

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Additional Estimates 2014 - 2015

Agency - Safe Work Australia

Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ15-000039

Senator Lines asked on 26 February 2015 on proof Hansard page 81

Question

SWA - Increase in deaths in construction

Senator LINES: With the increase in deaths in construction, do any particular states stand out or has there been a general increase of tragic deaths? Is there a way to explain that?

Ms Baxter: We do not have that information with us. I can take that on notice to see if we can get you that information.

Answer

Table 1 shows the number of worker fatalities in the construction industry from 2003 to 2014* by state/territory where the incident occurred. Based on these statistics no particular state or territory stands out for the years 2003 to 2013. The available statistical information does not provide an explanation about the causes underlying the year to year variation in fatality numbers.

Fatality numbers do not take into account the number of workers employed in construction. Therefore, caution needs to be exercised in comparing fatality numbers between years.

Taking into account the number of people employed in the industry, fatality rates (the number of fatalities per 100,000 workers) indicate that fatalities in construction have been declining since 2011 across Australia.

Table 1: Number of worker fatalities and national fatality rate in construction by state/territory of death, 2003 to 2014

State/territory of death	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014*	Total
NSW	14	8	15	16	11	8	11	15	8	10	3	6	125
QLD	7	9	8	15	10	17	9	8	15	8	5	11	122
VIC	12	10	2	6	10	7	7	7	9	5	4	4	83
WA	5	2	2	2	8	3	4	3	5		6	4	44
SA		2	3	2	3	3	3	6	2	2	1	3	30
TAS	4				2		1	2	1	2	2	1	15
NT		3		1	1		1		1	1	1		9
ACT	1	1		1						2			5
Total	43	35	30	43	45	38	36	41	41	30	22	29	433
National Fatality Rate	5.7	4.4	3.5	4.7	4.7	3.8	3.6	4.0	4.0	3.0	2.1	n/a	

* 2014 data is preliminary only. Figures are revised as new information is available via coronial reports and jurisdictional notifications.