

Slips & trips and falls from height in Great Britain, 2014

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Summary¹

The information in this document relates to Health and Safety Statistics for 2013/14. It can be found at: www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causinj/kinds-of-accident.htm

This document gives an overview of falls from height and slipping or tripping injuries that were reported to all RIDDOR enforcing authorities in 2013/14 provisional (p).

Falls from height and slips & trips (STF)² are discussed together here because injury reports do not always allow a clear distinction to be made between them. (www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/sources.htm#riddor)

Falls from height and slips, trips or falls on the same level are associated with more fatal and major/specified injuries to workers than any other injury kind.

In 2013/14p:

- falls from height were the most common cause of fatalities, accounting for nearly three in ten (29%) fatal injuries to workers (RIDDOR);
- slips & trips were the most common cause of major/specified injuries to employees, with falls from height the next most common (RIDDOR);
- STFs were responsible for more than half (57%) of all major/specified and almost three in ten (29%) over-seven-day injuries to employees, making up 36% of all reported injuries to employees (RIDDOR).

The latest estimates from the Labour Force Survey (LFS³) show the rate of injuries due to:

- slips or trips was 190 per 100 000 workers; and
- falls was between 48 and 77 per 100 000 workers.

Slips, trips and falls have a combined estimated number of working days lost of 1.5 million (slips & trips: an estimated 986 000 working days lost; falls: estimated 567 000 working days lost. (LFS)

¹ In 2011/12, the RIDDOR reporting system changed. There were also changes to what injuries had to be reported in 2012/13 (over-3 to over-7-day absence) and mid-way through 2013/14 (from major to specified injuries) The system changes affected the way that incidents were coded by reporters, for example the kind is coded as “other” much more frequently. (www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/sources.htm#riddor provides further explanation)..

² In this document, the term “slips, trips and falls” (STF) is used to refer to combined injury numbers for both (a) slips trips & falls on the same level and (b) falls from height.

³ Based on a three year-pooled average 2011/12 to 2013/14.

⁴ Source: www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/lfs/injkind1_3yr.xls and www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/lfs/injkind2.xls

Slips, trips and falls

In 2011/12, the RIDDOR reporting system changed. This and later system changes have affected data quality and the practical definition of injury kinds⁴. (www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/sources.htm#riddor provides further explanation).

Slips, trips & falls on the same level and falls from height (STF) are discussed together. Injury reports do not always allow us to make consistent distinctions between these two kinds of work-related injury.

STFs are associated with more fatal and major/specified injuries than any other injury kind.

In 2013/14p:

- falls from height were the most common cause of fatalities, accounting for nearly three in ten (29%) fatal injuries to workers (RIDDOR);
- slips & trips were the most common cause of major/specified injuries to employees, with falls from height the next most common (RIDDOR);
- STFs were responsible for more than half (57%) of all major/specified and almost three in ten (29%) over-seven-day injuries to employees, making up 36% of all reported injuries to employees (RIDDOR).

Table 1 Reported injuries to employees, 2013/14p (RIDDOR all enforcing authorities)

Injury	Slips & trips	Falls from height	Combined STFs
Fatal	2	19	21
Major/specified	7 742	2 895	10 637
Over-seven-day	13 841	3 038	16 879
Total	21 585	5 952	27 537

Table 2 Reported injuries to the self-employed 2013/14p (RIDDOR all enforcing authorities)⁵

Injury	Slips & trips	Falls from height	Combined STFs
Fatal	1	20	21
Major/specified	235	422	657
Over-seven-day	186	127	313
Total	422	569	991

- The latest Labour Force Survey (LFS) rates of self-reported workplace non-fatal injury with over-three-day absence, averaged 2011/12 – 2013/14, are:
 - 190 per 100 000 workers for non-fatal slip and trip injuries; and
 - between 48 and 77 per 100 000 workers. (LFS INJKIND1_3YR)
- About 1.5 million working days were lost due to slips & trips and falls:
 - 986 thousand working days due to slips & trips and
 - 567 thousand working days due to falls. (LFS INJKIND2)

