

December 2022

## Work-related serious injury outcome indicators: 2021

In 2013, the Government set a target of 25% reduction in work-related fatal and serious non-fatal injuries in New Zealand by the year 2020. Three indicators were used to measure progress: fatal injuries, serious non-fatal injuries, and injuries resulting in more than a week away from work.

While the period for system targets has ended, WorkSafe is continuing to monitor and report on serious injury trends as part of a wider set of outcome indicators for the work health and safety system.

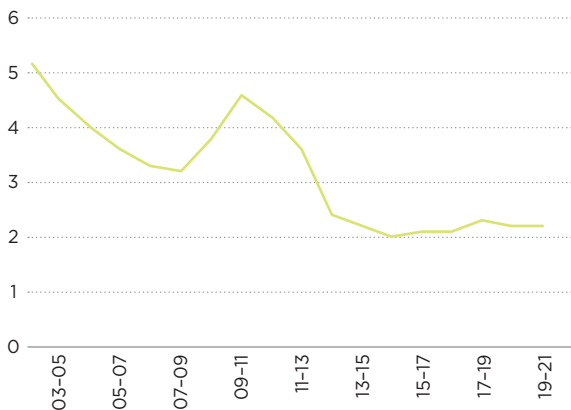
The most recent official data for serious injury outcome indicators was released by Stats NZ on 16 December 2022 for injuries to the end of 2021.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic during 2020 and 2021 introduces additional uncertainty to outcome data from these years and needs to be considered when interpreting trends in the data.

The latest result shows long-term downward trends in the rate of most work-related injuries, except for injuries resulting in more than a week away from work, which have steadily increased over the past decade.

Everyone has a role in improving work health and safety. While WorkSafe continues to engage with duty holders and enforce health and safety law at a business level, it is increasingly exploring ways with partners to address health and safety risks at industry and system levels.

### Indicator 1: Work-related fatal acute injury<sup>1</sup>



### Latest official data:

2019–2021 three-year average

**2.2**  
fatal acute injuries  
per 100,000 FTEs

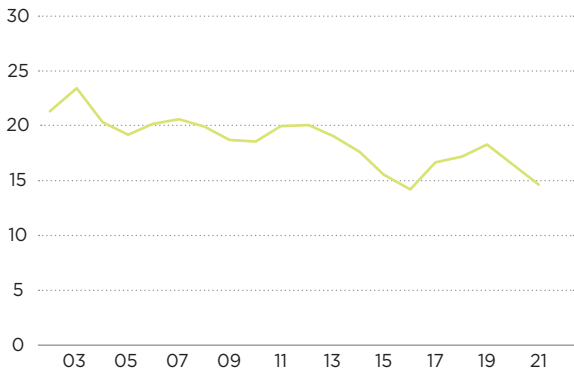
**0%**  
unchanged  
from 2018–2020

The fatality rate for 2019–2021 is unchanged from 2018–2020. The total number of fatalities was 178 in 2019–21, compared to 179 in 2018–20.

Source: Stats NZ, from WorkSafe notifications and ACC claims data, 2002–2021

<sup>1</sup> There were two major events that are reflected in the trend in fatalities from 2008–10 to 2011–13: Pike River coal mine explosion in 2010 and Canterbury earthquakes in 2011.

**Indicator 2: Work-related serious non-fatal acute injury<sup>2</sup>**



**Latest official data:**  
2021 calendar year

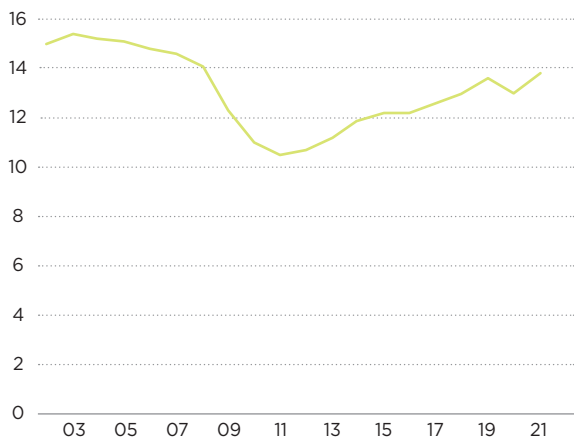
**14.7**  
serious non-fatal  
injuries per  
100,000 FTEs

**11%**  
**lower**  
than 2020

The rate of potentially fatal acute injuries has reduced by 11% from the previous year, following a similar decline of 10% in 2020.

Source: Stats NZ, from ACC claims and Ministry of Health hospitalisation data, 2002–2021

**Indicator 3: Work-related acute injury resulting in more than a week away from work<sup>3</sup>**



**Latest official data:**  
2021 calendar year

**13.8**  
ACC week away from  
work injury claims  
per 1,000 FTEs

**6%**  
**higher**  
than 2020

The rate of week away from work acute injuries has trended upwards since 2011. 2020 saw a temporary decline in claim rate, which was likely influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic. The number and rate of claims have now reverted to the trend seen before the pandemic.

Source: Stats NZ from ACC claims data, 2002–2021

<sup>2</sup> A serious non-fatal injury is an injury to a patient who is admitted to hospital with a probability of death of 6.9% or more.

<sup>3</sup> A work-related acute injury resulting in more than a week away from work is one where an injured worker has received weekly compensation from ACC for loss of earnings while recovering from injury.