

Aiming for Zero Harm in the Waste and Recycling Industry

2015 Data Update

This briefing presents a more detailed breakdown of ESA's health and safety data, which has been revised, where appropriate, to include our most recent 2015 data.

Our latest data shows that ESA Members achieved a 32% reduction in injuries in 2015, the greatest annual reduction since the launch of our Accident Reduction Charter in 2004. ESA's RIDDOR rate now stands at 628 (per 100,000 employees) and is our lowest to date.

The Charter represents ESA's high level statement of intent and includes ambitious targets to reduce RIDDOR reportable accidents by 10% each year. ESA's Board has revised the Charter on a number of occasions since its launch, and on each occasion has renewed its commitment to further 10% year on year reduction targets. In fact, since the launch of the Charter, ESA Members have reduced injuries by 85%.

The progress achieved by ESA Members is all the more significant given the waste management industry's transformation over the last decade. In helping the UK towards a 45% recycling rate the waste industry has had to adapt its working practices over a relatively short period of time, becoming increasingly more mechanised and more labour intensive as we handle and recycle an ever more diverse range of society's waste.

But new technology and techniques deployed to recycle waste introduce new risks into the workplace, and workers are increasingly interacting with an array of heavy plant and equipment.

While ESA clearly has more to do to achieve our ambition of zero harm we are at least heading in the right direction. In fact, as shown in our health and safety report published earlier this year,¹ ESA's health and safety performance far exceeds that of the wider waste management industry. An analysis of ESA's data against accident statistics published by HSE reveals significant variation in health and safety performance between key sectors and organisations within the industry.

ESA's RIDDOR of 628 in 2015 remains lower than the (provisional) injury rate of 1,854 as reported by HSE for the waste management industry as a whole, while over the 6 year period from 2009-2015 the 67.5% reduction in injuries achieved by ESA Members was not mirrored by the industry as a whole (17.5% reduction).²

It is of course difficult to pin-point any single factor which has led to the overall reduction in ESA's injury rate, which in practice is likely to be a combination of:

- compilation of best practice into industry-led guidance documents for wider dissemination;
- targeted rehabilitation programmes to help people return to work;
- stronger health and safety culture within organisations; and
- improved behavioural safety initiatives.

¹ http://www.esauk.org/reports_press_releases/esa_reports/20160224_Aiming_for_Zero_Harm_in_the_Waste_and_Recycling_Industry.pdf

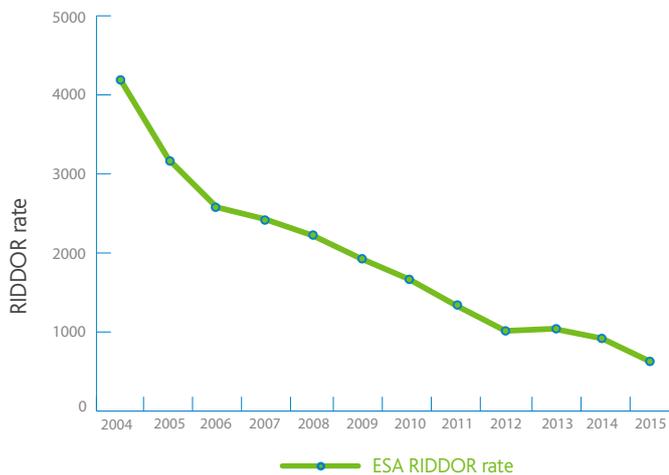
² Please note: ESA uses the calendar year for the reporting of health and safety data, while HSE uses the financial year

Fig 1: Summary of ESA data (2014 and 2015)

RIDDOR reportable incidents	2014	2015
RIDDOR incidence rate (per 100,000 employees)	919	628
Total fatal injuries	1	1
Total specified injuries	57	69
Total over-7 day injuries	262	189

A significant reduction in over-7day injuries led to an overall 32% reduction in injuries in 2015.

Fig 2: ESA's injury rate



ESA Members have reduced RIDDOR reportable injuries by 85% since the launch of ESA's Accident Reduction Charter in 2004.