⁴ Main sources of coding discontinuities:

- 2008/09 Changes in coding practice by HSE's Incident Contact Centre (ICC). Injuries reported as "slips or trips on stairs" were reclassified as falls from height. Fall numbers rose and slip or trip numbers fell. The effect was disproportionately greater on fall numbers, which are lower.
- 2011/12 Mid year change in RIDDOR reporting system. Without a code to identify stairs, reported slips & trips on stairs can no longer be reclassified as falls. Injury definitions now more directly reflect reporters' own interpretations of the Kind codes than was the case when ICC applied data quality checks.
- 2012/13 Change in RIDDOR reporting requirements for lost time injuries from over three days to over seven days.
- 2013/14 Mid-year change in RIDDOR injury classification from Major to Specified.

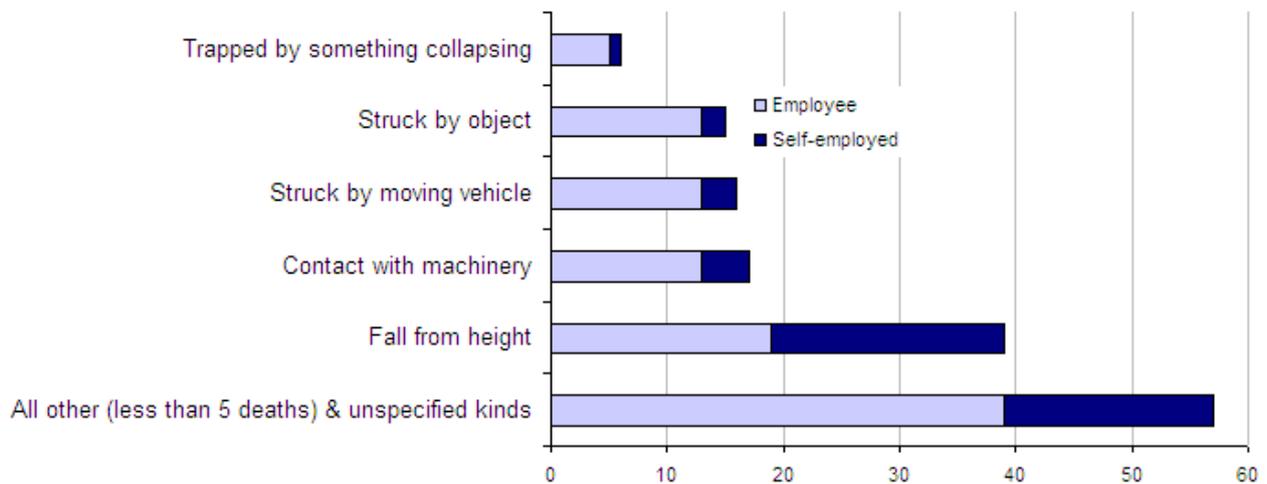
⁵ Reporting levels are low for non-fatal injuries to the self-employed.

Fatal slip, trip and fall injuries

In 2013/14p:

