



HEELA 1998

**KEY FACT SHEET ON
INJURIES
WITHIN
RESIDENTIAL CARE HOMES
REPORTED TO
LOCAL AUTHORITIES
1991/92 TO 1996/97**

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CONTENTS

KEY CHANGES UNDER RIDDOR 95	PAGE 1
INTRODUCTION	PAGE 2
FATAL INJURIES	PAGES 3 - 4
Fatal injuries to employees	Page 3
Fatal injuries to members of the public	Page 3
Case studies	Page 4
NON-FATAL INJURIES	PAGES 5 - 7
Non-fatal injuries to employees	Pages 5 -6
Non-fatal injuries to members of the public	Page 7
ANNEX 1 - SOURCE OF STATISTICS	PAGE 8
ANNEX 2 - ADDITIONAL TABLES	PAGES 9 - 11

KEY CHANGES UNDER RIDDOR 95

KEY CHANGES IN REPORTABILITY OF INJURIES TO WORKERS FROM RIDDOR 85 TO RIDDOR 95

The term 'accident' now includes physical violence to people at work.

The criteria for a reportable major injury has been simplified and expanded slightly under RIDDOR 95; more fractures, except to fingers and toes, and more amputations are now defined as a major injury. Also, any dislocation to the knee, hip, shoulder or spine is now a major injury.

Over-3-day injuries are still injuries resulting in an inability to do normal work for more than 3 days. However the revision of the criteria of a major injury, as above, may have led to an over-3-day injury under RIDDOR 85, being now classed as a major injury under RIDDOR 95.

The substantial increase in the number of major injuries and small increase in the number of over-3-day injuries to workers, is largely due to these changes.

Non-fatal injuries to workers reported to local authorities, 1995/96 and 1996/97

	Major Injuries	Over-3-Day injuries
Number of injuries in 1995/96	2 668	20 399
Number of injuries in 1996/97	5 577	21 313
Difference	+2 909	+924
(minus acts of violence)	(211)	(548)
Change	+2 698	+366

KEY CHANGES IN REPORTABILITY OF INJURIES TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC FROM RIDDOR 85 TO RIDDOR 95.

Under RIDDOR 85, an injury to a member of the public was reportable if it resulted in a fatality or one of a list specified major injuries. RIDDOR 95 specifies that fatalities are still reportable, but now include suicide or trespass on railways.

A reportable non-fatal injury to a member of the public now includes any injury caused by accidents arising out of or in connection with work which lead to a person being taken from the site of the accident to hospital.

These changes have led to a substantial increase in the number of non-fatal injuries to members of the public. The number of fatal injuries in the LA sector are relatively unaffected.

KEY FACTS ABOUT INJURIES IN RESIDENTIAL CARE HOMES AS REPORTED TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES, 1991/92 TO 1996/97.

Introduction

This factsheet describes the features and trends in statistics on injuries in residential care homes for the years 1991/92 to 1996/97. The statistics relate to injuries in residential care homes that were reported to local authorities by employers and others under RIDDOR¹.

Residential care homes are those homes providing round-the-clock social assistance to children, the aged and other special categories of people, where the provision of education or health care is not the main activity.

Local Authorities and HSE get to know about virtually all workplace fatalities. However, not all non-fatal injuries are reported by employers and self-employed people. The results of HSE's accident questions in the Labour Force Survey confirm the substantial level of under-reporting. Details of the LFS and RIDDOR sources of injury information are given at Annex 1.

Aggregate statistics on reported injuries cannot give detailed information on all the circumstances surrounding a workplace injury. This factsheet, therefore, also includes some case studies on particular fatal injuries, which provide more detailed information on the specific circumstances of the injury.

Injury Statistics

The injuries in this report cover the six year period from 1991/92 to 1996/97. In this period employers and others have reported 6,753 injuries occurring in residential care homes, of which:

- 53 (1%) were fatal injuries;
- 4,581 (68%) were major injuries;
- 2,119 (31%) were over-3-day injuries.

Table 1: Reported injuries by employment status of injured person, 1991/92 to 1996/97

Employment Status	Severity of Injury			
	Fatal	Major	Over-3-Day	Total
Employees (inc. trainees)	2	414	2 114	2 530
Self-employed	1	5	5	11
Members of the Public	50	4 162	..	4 212
Total	53	4 581	2 119	6 753

.. not reportable

1. The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1985 and RIDDOR 1995.

FATAL INJURIES TO EMPLOYEES

In the six year period since 1991/92 employers have reported 2 fatalities to employees, representing 2% of all employee fatalities in the LA enforced sector since 1991/92.

