

# How are we injuring ourselves at work?



## CIVIL CONSTRUCTION

TOTAL DAYS LOST TO INJURY IN 2014:

77,369



COST TO BUSINESS FOR INJURY IN 2014:

\$16m+



NUMBER OF CLAIMS IN 2014:

4,702

23  
145

COST OF ACTIVE CLAIMS TO ACC IN 2014:

\$13.4m+



## Where it's hurting us

EAR

NUMBER OF CLAIMS: 848

INJURY COST: \$705,792

DAYS LOST: 295

"I have had years of working with grader machinery which was very noisy – no ear muffs used in those days and my hearing has deteriorated."

SHOULDER/CLAVICLE

NUMBER OF CLAIMS: 315

INJURY COST: \$1,680,184

DAYS LOST: 10,396

"I fell off a ladder and my left arm got caught on something and I was yanked upwards, hurting my shoulder."

FINGER/THUMB

NUMBER OF CLAIMS: 407

INJURY COST: \$539,849

DAYS LOST: 4,041

"I was drilling for water and crushed my finger between the steel bar and steel ball ring. My left ring finger was stripped toward the first joint."

LOWER BACK/SPINE

NUMBER OF CLAIMS: 736

INJURY COST: \$2,862,647

DAYS LOST: 19,526

"I went to bend over to pick up a digger implement and pulled my lower back and hip area."

ANKLE

NUMBER OF CLAIMS: 215

INJURY COST: \$613,799

DAYS LOST: 4,912

"I rolled my ankle when I stepped on large stone while descending from an excavator."

KNEE

NUMBER OF CLAIMS: 303

INJURY COST: \$942,261

DAYS LOST: 6,307

"I was standing in a 1.3 metre deep trench when the side caved in and a piece concrete hit my knee."

### TOP 5 INJURY SITES BY NUMBER

- 1) Ear
- 2) Lower back/spine
- 3) Finger/thumb
- 4) Shoulder (incl clavicle/blade)
- 5) Knee

23  
145

### TOP 5 INJURY SITES BY COST

- 1) Lower back/spine
- 2) Shoulder (incl clavicle/blade)
- 3) Knee
- 4) Ear
- 5) Ankle



## How we calculated this information (using 2014 data)

### Cost of active claims to ACC

The total includes the cost (excl GST) to ACC of all treatment and entitlements incurred for that claim.

### Cost of injury claims to business

The total cost to business is based on the average salary of civil construction workers (derived from Occupation Outlook Report, MBIE 2013) by the number

of working days in 2014, this was used to calculate the average daily salary for the occupation. The number of days of productivity lost to injury was multiplied by this figure to identify the cost of injury claims to business.

## Remember a tidy worksite is a safe worksite

### High risk areas

- When working at a height use the appropriate scaffolding or falls protection to prevent workers from a fall.
- Overreaching when carrying out your work is one of the major contributions to a person overloading shoulder and muscles in the back region.
- When using any type of power tool remember to wear hearing and eye protection.
- If you are required to lift or carry a heavy object or materials then remember the old saying 'many hands make light work'.
- Think before you act.

## How do you reduce your risk?

It's easy to reduce your risk of injury, just follow these simple tips to help keep yourself and your workmates safe on the job.

### EAR

- Wear the appropriate hearing protection when working around noisy equipment.
- Place warning signs in areas of excessive noise – above 85 decibels.
- Check noisy tools to ensure that they are well maintained and when possible separate workers from noisy activities.
- If you cannot hear a person talking to you without shouting then you need to wear hearing protection.



### SHOULDER

- Avoid any activities where you are overreaching.
- Avoid sudden uncontrolled or jerky movements.



### KNEE

- Wear knee pads when you are required to kneel on the ground as this reduces the contact pressure.
- Avoid jumping down from step ladders, ladders and platforms or down to the next level.

### BACK/SPINE

- Avoid lifting and carrying heavy or awkward materials: if you have to lift or carry it get a mate to help.
- Avoid twisting when carrying or lifting a heavy load.
- Try to avoid bending, reaching forward and twisting while lifting, carrying or moving a particularly heavy or bulky load.
- Use mechanical load shifting devices such as cranes, hoist and hand trucks to move materials around the worksite.
- Fit temporary lifting points or handles to heavy or awkward loads.
- If manual lifting is required, make sure you have enough workers available to complete the task.



### FINGER/THUMB



- Check that all tool guards function correctly and are safe to use.
- When using any power tools, be aware of the dangers of applying too much pressure as this can cause a 'kick back' by jamming the tool.
- Keep your hands clear of any moving parts.
- Make sure that any exposed nails and other sharp objects are removed or knocked in.



## Other ways to reduce the likelihood of risk

- Remove unwanted materials and construction waste from the worksite so that it does not accumulate.
- Ensure that all power leads and other tools and equipment are positioned so as not to cause a tripping hazard.
- Avoid attaching bracing across door frames where people are likely to walk through.