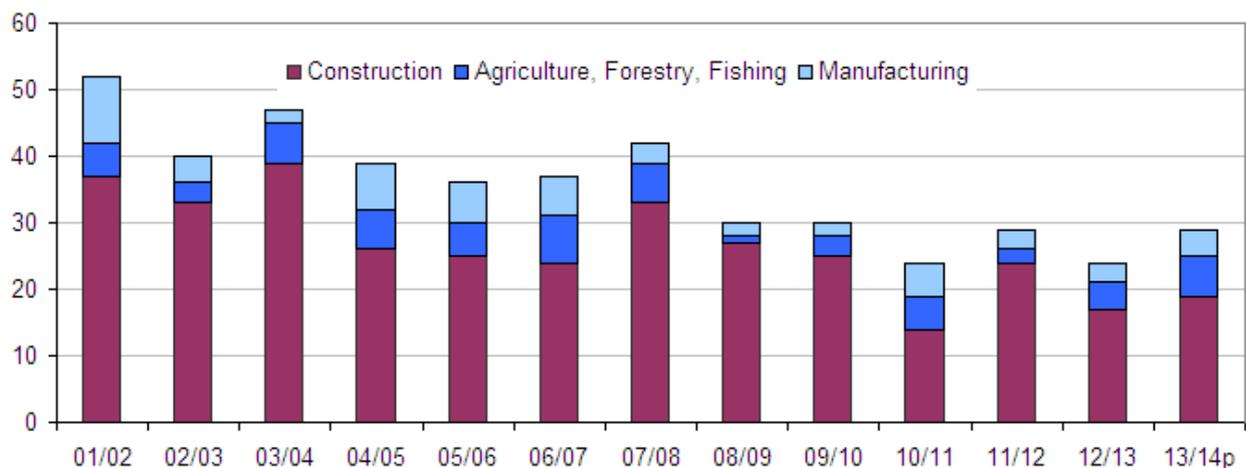
- 39 fatal injuries to workers involved falls from height, unusually, there were also three fatal slips & trips;

Figure 1 Fatal injuries to workers, by kind, 2013/14p (RIDDOR)



- all fatal fall injuries were to males - seven of these (18%) involved a worker aged over 65 although such workers only make up about 4% of the male workforce;
- one of the three fatal slip trip injuries was to a female;
- while the number of fatal injuries has generally continued to fall over the past 13 years, fatal fall injury numbers have remained steady;
- the percentage of fatal injuries that was due to falls from height has not decreased.
- about half of fatal fall injuries to workers were in construction (19);
 - construction accounted for eight of the 20 fatal injuries to the self-employed and for 11 of the 19 to employees;
 - nearly half of the coded occupations of workers killed by falls were construction-related;
- other industries with high numbers of fatal fall injuries were agriculture (6) admin and support ⁶ (5) and manufacturing (4).

Figure 2 Fatal fall injuries to workers, top three industries, 2001/02 to 2013/14p



⁶ In SIC 81: services to buildings and landscape activities

Table 3 Occupations of workers killed by falls from height, 2013/14p (RIDDOR)

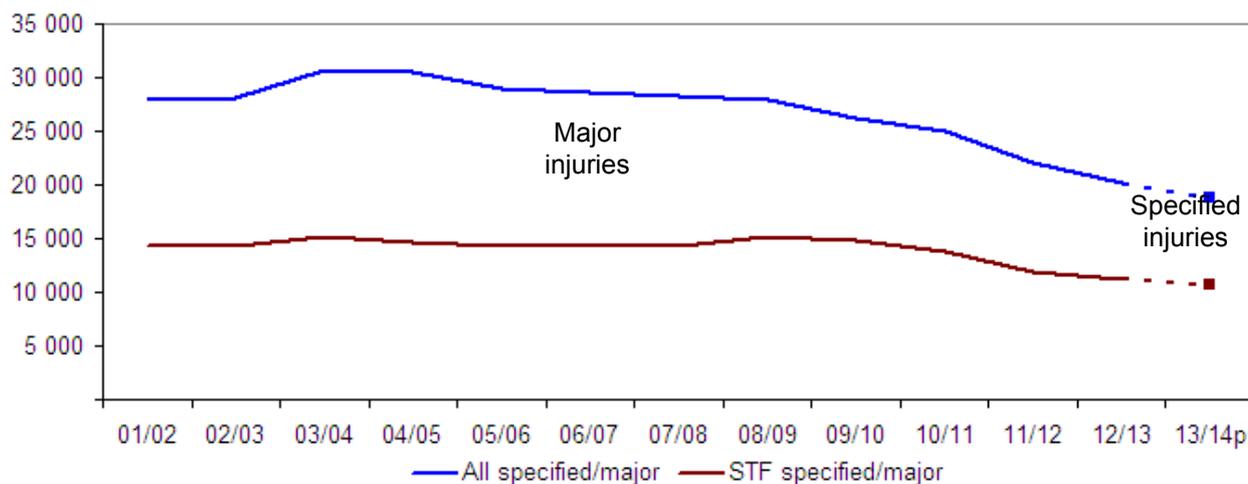
SOC2010 4-digit occupation codes	Fatal fall injuries
8149 - Construction operatives , not elsewhere classified	8
5111 - Farmers	4
5241 - Electricians and electrical fitters	3
5313 - Roofers, roof tilers and slaters	3
5249 - Electrical and electronic trades , not elsewhere classified	2
9111 - Farm workers	2
9120 - Elementary construction occupations	2
9231 - Window cleaners	2
9260 - Elementary storage occupations	2
All other occupations with 1 fatal injury	11

