

8 October 2019

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Chairperson  
Economic Policy Scrutiny Committee  
Parliament House  
GPO Box 3146  
Darwin NT 0801

Dear Sir/Madam

**Re: Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Amendment Bill 2019**

I am writing in regard to our concerns around the impacts of legislative changes to Work Health and Safety legislation on Northern Territory business. The Chamber of Commerce Northern Territory speaks for 1,200 businesses employing thousands of Territorians in every sector of our economy.

The Chamber and its members are committed to providing safe workplaces for their employees and, over the past 6-7 years, have worked hard to provide these. Prior to 2012, the relationship between the regulator and industry was very combative, with an enforcement model used and businesses were shut down with no attempt at mutual resolution of work safety issues. The change to a more educational role for the regulator was welcomed at the time and we gradually saw improvement in the policy and procedures required to make workplaces safer.

As can be seen from examination of the statistics, which have been oft quoted of late, the Northern Territory has been making major steps in improving its work safety. The Comparative Performance Monitoring Report prepared by Safe Work Australia in December 2018 states *between 2012–13 and 2015–16 all Australian jurisdictions recorded falls in the incidence rate of serious claims. Seacare recorded the largest decrease (down by 40 per cent), followed by the Australian Government (down by 36 per cent), the Northern Territory (down by 28 per cent)*, shows that NT fatality numbers have gone up and down over the years so looking at that alone can be a bit misleading, see P.9.

Of further note is that in the breakdown of incidence rates by size of business (p.16), the Northern Territory has the lowest incident rate in Australia for businesses with 200+ employees while having the highest rate in 1-19 employees category. This is perhaps indicative of the nature of business in the Northern Territory, with remote community and pastoral related businesses making up a far larger portion of our total business community

than any other jurisdiction. The Chamber of Commerce NT works closely with many of these organisations around the HR and WHS policies and recognises that there are many situations where employees work without the level of supervision experienced in other industries and jurisdictions. As Mr Lyons raised in his report, it is almost impossible for NT Worksafe to adequately inspect operations around the breadth of the NT.

The Chamber members are very concerned about a return to enforcement by the regulator, of which the introduction of industrial manslaughter legislation is a part of, as recommended by the Lyons Report. The introduction of punitive measures, which we maintain were already covered adequately under criminal law, will create a hostile atmosphere in dealing with the regulator and be to the detriment of the good work being done to build capability within businesses to create safer workplaces. This is a matter that has been raised by many members as they struggle through a period of economic downturn, where business costs are under extreme pressure and the advice from NT Worksafe has been both welcomed and followed.

Some recommendations of Mr Lyons report need further work though, such as the recommendation to “rebalance” to “hard” compliance. We are concerned that this recommended approach isn’t fully mindful of the available resources to SME’s, particularly those in the remote regions of the Northern Territory and Indigenous Communities. The challenges of implementation of the findings for these groups require further input.

There needs to be a considered analysis of the practical application and impact of a number of recommendations, including:

- Mandatory HSR training, the implications for SME’s and industry and lack of RTO’s available to deliver the training across the Territory;
- Mandatory codes of practice and practicality for SME’s; and
- General compliance costs to SME’s and community organisations associated with the recommendations.

There is no full exploration of how this will impact on employers, in light of the industrial manslaughter legislation.

While we do not accept that there has been adequate consultation over the legislation that was introduced to parliament without any circulation of the text, we believe that there is an opportunity through the process to consider some innovation. Given that those most exposed to the Industrial Manslaughter legislation are Small to Medium Enterprises, we believe that consideration be given to incentivising improvements to employer systems through SME WHS Safety Discounts. For SME’s (Defined Turnover to be determined), the introduction of a NT Worksafe premium discount of 15% where an employer has been independently audited (by an NT Worksafe Approved Provider) and is compliant with the NT Worksafe “Small business safety program”. This discount to be applied by the insurer 12 months after the insured period upon the supply of the wage declaration of actual wages for that year. This discount to apply irrespective of whether the SME continues with the same INSURER or not.

This discount will help identify and work to address the unfortunate issue of workplace safety not being “front of mind” for many SME businesses. Insurers, in the past, have not been required to offer a premium saving to a small employer who has demonstrated good WHS practices, so some employers have not seen the need until after there has been a serious workplace injury.

An added benefit of the WHS Safety Discount being introduced is once NT Worksafe identify SME businesses without it, they can target these employers and encourage them to be compliant, undertake the audit and receive the premium saving.

Over time we should see more compliant small businesses and hopefully an overall reduction in workplace injuries, whilst allowing NT Worksafe to better allocate its limited resources.

Our employer network feel strongly that the prevention of workplace incidents, injuries and fatalities is a shared responsibility. We will continue to work with our members, union counterparts and NT WorkSafe to improve the safety of Territorian workplaces. Further, we firmly believe that there should be a full Regulatory Impact Assessment completed before the passing of this new legislation that will impact on business and would be happy to work with your committee on such an assessment.

Yours sincerely



Greg Bicknell  
Chief Executive

# Comparative Performance Monitoring Report

**Part 1 – Work Health and Safety Performance**

*20th Edition - December 2018*

Comparison of work health and safety and workers' compensation schemes in Australia and New Zealand



**safe work australia**

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### **Important Notice**

Safe Work Australia provides the information given in this document to improve public access to information about work health and safety information generally. The vision of Safe Work Australia is Australian workplaces free from injury and disease. Its mission is to lead and coordinate national efforts to prevent workplace death, injury and disease in Australia.

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## Foreword

The Labour Ministers' Council released the first Comparative Performance Monitoring (CPM) report in December 1998. The CPM project was transferred to Safe Work Australia when it was established in 2009. The CPM reports provide trend analysis on the work health and safety and workers' compensation schemes operating in Australia and New Zealand. This is the 20<sup>th</sup> annual report of the CPM project.

The CPM is complemented by the *Australian Workers' Compensation Statistics* report, which provides more detailed analysis of national workers' compensation data using key variables such as occupation, industry, age and sex with supporting information on the circumstances surrounding work-related injury and disease occurrences. The CPM is also complemented by the *Comparison of Workers' Compensation Arrangements in Australia and New Zealand*, which discusses the way that each scheme deals with key aspects such as coverage, benefits, self-insurance, common law and dispute resolution. The publications can be found on the Safe Work Australia website.

## Statement of purpose

The role of the CPM report is to facilitate improvement of work health and safety, workers' compensation and related service outcomes in Australian and New Zealand schemes through an accessible report that:

- (a) monitors the comparative performance of jurisdictions over time, and
- (b) enables benchmarking across jurisdictions and the identification of best practice to support policy making.

## Data

The data used in this report were supplied by jurisdictions for the 2016–17 financial year and data updates back to 2011–12. Readers should be aware that the data presented here may differ from jurisdictional annual reports due to the use of different definitions and the application of adjustment factors to aid in the comparability of data. Each chapter contains explanatory commentary on the data items with additional information included in Appendix 1 – Explanatory Notes, at the end of this publication.

The data in this report were collected from:

- workers' compensation schemes and work health and safety authorities as follows:
  - New South Wales — State Insurance Regulatory Authority and SafeWork NSW
  - Victoria — WorkSafe Victoria
  - Queensland — Workplace Health and Safety Queensland, Office of Industrial Relations – Education Queensland, Queensland Workers' Compensation Regulator and WorkCover Queensland
  - Western Australia — Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety – WorkSafe
  - South Australia — Return to Work South Australia and SafeWork SA
  - Tasmania — WorkSafe Tasmania and WorkCover Board Tasmania
  - Northern Territory — NT WorkSafe, Department of Attorney-General and Justice
  - Australian Capital Territory — Access Canberra, Worksafe ACT within Chief Minister Treasury and Economic Development Directorate
  - Australian Government — Comcare
  - Seacare — Seacare Authority (Seafarers Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Authority), and
  - New Zealand — Accident Compensation Corporation and WorkSafe New Zealand
- the National Data Set for Compensation-based Statistics and the Work-related Traumatic Injury Fatalities data set compiled by Safe Work Australia. Further information on these data sets can be found on the [Safe Work Australia](#) website, and

- the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) which provides estimates of the number of employees and hours worked based on the Labour Force Survey, the Survey of Employment and Earnings, and data provided by Comcare. Further adjustments are performed using data from the Census, the Forms of Employment Survey and the Survey of Employment Arrangements, Retirement and Superannuation.

## **Coordination**

This report has been compiled and coordinated by Safe Work Australia with assistance from representatives of all work health and safety and workers' compensation authorities in Australia and New Zealand. As agreed with Comcare in this report, the name 'Australian Government' is used for indicators relating to the Australian Government jurisdiction in work health and safety and workers' compensation matters, while 'Comcare' is used to describe Comcare – the entity for indicators relating to scheme performance.

Through a partnership of governments, employers and employees, Safe Work Australia leads the development of national policy to improve work health and safety and workers' compensation arrangements across Australia.

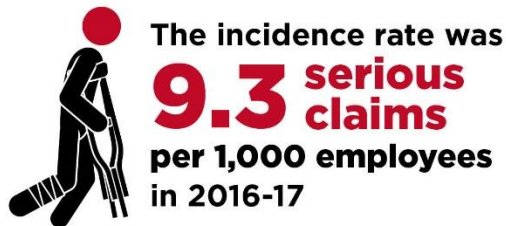


# Comparative Performance Monitoring Report

## Part 1 – Work Health and Safety Performance

### Key findings

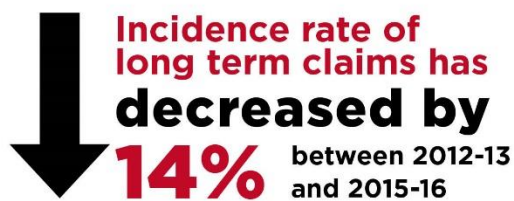
#### Australian claims performance



#### New Zealand claims performance



#### Australian long term claims (12 weeks or more compensation)



#### Claims with more than 52 weeks of compensation (in 2014-15)



#### Claims with less than 6 weeks of compensation (in 2014-15)




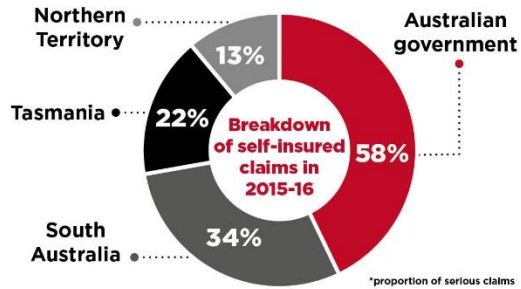
# Comparative Performance Monitoring Report

## Part 1 – Work Health and Safety Performance

### Key findings

#### Self-insured claims in Australia

 The number of self-insured claims has decreased by **17%** 2012-13 to 2015-16



#### Australian compensated fatalities

**178** compensated worker fatalities were recorded in 2016-17



#### New Zealand compensated fatalities

**88** compensated worker fatalities were recorded in 2016-17



#### Highest rate of serious claims in Australia (2016-17)



#### Causes of injury in Australia (2016-17)



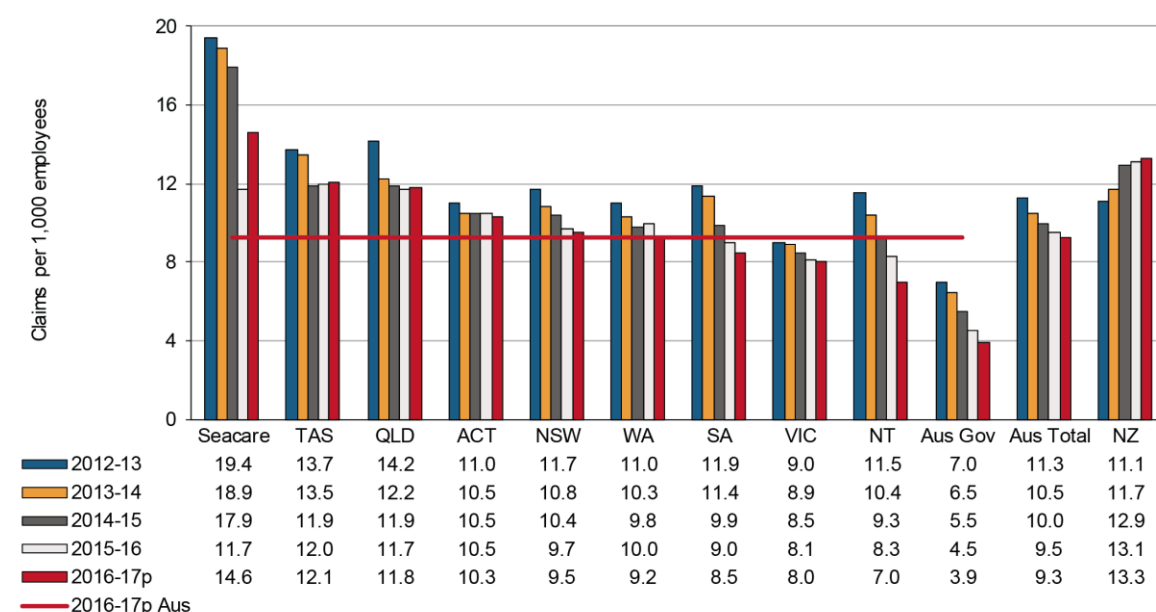
# 1. Serious claims

The data presented in this section are accepted serious workers' compensation claims lodged in each financial year. Serious claims refer to claims relating to work-related injury or disease that result in a total absence from work of one working week or more. Workers' compensation data provides an indicator for measuring work health and safety performance. While there are some limitations, most notably that the data only cover those eligible for workers' compensation and under-report the incidence of disease, the data still provides a good indication of work health and safety trends. The estimates of the number of employees and hours worked (supplied by the ABS) and claims data have been revised back to 2012–13. This means that the incidence and frequency rates published in this report will differ to those previously published.

## 1.1 Incidence rate

Indicator 1 shows that the overall Australian incidence rate for serious claims has steadily declined over the past four years, falling by 16 per cent from 11.3 to 9.5 claims per 1,000 employees between 2012–13 and 2015–16. Preliminary data for 2016–17 (denoted by letter "p") show an incidence rate of 9.3 claims per 1,000 employees, however this is expected to be revised upwards when updated data are available.

