



# Construction

## Overview

The sector is performing relatively well, although there have been few significant improvements in recent times. It could do better in:

- reporting hazards, near misses and accidents all the time
- ensuring communication is two-way
- ensuring employees do not work when sick, injured or overtired
- checking and maintaining equipment and machinery regularly.

## Priorities

One significant change since 2014 is the proportion of employers who rank health and safety in their top three priorities (up from 57% to 68%).

But the trend has gone the other way for workers: fewer now rate health and safety among their top three priorities.

## Boss on site

A strong health and safety culture is more likely if a boss or supervisor is on site most or all of the time. For example, nine out of 10 workers who say a boss is on site most or all of the time will also say risks are discussed in an open and helpful way. If a boss is never on site, only about half of workers say discussion is open and helpful.

The same applies to reporting accidents: about three-quarters of workers with an on-site boss say this happens, compared with about half of workers whose boss is never on site. Having a boss on site and having undertaken recent health and safety training also lead to greater worker involvement in health and safety matters.

## Perceptions of risk

Employers and employees have more or less the same perception of workers' risk of suffering serious injury (53% and 59% respectively). This is the highest after forestry. Yet workers don't necessarily think they will be injured.

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**97%** say they feel safe at work.

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**53%** say they feel very safe.

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**13%** say there is a moderate risk of someone getting injured at their workplace in the next 12 months (down from 18% in 2014).

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## Training

Formal health and safety training for workers is higher than in any other sector (two-thirds report receiving such training in the previous 12 months). Training has led to more worker involvement in health and safety. Those receiving training in the previous six months are more likely to discuss risks openly than those without recent training (87% compared with 59%). Workers who receive training also report feeling more empowered to make a difference to workplace health and safety.

## Perception gap

There is a gap in employer-employee perceptions, and it is not closing. Employees are far more likely to say they risk injury through working when sick or injured, or when overtired (45% and 38% respectively) than employers (16% and 14%).

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**94%** of employers say they would support staff who stop work because of a health hazard.

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**73%** of workers feel they would get such support.

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The gap has widened over equipment maintenance. More employers say equipment is well maintained than a year ago (up from 61% to 71%), but fewer employees now say this is so (down from 51% to 44%).

Only half of workers say their boss praises or rewards those who work safely (compared with three-quarters of employers), and only half of workers say they are told how their views are considered when health and safety decisions are made, compared with four-fifths of employers who think this happens.

## Reporting hazards, accidents and near misses

Only 62% of workers say they report hazards, accidents and near misses to bosses most or all of the time. This is the lowest reporting rate of any of the priority sectors, and is lower than a year earlier when it was 69%. This is despite:

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**ABOUT**  
**9 in 10** workers saying they are confident they know how to report such incidents.

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**ABOUT**  
**9 in 10** workers saying they would feel confident about approaching their boss or supervisor about a health and safety problem.

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**ABOUT**  
**3 in 4** saying they would not get into trouble if they told their boss about a near miss.

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## Safety practices

Workers say practices such as holding safety meetings and appointing safety representatives have declined.

The number reporting regular meetings during the past 12 months fell from 69% to 57%.

## Communication

Communication is a mixed bag:

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**MORE THAN**  
**8 in 10** workers feel they have a say in health and safety decisions.

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**NEARLY**  
**9 in 10** would not worry about getting into trouble for reporting a near miss

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**ONLY**  
**5 in 10** say they are told how their views are taken into account in making health and safety decisions (compared with 84% of employers who feel this happens).

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**ONLY**  
**7 in 10** workers find health and safety information easy to understand (compared with 88% of employers who feel this is so).

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