



# How to examine and interrogate workplace data

Data can help to identify and assess potential psychosocial hazards. Sources of data can vary depending on the size of your organisation. The data source table below will help you identify some that may be available to your organisation.

Data source	What to look for
<b>Records of sick leave with or without certificates</b>	<p>Look at the rate of sick leave for a workgroup compared to the average across a unit, region or department and compared to the whole organisation. Look for types of illness in summary information, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>tension headaches or migraines</li> <li>recurrent general ill-health (e.g. colds or flu)</li> <li>digestive system ulcers</li> <li>musculoskeletal disorders (e.g. tendon or muscular soreness).</li> </ul> <p>Examine data frequencies for each workplace/workgroup.</p>
<b>Recreation leave</b>	<p>Look at patterns of use such as taking a small amount of time off (i.e. one or two days off frequently) - this can be commonly associated with unpleasant working conditions and employee work-related stress.</p>
<b>Absenteeism records</b>	<p>Look at trends particularly linked to the work-related stress factors or hazards.</p>
<b>Workers' compensation claims</b>	<p>Patterns and trends recorded for workers' compensation claims can provide information about stress hazards and risks in a workplace.</p> <p>Examine data regarding workers' compensation claims for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>work related stress</li> <li>post traumatic disorder</li> <li>anxiety</li> <li>depression.</li> </ul> <p>Record the factors associated with work-related stress claims and the actions taken in the workplace to prevent further injury or illness.</p>
<b>Grievance information</b>	<p>Workplace grievance information can also indicate issues that may give rise to stress in the workplace such as harassment, discrimination, occupational violence and bullying.</p>
<b>Incident and injury records</b>	<p>Look at dates and times that coincide with other events or trends. The pattern of small and large incidents can provide insight into the sources of stress in a workplace.</p>
<b>Employee assistance program</b>	<p>Look at the summary data such as the number of reports or types of issues managed.</p>
<b>Industrial relations records</b>	<p>This can provide insight into the level of job satisfaction in the workplace. Industrial relations disputes are frequently associated with stress in the workplace.</p>
<b>Minutes of meetings</b>	<p>Look for unresolved and reappearing issues over time, such as workload and changes in work roles by reviewing previous minutes from workplace health and safety meetings, toolbox talks and staff meetings.</p>
<b>Issue resolution records</b>	<p>Look for workplace health and safety issues (i.e. bullying, incidents, stress reports, grievances etc.) when changing practices such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>work systems</li> <li>practices</li> <li>management</li> <li>responsibilities.</li> </ul>

Data source	What to look for
<b>Employee opinion survey information</b>	Look for employee satisfaction regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• leadership</li> <li>• pay</li> <li>• management of workplace conflict</li> <li>• reward and recognition of effort</li> <li>• career opportunities</li> <li>• job security</li> <li>• working conditions</li> <li>• workplace consultation</li> <li>• communication and involvement in decision making</li> <li>• control over workload</li> <li>• work schedules</li> <li>• work culture issues (e.g. levels of support, social or physical isolation, management style).</li> </ul>
<b>Turnover data</b>	Examine data from existing surveys or exit interviews. Data that shows higher than normal turnover rates can indicate a potential workplace problem. Specific information to look for when reviewing reasons for leaving include workload, lack of support or the mention of any bullying or conflict.
<b>Media attention</b>	Any negative media attention for your business or organisation can signal potential problems within the workplace. Use this as a catalyst to examine what is going on a little more closely.
<b>Recruitment</b>	Consider the difficulty or ease with which you are able to recruit new employees. Look at the time taken to hire as compared to industry averages (keeping in mind that some specialist roles are much more difficult to recruit for).  Sites such as glassdoor.com and employer reviews on seek.com can provide insight into an organisation's work-life balance. This may contribute to how easy you find it to recruit new employees.