**Indicator 1 – Incidence rates of serious injury and disease claims by jurisdiction**



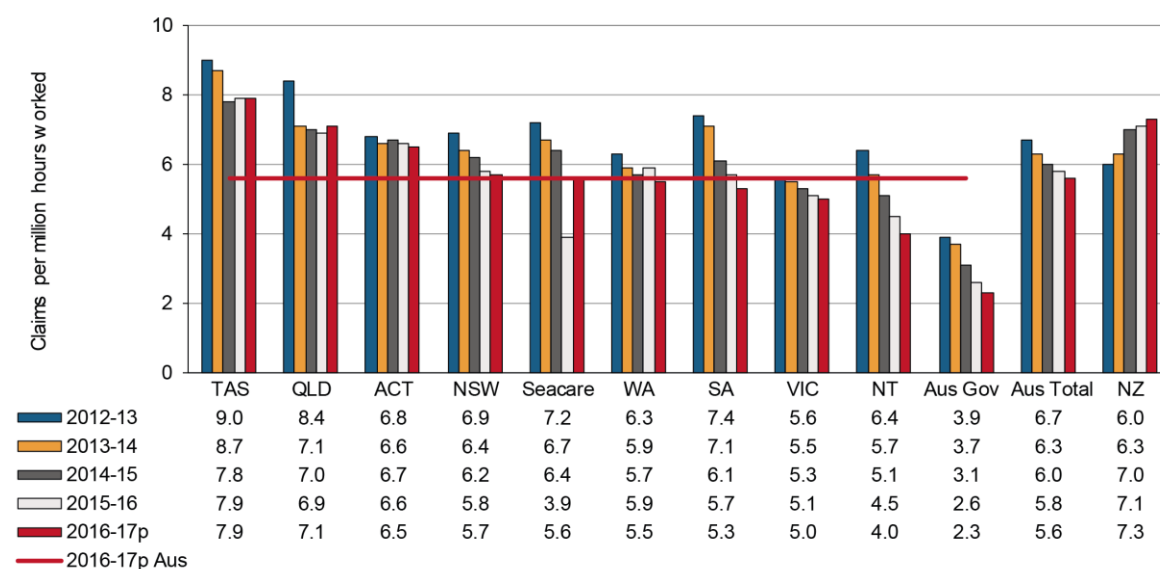
Between 2012–13 and 2015–16 all Australian jurisdictions recorded falls in the incidence rate of serious claims. Seacare recorded the largest decrease (down by 40 per cent), followed by the Australian Government (down by 36 per cent), the Northern Territory (down by 28 per cent), and South Australia (down 24 per cent). Preliminary data show that Seacare recorded the highest incidence rate of serious claims in 2016–17 with 14.6 claims per 1,000 employees, while the Australian Government recorded the lowest rate with 3.9 claims per 1,000 employees, followed by the Northern Territory (7.0 claims per 1,000 employees).

Over the period from 2012–13 to 2015–16, New Zealand recorded an 18 per cent increase in the incidence rate of serious claims, increasing from 11.1 to 13.1 claims per 1,000 employees. Preliminary data show the New Zealand incidence rate has increased slightly to 13.3 serious claims per 1,000 employees in 2016–17.

## 1.2 Frequency rate

Indicator 2 shows that the overall Australian frequency rate of serious claims decreased by 13 per cent from 6.7 claims per million hours worked in 2012–13 to 5.8 in 2015–16. Preliminary data show that the Australian frequency rate of serious claims has further decreased slightly to 5.6 claims per million hours worked in 2016–17. Although the frequency rate data show a similar level of improvement to incidence rates across jurisdictions, there are differences in the ranking of jurisdictions. Tasmania recorded the highest frequency rate at 7.9 claims per one million hours worked in 2016–17. Seacare only had the fifth highest frequency rate due to the 24-hour basis on which its frequency rates are calculated. Refer to Note 1 in Appendix 1 – Explanatory notes for further information.

### Indicator 2 – Frequency rates of serious injury claims by jurisdiction

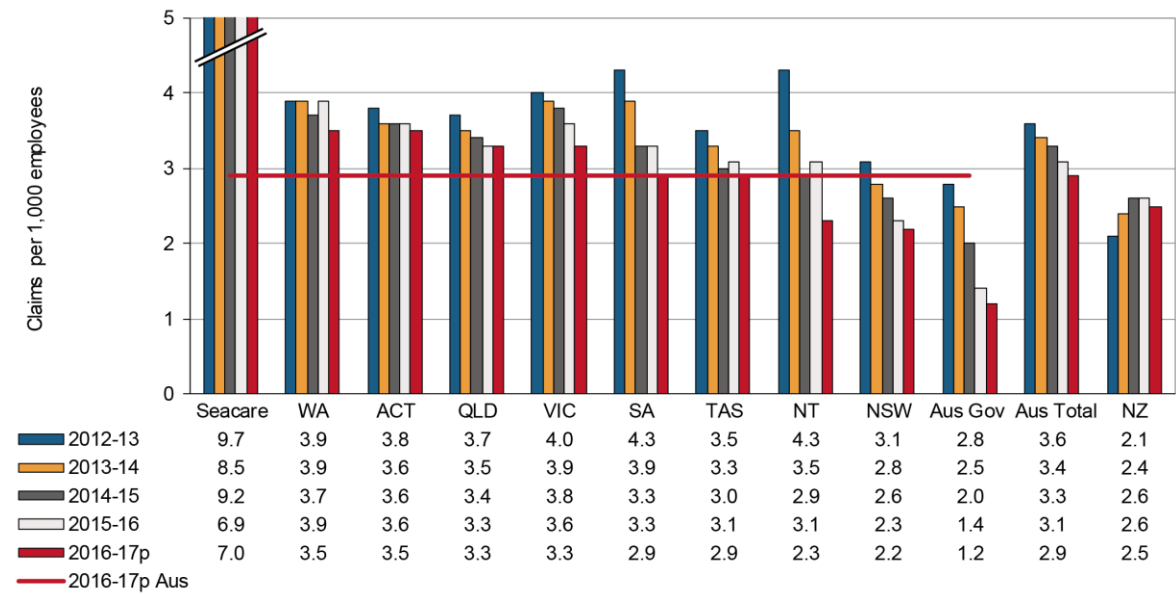


## 1.3 Long term incidence and frequency rates

Indicator 3 shows that the incidence rate of long term (12 weeks or more compensation) injury and disease claims in Australia decreased by 14 per cent between 2012–13 and 2015–16. While the preliminary 2016–17 results show a further 6 per cent decrease in the incidence rate compared to the previous year, this data should be treated with caution as a proportion of claims from the preliminary year are likely to be still open and claimants may accrue more time lost or compensation payments in subsequent years. On average, 32 per cent of serious claims resulted in 12 or more weeks of compensation over the five-year period.

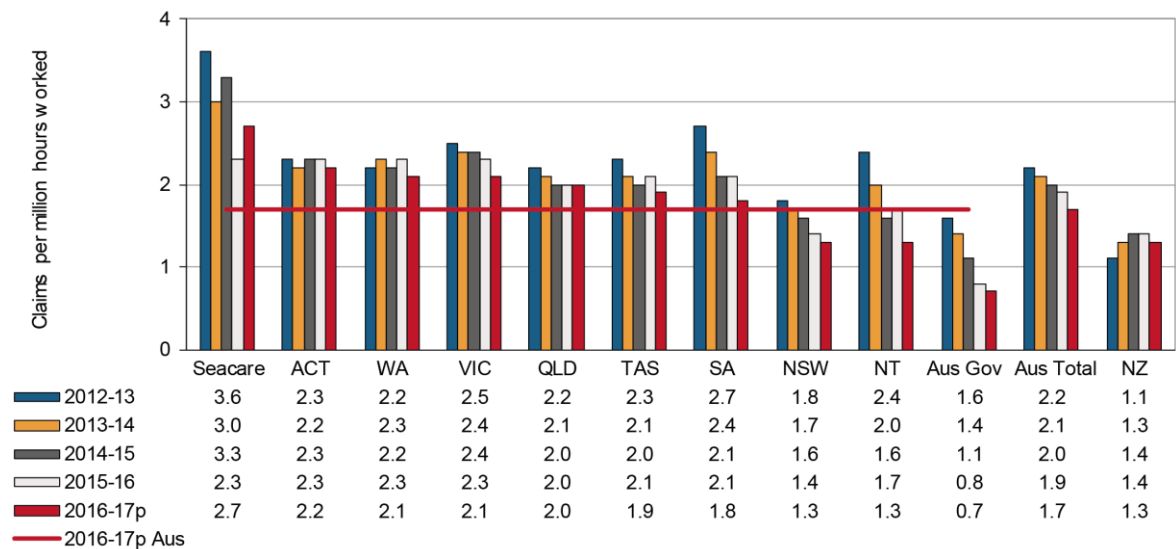
All Australian jurisdictions, except Western Australia, recorded a decrease in incidence rates of long term claims over the period from 2012–13 to 2015–16. The Australian Government recorded the highest decrease in the long term incidence rate (down by 50 per cent) over the period, followed by Seacare (down 29 per cent), the Northern Territory (down 28 per cent), and New South Wales (down 26 per cent). Western Australia recorded no change in the long term incidence rate between 2012–13 and 2015–16. New Zealand recorded a 24 per cent increase over this period, however, its rate remains lower than that of Australia.

**Indicator 3 – Incidence rates of long term (12 weeks or more compensation) injury and disease claims by jurisdiction**



The frequency rates of long term claims (Indicator 4) decreased across all Australian jurisdictions except the Australian Capital Territory (no change) and Western Australia (up 5 per cent) during the comparative period. The overall Australian frequency rate of long-term claims decreased by 14 per cent from 2.2 claims per million hours worked in 2012–13 to 1.9 in 2015–16. Preliminary data for 2016–17 showed an Australian frequency rate of long-term serious claims of 1.7 claims per million hours worked.

**Indicator 4 – Frequency rates of long term (12 weeks or more compensation) injury and disease claims by jurisdiction**



**1.4 Self-insured serious claims**

Indicator 5 shows that the number of self-insured serious claims in Australia decreased by 17 per cent during the period from 2012–13 to 2015–16. The preliminary data for Australia in 2016–17 shows a further 5 per cent decrease from the previous year. The Northern Territory recorded the highest decrease in the number of self-insured serious claims (down by 42 per cent) over the period from



2012–13 to 2015–16, followed by South Australia (down by 26 per cent), the Australian Government (down by 23 per cent), and New South Wales (down by 18 per cent). The Australian Capital Territory was the only jurisdiction to record an increase in the number of self-insured serious claims (up by 26 per cent) during the same period.

The number of self-insured serious claims in New Zealand showed a 10 per cent increase between 2012–13 and 2015–16. Preliminary data, however, show a 2 per cent decrease in the number of self-insured claims in 2016–17.

The overall proportion of self-insured claims in Australia did not show any substantive change during the comparative period. The Australian Government (58 per cent) had the highest percentage of self-insured claims in 2015–16, followed by South Australia (34 per cent), Tasmania (22 per cent), and the Northern Territory (13 per cent). By contrast, the Australian Capital Territory had the lowest proportion of self-insured claims (2 per cent) in 2015–16. Preliminary data for 2016–17 showed a similar trend, with the highest and lowest percentages reported in the Australian Government (68 per cent) and the Australian Capital Territory (1 per cent), respectively.

In New Zealand, 24 per cent of serious claims in 2015–16 were recorded by self-insurers, which is more than twice the Australian proportion for the same financial year.

For more information on self-insurers' arrangements in Australia and New Zealand refer to Chapter six of the Comparison of Workers' Compensation Arrangements publication on [Safe Work Australia website](#).

#### Indicator 5a – Self-insured claims: number of serious claims by jurisdiction

	SA	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	Aus Gov	Tas	NT	ACT	Australian total	NZ
2012–13	3,011	3,008	2,592	1,984	1,016	1,324	616	254	23	13,828	5,226
2013–14	3,116	2,866	2,496	1,837	980	1,267	561	231	29	13,383	5,214
2014–15	2,819	2,850	2,335	1,811	978	1,141	557	168	31	12,690	5,767
2015–16	2,233	2,480	2,273	1,749	970	1,021	592	147	29	11,494	5,770
2016–17p	2,217	2,204	2,173	1,613	903	1,093	611	139	19	10,972	5,653

#### Indicator 5b – Self-insured claims: proportion of serious claims by jurisdiction

	SA	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	Aus Gov	Tas	NT	ACT	Australian total	NZ
2012–13	34	8	11	7	8	48	21	18	1	12	27
2013–14	38	8	11	7	8	51	20	17	2	12	25
2014–15	39	8	10	7	8	54	21	13	2	12	25
2015–16	34	7	10	7	8	58	22	13	2	11	24
2016–17p	35	7	9	6	8	68	23	14	1	10	22

## 2. Duration of absence

The duration of absence associated with claims provides an indication of the severity of injuries and diseases occurring in Australia. Indicator 6 shows the variation in the percentage of claims involving selected periods of compensation across the jurisdictions. These data are based on claims lodged in 2014–15, which is the most recent year that reliable data are available for this indicator.

Indicator 6 shows that 51 per cent of claims in Australia resulted in less than six weeks of compensation. The jurisdictional rates ranged between 59 per cent for New South Wales to 24 per cent for Seacare. Injured workers in the Seacare scheme face unique issues in return to work that need to be considered when interpreting the Seacare results for this indicator. Refer to Note 4 in Appendix 1 (Explanatory notes) for further information.

Victoria had the highest percentage of claims that continued past 52 weeks of compensation (19 per cent of claims), followed by Seacare (13 per cent), Western Australia (12 per cent), South Australia (11 per cent) and the Australian Government (10 per cent). Queensland had the lowest percentage (6 per cent) of claims continuing past 52 weeks of compensation.

The New Zealand scheme finalised 65 per cent of claims within six weeks, which is considerably higher than the Australian average (51 per cent of claims).

### Indicator 6 – Serious claims: Percentage involving selected periods of compensation, 2014–15

Jurisdiction	less than 6 weeks	6 weeks or more	12 weeks or more	26 weeks or more	52 weeks or more
<b>New South Wales</b>	59	41	25	14	8
<b>Victoria</b>	38	62	45	29	19
<b>Queensland</b>	54	46	29	14	6
<b>South Australia</b>	49	51	34	19	11
<b>Western Australia</b>	46	54	38	23	12
<b>Tasmania</b>	57	43	25	13	7
<b>Northern Territory</b>	50	50	32	17	8
<b>Australian Capital Territory</b>	49	51	34	19	9
<b>Australian Government</b>	46	54	36	20	10
<b>Seacare</b>	24	76	51	29	13
<b>Australian average</b>	51	49	33	19	10
<b>New Zealand</b>	65	35	21	9	4

## 3. Work-related fatalities

### 3.1 Work-related traumatic injury fatalities

The data presented in this section are sourced from the Work-related Traumatic Injury Fatality (TIF) data collection. The TIF collection provides the most accurate information on work-related injury fatalities, as the data are sourced from workers' compensation data, fatality notifications to the various work health and safety authorities and information in the National Coronial Information System (NCIS). Only around 60 per cent of work-related fatalities recorded in the TIF collection are typically compensated. This is in part due to self-employed workers not being covered by workers' compensation schemes. Many self-employed workers work in high risk sectors such as agriculture, transport and construction. Further information about the TIF collection and a detailed analysis of the data can be found on the [Safe Work Australia](#) website.