- the three fatal slip and trip injuries were to a glazier (construction industry), a landscape gardener (admin & support), and a care worker (health & social care);
- 25 work-related fatal slip, trip and fall injuries to members of the public were also reported. More than half (14) of these were falls from a height;
 - numbers of males and females were almost equal (13 female and 12 male);
 - 23 (92%) involved people aged 65 or over;
 - two thirds (8 slips & trips and 9 falls) were in health & social care.

Major/specified⁷ slip, trip and fall injuries to employees

In 2013/14p, over half of reported major/specified injuries to employees involved a slip, trip or fall (56%) – three quarters of these were slips & trips. This was a similar proportion to the average for the previous five years (around 55%).

Figure 3 Major/specified slip, trip and fall injuries to employees (RIDDOR, 2001/02 to 2013/14p)



- Major/specified injury numbers in 2013/14p STF were 5% lower than the 2012/13 major/specified injury numbers; across all kinds, the numbers were 7% lower.
- Between 2007/08 and 2013/14p the combined number of major/specified STF injuries fell by 25%, whereas the overall fall in major/specified injury numbers was 33%.
- In 2013/14p, construction accounted for a fifth of all major/specified fall injuries to employees (581). The next highest injury numbers were in transport & storage (422), manufacturing (406).
- The human health & social care industry had the most major/specified slips & trips (1 264).

Table 4 Major/specified slip, trip and fall injuries to employees (RIDDOR, 2007/08 to 2013/14p)

Major/specified injuries by year	Slips & trips	Falls from height	Combined STFs
2007/08	10 963	3 270	14 233
2008/09	10 504	4 684 ⁸	15 188
2009/10	10 676	4 226	14 902
2010/11	9 835	3 957	13 792
2011/12	8 830	3 063	11 893
2012/13	8 647	2 575	11 222
2013/14p	7 742	2 895	10 637

- Employees who suffered major/specified slips & trips injuries are more likely to be older (over 55) and/or female than is the case for major/specified injuries overall.
- The highest fall injury rates were to older men. The highest rates of fall injury to women (to older females) were lower than any male injury rate.

⁷ Change from major to specified, see www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/riddor-notification.htm

⁸ See footnote 4 on p2.

Over-three-day and over-seven-day slip, trip and fall injuries to employees

Almost three out of ten (29%) over-seven-day injuries to employees involved a slip, trip or fall in 2013/14. The great majority of these were slips & trips (82%) (RIDDOR).

Until 2011/12⁹, slips, trips and falls over-three-day injury numbers followed a downward trend, similar to the overall over-three-day trend. It is too early to draw conclusions about trends since 2012/13.

Figure 4 Over-three-day / over-seven-day injuries to employees (RIDDOR, 2001/02 to 2013/14p)