Both fatalities were as a result of a fall from a height, one was as a result of a fall down stairs and the other resulted from a fall from a chair, box, racking or window.

FATAL INJURIES TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

In the six year period since 1991/92, employers and others have reported 50 fatal injuries to members of the public. The numbers of fatal injuries to members of the public in residential care homes are relatively low, but have fluctuated over the last five years.

Table 4: Fatal Injuries to Members of the Public, 1991/92 to 1996/97

1991/92	1992/93	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	Total
18	6	15	6	3	2	50

What were the circumstances of the fatality?

Of the 50 reported fatalities to members of the public:

- 28 were due to a fall from a height
of which 14 were from a chair, box, racking or window and 11 were falls down stairs;
- a slip or trip accounted for 10 fatalities.

Table 1 in Annex 2 gives more details on the kind of accident involved in fatal injuries.

What was the nature of the injury and what part of the body was affected?

In two thirds of all fatal injuries, the nature and site of injury was recorded. Of these:

- 19 were due to a fracture
of which 10 were to the leg, thigh or hip and 5 were to the head ;
- 6 resulted from burns;
- 3 deaths resulted from asphyxiation or drowning.

CASE STUDIES

Below are some narrative accounts [some based on the investigating officer's report] of fatal injuries.

"A resident fell to her death from the first floor window". The windows involved in the incident were capable of being fully opened. Others on the first floor were fitted with restraining devices. Prior to the incident, architects working on behalf of the owners had received specific advice from the local authority covering the avoidance of the precise risk.

There have been a number of similar incidents to the one above.

"A resident in a home for the mentally handicapped was scalded to death whilst attempting to take a bath". Just before the incident the deceased asked if he could change his clothes. Shortly afterwards he was found on his knees at the side of the bath with his head and arms in the water. This residents' care plan contained certain ground rules, one of which was when he was bathing or showering he must be supervised at all times.

NON-FATAL INJURIES TO EMPLOYEES

In the six year period to 1996/97 employers reported 414 major injuries and 2,114 over-3-day injuries (an accident resulting in an absence from normal work of 4 days or more) to employees. The 414 major injuries represent 2% of all major injuries reported over this period to local authorities, and the 2,114 over-3-day injuries also represent 2% of all over-3-day injuries to employees reported over this period to local authorities.

Table 5: Non-fatal injuries to employees (including trainees) 1991/92 to 1996/97

Number of injuries	1991/92	1992/93	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	Total
Major	37	58	56	89	64	110	414
Over-3-day	187	260	328	456	391	492	2 114

Detailed information on the number of employees in residential care homes enforced by local authorities is not readily available, but the numbers of employees are not expected to have changed much over the six year period.

- There has been no real trend in the number of major injuries in the five years to 1995/96, although the number reported in 1996/97 is nearly double that seen in the early nineties. Most of this increase can be attributed to the changes in reporting regulations.

- The number of reported over-3-day injuries is slightly higher than that reported in 1995/96, and continues the generally upward trend.

What were the circumstances of the injury?

Of the 414 major injuries:

- 230 (56%) resulted from a slip or trip (96 involved lost footing, 67 involved slipping on a slippery surface, 27 involved falling over an obstruction and 21 involved slipping on an uneven surface);
- 60 (15%) resulted from a fall from a height (35 involved a fall down stairs and 14 involved a fall from a chair, box, racking or window);
- 35 (8%) resulted from handling, lifting or carrying a load (20 involved moving or lifting a patient);
- 15 (4%) resulted from striking a fixed object (9 walked into a wall or desk);
- 15 (4%) resulted from being struck by a moving object (10 involved a door or ramp);
- 13 (3%) resulted from contact with a harmful substance (7 involved burns from chemicals and 3 involved exposure to gas or fumes).

Of the 2,114 over-3-day injuries:

- 1,039 (49%) resulted from handling, lifting or carrying an object (655 involved moving or lifting a patient, 172 involved lifting or moving an awkward or sharp object and 133 involved lifting or moving a heavy object);
- 415 (20%) resulted from a slip or trip (152 involved slipping on a slippery surface, 101 involved lost footing, 56 involved falling over an obstruction, 52 involved slipping on an uneven surface and 50 involved slipping on the stairs);
- 145 (7%) resulted from being struck by a moving or flying object (54 involved being struck by a door or ramp, 25 involved a knife, 19 involved being struck by a falling piece of structure and 14 involved being struck by an object falling from a table, shelf or stack);
- 125 (6%) resulted from a fall from a height (81 involved a fall down stairs, 19 involved a fall from a step ladder and 16 involved a fall from a chair, box, racking or window);
- 107 (5%) resulted from contact with a harmful substance (16 involved the use of chemicals and 12 involved ovens, ranges or stoves).