Information presented below in Indicator 7a and 7b does not include fatal work-related incidents occurring on a public road. This is because some fatalities, particularly those related to traffic incidents, may be missed due to the way these deaths are identified. The information in the NCIS relies heavily on information collected from reports which may not include sufficient information to identify whether or not the deceased was working at the time of the incident. The compensated injury fatalities in the TIF collection are based on date of death and not date of lodgement as in the case of compensated fatalities involving occupational diseases (Indicator 8).

Indicator 7a shows that there was a 19 per cent decrease in the number of worker fatalities resulting from incidents not on a public road between 2012–13 and 2016–17. Over the five years, on average, New South Wales has recorded the highest number of fatalities per year (41 fatalities), followed by Queensland (34 fatalities) and Victoria (28 fatalities). However, incidence rates over the five year period show that Tasmania (2.0 fatalities per 100,000 workers) recorded the highest rate and the Australian Capital Territory (0.6 fatality per 100,000 workers) recorded the lowest rate (Indicator 7b).

It should be noted that traumatic injury fatality data can be volatile year-on-year. In particular, multiple death events can impact the data, despite efforts of jurisdictions in reducing or eliminating work-related traumatic injury fatalities.

There were 88 compensated fatalities (includes incidents on a public road) in New Zealand in 2016-17. New Zealand recorded a 23 per cent decrease in the number of compensated fatalities from 99 in 2012–13 to 76 in 2015–16. In general, all workplace traumatic injury deaths are compensable in New Zealand once a claim is lodged and accepted.

#### Indicator 7a – Traumatic injury worker fatalities: number of incidents not on a public road, by state of death

	2012–13	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	5 year average
<b>New South Wales</b>	51	41	37	37	41	41
<b>Queensland</b>	39	42	25	34	28	34
<b>Victoria</b>	26	31	25	37	23	28
<b>Western Australia</b>	18	20	19	24	11	18
<b>South Australia</b>	11	8	10	9	13	10
<b>Tasmania</b>	4	6	7	5	2	5
<b>Northern Territory</b>	1	5	1	2	2	2
<b>Australian Capital Territory</b>	1	1	u/a	u/a	2	1
<b>Australian total</b>	151	154	124	148	122	140



**Indicator 7b – Traumatic injury fatalities: incidence rate per 100,000 workers for incidents not on a public road, by state of death**

	2012–13	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	5 year average
<b>New South Wales</b>	1.4	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.1
<b>Queensland</b>	1.7	1.8	1.1	1.4	1.2	1.4
<b>Victoria</b>	0.9	1.1	0.9	1.1	0.7	0.9
<b>Western Australia</b>	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.8	0.8	1.4
<b>South Australia</b>	1.4	1.0	1.2	1.1	1.6	1.3
<b>Tasmania</b>	1.7	2.6	2.9	2.1	0.8	2.0
<b>Northern Territory</b>	0.8	3.8	0.8	1.5	2.2	1.8
<b>Australian Capital Territory</b>	0.5	0.5	u/a	u/a	0.9	0.6
<b>Australian total</b>	1.3	1.3	1.1	1.2	1.0	1.2

### 3.2 Work-related disease fatalities

Workers' compensation data contain some information on disease-related fatalities but are known to understate the number of fatalities from work-related causes. It can be difficult to associate a disease that becomes evident later in life after exposure to a chemical or substance that occurred many years earlier while at work. Some occupational diseases such as asbestosis and mesothelioma are compensated through separate mechanisms while many other diseases go unreported and/or uncompensated.

Indicator 8 shows that in 2016–17 there were 43 accepted workers' compensation claims for a work-related fatalities involving an occupational disease in Australia. This number is expected to rise as more claims lodged in 2016–17 are accepted. There was a substantial decrease (down 13 per cent) in the number of compensated fatalities related to occupational diseases in Australia from 2012–13 to 2015–16.

Fatalities are recorded in the National Dataset for Compensation-based Statistics against the date of lodgement of the claim, not the date of death. Data revisions from previous years could occur where a claim is lodged in one year but not accepted until after the data are compiled for that year or for an injury or disease occurring in one year but where the employee dies from that injury or disease in a subsequent year. This is particularly the case with disease-related fatalities where considerable time could elapse between the date of diagnosis leading to a claim being lodged, and the date of death.

The Australian Mesothelioma Registry reports annually on mesothelioma incidence which is available on its [reports and publications webpage](#).

## Indicator 8 – Compensated fatalities involving occupational diseases by jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	2012–13	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17p	5 year average
New South Wales	8	8	10	11	9	9
Victoria	12	12	15	17	2	12
Queensland <sup>#</sup>	19	16	19	8	7	14
Western Australia	5	6	2	4	2	4
South Australia	7	6	5	6	2	5
Tasmania	0	0	0	1	0	0
Northern Territory	0	0	0	0	0	0
Australian Capital Territory	0	0	1	0	0	0
Australian Government	21	21	12	15	21	18
Seacare	0	0	0	1	0	0
<b>Australian total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>New Zealand</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>35</b>

<sup>#</sup> The majority of compensated fatalities for occupational diseases in Queensland and the Australian Government are due to mesothelioma or asbestosis. Queensland compensates more of these fatalities through its scheme than is the case in other jurisdictions where compensation is more often sought through separate mechanisms including common law.

## 4. Claims by size of business (in the private sector)

Indicator 9 compares the incidence of serious workers' compensation claims by size of business in 2012–13 and 2016–17. Seven Australian jurisdictions collect compensation data by size of business. Seacare and South Australia have been excluded as 2016–17 data breakdown by size of business were unavailable for comparison.

There are differences in the methodologies used by schemes to collect this information and therefore caution should be exercised when making jurisdictional comparisons. This indicator reports on the private sector only and excludes those industry sectors that are wholly or substantially public sector industries (i.e. Public administration and safety, Health care and social assistance, Education and training and Financial and insurance services).

In 2016–17, Australian businesses with 200 or more employees recorded the lowest incidence rate of serious claims (6.7 claims per 1,000 employees). With the exception of the Northern Territory, all jurisdictions recorded the highest incidence rate in businesses with 20–199 employees in 2016–17. Overall, the incidence rate of serious claims in businesses with 1–19 employees, 20–199 employees and 200 or more employees fell by 8 per cent, 5 per cent and 23 per cent, respectively, between 2012–13 and 2016–17.

**Indicator 9 – Size of business: incidence rates (claims per 1,000 employees) of serious claims by jurisdiction (private sector only)\***

	1–19 employees	20–199 employees	200 or more employees	All employees
<b>2012–13</b>				
<b>New South Wales</b>	12.9	13.5	7.6	11.3
<b>Victoria</b>	6.1	13.8	8.8	9.2
<b>Western Australia</b>	9.8	13.7	11.2	11.3
<b>Tasmania</b>	9.7	18.4	13.0	13.1
<b>Northern Territory</b>	20.3	16.3	2.3	13.1
<b>Australian Capital Territory</b>	9.1	18.7	5.7	10.6
<b>Australia**</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>13.9</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>10.6</b>
<b>2016–17p</b>				
<b>New South Wales</b>	11.7	12.1	5.4	9.7
<b>Victoria</b>	6.1	14.8	7.7	8.9
<b>Western Australia</b>	8.5	12.1	8.1	9.3
<b>Tasmania</b>	8.3	16.2	9.2	10.6
<b>Northern Territory</b>	13.6	10.7	2.2	8.8
<b>Australian Capital Territory</b>	8.4	15.0	6.6	9.6
<b>Australia**</b>	<b>9.2</b>	<b>13.2</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>9.4</b>

\* This indicator shows patterns at two points in time. Selecting different points may show a different pattern.

\*\* Excluding Queensland, Seacare and South Australia.

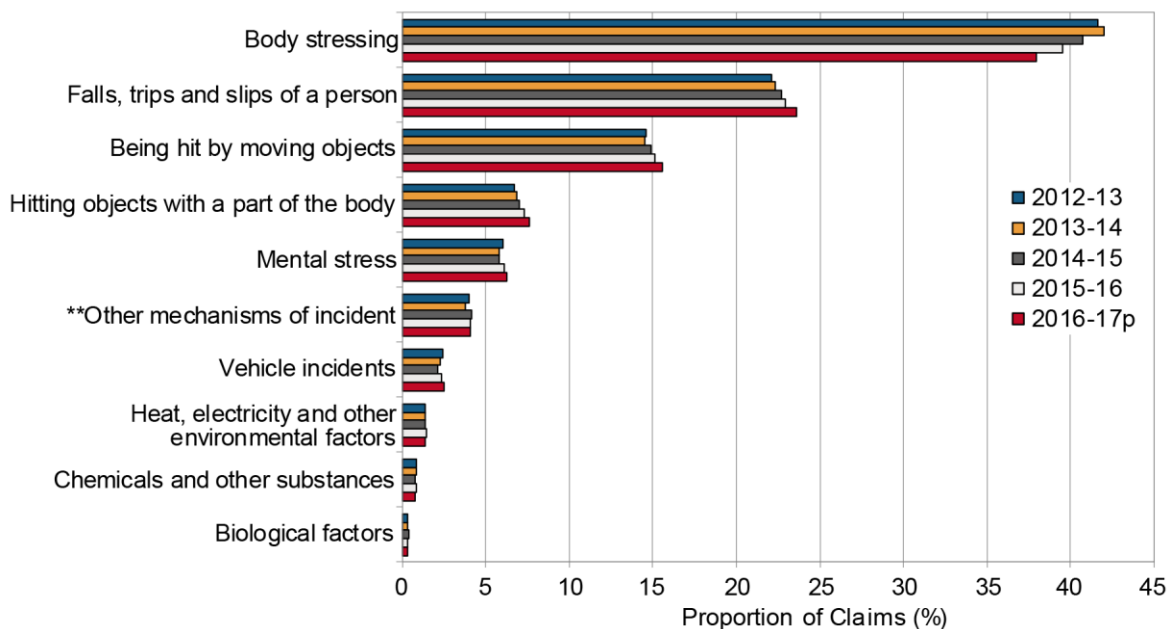
## 5. Claims by mechanism of incident

Claim patterns can be analysed using the Type of Occurrence Classification System (TOOCS), which contains a series of codes providing information on the cause of the incident and the type of injury or disease. Coding for the mechanism of incident is intended to identify the overall action, exposure or event that best describes the circumstances that resulted in the most serious injury or disease. More information on TOOCS can be found on the [Safe Work Australia](#) website.

Indicator 10 shows the proportion of serious claims by the mechanism of incident over the past five years. Body stressing accounted for 38 per cent of the 106,260 serious claims in 2016–17. Claims due to Mental stress accounted for 6 per cent of claims, while claims due to Falls, slips and trips of a person accounted for 24 per cent.

Claims arising due to Body stressing (down by 14 per cent) and Chemicals and other substances (down by 14 per cent) showed the highest reduction in claims between the period 2012–13 and 2015–16, followed by Vehicle incidents (down 12 per cent).

### Indicator 10 – Proportion of serious claims by mechanism of incident



\*\* Other mechanisms of incident include Sound and pressure, Other multiple mechanisms of incident, Roll over, Slide or cave-in and Unspecified mechanisms of incident.

### 5.1 Claims by mechanism of incident and jurisdiction

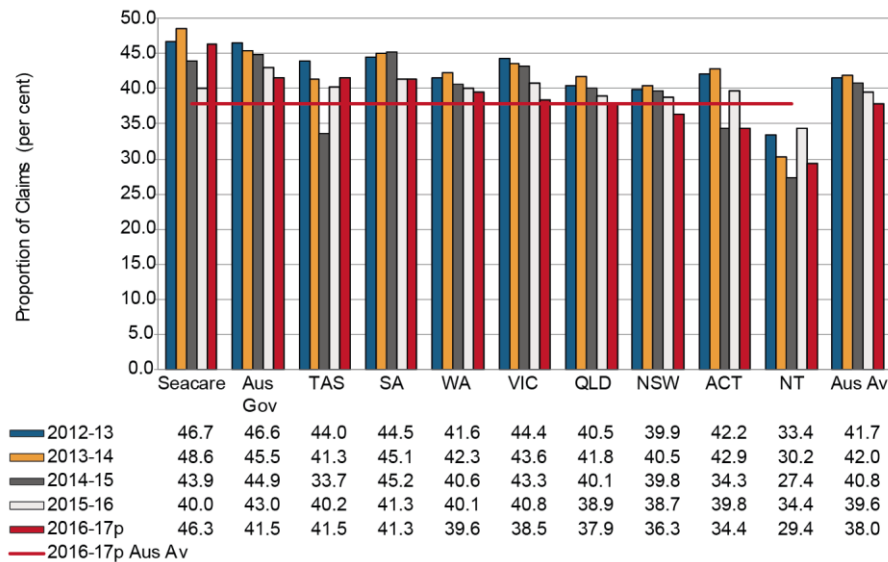
Presented below is a comparison of the proportion of claims across the Australian jurisdictions for the eight different groups of mechanisms of incident. Due to the differences in the total number of serious claims across jurisdictions, proportions are a better measure for direct comparison between jurisdictions. Hence, the data reported here are comparisons of the proportion of claims for each mechanism of incident across different jurisdictions. The industry and occupation composition of each jurisdiction, however, can have an influence on the proportion of claims due to different mechanisms and therefore may explain some of the differences between jurisdictions.

#### Body stressing

Body stressing was the leading mechanism of incident for serious claims between 2012–13 and 2016–17, accounting for 38.0 per cent of the 106,260 serious claims in 2016–17.

Indicator 10a shows that in 2016–17 Seacare had the highest proportion of claims (46.3 per cent) involving Body stressing, followed by the Australian Government (41.5 per cent), Tasmania (41.5 per cent), and South Australia (41.3 per cent). The Northern Territory had the lowest proportion of claims (29.4 per cent) involving Body stressing in 2016–17.

