

News

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NATIONAL CENSUS OF FATAL OCCUPATIONAL INJURIES, 1997

The number of fatal work injuries that occurred during 1997 was 6,218, about the same as the previous year's total, according to the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor. Decreases in deaths from job-related homicides and aircraft crashes in 1997 were offset by increases in work-related deaths from highway crashes, falls, and being caught in running equipment. (See table 1.) The construction industry reported the largest number of fatal work injuries and accounted for half of worker fatalities from falls. Taxicab drivers and police and detectives were among the occupations with the largest increases in fatalities over the previous year.

Profiles of 1997 fatal work injuries

In 1997, job-related highway fatalities reached their highest level since the BLS fatality census began in 1992. Increases in the number of workers killed in crashes with objects on the side of the road, jack-knifing tractor-trailer rigs, and overturning vehicles were largely responsible for the rise in highway fatalities over the 1996 total. The following table shows the major types of highway incidents in which workers were killed in 1997.

Type of highway incident	Number	Percent
Collision between vehicles.....	639	46
Moving in opposite directions.....	229	17
Moving in intersection.....	142	10
Moving in same direction	103	7
Moving and standing vehicle	45	3
Vehicle struck object on side of road.....	258	19
Vehicle struck object in roadway.....	22	2
Noncollision incident.....	384	28
Jack-knifed or overturned	295	21
Ran off highway	48	3
Other type of incident	84	6

Highway crashes were the leading cause of on-the-job fatalities and accounted for 22 percent of the 1997 fatal work injury total. (See table 1 and chart 1.) Ninety percent of workers killed in highway crashes were driving the vehicle at the time of the incident. Almost half of the highway fatality victims were employed as truckdrivers or in other jobs operating motor vehicles

as a profession. The number of highway fatalities among these occupations increased by about one-fifth over the 1996 total. Other victims worked in various fields in which highway travel is incidental to the primary work activities, including sales, farming, nursing and social work, police and firefighting, construction, and management.

Twenty percent of the worker fatalities resulted from other types of transportation-related incidents, such as tractors and forklifts overturning in fields or in warehouses, workers being struck by vehicles, aircraft and railway crashes, and water vessels capsizing. Worker deaths from railway crashes, while relatively few in number, were at the highest level in the last six years. Most of these fatalities occurred when the vehicle the worker was driving or riding in was struck by a train at a railroad crossing. Because there were no major commercial airline crashes in 1997, worker deaths from aircraft crashes were at their lowest level in the last six years.

Workplace homicides fell to their lowest level in the past six years, but continued as the second leading cause of job-related deaths. The 7 percent drop in workplace homicides from 1996 was consistent with a decline in homicides nationally during the period, as reported by the Department of Justice. Four-fifths of the workplace homicides resulted from shootings. Robbery continued to be the primary motive of job-related homicide when a motive could be ascertained from the source documents. Disputes among coworkers and with customers and clients accounted for about one-tenth of the total and declined by over one-third from the previous year.

Circumstances or alleged perpetrator	Number	Percent
Robberies and other crimes	731	85
Robberies	338	39
Work associates	81	9
Coworker, former coworker	56	7
Customer, client	25	3
Relatives	24	3
Husband, ex-husband	16	2
Other relative	8	1
Other personal acquaintances	20	2
Boyfriend, ex-boyfriend	11	1
Other acquaintance	9	1

Deaths resulting from on-the-job falls rose slightly over 1996 totals to their highest level in the six years data have been collected and accounted for 11 percent of the fatality total. About one-half of the falls occurred to workers in the construction industry. Falls from roofs, scaffolds, and ladders predominated. Services accounted for about one-tenth of the total.

Nine percent of the worker fatalities occurred when workers were struck by objects, such as vehicles falling from jacks during repair, beams or other objects falling from cranes or forklifts, and trees falling while being cut down. Another 7 percent of the fatal work injuries resulted from workers being caught in running equipment, trench cave-ins, or collapsing structures. Workers fatally injured from being caught in running equipment, such as agricultural and manufacturing equipment, were at a six-year high.

Electrocutions accounted for 5 percent of the fatal injuries, and fires and explosions accounted for 3 percent. Job-related electrocutions resulting from contact with overhead power

lines increased by almost one-fifth over the 1996 total, yet were consistent with counts reported for the previous five years.