What was the nature of the injury and what part of the body was affected?

The majority (83%) of major injuries involved a fracture of some type.

- Fracture accounted for 344 major injuries. Of these 106 were to the wrist, 77 were to the arm, shoulder or collar bone, 60 were to the leg, thigh or hip and 43 were to the ankle.
- Burns account for 14 (3%) major injuries. Of these 6 were to the eye.

Half of all over-3-day injuries were sprains or strains.

- Sprains or strains accounted for 1,104 (52%) over-3-day injuries. Of these 693 were to the back or spine, 68 were to the leg, thigh or hip, 67 were to the ankle and 69 were to the arm, shoulder or collar bone).
- Bruising accounted for 320 (15%) over-3-day injuries. Of these 46 were to the back or spine, 38 were to the leg, thigh or hip, 40 were to the arm, shoulder or collar bone.
- Fractures* accounted for 123 (6%) over-3-day injuries. Of these 23 were to the foot, 33 were to the finger, 16 were to the hand and 18 were to the toes.
- Burns accounted for 114 (5%) over-3-day injuries. Of these 28 were to the hand, 20 involved several areas of the body and 22 were to the arm, shoulder or collar bone.

* Only fractures to the fingers and toes are reportable as over-3-day injuries under RIDDOR95.

NON-FATAL INJURIES TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

In the six year period to 1996/97 there were 4,162 reported major injuries to members of the public.

Table 6: Injuries to members of the public, 1991/92 to 1996/97

Severity of Injury	1991/92	1992/93	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	Total
Major	317	512	723	909	1 017	684	4 162

The number of major injuries reported in the five years to 1995/96 has more than tripled before falling back to a level slightly higher than that seen in the early 1990's, in part reflecting an improvement in employer reporting.

What were the circumstances of the injury?

There has been some small change in the kinds of accident to members of the public over the six year period. The number of major injuries resulting from a slip or trip have risen over the six year period; correspondingly, the percentage of major injuries resulting from a fall from a height has fallen in the six year period.

Of the 4,162 major injuries:

- 3,388 (81%) resulted from a slip or trip (3,014 involved lost footing, 153 involved falling over an obstruction, 91 involved slipping on a slippery surface, 67 involved slipping on an uneven surface and 31 involved slipping on the stairs);
- 528 (13%) resulted from a fall from a height (401 involved a fall from a chair, box, racking or window and 98 involved a fall down stairs).

What was the nature of the injury and what part of the body was affected?

The majority (92%) of major injuries involved a fracture of some type.

- 3,842 (92%) major injuries involved a fracture of some type (2,487 were to the leg, hip or thigh, 485 were to the arm, shoulder or collar bone, 406 were to the wrist, 177 were to chest, trunk and 91 were to the ankle).

How old was the injured person?

Where the age of the injured person was known, 86% of fatalities and 96% of major injuries were to people of retirement age (60 plus). Of these injuries to persons age sixty or more, the vast majority were to people age eighty and above.

Table 7: Injuries to members of the public in residential care homes by age of injured person, 1991/92 to 1996/97

Age of injured person	Fatal	Major
pre-working age	0 - 5	11 ~
	6 - 10	9 ~
	11 - 15	6 ~
working age	16 - 59	7 136 4%
retirement age	60 - 69	5 102 3%
	70 - 79	5 486 13%
	80 plus	32 3 044 80%
Total (where age is known)	49	3 794 100%

~ less than 0.5%

Source of Injury Statistics.

The statistics in this fact sheet are based on injuries reported to local authorities under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 1985 and 1995. The statistics refer to injuries occurring in residential care homes, as defined by the Standard Industrial Classification 1992 activity 85.31 (Social work activities with accommodation).

Reporting of Injuries and the LFS

Local Authorities and HSE get to know about virtually all fatalities at work. However, not all non-fatal injuries are reported by employers and self-employed people. As a result, HSE places a set of accident questions each year in the Labour Force Survey (LFS). The most recent results show that employers currently report about 40% of non-fatal injuries to employed people.

