

# How are we injuring ourselves at work?



## SHEET METAL WORKERS

TOTAL DAYS LOST TO INJURY IN 2014:

12,891



COST TO BUSINESS FOR INJURY IN 2014:

\$2m+



NUMBER OF CLAIMS IN 2014:

1,331

2<sup>3</sup>  
145

COST OF ACTIVE CLAIMS TO ACC IN 2014:

\$2m+



## Where it's hurting us

**EAR**

**NUMBER OF CLAIMS:** 441  
**INJURY COST:** \$397,037  
**DAYS LOST:** 0

"Repetitive exposure to loud noise without adequate hearing protection in sheet metal factory."

**EYE**

**NUMBER OF CLAIMS:** 119  
**INJURY COST:** \$15,053  
**DAYS LOST:** 0

"Grinding metal and a piece of metal got stuck in my eye."

**FINGER/THUMB**

**NUMBER OF CLAIMS:** 179  
**INJURY COST:** \$255,219  
**DAYS LOST:** 1,799

"Working on a machine and the machine started, crushing finger on right hand."

**HAND/WRIST**

**NUMBER OF CLAIMS:** 82  
**INJURY COST:** \$209,437  
**DAYS LOST:** 1,290

"Using left hand (right handed) to do pop riveting over a long day at work. Wrist felt sore that evening and is slowly getting worse."

**LOWER BACK/SPINE**

**NUMBER OF CLAIMS:** 123  
**INJURY COST:** \$323,387  
**DAYS LOST:** 2,008

"Lifting metal frames with colleague and shifting them to the right. Felt pain in lower right side of lower back. Hasn't eased since."

**SHOULDER/CLAVICLE**

**NUMBER OF CLAIMS:** 62  
**INJURY COST:** \$260,990  
**DAYS LOST:** 1,456

"Lift and swung heavy sheet metal. Sudden pain in left shoulder ongoing."

### TOP 5 INJURY SITES BY NUMBER

- 1) Ear
- 2) Finger/thumb
- 3) Lower back/spine
- 4) Eye
- 5) Hand/wrist

2<sup>3</sup>  
145

### TOP 5 INJURY SITES BY COST

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



## 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 sheet metal 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 risk?

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

### 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.



### SHOULDER

- Avoid any activities where you are overreaching.
- Avoid sudden uncontrolled or jerky movements.
- When in a small space for prolonged periods, take breaks and stretch.

### BACK/SPINE

- 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.
- If manual lifting is required, make sure you use a manual moving aid to move heavier materials.



### HAND/WRIST

- Think before you put your hands where they don't belong.
- Take regular breaks to relax and stretch.
- Keep your hands clear of crush areas.



### FINGER/THUMB

- Check that all tool guards function correctly and are safe to use.
- When using power tools be aware of the dangers of applying too much pressure and jamming the tool.
  - Keep your hands clear of any moving parts.
- Make sure that sharp objects are removed or knocked in.



## Other ways to reduce the likelihood of risk

- Remove unwanted materials and 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.