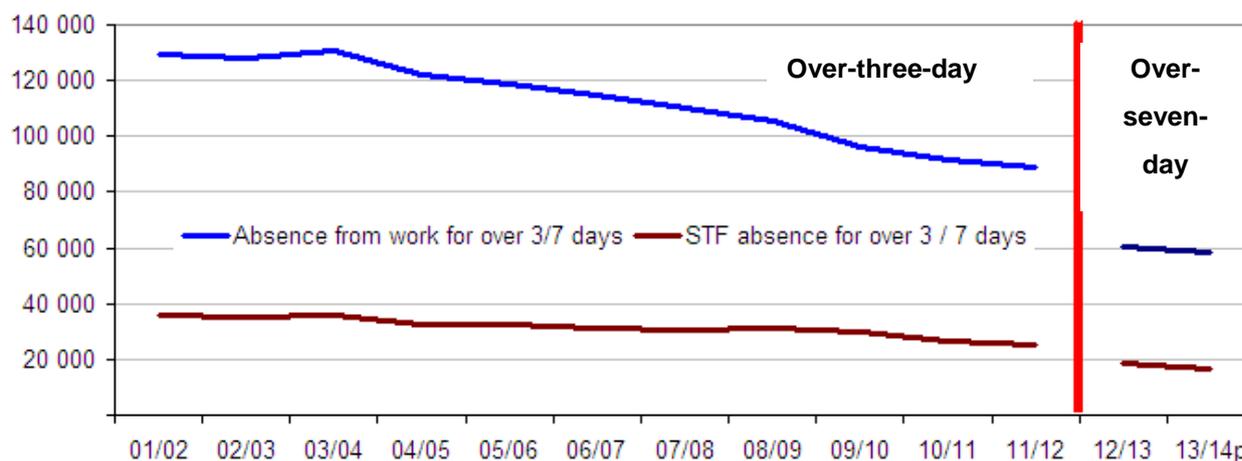


Table 5 Over-three-day & over-seven-day slip, trip and fall injuries to employees (RIDDOR, 2007/08 to 2013/14p)

Injuries by year	Slips & trips	Falls from height	Combined STFs
Over-three-day			
2007/08	26 461	3 907	30 368
2008/09	24 021	7 119 ¹⁰	31 140
2009/10	23 343	6 324	29 667
2010/11	20 915	5 728	26 643
2011/12	21 201	4 297	25 498
Over-seven-day			
2012/13	15 646	2 786	18 432
2013/14p	13 841	3 038	16 879

In 2013/14p:

- human health & social care reported the most over-seven-day slip & trip employee injuries (2 288);
- transport & storage had the second highest number (2 154);
- the greatest numbers of over-seven-day falls were in manufacturing (479) and transport & storage (479);
- the sectors reporting more than 2 000 over-seven-day slip, trip or fall injuries were transport & storage (2 633) human health & social care (2 581) manufacturing (2 406) and wholesale & retail (2 357).

⁹ Change to over seven day reporting.

¹⁰ See footnote 3 on p3.

Seasonal variation

- Falls from height and slips & trips show different seasonal variations. More major/specified slips & trips were reported in autumn and winter in 2013/14p.
- Slips & trips tend to peak in the winter, probably reflecting adverse weather conditions, such as slippery ground surfaces resulting from snow, rain and ice.
- As table 6 shows seasonal effects on major/specified slip & trip injury numbers were less marked in 2013/14p than in previous years, possibly due to the mid-year change from major injuries to specified, as well as to milder weather.

Table 6 Major/specified slip, trip and fall injuries to employees by season, 2013/14p (RIDDOR)

Major/specified injuries by season	Slips & trips	Falls from height	Combined STFs
Spring (April to June) (Major)	1 860 (24%)	722 (25%)	2 582 (24%)
Summer (July to September) (Major)	1 860 (24%)	734 (25%)	2 594 (24%)
Autumn (October to December) (Specified)	2 049 (26%)	709 (24%)	2 758 (26%)
Winter (January to March) (Specified)	1 973 (25%)	730 (25%)	2 703 (25%)
Total	7 742	2 895	10 637

Table 7 Over-seven-day injuries to employees by season, 2013/14p (RIDDOR)

