

Part 1 Meat industry statistics

1.1 Meat industry national statistical analysis

Introduction

Injury and illness data provides guidance to the meat industry by assisting it to identify hazards and plan solutions on the basis of statistical analysis. Where possible, Australia-wide data specific to the meat processing and has been used. Where this level of detailed information was not available, examples or more generic, but indicative data has been used.

While there will always be a number of factors that impact on performance (such as self insurance of some processors, decrease in numbers of workers, increased focus on early return to work), most indicators demonstrate an improvement in the performance of the meat processing industry in the period since the first edition of this guide. However, as the following figures will show, meat processing still remains one of the poor performers in Australian industry.

Industry Data

The data utilised in Tables 1 and 2 comes from the National Online Statistics Interactive (NOSI) system, one of the services of the Australian Safety and Compensation Council. This is an interactive statistics database that uses data provided by the Commonwealth, State and Territory workers compensation authorities and extracted from the National Data Set for Compensation-based Statistics (NDS). To be included in the NDS, new claims must be accepted by the jurisdiction and involve either a death, permanent incapacity, or a temporary incapacity for which payments have been made (including common law, but excluding claims for which only payments for medical and like services have been made). The scope is further limited in publications to non-journey claims involving more than one working week lost from work.

Classifications follow the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification 1993 (ANZSIC). Occupations were classified in accordance with the ABS classification, the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO). The ANZSIC industry codes of Group 211 cover meat and meat product manufacturing and can be further broken down into meat processing, poultry processing, and bacon, ham and smallgoods manufacturing. The data in this chapter focuses on the meat processing industry class, but NOSI does provide comparative analysis with the poultry industry and the bacon ham and smallgoods industry as a means of outlining the full picture. This data can be obtained from the NOSI website <http://nosi.ascc.gov.au/>.

Table 1: Industry Sector Incidence Rates

Performance Area	Industry Sector	Performance 2000/1	Performance 2004/5	Comments
Incidence rates**	All industries	18.5	16.6	The incidence rate has improved considerably in the industry sector to which meat processing belongs. This is particularly pleasing as the performance of every other manufacturing sector appears to have deteriorated. However, based on the performance of the sector to which meat processing belongs, a worker in this sector is still more than twice as likely to suffer an injury as an 'average' worker.
	Food Beverage & Tobacco Manufacturing***	49.8	38.8	
	All manufacturing	30.8	32.0	
	Non-metallic mineral manufacturing	37.7	44.0	
	Wood & paper product manufacturing	35.9	38	

* Includes all manufacturing

** Number of cases per 1,000 employees

*** Includes manufacturing/processing of: meat, meat product, dairy product, fruit & vegetable, oil & fat, flour & cereal, bakery, beverage, tobacco.

Table 2: Meat Processing Performance

Performance Area	Meat Processing	Performance 2000/01	Performance 2004/05 (unless otherwise stated)	Comments
Number of claims		3295	2270	While there has been a significant reduction in overall injuries in the industry, without accurate participation rates it is difficult to determine how much of this is due to improved performance and how much to a smaller proportional workforce.
Mechanism of injury/disease	Body stressing	43% of all claims	48% of all claims	Body stressing continues to be the single biggest mechanism of injury/disease and remains an area that requires significant resources to address.
	Hitting objects with a part of the body	18%	15%	Includes contact with knives, therefore contact with knives remains a significant problem within the industry
	Being hit by moving objects	13%	15%	
	Falls, slips & trips	8%	9%	Continues to be a significant cause of injuries and hence warrants continued effort
	Biological factors	0.03%	0.02%	The significant effort being put into managing zoonotic diseases appears to be reflected in the reduction in claims.

Table 2: Meat Processing Performance - Continued

Performance Area	Meat Processing	Performance 2000/01	Performance 2004/05 (unless otherwise stated)	Comments
Cost of claims - median cost	All claims	\$2,900	\$3,700 (2003/2004)	<p>Cost of claims continue to rise despite less time off work. The ASCC attributes this to higher medical costs and increased wages. (ASCC, Compendium of Workers' Compensation Statistics Australia 2004-5, 2007, p 58)</p> <p>If a processor had a workforce of 1000 persons, they could reasonably expect, based on (broader sector) incidence rates and these costs that the direct costs of injury would be \$143,560 (based on 2003-4 figures). It should also be noted that the figures provided are direct costs only and do not take into account the other substantial indirect costs associated with lost production, investigation, retraining, injury management, recruitment etc.</p>
	Body-stressing claims	\$4,100	\$4,800 (2003/2004)	
Time lost	Absent from work for less than 2 weeks	79.9%	84%	<p>Early return to work practices have generally led to workers having less time off work. However, this could also be an indication that injuries are becoming less severe.</p>
	Absent more than 12 but less than 26 weeks	13%	6.3%	

The data utilised in Table 3 comes from WorkCover NSW publications, *Insurance Premiums Order* for the respective years

Table 3: Premium Rates NSW

Performance Area	Industry Sector	Industry Rate 2001/02	Industry Rate 2007/08	Comments
Premium rates - NSW	Average all industries	2.8% (2000/01)	1.89%	NSW premium rates are based on actual injury costs and hence give a reasonable indicator of industry performance. While some of the larger processors have self-insurance status, and hence their results are not used when calculating these rates, this significant improvement in rates indicates that the industry is becoming safer. However, when comparing to 'all industries' average, it is clear that there is still potential for even greater improvement in meat processing industries.
	Abattoirs - NSW	15%	8.2%	
	Meat Packing & Freezing - NSW	9.51%	8.3%	