### Indicator 10a – Proportion of serious claims involving Body stressing by jurisdiction

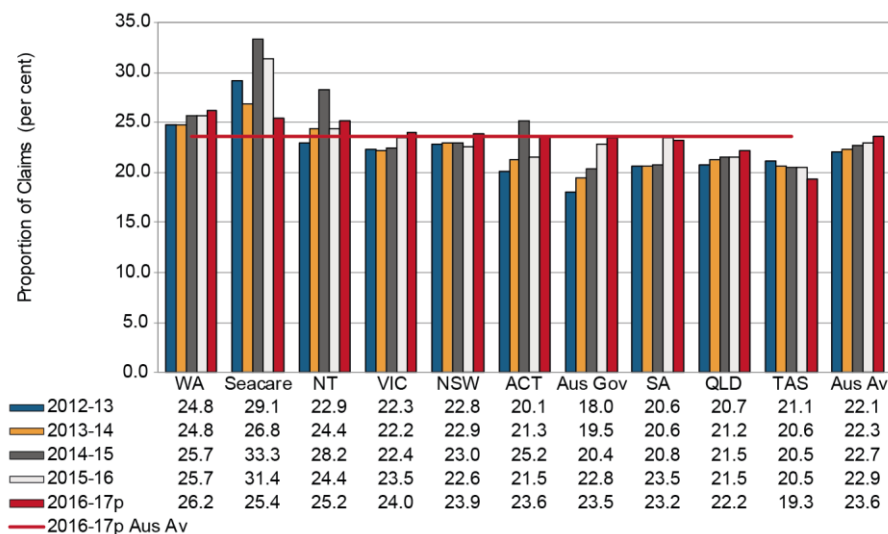


## Falls, trips and slips of a person

Indicator 10b shows the proportion of claims involving Falls, trips and slips of a person by jurisdiction. Falls, trips and slips of a person accounted for 23.6 per cent of serious claims in Australia in 2016–17.

This mechanism of incident was the second leading cause for serious claims across jurisdictions. Western Australia recorded the highest proportion of claims (26.2 per cent) in 2016–17 for this mechanism, followed by Seacare (25.4 per cent). Tasmania recorded the lowest proportion of claims (19.3 per cent) for this mechanism, followed by Queensland (22.2 per cent each).

### Indicator 10b – Proportion of serious claims involving Falls, trips and slips of a person by jurisdiction

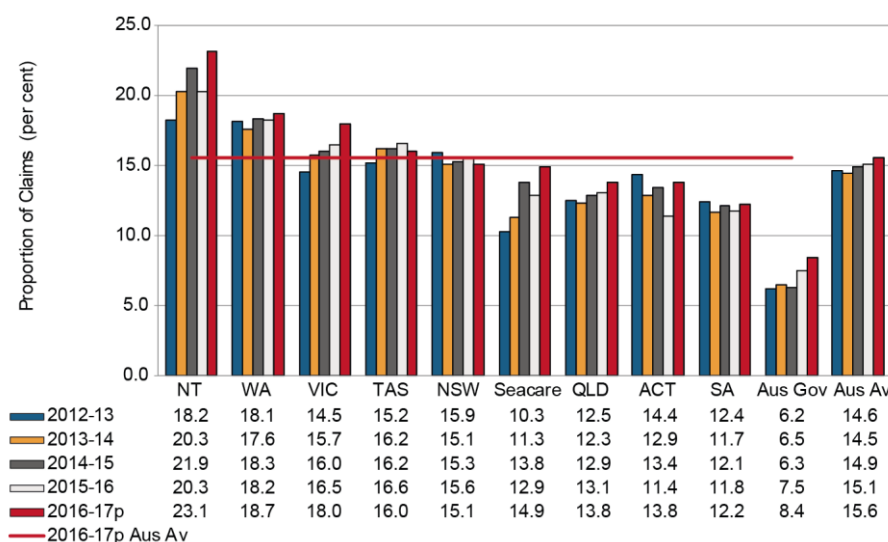


## Being hit by moving objects

The Northern Territory had the highest proportion of serious claims (23.1 per cent) in 2016–17 arising from Being hit by moving objects, followed by Western Australia (18.7 per cent), and Victoria (18.0 per cent). The Australian Government had the lowest proportion of serious claims involving this mechanism of incident (8.4 per cent) in 2016–17.

Overall, the Australian average for the proportion of serious claims caused by Being hit by moving objects was 15.6 per cent 2016–17.

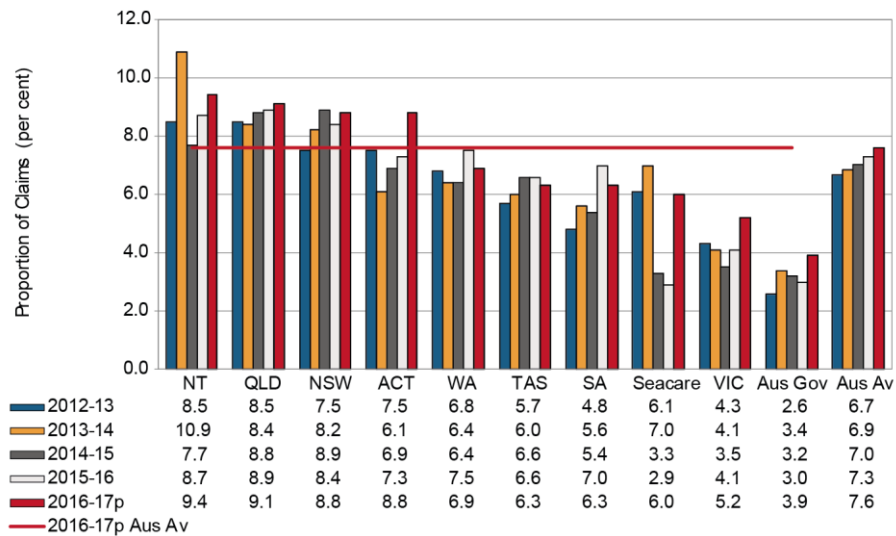
### Indicator 10c – Proportion of serious claims involving Being hit by moving objects by jurisdiction



## Hitting objects with a part of the body

The mechanism of Hitting objects with a part of the body includes incidents where the motion of a person results in hitting (including bumping, cutting, striking, grasping etc.) stationary and/or moving objects (including machines, vehicles, equipment, tools etc.). Indicator 10d shows that the Northern Territory recorded the highest proportion of serious claims (9.4 per cent) in 2016–17 due to this mechanism, followed by Queensland (9.1 per cent). The Australian Government recorded the lowest proportion of claims (3.9 per cent) for this mechanism, followed by Victoria (5.2 per cent). On average, 7.6 per cent of claims were due to this mechanism across Australia in 2016–17.

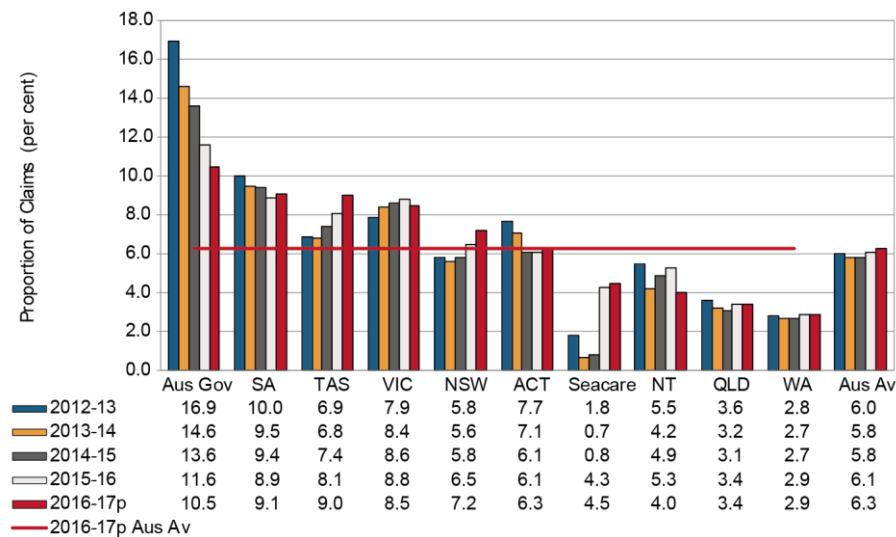
**Indicator 10d – Proportion of serious claims involving Hitting objects with a part of the body by jurisdiction**



**Mental stress**

The proportion of serious claims due to Mental stress in Australia increased from 6.0 per cent in 2012–13 to 6.3 per cent in 2016–17. The Australian Government had the highest proportion of Mental stress claims (10.5 per cent) in 2016–17, followed by South Australia (9.1 per cent) and Tasmania (9.0 per cent). Western Australia recorded the lowest proportion of Mental stress claims during the same year (2.9 per cent).

**Indicator 10e – Proportion of serious claims involving Mental stress by jurisdiction**

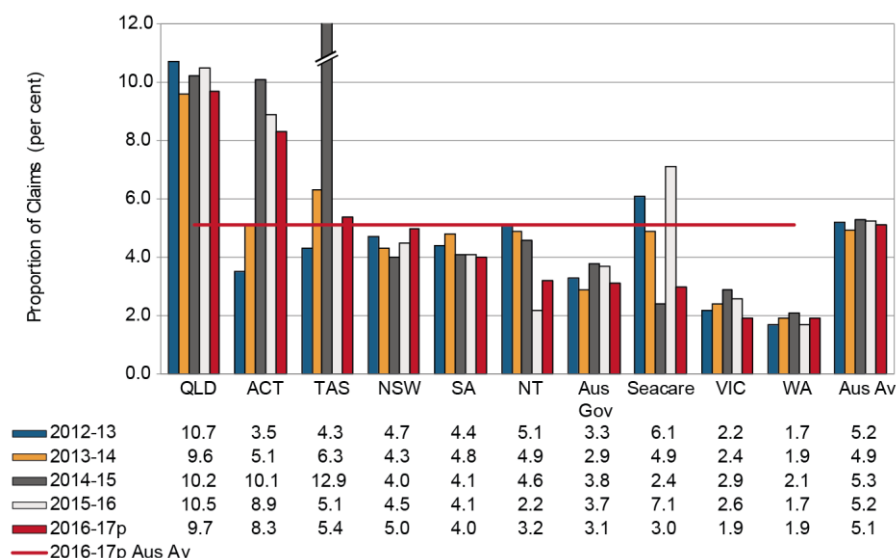


## Other mechanisms

Indicator 10f shows the proportions of serious claims involving Other mechanisms of incident. This category includes Biological factors, Chemicals and other substances, Sound and pressure, Other multiple mechanisms of incidents, Roll over, slide or cave-in and Unspecified mechanisms of incidents.

Queensland had the highest proportion of claims (9.7 per cent) for this mechanism during 2016–17, followed by the Australian Capital Territory (8.3 per cent). Western Australia and Victoria recorded the lowest proportion of serious claims (1.9 per cent for both) due to this mechanism. On average, 5.1 per cent of serious claims across Australia in 2016–17 were due to this mechanism.

### Indicator 10f – Proportion of serious claims involving Other mechanisms by jurisdiction



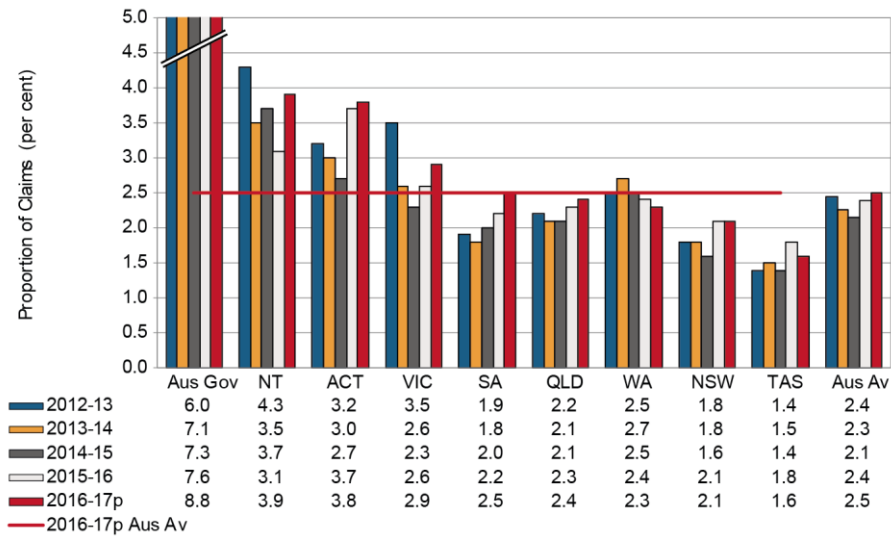
## Vehicle incidents

In 2016–17, 2.5 per cent of all serious claims across Australian jurisdictions were due to Vehicle incidents as shown in Indicator 10g. Serious claims due to vehicle incidents cover all claims lodged and accepted for compensation where a vehicle collision was involved in leading to the injuries.

The Australian Government recorded the highest proportion of serious claims (8.8 per cent) due to this mechanism in 2016–17, which was more than three times the Australian average. This may, in part, be explained by the composition of this jurisdiction leading to lower proportions of claims for other mechanisms. Tasmania had the lowest proportion of claims (1.6 per cent), followed by New South Wales (2.1 per cent). Seacare has not reported any Vehicle incident related claims since 2011–12.



**Indicator 10g – Proportion of serious claims involving Vehicle incidents by jurisdiction**

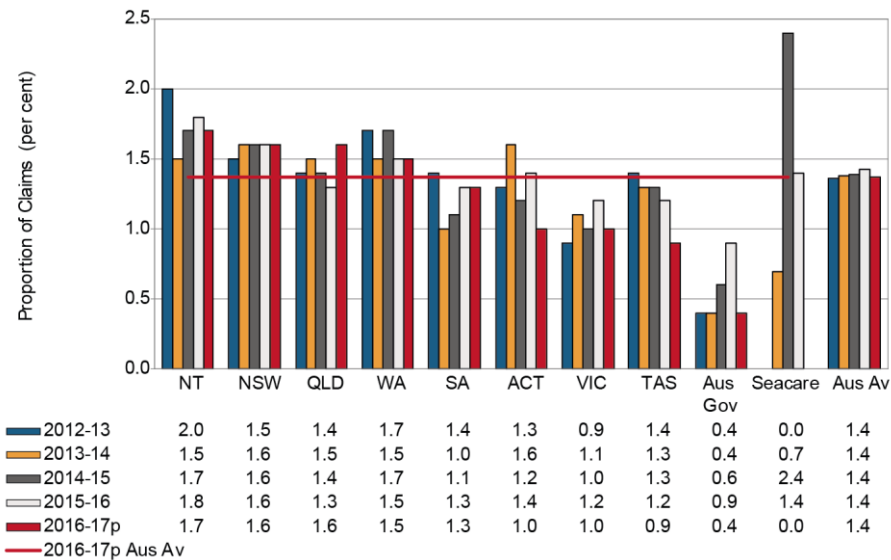


**Heat, electricity and other environmental factors**

Of all the mechanisms of incident, claims associated with Heat, electricity and other environmental factors accounted for the lowest proportion (1.4 per cent) of serious claims in 2016–17. Indicator 10h shows that the proportion of claims has been stable since 2012–13 at 1.4 per cent.

Northern Territory (1.7 per cent) had the highest proportion of claims due to this mechanism, followed by New South Wales (1.6 per cent). Where claims for this mechanism were recorded, the lowest proportion was reported by the Australian Government (0.4 per cent). Seacare did not record any serious claim for this mechanism in 2016–17.