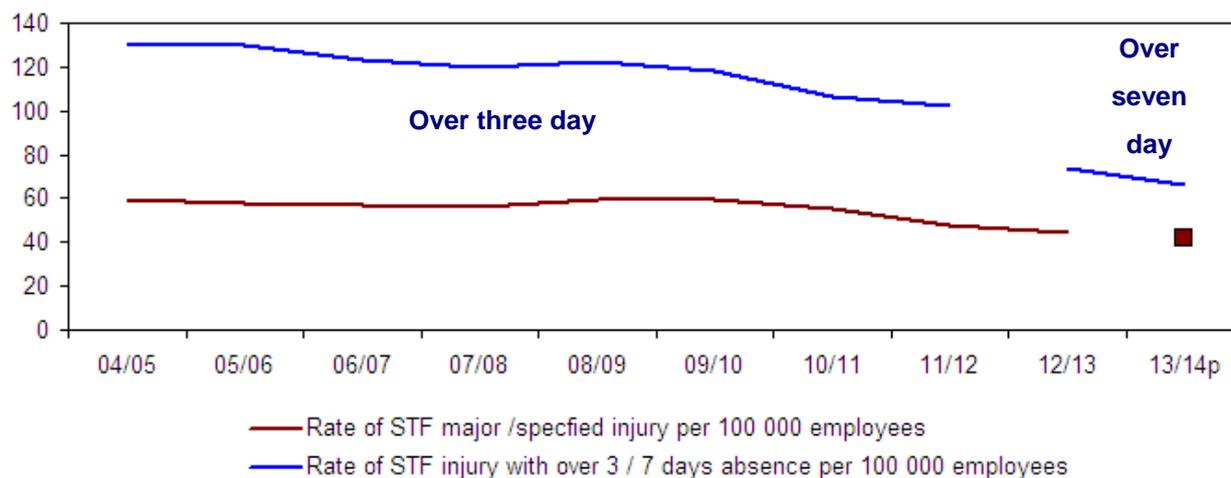
Over-seven-day injuries by season	Slips & trips	Falls from height	Combined STFs
Spring (April to June)	3 119 (23%)	725 (24%)	3 844 (23%)
Summer (July to September)	3 359 (24%)	757 (25%)	4 116 (24%)
Autumn (October to December)	3 673 (27%)	765 (25%)	4 438 (26%)
Winter (January to March)	3 690 (27%)	791 (26%)	4 481 (27%)
Total	13 841	3 038	16 879

Trends in employee slip, trip and fall injury rates

There was an underlying downward trend in rates of both major and over-three-day (until 2011/12) STF injuries per 100 000 employees.

There have been changes to the RIDDOR reporting system (especially the change from over-three-days to over-seven-days absence in 2012/13 and from major to specified part year 2013/14.) These changes have caused discontinuities in the data series that make it difficult to identify trends over the past two years.

Figure 5 Rates of non-fatal slip, trip and fall injury to employees (RIDDOR, 2004/05 to 2013/14p)

