



# INJURY BULLETIN

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## “ON THE JOB” INJURIES”

### Some facts:

One in every four injuries sustained by people of employable age is work related.

More than half of all “on the job” injuries (62%) are serious.

Of these serious injuries 88% require ongoing treatment, 11% require admission to hospital and the remaining 1% represents fatal injuries.

### Body Parts most commonly injured:

**Eyes:** In 1989, over 1,000 eye injuries were recorded. These were most frequently associated with metal fragments entering the eye in the process of grinding or drilling metal. Flashburns while welding were also common.

**Fingers:** Finger injuries are both frequent and serious. There were 87 cases recorded in 1989 of fingers being amputated. Finger injuries resulting in admission to hospital frequently involved the severing of a digital nerve or tendon.

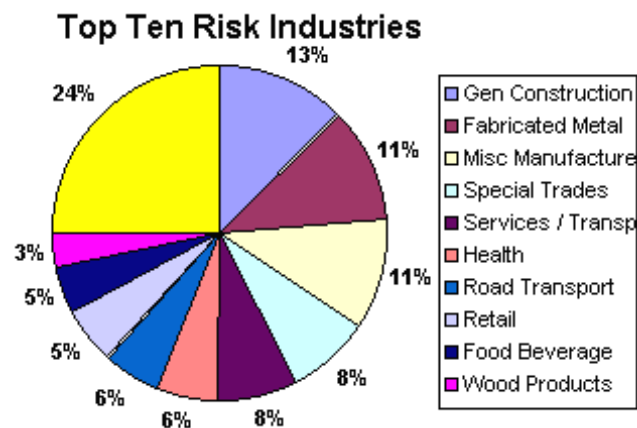
### Safety Equipment:

Reports of some sort of safety equipment being worn at the time of injury have increased from 8% in 1988 to 15% in 1989. In these cases, the safety gear may not have provided complete protection but

\* QISU data is based on emergency department presentations to the following hospitals: Mater Children’s Hospital, Mater Adult Hospital, Mater Private Emergency Care Centre, Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Hospital, Redland Hospital, Logan Hospital, Royal Children’s Hospital, Mt Isa Hospital and Mackay and district hospitals.

in most cases, it significantly reduces the severity of the injury suffered. Injuries have also occurred because safety equipment has been inadequate or not worn at all times. For example, a number of eye injuries were sustained as a result of an employee supervising or simply walking through a work area unprotected.

**High Risk Industries:** There are 50 codes that can be used to indicate the industry associated with a particular injury and yet three quarters of all “on the job” injury is represented by only 10 of these.



General Construction is associated with the highest number of injury at all levels of severity as well as the highest number of fatalities. Most cases occurred during demolition work.

**For example:**

- a) Demolishing building when struck by large piece of concrete which crushed upper body.
- b) Dismantling building. Fell from crane and crushed by metal.

**People factors:** People were seen to be a factor in their own injury in 30% of cases. In most cases the person had moved into a dangerous position (21%). Injury descriptions also suggest that inexperience, fatigue and being told to hurry are common precipitants of “on the job” injury.

**Solutions:** There is no single or simple answer as injury in the workplace occurs as a result of the interaction of a number of different factors. However an increased awareness of the hazards, an increased use of safety equipment and a belief that injury is preventable is foundational to “on the job” safety.