**Indicator 10h – Proportion of serious claims involving Heat, electricity and other environmental factors by jurisdiction**



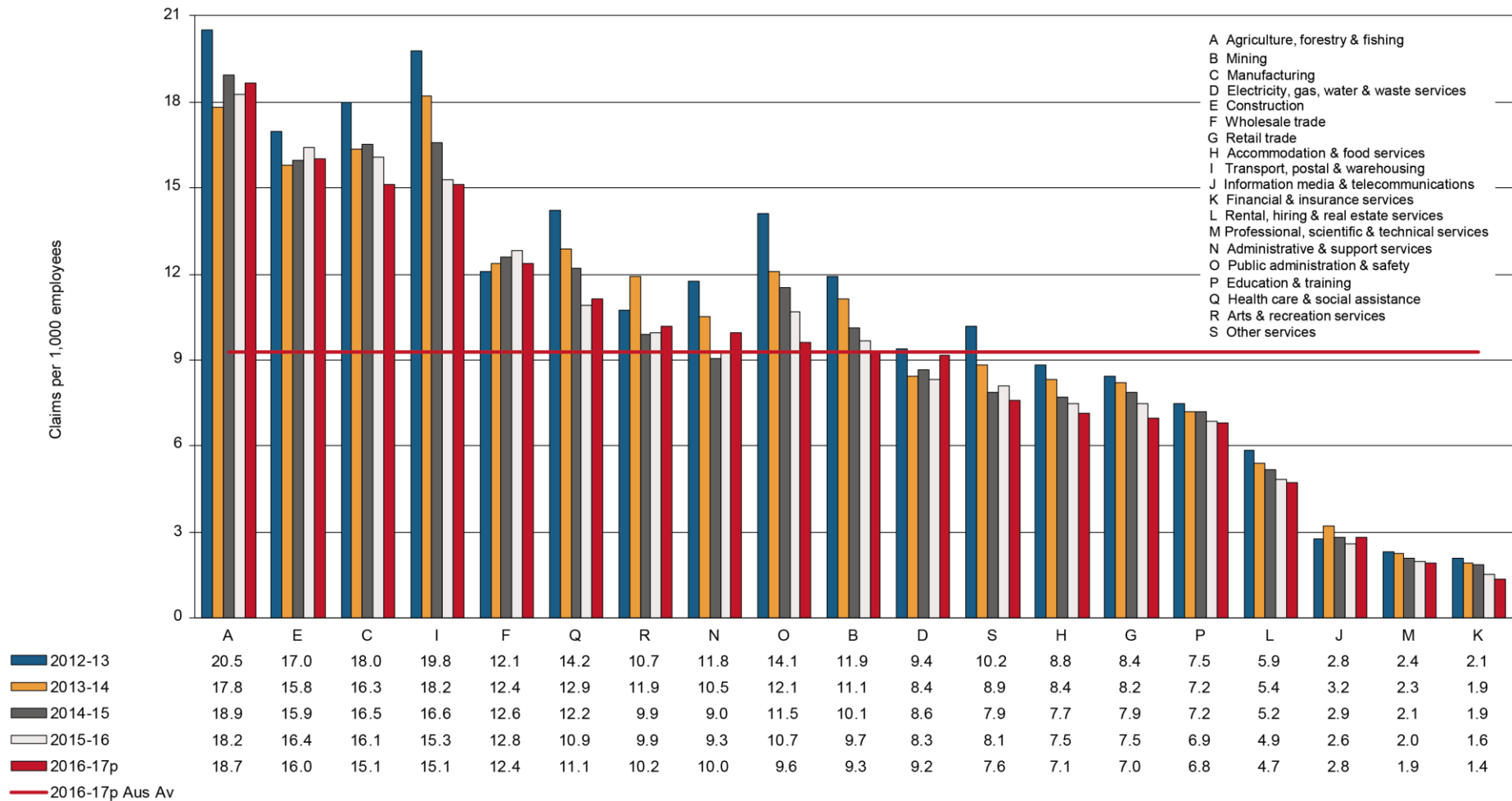
## 6. Claims by industry

Indicator 11 shows the incidence rates of serious claims in Australia by industry using the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) 2006 system. Preliminary data show that in 2016–17, the Agriculture, forestry and fishing industry recorded the highest incidence rate with 18.7 serious claims per 1,000 employees, followed by the Construction (16.0), Manufacturing (15.1) and Transport, postal and warehousing (15.1) industries. Under the *Australian Work Health and Safety Strategy 2012–2022* these industries together with Accommodation and food services, Public administration and safety, and Health care and social assistance have been identified as national priorities for prevention activities.

Decreases in the incidence rate of serious claims between 2012–13 and 2015–16 were recorded for all industries except Wholesale trade (up 6 per cent). The most notable reductions were seen in Financial and insurance services (down 24 per cent), Public administration and safety (down 24 per cent), Transport, postal and warehousing (down 23 per cent) and Health care and social assistance (down 23 per cent).

More detailed information on claims by industry can be found in the Australian Workers' Compensation Statistics report, published on the [Safe Work Australia](#) website.

### Indicator 11 – Incidence rates of serious\* claims by industry



\* Includes all accepted workers' compensation claims for an incapacity that results in a total absence from work of one working week or more excluding fatalities and journey claims.

## 6.1 Claims by industry and jurisdiction

This section contains supplementary information to Indicator 11. Presented below is a comparison of the incidence rates of serious claims across the Australian jurisdictions for the 19 industry divisions.

Incidence rates in some industries at the jurisdictional level can be volatile and should be treated with caution. As the number of employees used in calculating incidence rates are estimated from survey samples, readers should be aware that the relative standard errors for estimating the number of employees will be higher with smaller sample sizes.

The analysis presented in the text below does not include 2016-17 due to the preliminary nature of the data, however, it is included in the charts.

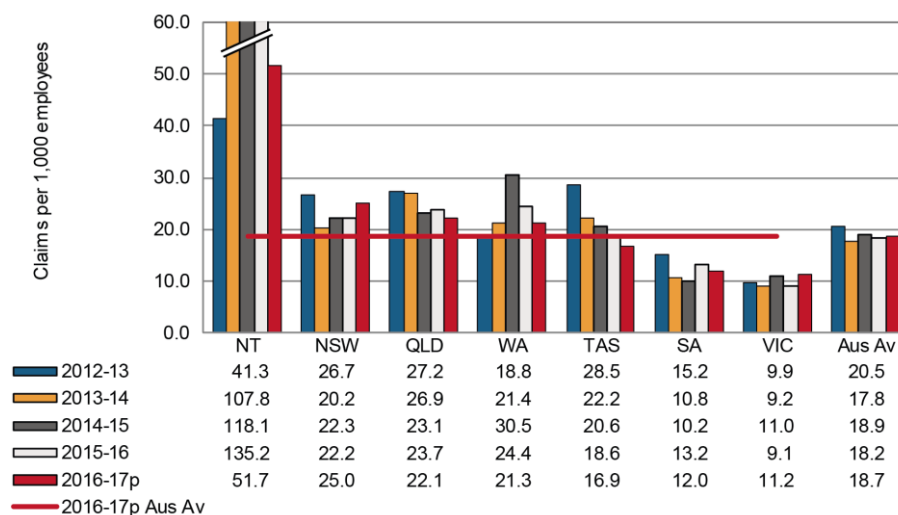
### Agriculture, forestry and fishing

Indicator 11a shows the incidence rates of serious claims for the Agriculture, forestry and fishing industry, which had the highest Australian average (18.2 claims per 1,000 employees) of all industries during 2015–16.

The incidence rates for the Australian Capital Territory were not reported due to the relative standard error of the number of employees being greater than 50 per cent. In addition, the incidence rates for the Northern Territory should be interpreted with caution due to the high variability of the data.

Of the other jurisdictions, Western Australia recorded the highest incidence rate of serious claims in the Agriculture, forestry and fishing industry (24.4 claims per 1,000 employees) in 2015–16, followed by Queensland (23.7), New South Wales (22.2) and Tasmania (18.6). The lowest incidence rate was recorded in Victoria (9.1 claims per 1,000 employees).

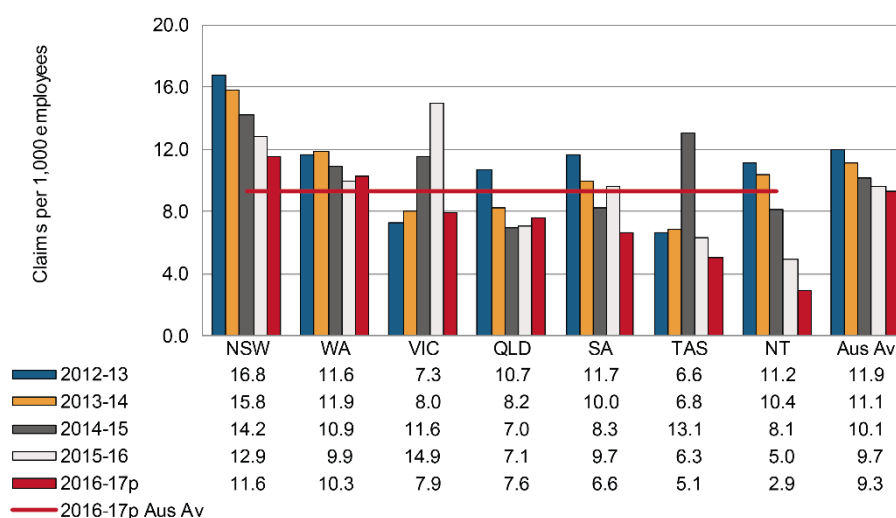
#### Indicator 11a – Incidence rates of serious claims for Agriculture, forestry and fishing by jurisdiction



## Mining

In 2015–16 the Australian average incidence rate of serious claims in the Mining industry was 9.7 claims per 1,000 employees. With the exception of Victoria, all jurisdictions recorded a decrease in their incidence rates between 2012–13 and 2015–16. The Northern Territory recorded the largest decrease in incidence rate (down 55 per cent), followed by Queensland (down 34 per cent), and New South Wales (down 23 per cent). The incidence rates of the Australian Capital Territory were not reported due to the high relative standard error (greater than 50 per cent).

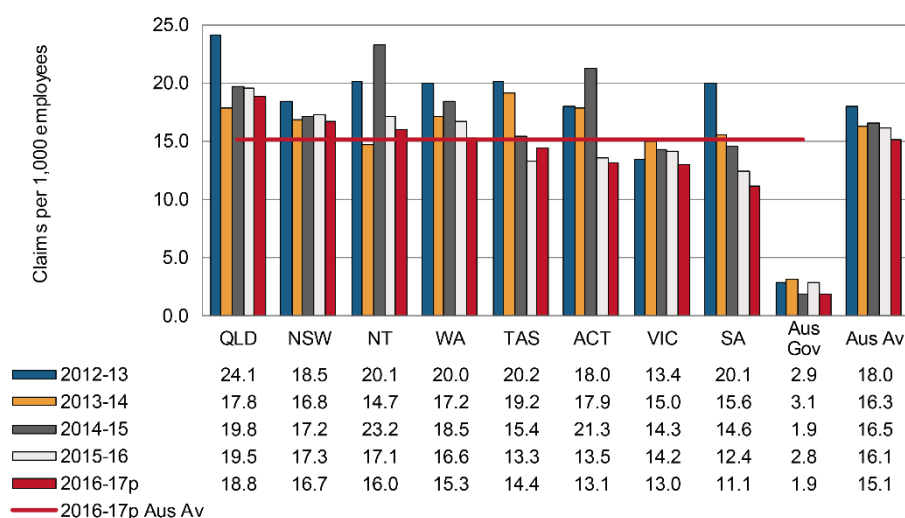
### Indicator 11b – Incidence rates of serious claims for Mining by jurisdiction



## Manufacturing

Indicator 11c shows that between 2012–13 and 2015–16 the majority of jurisdictions recorded a decrease in incidence rates in the Manufacturing industry. South Australia recorded the largest decrease (down 38 per cent). By contrast, Victoria recorded a 6 per cent increase in incidence rate during the same period. The Australian average incidence rate in 2015–16 was 16.1 claims per 1,000 employees, an 11 per cent decrease from 2012–13. The incidence rates of the Australian Capital Territory and the Australian Government should be interpreted with caution as the relative standard error of the number of employees was between 25 and 50 per cent.

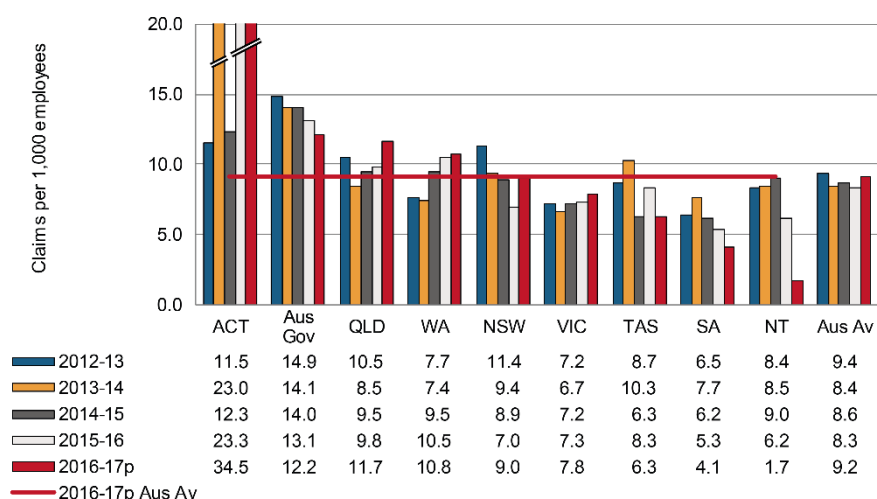
### Indicator 11c – Incidence rates of serious claims for Manufacturing by jurisdiction



## Electricity, gas, water and waste services

Six out of the nine jurisdictions recorded decreases in the incidence rate in the Electricity, gas, water and waste services industry between 2012–13 and 2015–16. The Australian average incidence rate of serious claims in this industry fell by 12 per cent between 2012–13 and 2015–16. The incidence rates of the Australian Capital Territory should be interpreted with caution as the relative standard error of the number of employees was between 25 and 50 per cent.