On average, about 17 workers were fatally injured each day during 1997. Eighty-four percent of fatally injured workers died the day they were injured; 97 percent died within 30 days. There were 220 multiple-fatality incidents (incidents that resulted in two or more worker deaths), resulting in 544 job-related deaths. This was an increase of 16 percent more multiple-fatality incidents than in 1996, when 189 events resulted in 546 fatal work injuries.

Occupation highlights (table 2 and chart 2):

* Occupations with large numbers of fatal injuries included truck drivers, construction trades, farm occupations, and sales occupations. Fatal injuries to truck drivers were at their highest level in the six-year period, while the number of fatalities to workers in sales occupations fell to its lowest level in the six-year period.

* Primarily as a result of increases in homicides and highway fatalities, on-the-job fatalities to police and detectives and taxicab drivers rose by about one-third after falling in 1996.

* Commercial fishers experienced a 24 percent drop in fatal work injuries in 1997 over the 1996 total, yet this remains one of the most dangerous occupations. (For more information on fatalities to fishers, see "Fishing for a Living is Dangerous Work" in BLS Report 922, *Fatal Workplace Injuries in 1996: A Collection of Data and Analysis*.)

Relative risk (tables 3 and 4):

A comparison of percent distributions of fatalities and employment can be used to evaluate the relative risk of a job-related fatality for a given occupation, industry, or worker characteristic. For example, the construction industry accounted for about 18 percent of the fatality total, 3 times its 6-percent share of total employment. While employment can be used to evaluate the relative risk of a fatal work injury, other measures, such as employee exposure hours, also can be used. (The annual average employment data shown in tables 3 and 4 are from the Current Population Survey.)

Industry highlights (table 3):

* Construction and transportation and public utilities together accounted for about one-third of the fatal work injuries and reported increases over 1996 fatality totals consistent with increases in their employment totals.

* Industry divisions with large numbers of fatalities relative to their employment include agriculture, forestry, and fishing; construction; transportation and public utilities; and mining.

Demographic highlights (table 4):

* Men, the self-employed, and older workers suffer fatal injuries more often than their employment shares would suggest. Differences in the industries and occupations of these worker groups explain in part their high relative risk of fatal injury on the job. (For more information on relative risk among worker groups, see "Denominator Choice in the Calculation of Workplace Fatality Rates" in BLS Report 922.)

* The majority of fatally injured workers under 16 years of age were killed while doing farm work, often involving a farm vehicle.

* Highway-related incidents were the leading events for job-related fatalities among both men and women in 1997. In prior years, homicides had been more frequent than highway deaths for women.

State highlights (table 5):

* In general, states that have the largest number of persons employed also reported the largest number of work-related fatalities. Twelve of the largest states accounted for almost half of the total fatality count; three of the states--California, Texas, and Florida--accounted for one-fourth of the total. A state's industry mix, however, also must be considered when evaluating its occupational fatality profile, especially when large numbers of workers are employed in relatively dangerous industries, such as agriculture, mining, and construction. (For more information on variations in state fatality counts, see "State and Industry Fatal Occupational Injuries, 1992-96" in BLS Report 922.)