Fig 3: comparison of ESA's injury rate with the rest of the waste industry



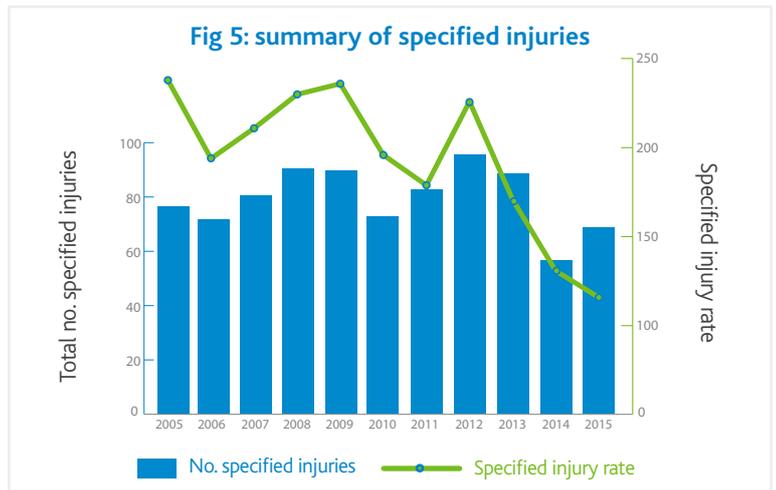
ESA performs well against the waste management industry as a whole, with ESA's 67.5% reduction in injuries between 2009-2015 not mirrored by the rest of the industry.

Fig 4: summary of fatal injuries

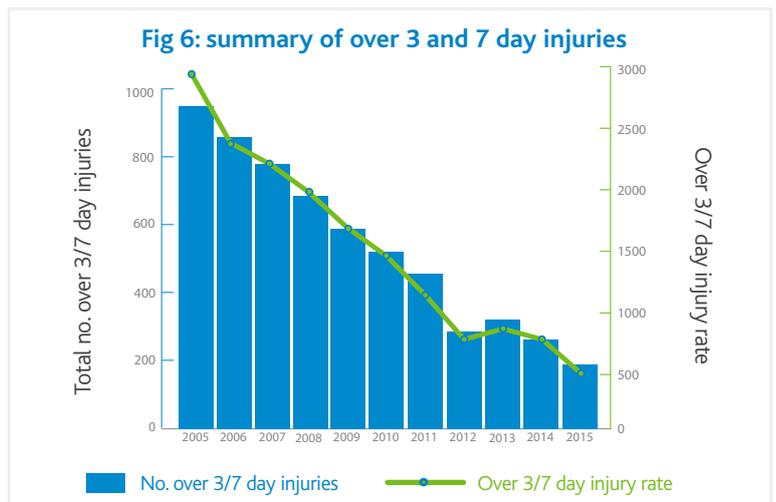


The relatively small number of such incidents makes it difficult to identify trends. However, it is clear that ESA still has some way to go to achieving our ambition of zero harm.

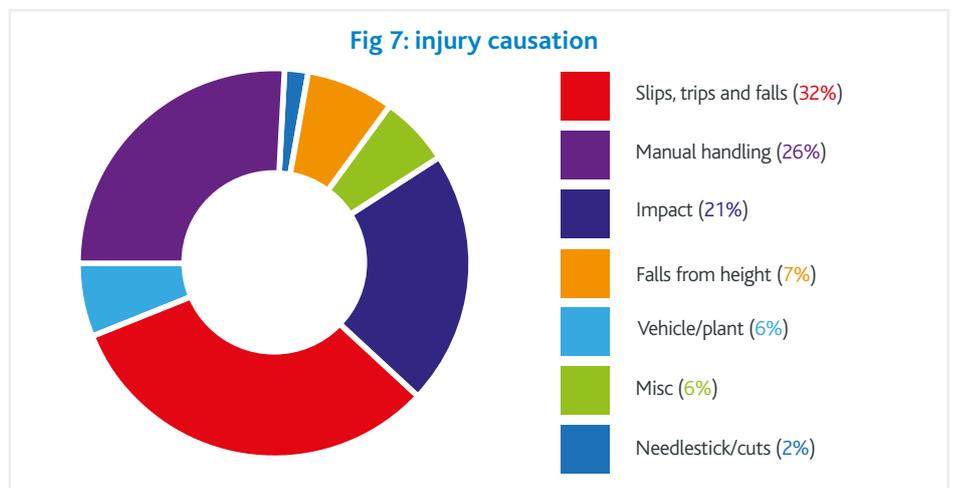
While there is clearly variation in the number of specified injuries there is an overall downward trend in such incidents.



