

New HSE annual statistics

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According to provisional figures in the HSE's latest Health & Safety Statistics Annual Report:

- 1.2 million people who worked in the previous 12 months suffered from a work-related illness in 2013/14 – a slight increase from 1.07 million in 2011/12
- 133 workers were killed at work in Great Britain in 2013/14, an average rate of 0.44 deaths per 100,000 workers – a decrease from an average rate of 0.56 per 100,000 workers over the previous five years
- Construction was the industrial sector with the highest rate of fatal injuries: 42 deaths in 2013/14, a rate of 8.77 per 100,000 workers – a decrease from the five-year average rate of 9.89
- 28.2 million working days were lost due to work-related illness and workplace injury in 2013/14 – a slight increase from 27 million in 2011/12
- 551 cases were prosecuted by the HSE in England and Wales in 2013/14 – a decrease of 5% from the year 2012/13
- 88 cases were prosecuted by local authorities in England and Wales in 2013/14, a decrease of 16% from the year 2012/13
- 13,790 enforcement notices were issued by the HSE and local authorities in 2013/14 – an increase of 2% from the previous year. Although the number of notices issued by the HSE rose 15% from the previous year, notices issued by local authorities over the same period decreased significantly by 22%

What do the statistics mean?

Although the number of workers killed in Britain last year has fallen to the lowest annual rate on record, construction continues to have the highest rate of fatal injuries of all the main industrial sectors. The decrease in prosecutions brought by the HSE and local authorities may either reflect a reduction in their resources and funding, or show that resources are being applied in a more targeted way. The rise in HSE enforcement notices compared with a drop in notices from local authorities might be linked to the HSE's greater ability to fund their enforcement activities through the Fees for Intervention (FFI) scheme. As FFI looks likely to be retained, the disparity in enforcement activity between the HSE and local authorities may increase further over the coming years.