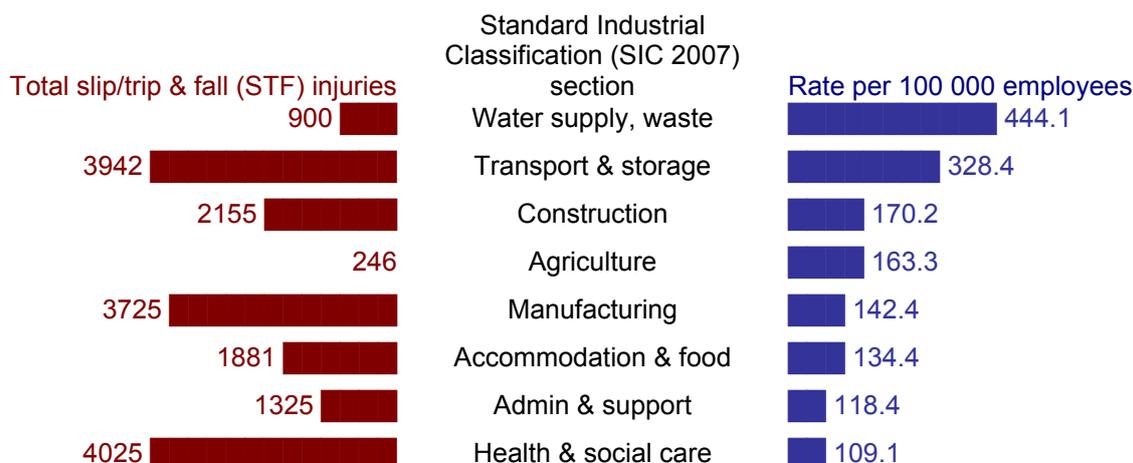


Employee slip, trip and fall injury rates by industry

- The water supply, sewerage, waste management & remediation sector had the highest rates for STF injuries, but relatively low numbers of reported injuries.
- Transport & storage had the second highest STF injury numbers and second highest rates.
- Construction had the highest number and second highest rate of falls.

The following charts show 2013/14 numbers and rates of reported slip, trip and fall injuries in the industries with the highest rates.

Figure 6 Industries with highest rates of non-fatal employee slips, trips and falls, 2013/14p (RIDDOR)



The overall rate of slips trips and falls per 100 000 GB employees was 108.0.

Figure 7 Industries with highest rates of non-fatal employee falls, 2013/14p (RIDDOR)

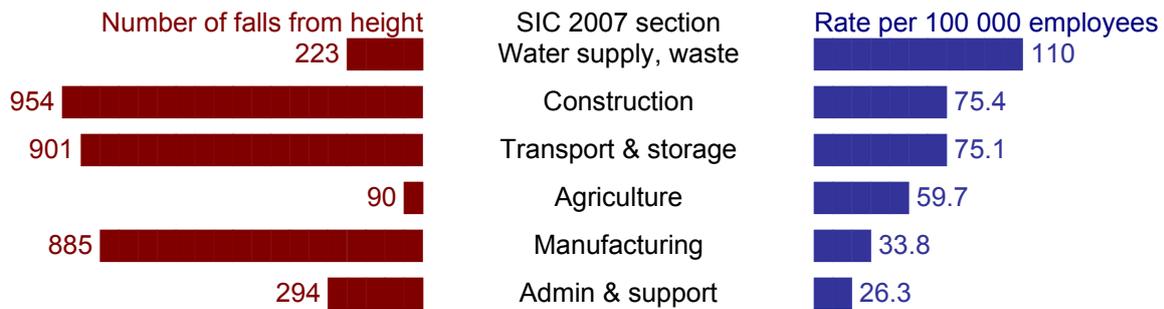
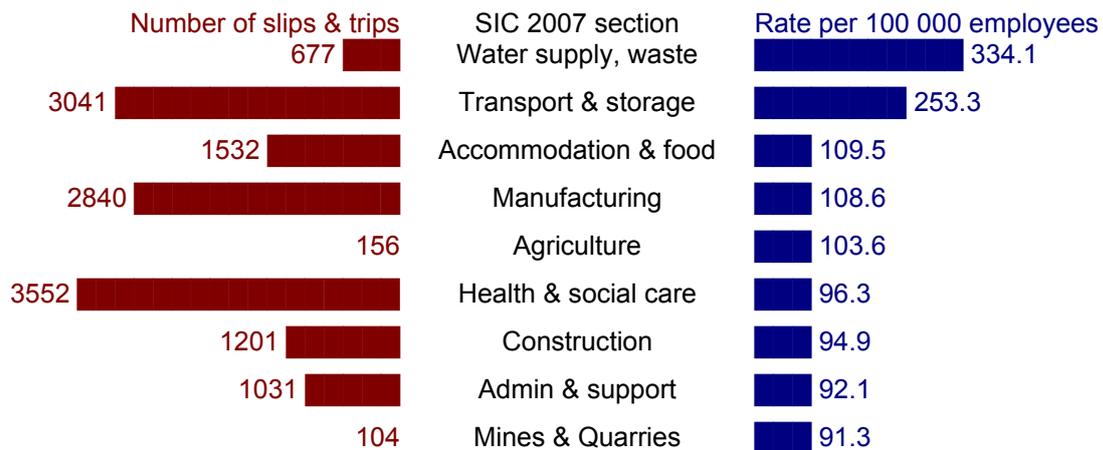


Figure 8 Industries with the highest rates of non-fatal employee slips & trips, 2013/14p (RIDDOR)



- More than half of the fatal fall injuries to employees occurred in construction (11 out of 19). Construction also had the most major/specified injury falls, accounting for over a fifth of the total. (581 out of 2 895)
- The highest number of major/specified injury slips & trips was in health & social care (1 264) followed by education (982). Health & social care reported the greatest number of over-seven-day slips & trips 2 288), followed by Transportation & storage (2 154).