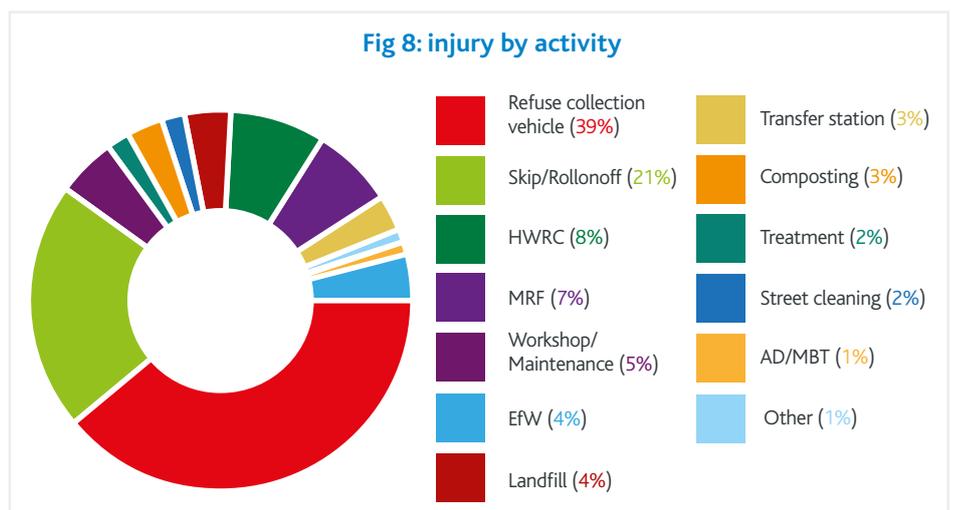
The decline in over-3 (and then 7) day injuries has been a key contributory factor to ESA's overall reduction in injuries. Changes were introduced from 2013 to the reporting of over 3 day injuries, with our data reflecting the new reporting requirements.



Slips, trips & falls were responsible for a third of all non-fatal injuries reported by ESA Members in 2015. Together, slips, trips & falls; manual handling & impact injuries make up nearly 80% of all reported incidents. There has been little variation in this trend between previous reporting years.



Waste collection activities remain the most hazardous aspect of the waste management industry's operations, with the majority of non-fatal injuries in 2015 (60%) associated with such activities.



Conclusion

While ESA achieved its lowest RIDDOR rate in 2015 there is no getting away from the fact that the waste industry's injury rate remains stubbornly higher than the all-UK industry average. However, it is nonetheless encouraging to note that ESA's accident reduction of 67.5% since 2009 compares favourably with the level of injury reductions achieved by other industrial sectors, and surpassing that of the all UK-industry average (44% reduction) over the same period.

Going forward, ESA will seek to maintain its position as an industry leader in health and safety and remains committed to its accident reduction targets. Working with the Waste Industry Safety & Health (WISH) Forum (and SWITCH in Scotland) we aim to disseminate best practice and to help drive up standards across the board.

About ESA

The Environmental Services Association (ESA) is the trade association for the UK's resource and waste management sector. We work with our members to transform waste and resource management across the country. This work helps enable our members to turn the UK's waste into valuable resources, whilst continually protecting the environment.

We work with all levels of government, regulators and the public to deliver a more sustainable waste and resource management solution for the UK. ESA's recent Circular Economy report 'Going for Growth – A practical route to a circular economy', which outlines how a Circular rather than a linear economy can help manage resources sustainably, can be downloaded from our website.

ESA's Members manage waste on behalf of the whole of society and we are recovering more than ever before. For example, the industry has helped quadruple the UK's household recycling rates over the last 10 years.

The sector at a glance



Total turnover: £11 billion



Direct Employment: 106,000 people (*including waste collection, treatment and materials recovery*)



Municipal waste handled each year: 27 million tonnes



Energy generated (across landfill gas, anaerobic digestion and energy from waste) each year: approximately 11,867 GWh, which is 3.5% of the UK's electricity. 9,083 GWh of that was renewable electricity (taking out non-biodegradable portion of EfW) which is 11% of UK's renewable electricity



Greenhouse gas emissions down by 70% since 1990



The top seven companies account for approximately 40% of turnover. Many hundreds of SME's provide either localised or more specialised services



For more information about this report please contact:
Stephen Freeland, Policy Advisor, (s-freeland@esauk.org)
Toni Waters, Communications Officer, (t-waters@esauk.org)

Environmental Services Association
154 Buckingham Palace Road, London, SW1W 9TR
Tel: 0207 824 8882

ESA: [@ESA_tweets](https://twitter.com/ESA_tweets) / SESA: [@SESA_tweets](https://twitter.com/SESA_tweets) / WESA: [@WESA_tweets](https://twitter.com/WESA_tweets)

www.esauk.org

November 2016