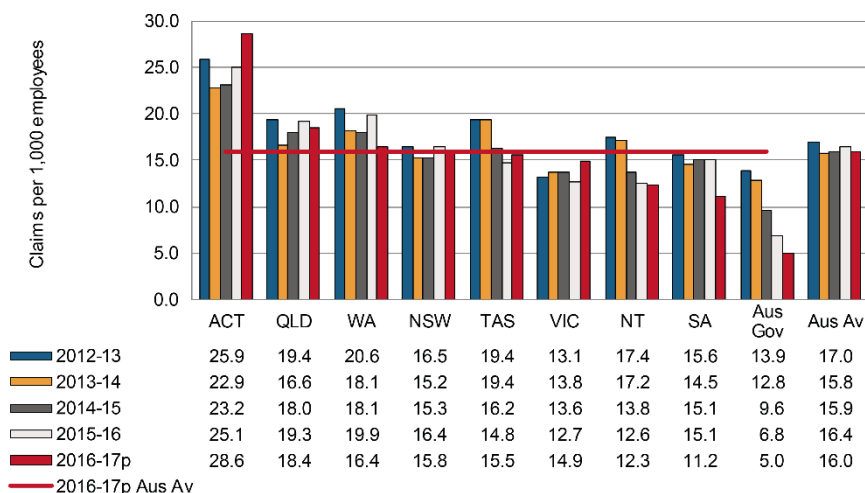
### Indicator 11d – Incidence rates of serious claims for Electricity, gas, water and waste services by jurisdiction



## Construction

Indicator 11e shows that the Australian average incidence rate for the Construction industry decreased by 4 per cent between 2012–13 and 2015–16. The Australian Government recorded the largest decrease (down 51 per cent), followed by the Northern Territory (down 28 per cent) and Tasmania (down 24 per cent). The Australian Government, South Australia, the Northern Territory, Victoria and Tasmania all recorded incidence rates less than the Australian average (16.4 serious claims per 1,000 employees) in 2015–16.

### Indicator 11e – Incidence rates of serious claims for Construction by jurisdiction

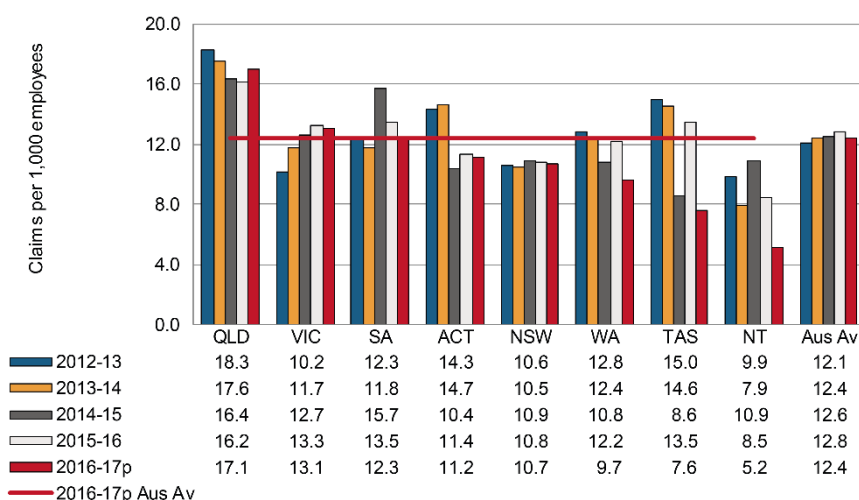


## Wholesale trade

Between 2012–13 and 2015–16 the Australian average incidence rate for the Wholesale trade industry increased by 6 per cent, from 12.1 claims per 1,000 employees to 12.8. Tasmania recorded the largest decrease in the incidence rate (down 25 per cent) between 2012–13 and 2015–16, followed by the Australian Capital Territory (down 23 per cent).

Queensland had the highest incidence rate of claims in 2015–16 (16.2 claims per 1,000 employees) followed by South Australia and Tasmania (13.5 claims per 1,000 employees for both). The lowest incidence rate was recorded by the Northern Territory (8.5 claims per 1,000 employees). The incidence rates of the Australian Capital Territory should be interpreted with caution as the relative standard error of the number of employees was between 25 and 50 per cent.

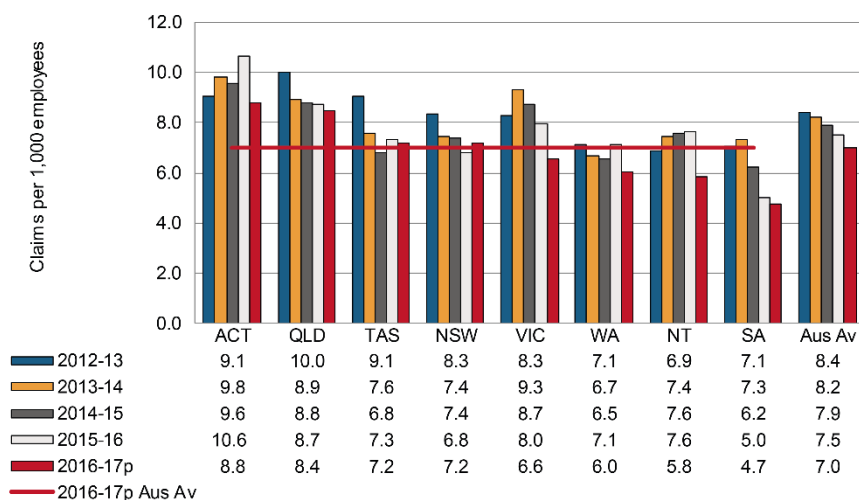
### Indicator 11f – Incidence rates of serious claims for Wholesale trade by jurisdiction



## Retail trade

Indicator 11g shows that the Australian average incidence rate of serious claims in the Retail trade industry decreased by 11 per cent between 2012–13 and 2015–16. South Australia recorded a substantial decrease (down 30 per cent) over the same period, followed by Tasmania (down 20 per cent), and New South Wales (down 18 per cent).

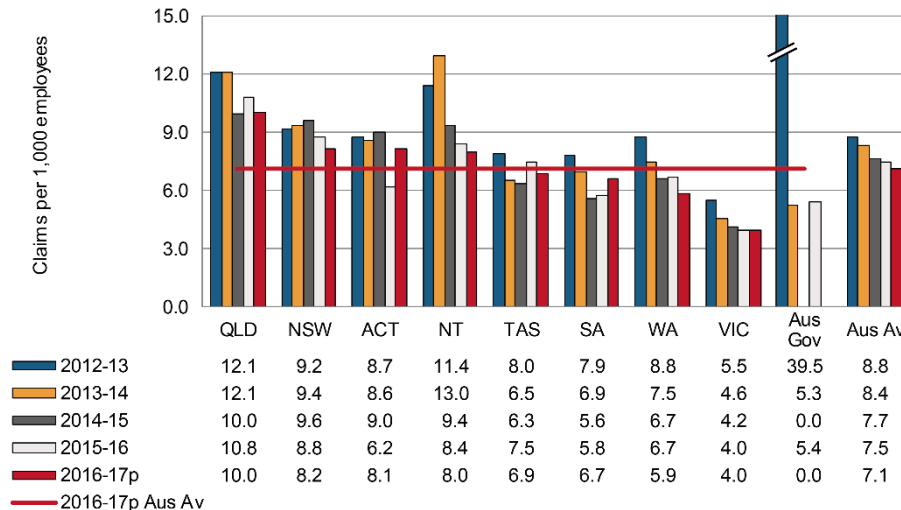
### Indicator 11g – Incidence rates of serious claims for Retail trade by jurisdiction



## Accommodation and food services

Indicator 11h shows that the Australian average incidence rate for the Accommodation and food services industry was 7.5 serious claims per 1,000 employees in 2015–16, down 15 per cent since 2012–13. All jurisdictions recorded a decrease in their incidence rates for this industry over the period. The Australian Government did not have any reportable claims in 2014–15 and 2016–17. The incidence rates of the Australian Capital Territory and the Australian Government should be interpreted with caution as the relative standard error of the number of employees was between 25 and 50 per cent.

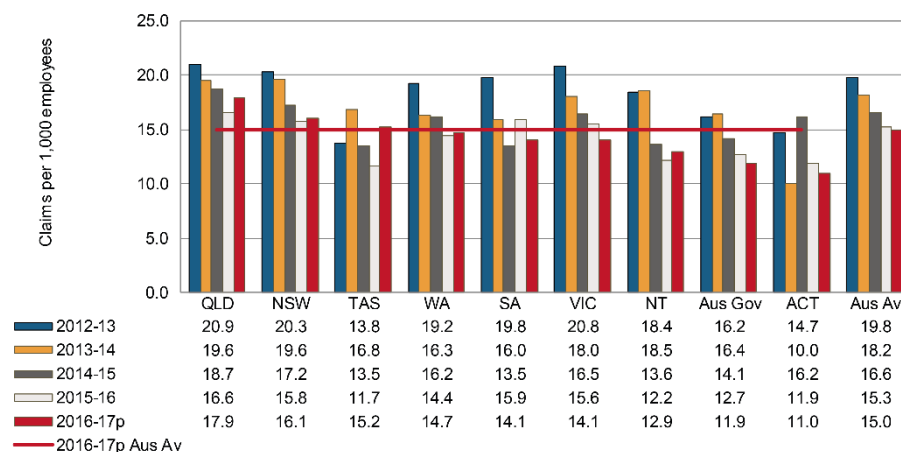
### Indicator 11h – Incidence rates of serious claims for Accommodation and food services by jurisdiction



## Transport, postal and warehousing

Indicator 11i shows that the Australian average incidence rate for this industry was 15.3 serious claims per 1,000 employees in 2015–16, down by 23 per cent since 2012–13. All jurisdictions have recorded a decrease in their incidence rates during this period, ranging between 15 per cent in the Tasmania and 34 per cent in the Northern Territory. The incidence rates for Seacare were not reported due to the high relative standard error (greater than 50 per cent). The incidence rates of the Australian Capital Territory should be interpreted with caution as the relative standard error of the number of employees was between 25 and 50 per cent.

### Indicator 11i – Incidence rates of serious claims for Transport, postal and warehousing by jurisdiction



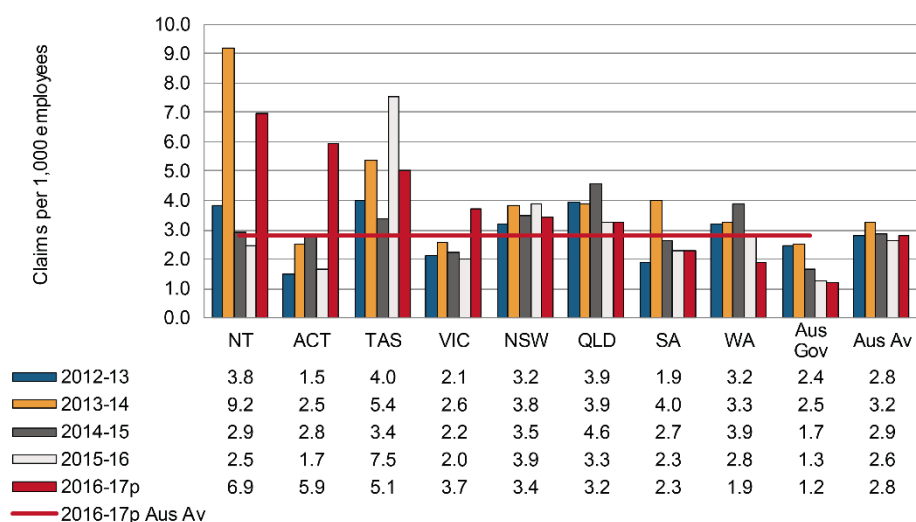


## Information, media and telecommunications

Indicator 11j shows the Australian average incidence rates of serious claims for the Information, media and telecommunications industry in 2015–16 was 2.6 claims per 1,000 employees, down by 7 per cent since 2012–13. The incidence rates of the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory should be interpreted with caution as the relative standard error of the number of employees were between 25 and 50 per cent.

Of the other jurisdictions, the Australian Government recorded the largest decrease (down 46 per cent) between 2012–13 and 2015–16, followed by Queensland (down 15 per cent), Western Australia (down 13 per cent) and Victoria (down 5 per cent). Tasmania, New South Wales and South Australia recorded increases in the incidence rate for this industry during the period.

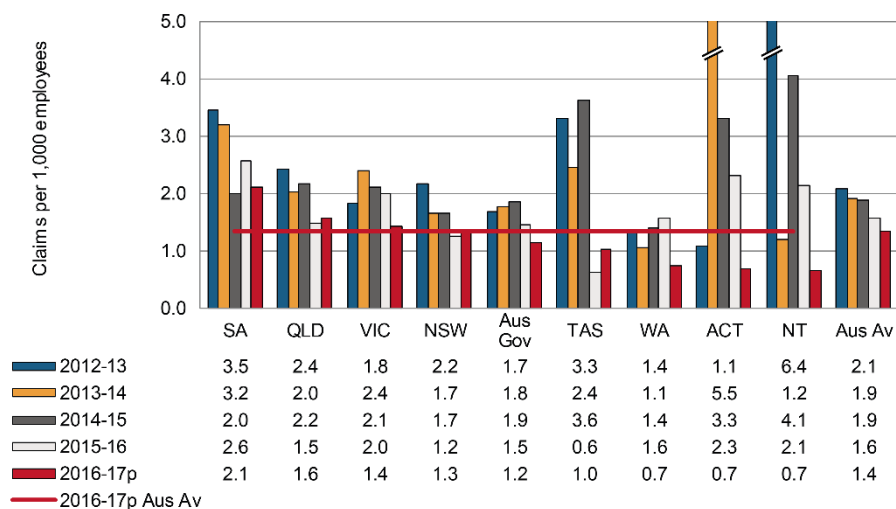
### Indicator 11j – Incidence rates of serious claims for Information, media and telecommunications by jurisdiction



## Financial and insurance services

The Australian average incidence rate for the Financial and insurance services industry in 2015–16 was 1.6 claims per 1,000 employees (Indicator 11k), the lowest average incidence rate of serious claims among all industries. Tasmania recorded the largest decrease (down 82 per cent) in the incidence rate for this industry between 2012–13 and 2015–16, followed by the Northern Territory (down 67 per cent), and New South Wales (down 45 per cent). The incidence rates of the Australian Capital Territory should be interpreted with caution as the relative standard error of the number of employees was between 25 and 50 per cent.

