by moving or falling objects can be obtained from the following:

- Worker crushed by hoist
- Guards and discs on angle grinders
- Workers fall through second storey floor
- Preventing workers falling from trucks
- Worker injured in wall collapse
- Managing the risk of falls at workplaces Code of Practice 2018 (PDF, 2.3 MB)
- Managing risks of plant in the workplace Code of Practice 2013 (PDF, 1.0 MB)
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*
- Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011

About this report

The fatalities data set used in this report includes fatalities resulting from a work related traumatic injury, as defined by legislation. This may involve:

- employees
- self-employed workers/contractors
- fatalities occurring at a private residence where work activity was involved, such as a person working from home or work carried out on a house by a contractor
- fatalities caused by work where the death occurs in hospital rather than at the workplace
- homicide where there is a close nexus with work
- work related road traffic fatalities on public
- bystanders, such as visitors to a workplace, who die as a consequence of work activity.

The categories listed below are not included in the fatalities data set, regardless of whether work related factors can be identified:

- commuting fatalities (travelling to or from work)
- injuries where the worker died due to medical intervention
- natural causes such as heart attacks and strokes (except where a work related injury was the direct cause of the heart attack or stroke)
- diseases including cancers and mesothelioma
- self-inflicted injuries (suicide).

The fatalities detailed in this report are those that occurred between January and June 2016 that WHSQ reported to Safe Work Australia. Further investigation of any of these incidents could reveal additional information that may deem an incident to be non-work related. WHSQ reports any changes to notified fatalities to Safe Work Australia.

Notes

The approximately 100 workplace fatalities per year regularly compensated by the Queensland workers' compensation scheme includes injuries due to commuting fatalities (travelling to or from work) and diseases in addition to fatalities resulting from work related traumatic injuries.

For more information on work health and safety, visit worksafe.qld.gov.au or call 1300 362 128.

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