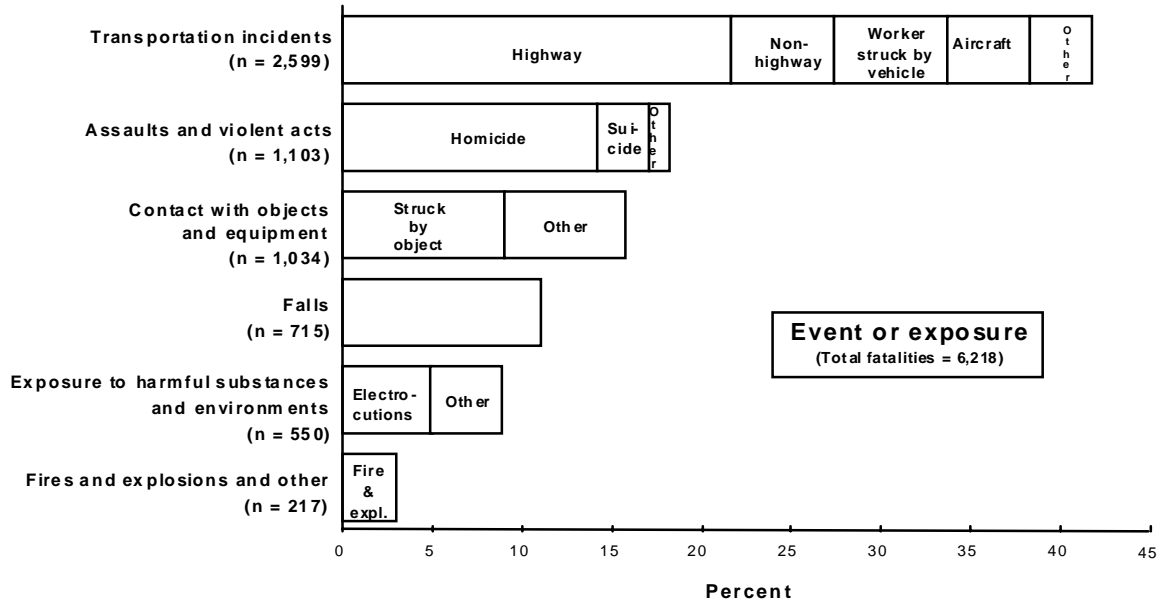
Background of the program

The Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, part of the BLS safety and health statistics program, provides the most complete count of fatal work injuries available because it uses diverse state and federal data sources to identify, verify, and profile fatal work injuries. Information about each workplace fatality (occupation and other worker characteristics, equipment being used, and circumstances of the event) is obtained by cross-referencing source documents, such as death certificates, workers' compensation records, and reports to federal and state agencies. This method assures counts are as complete and accurate as possible.

This is the sixth year that the fatality census has been conducted in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The BLS fatality census is a federal/state cooperative venture in which costs are shared equally. Additional state-specific data are available from the participating state agencies listed in table 6.

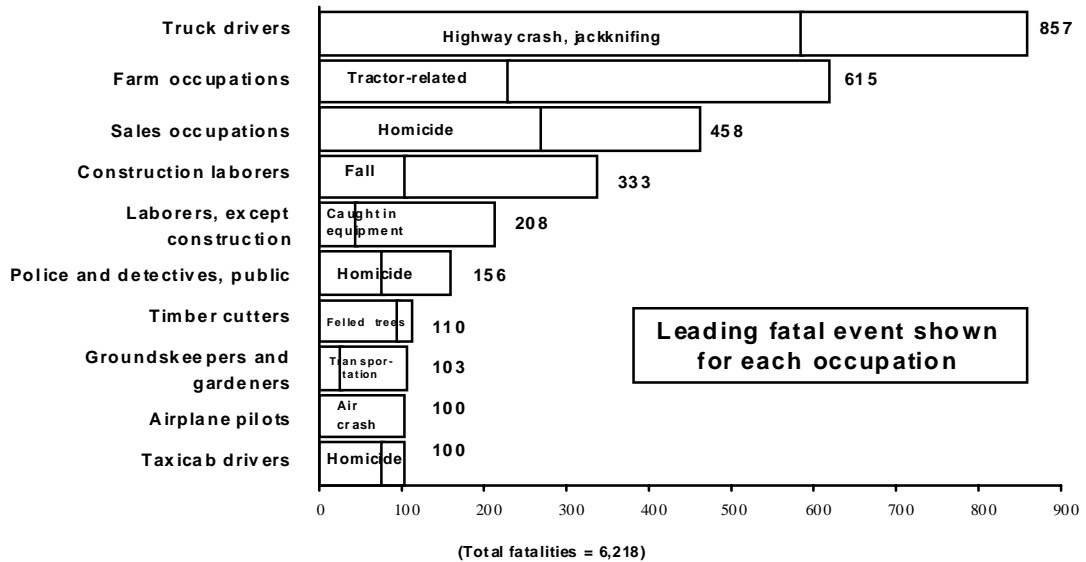
Another BLS program, the Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses, profiles worker and case characteristics of nonfatal workplace injuries and illnesses that result in lost worktime and presents frequency counts and incidence rates by industry. Copies of the 1996 news release on nonfatal injuries and illnesses are available from BLS by calling (202) 606-6304. Incidence rates for 1997 by industry will be published in December 1998, and information on 1997 worker and case characteristics will be available in April 1999. For additional occupational safety and health data, access the BLS World Wide Web Internet site: <http://www.bls.gov/oshhome.htm>. To request a copy of BLS Report 922, e-mail your address to CFOIstaff@bls.gov or write to Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE, Room 3180, Washington, DC 20212.