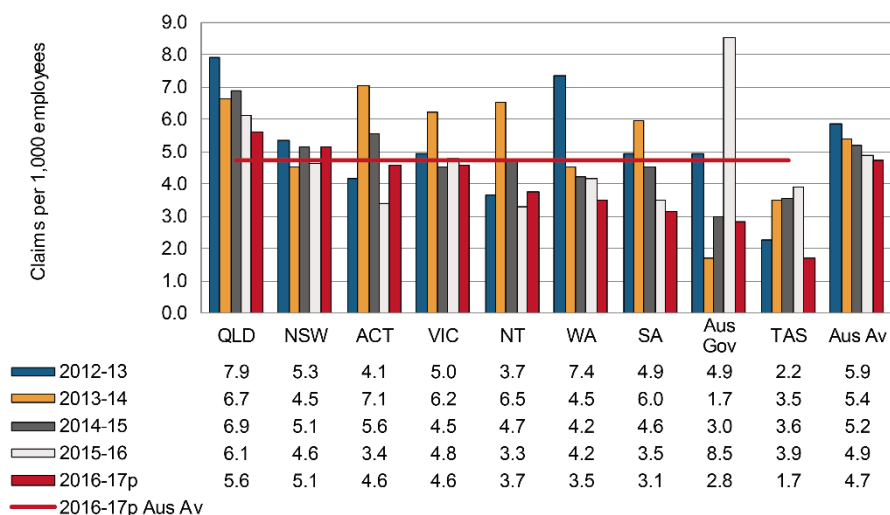
## Indicator 11k – Incidence rates of serious claims for Financial and insurance services by jurisdiction



## Rental, hiring and real estate services

Indicator 11l shows that the Australian average incidence rate for the Rental, hiring and real estate services industry was 4.9 claims per 1,000 employees in 2015–16. Western Australia recorded the largest decrease (down 43 per cent) between 2012–13 and 2015–16, followed by South Australia (down 29 per cent) and Queensland (down 23 per cent). The incidence rates of the Australian Capital Territory and the Australian Government should be interpreted with caution as the relative standard error of the number of employees was between 25 and 50 per cent.

## Indicator 11l – Incidence rates of serious claims for Rental, hiring and real estate services by jurisdiction

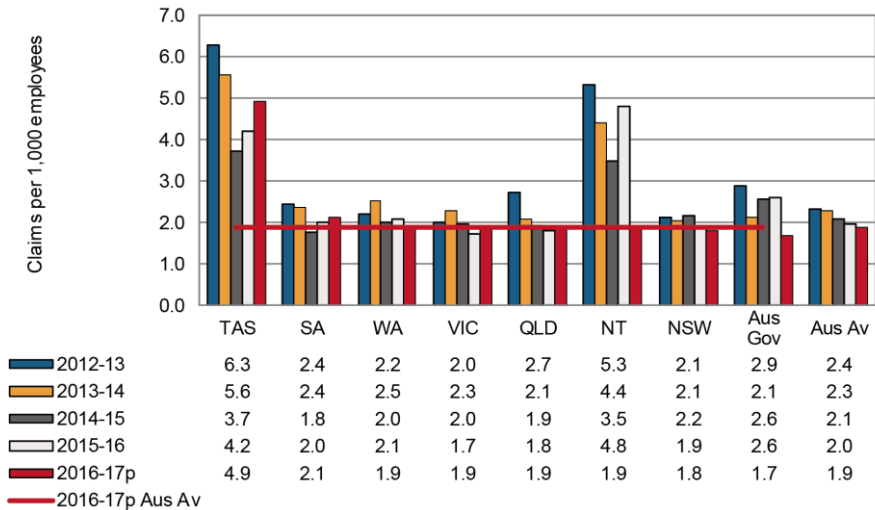


## Professional, scientific and technical services

All jurisdictions recorded decreases in the incidence rate of serious claims for the Professional, scientific and technical services industry between 2012–13 and 2015–16 (Indicator 11m). The largest decrease was recorded by Queensland and Tasmania (both down 33 per cent). The Professional, scientific and technical services industry had the second lowest incidence rate overall in 2015–16 (2.0 claims per 1,000 employees) when compared to all other industries.

The relative standard error values for employee numbers in the Australian Capital Territory were greater than 50 per cent, hence the incidence rates for this industry are not reported here.

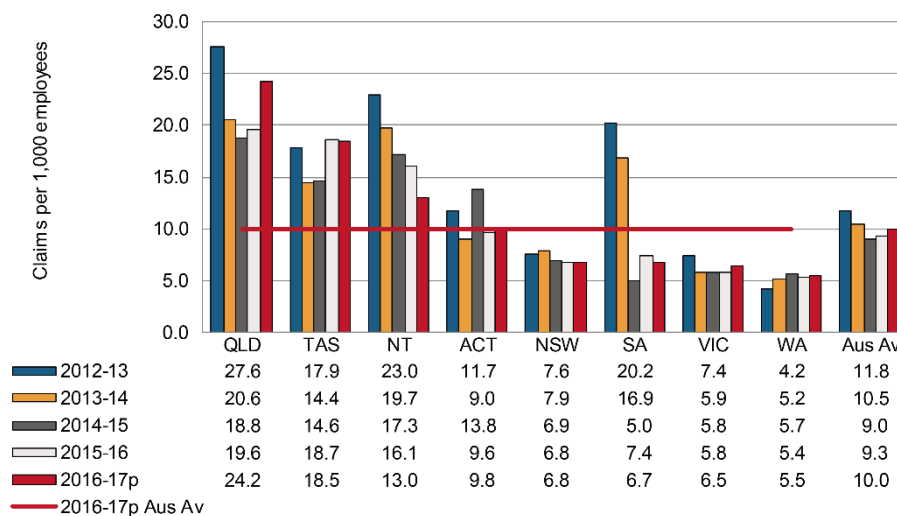
### Indicator 11m – Incidence rates of serious claims for Professional, scientific and technical services by jurisdiction



## Administrative and support services

Indicator 11n shows that the Australian average incidence rate in the Administrative and support services industry was 9.3 serious claims per 1,000 employees in 2015–16. Western Australia (5.4 claims per 1,000 employees) had the lowest incidence rate in 2015–16. South Australia recorded the largest decrease (down 63 per cent) in the incidence rate between 2012–13 and 2015–16, followed by the Northern Territory (down 30 per cent) and Queensland (down 29 per cent). Readers should be aware that the Australian Government has not reported any claims for this industry since 2011–12. The incidence rates of the Australian Capital Territory should be interpreted with caution as the relative standard error of the number of employees was between 25 and 50 per cent.

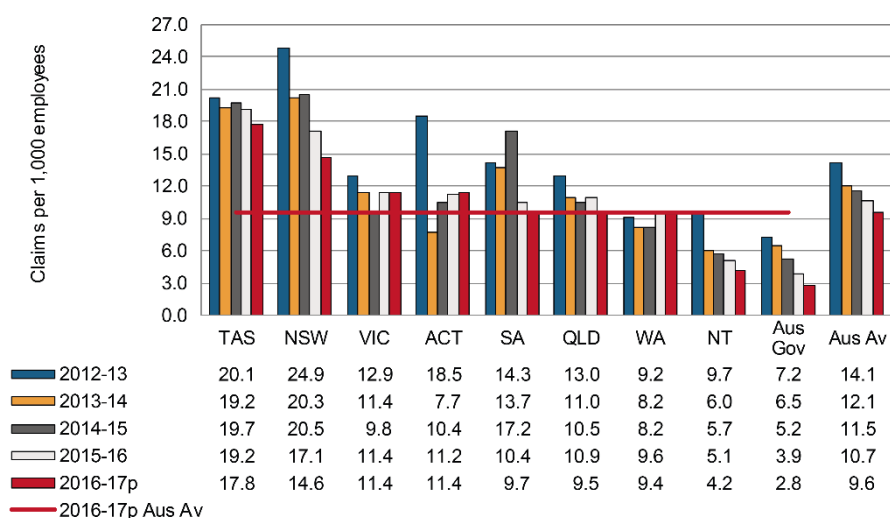
### Indicator 11n – Incidence rates of serious claims for Administrative and support services by jurisdiction



## Public administration and safety

Indicator 11o shows that the Australian average incidence rate of serious claims in the Public administration and safety industry was 10.7 claims per 1,000 employees in 2015–16, down from 14.1 claims per 1,000 employees in 2012–13. All jurisdictions except Western Australia (up 4 per cent) showed a decrease in the incidence rate of claims between 2012–13 and 2015–16. The incidence rates of the Australian Capital Territory should be interpreted with caution as the relative standard errors of the number of employees were between 25 and 50 per cent. Of all other jurisdictions, the Northern Territory recorded the largest decrease in incidence rate between 2012–13 and 2015–16 (down 47 per cent).

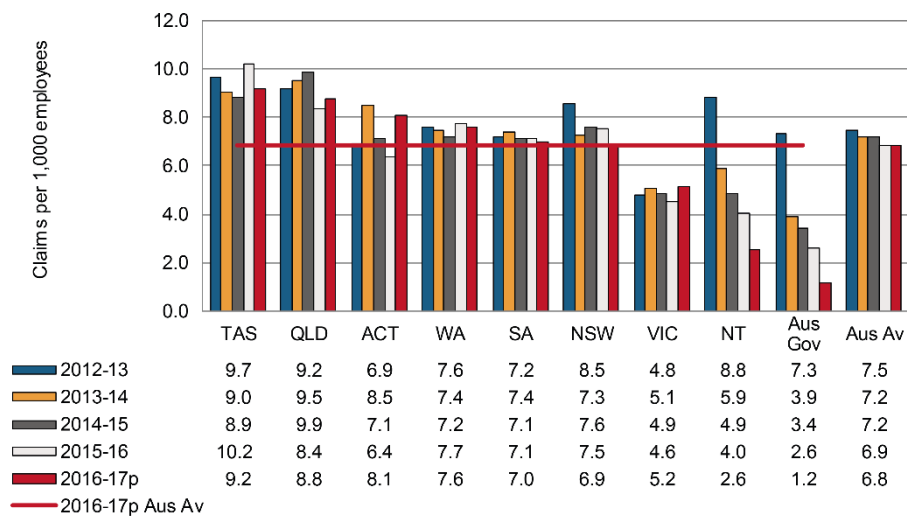
### Indicator 11o – Incidence rates of serious claims for Public administration and safety by jurisdiction



## Education and training

Indicator 11p shows that the Australian average incidence rate for the Education and training industry was 6.9 serious claims per 1,000 employees in 2015–16, an 8 per cent decrease since 2012–13. With the exception of Tasmania and Western Australia, all jurisdictions recorded a decrease in their incidence rates between 2012–13 and 2015–16. The Australian Government recorded the largest decrease (down 64 per cent), followed by the Northern Territory (down 55 per cent) and New South Wales (down 12 per cent). The incidence rates of the Australian Capital Territory should be interpreted with caution as the relative standard error of the number of employees were between 25 and 50 per cent.

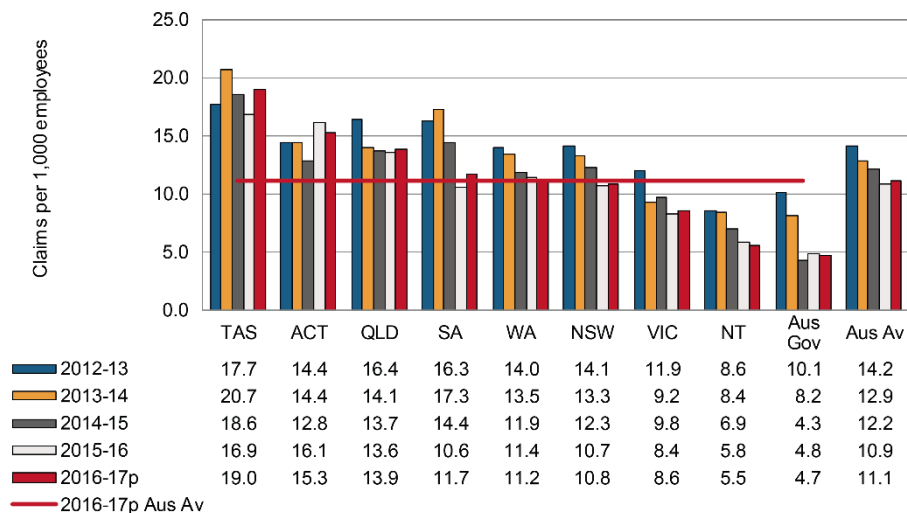
### Indicator 11p – Incidence rates of serious claims for Education and training by jurisdiction



## Healthcare and social assistance

The Australian average incidence rate of serious claims in the Healthcare and social assistance industry in 2015–16 was 10.9 claims per 1,000 employees, which was 23 per cent lower than in 2012–13. The incidence rates of the Australian Capital Territory and the Australian Government should be interpreted with caution as the relative standard error of the number of employees were between 25 and 50 per cent. Of the other jurisdictions, South Australia recorded the largest decrease (down 35 per cent) in the incidence rates for the industry between 2012–13 and 2015–16, followed by the Northern Territory (down 33 per cent) and Victoria (down 29 per cent).

### Indicator 11q – Incidence rates of serious claims for Healthcare and social assistance by jurisdiction

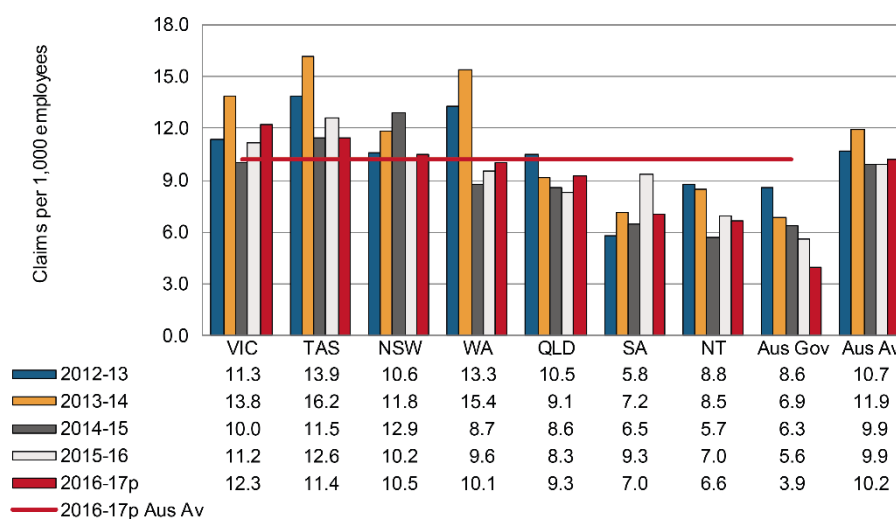


## Arts and recreation services

The Australian average incidence rate for the Arts and recreation services industry fell by 7 per cent from 10.7 claims per 1,000 employees in 2012–13 to 9.9 claims per 1,000 employees in 2015–16. The incidence rates for the Australian Capital Territory were not reported due to the high relative standard error (greater than 50 per cent) of the number of employees. The incidence rates of the Australian Government should be interpreted with caution as the relative standard error of the number of employees was between 25 and 50 per cent.

Of the other jurisdictions, South Australia recorded an increase in the incidence rate (up 60 per cent), while the rest recorded a fall over the same period. Western Australia recorded the largest decrease (down 28 per cent), followed by Queensland (down 21 per cent) and the Northern Territory (down 20 per cent).