The reporting levels vary between employers in different industries and are lowest in many parts of the services industry. This means that reported injuries understate the true risk of injury in the services industry, including residential care homes, compared with industry generally.

A fact sheet on the results of the LFS is available from the Operations Unit

Tables

Table 1: Fatal injuries to employees and members of the public by kind of accident, 1991/92 to 1996/97.

Table 2: Major injuries to employees by kind of accident, 1991/92 to 1996/97.

Table 3: Over-3-Day injuries to employees by kind of accident, 1991/92 to 1996/97.

Table 4: Major injuries to members of the public by kind of accident, 1991/92 to 1996/97.

Table 1: Fatal injuries to employees and members of the public by kind of accident, 1991/92 to 1996/97.

Employees	1991/92	1992/93	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	Total
Fall from a height	1	-	1	-	-	-	2
Members of the Public							
Struck by a moving object	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Striking a fixed object	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Slip or trip	5	1	3	-	-	-	9
Fall from a height	9	4	8	3	3	1	28
Drowning or asphyxiation	1	-	1	-	-	-	2
Contact with a harmful substance	1	-	-	1	-	-	2
Exposure to a fire	2	-	-	1	-	1	4
Other kind of accident	-	1	1	1	-	-	3
Total	18	6	15	6	3	6	50

Table 2: Major injuries to employees by kind of accident, 1991/92 to 1996/97.

	1991/92	1992/93	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	Total
Contact with moving machinery or material being machined	1	1	-	-	2	-	4
Struck by moving inc. flying/falling object	1	-	3	4	3	4	15
Struck by moving vehicle	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
Strike against something fixed or stationary	2	3	2		1	5	15
Injured whilst handling, lifting or carrying	3	3	3	6	7	13	35
Slip, trip or fall on same level	20	33	31	67	37	42	230
Fall from a height	7	11	11	7	5	20	61
Exposure to or contact with harmful substance	-	3	2	3	5	-	13
Exposure to fire	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Exposure to an explosion	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Contact with electricity or an electrical discharge	-	-	-	-	3	1	4
Injured by an animal	-	-	2	-	-	-	2
Acts of violence	-	-	-	-	-	21	21
Other kind of accident	2	3	2	-	-	3	10
Total	37	58	56	89	64	110	414

Under RIDDOR 95 the definition of a major injury was widened

Table 3: Over-3-Day injuries to employees by kind of accident, 1991/92 to 1996/97.

	1991/92	1992/93	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	Total
Contact with moving machinery or material being machined	9	5	7	2	5	1	29
Struck by moving inc. flying/falling object	12	20	25	37	18	33	145
Struck by moving vehicle	-	1	1	4	3	1	10
Strike against something fixed or stationary	7	12	16	15	13	15	78
Injured whilst handling, lifting or carrying	81	119	158	254	219	208	1 039
Slip, trip or fall on same level	47	57	74	97	70	70	415
Fall from a height	9	18	18	25	24	31	125
Exposure to or contact with harmful substance	6	8	22	16	34	21	107
Exposure to fire	1	-	-	-	1	2	4
Exposure to an explosion	-	1	-	-	1	-	2
Contact with electricity or an electrical discharge	2	3	2	1	-	3	11
Injured by an animal	1	-	2	2	1	-	6
Acts of Violence	-	-	-	-	-	95	95
Other kind of accident	12	16	3	3	2	12	48
Total	187	260	328	456	391	492	2 114

Table 4: Major injuries to members of the public by kind of accident, 1991/92 to 1996/97.

	1991/92	1992/93	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	Total
Contact with moving machinery or material being machined	-	-	-	3	2	2	7
Struck by moving inc. flying/falling object	4	1	5	6	7	6	29
Struck by moving vehicle	1	1	-	1	1	1	5
Strike against something fixed or stationary	4	2	7	6	12	16	47
Injured whilst handling, lifting or carrying	3	2	6	8	7	8	34
Slip, trip or fall on same level	241	407	597	770	876	497	3 388
Fall from a height	47	75	87	103	100	116	528
Drowning or asphyxiation	-	-	3	-	-	-	3
Exposure to or contact with harmful substance	3	2	2	-	-	10	17
Exposure to fire	1	1	1	-	1	1	5
Contact with electricity or an electrical discharge	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Injured by an animal	-	-	1	-	1	-	2
Other kind of accident	13	21	13	12	10	27	96
Total	317	512	723	909	1 017	684	4 162

Under RIDDOR 95 a non-fatal injury to a member of the public was widened to include such things as "taken to hospital",