Chart 1: The manner in which workplace fatalities occurred, 1997



Highway vehicle incidents and homicide led all other fatal events.

Chart 2: Occupations with large numbers of worker fatalities and the leading event, 1997



Truck driver fatalities, primarily involving highway crashes and jackknifings, accounted for 14 percent of the job-related fatalities.

Table 1. Fatal occupational injuries by event or exposure, 1992-97

Event or exposure ¹	Fatalities			
	1992-96 average	1996 ²	1997	
		Number	Number	Percent
Total	6,331	6,202	6,218	100
Transportation incidents	2,587	2,601	2,599	42
Highway	1,287	1,346	1,387	22
Collision between vehicles, mobile equipment.....	640	667	639	10
Moving in same direction	104	96	103	2
Moving in opposite directions, oncoming	228	220	229	4
Moving in intersection	125	153	142	2
Vehicle struck stationary object or equipment.....	231	243	280	5
Noncollision	343	352	384	6
Jackknifed or overturned--no collision	250	266	295	5
Nonhighway (farm, industrial premises)	400	374	377	6
Overturned.....	213	206	216	3
Aircraft.....	334	324	261	4
Worker struck by a vehicle	369	353	367	6
Water vehicle	106	119	109	2
Railway.....	78	74	93	1
Assaults and violent acts	1,275	1,165	1,103	18
Homicides	1,032	927	856	14
Shooting.....	839	761	705	11
Stabbing.....	78	80	73	1
Other, including bombing	115	86	78	1
Self-inflicted injuries.....	213	204	212	3
Contact with objects and equipment	998	1,010	1,034	17
Struck by object	568	582	578	9
Struck by falling object	365	403	384	6
Struck by flying object	69	58	53	1
Caught in or compressed by equipment or objects.....	289	285	320	5
Caught in running equipment or machinery	147	146	189	3
Caught in or crushed in collapsing materials.....	122	131	118	2
Falls	645	691	715	11
Fall to lower level	562	610	652	10
Fall from ladder.....	87	97	116	2
Fall from roof.....	130	149	154	2
Fall from scaffold	79	88	87	1
Fall on same level.....	56	52	44	1
Exposure to harmful substances or environments	596	533	550	9
Contact with electric current	327	281	297	5
Contact with overhead powerlines.....	128	116	138	2
Contact with temperature extremes.....	42	33	40	1
Exposure to caustic, noxious, or allergenic substance	121	123	123	2
Inhalation of substances	75	76	59	1
Oxygen deficiency	105	95	87	1
Drowning, submersion.....	81	70	70	1
Fires and explosions	193	185	196	3
Other events or exposures ³	37	17	21	-

¹ Based on the 1992 BLS Occupational Injury and Illness Classification Structures.

² The BLS news release issued August 7, 1997, reported a total of 6,112 fatal work injuries for calendar year 1996. Since then, an additional 90 job-related fatalities were identified, bringing the total job-related fatality count for 1996 to 6,202.

³ Includes the category "Bodily reaction and exertion."

NOTE: Totals for major categories may include subcategories not shown separately. Percentages may not add to totals because of rounding. Dashes indicate less than 0.5 percent or data that are not available or that do not meet publication criteria.

SOURCE: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, in cooperation with state and federal agencies, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, 1992-1997.

Table 2. Fatal occupational injuries by occupation and major event or exposure, 1997