### Indicator 11r – Incidence rates of serious claims for Arts and recreation services by jurisdiction

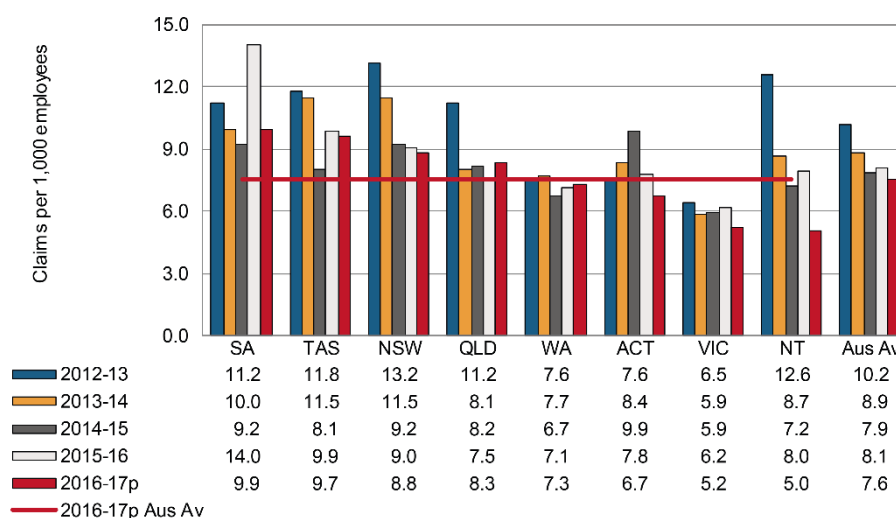


## Other services

Indicator 11s shows that the Australian average incidence rate of serious claims in the Other services industry decreased by 21 per cent between 2012–13 and 2016–17. The incidence rates of the Australian Capital Territory should be interpreted with caution as the relative standard error of the number of employees were between 25 and 50 per cent. The Australian Government data are not reported here due to the high relative standard error (greater than 50 per cent) in the employee numbers, rendering the data unreliable.

Of the other jurisdictions, the Northern Territory recorded the largest decrease (down 37 per cent), followed by Queensland (down 33 per cent), New South Wales (down 32 per cent) and Tasmania (down 16 per cent).

### Indicator 11s – Incidence rates of serious claims for Other services by jurisdiction



# Appendix 1 — Explanatory notes

## Workers' compensation claims data

### Scope

The data presented in this report are extracted from the National Data Set for Compensation-based Statistics (NDS), which is compiled annually from claims made under state, territory and Commonwealth workers' compensation Acts. The New Zealand Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) also collects data in accordance with the NDS.

Definition of a serious claim: Under the definition, a serious claim is a workers' compensation claim for an incapacity that results in a total absence from work of one working week or more. Claims excluded from this definition include those arising from a work-related fatality or a journey to or from work or during a recess period. One working week is defined as lost when the number of hours lost is greater than or equal to the number of hours usually worked per week.

The data in this report do not cover all cases of occupational injury and diseases as workers' compensation generally covers employees only. Therefore many contractors and self-employed workers are not represented by these data. The exclusion of self-employed persons is likely to result in an underestimate of the number of cases in industries where self-employed persons are common, such as Agriculture, forestry and fishing, Construction, Transport, postal and warehousing – Road transport, Administrative and support services and Arts and recreation services. However, the incidence and frequency rates shown in this report for all industries can be considered to be reliable, as the denominators used in the calculation of the rates have been adjusted to exclude self-employed persons.

In addition, the following have been excluded from the data in this report:

- occupational injuries and diseases resulting in absences from work of less than one working week
- military personnel within the Defence force
- cases not claimed as workers' compensation or not acknowledged as being work-related, and
- claims for compensation to the Dust Diseases Authority of New South Wales.

Australian Government employees working in each jurisdiction have been included in Australian Government figures rather than state or territory results. The Australian Capital Territory Public Service employees are covered by the Comcare scheme but operate under the work health and safety provisions of the Australian Capital Territory. These employees and their claims have been combined with the Australian Capital Territory Private sector employees for reporting outcomes in Chapter 1 of this report.

Reporting on fatalities: Similar to the previous edition, this edition sources information from the traumatic injury fatalities (TIF) collection. The TIF collection provides the most accurate information on work-related injury fatalities since the data is sourced from workers' compensation data, fatality notifications to the various work health and safety authorities and information in the National Coronial Information System (NCIS). Only around 60 per cent of work-related fatalities recorded in the TIF collection are typically compensated. This is in part due to self-employed workers not being covered by workers' compensation schemes. Many self-employed workers work in high risk sectors such as agriculture, transport and construction. Further information about the TIF collection and a detailed analysis of the data can be found in the *Work-Related Traumatic Injury Fatalities* report published on the [Safe Work Australia](#) website.

There is no change to the source of information on disease-related fatalities in this edition of the CPM. This information is only available through the NDS.



The following table (Appendix 1 – Table 1) shows the preliminary number of serious claims, an estimate of the number of employees in each jurisdiction, and an estimate of the number of hours worked in each jurisdiction in 2016–17. Please note that the number of serious claims shown for Victoria includes adjustment factors that are explained later in this section. The figures for employee and hours worked in Appendix 1 – Table 1 are those that have been used to calculate the incidence and frequency rates in this report. Please note that the number of claims shown will increase when updated information is provided by the jurisdictions for next year's report.

**Appendix 1 – Table 1: Summary of key jurisdictional data, 2016–17**

Jurisdiction	Serious claims	Per cent of claims	Employees	Per cent of employees	Hours worked	Per cent of hours worked
<b>New South Wales</b>	33,000	31.1	3,482,440	30.4	5,816,554,460	30.9
<b>Victoria</b>	22,930	21.6	2,879,730	25.2	4,621,178,070	24.5
<b>Queensland</b>	25,790	24.3	2,182,520	19.1	3,629,311,430	19.3
<b>Western Australia</b>	11,140	10.5	1,211,770	10.6	2,016,582,060	10.7
<b>South Australia</b>	6,360	6.0	752,050	6.6	1,189,668,390	6.3
<b>Tasmania</b>	2,640	2.5	218,990	1.9	334,313,370	1.8
<b>Northern Territory</b>	990	0.9	140,420	1.2	248,035,180	1.3
<b>Australian Capital Territory</b>	1,730	1.6	168,330	1.5	266,524,040	1.4
<b>Australian Government</b>	1,610	1.5	407,110	3.6	712,478,050	3.8
<b>Seacare</b>	70	0.1	4,600	0.0	11,941,380	0.1
<b>Australian total</b>	<b>106,260</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>11,447,950</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>18,846,586,430</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## Time series and adjustment of scheme data

The estimates of the number of employees and their hours worked for Australia are supplied by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and these denominator data are based on the Labour Force Survey, the Survey of Employment and Earnings and data provided by Comcare. Further adjustments are performed using data from the Census, the Forms of Employment Survey and the Survey of Employment Arrangements, Retirement and Superannuation. These data are matched to the scope of the claims data but may not be exact, particularly in the smaller jurisdictions, due to the number of employees being derived from a survey of the population rather than a census.

The labour force estimates were recently benchmarked against the 2011 Census and 20 years recasting is currently underway. As a result, the ABS revised and supplied Safe Work Australia with estimates for the number of employees and hours worked back to 2007–08. This change and the recent change in the definition of serious claims means that the incidence and frequency rates published in this report will differ to those previously published. The New Zealand employment data used has been sourced from the New Zealand census information.

Incidence and frequency rates, especially for the most recent years, are expected to rise as the number of accepted claims increases as a result of further data development. This may involve additional claims being accepted or shorter-term claims with temporary incapacity incurring additional time lost and subsequently matching the definition of a serious claim: one that involves one or more working weeks of time lost.

Claims data shown in this report for 2016–17 are preliminary unless otherwise stated. Therefore these data are likely to be understated and a comparison of 2016–17 data with those of previous years should be undertaken with caution.

In analysing trends over time, consideration needs to be given to any changes to jurisdiction-specific legislation and administrative processes during the period concerned, further details of which should be sought from the jurisdictions. Any commentary relating to these comparisons should be interpreted carefully, where provided.

Frequency rates for the Seacare scheme have been calculated using a 24-hour basis. This is in recognition of the 24-hour risk of exposure to workplace hazards due to the nature of employment in the maritime industry. This definition is consistent with data published by the Seacare Authority.

Due to difficulties obtaining time lost in hours for the Northern Territory, data have been estimated using the definition of a working week of five working days. To enable comparison of the data reported for the Northern Territory and data reported for all other jurisdictions, the data for the Northern Territory has been increased by a factor of 1.3 per cent.

## **Definition of injury and disease**

Occupational injuries are defined as all employment-related injuries that are the result of a single traumatic event, occurring while a person is on duty or during a recess period at the workplace, and where there was a short or non-existent latency period. This includes injuries that are the result of a single exposure to an agent(s) causing an acute toxic effect.

Occupational diseases are defined as all employment-related diseases that result from repeated or long-term exposure to an agent(s) or event(s), or that are the result of a single event resulting in a disease (for example, the development of hepatitis following a single exposure to the infection).

In this report, the injuries data also include claims for musculoskeletal disorders (MSD). This change was necessitated by the introduction of a new coding system in Victoria in 2002–03 that resulted in a large number of claims previously coded as sprains and strains (injuries) being coded as diseases of the musculoskeletal system and connective tissue. This more accurately reflects the repetitive and long term muscle stress that results in these conditions. To minimise the effect of this coding change on time series consistency, musculoskeletal disorders have been combined with the data on injuries for all years and all jurisdictions in this report. A similar change in coding practices across all other jurisdictions has been occurring progressively from 2005–06 as the 3rd edition of the Type of Occurrence Classification Scheme (TOOCS) is introduced in each jurisdiction.

## **Adjustment of Victorian data**

Only claims involving one or more weeks of compensation have been used for analysis in Part 1 of the CPM, to enable greater comparability in the jurisdictional data. This accounts for the different employer excesses that exist in various schemes. Under the Victorian workers' compensation scheme the employer is generally liable for the first 10 days of lost wages by the injured worker. In addition to this, Victorian employers pay the first \$692 of medical services (for the year 2016-17 – indexed annually) unless the employer has elected the Excess Buyout option. Please refer to WorkSafe Victoria's website for more information on the Excess Buyout option.

As employers do not always provide WorkSafe Victoria with information on claims lasting fewer than 10 days, an adjustment factor needs to be applied in order to compare Victorian claims data with other jurisdictions. To calculate the Victorian under-10-days excess impact, the percentage of claims between one and two weeks duration for Victoria were compared with the percentage of one to two weeks claims for other Australian jurisdictions. From this comparison, the number of Victorian claims between one and two weeks were increased by a factor so that the percentage of such claims was similar to the Australian average. The analysis was undertaken at the industry division level to allow for a greater degree of homogeneity in respect of claim duration in Victoria. The application of the factors has increased claims supplied by WorkSafe Victoria by 19 per cent (from 19,345 to 22,934) in 2016–17.

## Changes to South Australian data

Safe Work Australia conducted a review of the methodology used to calculate South Australian under-10-days excess factors. Following the review it was found that the claim numbers after factoring did not accurately represent the South Australian claims. Hence the excess factors for South Australian claims were not applied in this edition of the CPM, which includes claims data from 2012–13 to 2016-17. This change means that the incidence and frequency rates reported for South Australia and Australian average will differ to those previously published.

## Size of business

The number of employees in each of the three business size groups has been provided by the ABS. Estimates of employment figures by 'Small: less than 20 employees', 'Medium: 20–199 employees' and 'Large: 200 employees or more' business size groups published in the 2014–15 'Australian Industry' publication (ABS cat. No. 8155.0) are used. These estimates are produced annually using a combination of data directly collected from the annual Economic Activity Survey (EAS) conducted by the ABS and Business Activity Statement (BAS) data provided by businesses to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). As figures in this publication are for 'Employment', the ABS Labour Force data were also used in order to be able to exclude self-employed persons from the 'Australian Industry' figures.

The scope and coverage of these estimates are for the private sector only, which consists of all business entities in the Australian economy except for entities classified as general Government. Data on the number of claims are collected in each jurisdiction by a variety of methods, some via the claim form and others by imputing estimates from the data supplied by employers.

## Appendix 2 – Jurisdictional contact information

Appendix 2 – Table 1: Jurisdictional contact information

Jurisdiction	Organisation	Contact details
<b>New South Wales</b>	State Insurance Regulatory Authority SafeWork NSW Customer Service Centre	<a href="http://www.sira.nsw.gov.au">www.sira.nsw.gov.au</a> <a href="http://www.safework.nsw.gov.au">www.safework.nsw.gov.au</a> 13 10 50
<b>Victoria</b>	WorkSafe Victoria	Advisory Service 1800 136 089 <a href="mailto:info@worksafe.vic.gov.au">info@worksafe.vic.gov.au</a> <a href="http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au">www.worksafe.vic.gov.au</a>
<b>Queensland</b>	Workplace Health and Safety Queensland – Office of Industrial Relations – Education Queensland	Infoline 1300 362 128 <a href="http://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au">www.worksafe.qld.gov.au</a>
<b>Western Australia</b>	WorkCover WA  Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety– WorkSafe	(08) 9388 5555 <a href="http://www.workcover.wa.gov.au">www.workcover.wa.gov.au</a> 1300 307 877 <a href="http://www.dmirs.wa.gov.au">www.dmirs.wa.gov.au</a>
<b>South Australia</b>	Return to WorkSA  SafeWork SA	13 18 55 <a href="http://www.rtwsa.com">www.rtwsa.com</a> 1300 365 255 <a href="http://www.safework.sa.gov.au">www.safework.sa.gov.au</a>
<b>Tasmania</b>	WorkSafe Tasmania	Helpline 1300 366 322 (inside Tas) (03) 6166 4600 (outside Tas) <a href="mailto:wstinfo@justice.tas.gov.au">wstinfo@justice.tas.gov.au</a> <a href="http://www.workcover.tas.gov.au">www.workcover.tas.gov.au</a> <a href="http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au">www.worksafe.tas.gov.au</a>
<b>Northern Territory</b>	NT WorkSafe	1800 019 115 <a href="mailto:ntworksafe@nt.gov.au">ntworksafe@nt.gov.au</a> <a href="http://www.worksafe.nt.gov.au">www.worksafe.nt.gov.au</a>
<b>Australian Capital Territory</b>	Access Canberra WorkSafe ACT within Chief Minister Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	(02) 6207 3000 <a href="http://www.worksafe.act.gov.au">www.worksafe.act.gov.au</a>
<b>Seafarers</b>	Seacare Authority	(02) 6275 0070 <a href="mailto:seacare@comcare.gov.au">seacare@comcare.gov.au</a> <a href="http://www.seacare.gov.au">www.seacare.gov.au</a>
<b>Australian Government</b>	Comcare	1300 366 979 <a href="http://www.comcare.gov.au">www.comcare.gov.au</a>
<b>New Zealand</b>	Accident Compensation Corporation	64 7 848 7400 <a href="http://www.acc.co.nz">www.acc.co.nz</a>