Enforcement action on fall risks

The Work at Height Regulations (2005) (WAH 2005) apply to all work at height where there is a risk of a fall liable to cause personal injury. (www.hse.gov.uk/falls/regulations.htm) A significant proportion of WAH related enforcement is likely to have been taken under the Health & Safety at Work Act (1974) and so would not be included here.

In 2013/14p:

- HSE prosecuted 77 cases under WAH 2005, there were 73 convictions with an average fine of over eight thousand pounds;
- the number of cases, number of offences prosecuted, average fine per case and conviction rate were all higher than the averages for the previous 5 years;
- around one in ten offences prosecuted by HSE involved a prosecution under WAH 2005 (99 out of 988).

Table 8 Cases¹¹ prosecuted under the Work at Height Regulations 2005 (2008/09- 2013/14p)

Year	Cases	Cases with a conviction for 1 or more offences	Conviction % rate for cases heard	Average fine per conviction (case level)
2008/09	54	48	89%	£5 926
2009/10	56	49	88%	£8 901
2010/11	69	59	86%	£6 683
2011/12	62	58	94%	£8 364
2012/13	88	81	92%	£10 123
<i>Average 2008/09 to 2012/13</i>	66	59	89%	£7 999
2013/14p	77	73	95%	£8 663

Table 9 Offences¹² prosecuted under the Work at Height Regulations (2008/09- 2013/14p)

Year	Offences	Convictions	Conviction % rate	Average fine per conviction
2008/09	76	61	80%	£4 663
2009/10	77	65	84%	£6 710
2010/11	90	74	82%	£5 328
2011/12	84	67	80%	£7 241
2012/13	124	107	86%	£7 664
<i>Average 2008/09 to 2012/13</i>	90	75	83%	£6 321
2013/14p	99	88	89%	£7 187

Table 10 Number of enforcement notices with requirements quoting the Work at Height Regulations 2005 (2009/10- 2013/14p)

Year	Improvement	Immediate or Deferred prohibition	Total notices
2009/10	372	1 817	2 189
2010/11	359	1 881	2 240
2011/12	336	1 731	2 067
2012/13	305	1 420	1 725
2013/14p	618	1 684	2 096

¹¹ See www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/prosecutions.htm for a fuller explanation of HSE's enforcement information.

¹² A prosecution case may include one or more offences.

Links to data sources and tables

Data Sources	Web Address (URL)
Labour Force Survey (LFS)	www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/sources.htm#lfs
RIDDOR (The Reporting Of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995)	www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/sources.htm#riddor
Tables/further information	Web Address (URL)
RIDKIND1	www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/tables/ridkind1.xls
RIDKIND2	www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/tables/ridkind2.xls
RIDKIND3	www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/tables/ridkind3.xls
INJKIND1	www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/lfs/injkind1.xls
INJKIND1_3YR	www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/lfs/injkind1_3yr.xls
INJKIND2	www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/lfs/injkind2.xls
Kinds of injury	www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causinj/kinds-of-accident.htm www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causinj/kinds-of-accident.pdf
Slips trips and falls	www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causinj/slips-trips-and-falls.pdf
Vehicle injuries	www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causinj/moving-vehicles.pdf
Handling injuries	www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causinj/handling-injuries.pdf
Handling injuries (finalised for 2010/11)	www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causinj/handlinginjuries-2006-07to2010-11.pdf
Workplace transport injuries (finalised for 2010/11)	www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causinj/workplace-transport.pdf
Other tables	www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/tables/index.htm

National Statistics

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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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