Occupation ¹	Fatalities		Major event or exposure ² (percent)			
	Number	Percent	Highway ³	Homicide	Struck by object	Fall to lower level
Total.....	6,218	100	22	14	9	10
Managerial and professional specialty	667	11	26	23	4	8
Executive, administrative, and managerial.....	417	7	23	30	5	11
Professional specialty.....	250	4	32	12	2	3
Technical, sales, and administrative support	733	12	20	41	2	3
Technicians and related support occupations.....	172	3	14	2	-	2
Aircraft pilots and navigators.....	100	2	-	-	-	-
Sales occupations.....	458	7	19	59	2	3
Supervisors and proprietors, sales occupations.....	223	4	10	67	2	4
Sales workers, retail and personal services.....	182	3	19	63	2	2
Cashiers.....	84	1	-	92	-	-
Administrative support occupations, including clerical..	103	2	36	27	3	4
Service occupations	492	8	20	37	3	7
Protective service occupations.....	283	5	24	39	2	2
Firefighting and fire prevention occupations, including supervisors.....	49	1	22	-	8	-
Police and detectives, including supervisors.....	156	3	32	43	-	4
Guards, including supervisors.....	78	1	8	55	-	-
Farming, forestry, and fishing	923	15	9	1	21	6
Farm operators and managers.....	386	6	10	-	12	5
Farmers, except horticultural.....	296	5	10	-	12	6
Managers, farms, except horticultural.....	71	1	11	-	13	-
Other agricultural and related occupations.....	349	6	13	2	15	10
Farm workers, including supervisors.....	213	3	14	2	11	6
Forestry and logging occupations.....	128	2	2	-	74	4
Timber cutting and logging occupations.....	110	2	3	-	75	3
Fishers, hunters, and trappers.....	60	1	-	-	5	-
Fishers, including vessel captains and officers.....	58	1	-	-	6	-
Precision production, craft, and repair	1,094	18	10	3	12	26
Mechanics and repairers.....	325	5	13	6	18	13
Construction trades.....	593	10	8	2	6	39
Carpenters and apprentices.....	98	2	13	4	11	43
Electricians and apprentices.....	94	2	6	-	4	17
Painters.....	39	1	-	-	-	64
Roofers.....	55	1	5	-	-	75
Structural metal workers.....	45	1	-	-	-	80
Operators, fabricators, and laborers	2,161	35	34	7	9	9
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors.....	221	4	6	5	17	10
Transportation and material moving occupations.....	1,271	20	52	9	7	3
Motor vehicle operators.....	1,026	17	63	11	4	2
Truck drivers.....	857	14	68	3	5	3
Driver-sales workers.....	44	1	66	25	-	-
Taxicab drivers and chauffeurs.....	100	2	23	76	-	-
Material moving equipment operators.....	169	3	8	2	20	5
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers..	669	11	9	5	11	20
Construction laborers.....	333	5	9	-	11	30
Laborers, except construction.....	208	3	7	4	13	11
Military ⁴	94	2	14	1	3	2

¹ Based on the 1990 Occupational Classification System developed by the Bureau of the Census.

² The figure shown is the percent of the total fatalities for that occupational group.

³ "Highway" includes deaths to vehicle occupants resulting from traffic incidents that occur on the public roadway, shoulder, or surrounding area. It excludes incidents occurring entirely off the roadway, such as in parking lots and on farms; incidents involving trains; and deaths to pedestrians or other nonpassengers.

⁴ Resident armed forces.

NOTE: Totals for major categories may include subcategories not shown separately. Percentages may not add to totals because of rounding. There were 51 fatalities for which there was insufficient information to determine an occupation classification. Dashes indicate less than 0.5 percent or data that are not available or that do not meet publication criteria.

SOURCE: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, in cooperation with state and federal agencies, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, 1997.

Table 3. Fatal occupational injuries and employment by industry, 1997

Industry	SIC code ¹	Fatalities				Employment ² (in thousands)	
		1992-96 average	1996 (revised)	1997		Number	Percent
		Number	Number	Number	Percent		
Total		6,331	6,202	6,218	100	130,810	100
Private industry		5,638	5,597	5,594	90	111,417	85
Agriculture, forestry, and fishing		826	806	830	13	3,479	3
Agricultural production - crops	01	390	337	373	6	985	1
Agricultural production - livestock	02	174	157	182	3	1,205	1
Agricultural services	07	157	172	176	3	1,199	1
Mining		169	153	158	3	632	-
Coal mining	12	45	39	32	1	84	-
Oil and gas extraction	13	87	83	85	1	369	-
Construction		996	1,047	1,107	18	7,844	6
General building contractors	15	176	184	194	3	-	-
Heavy construction, except building	16	247	248	252	4	-	-
Special trades contractors	17	568	606	648	10	-	-
Manufacturing		751	725	743	12	20,765	16
Food and kindred products	20	81	73	78	1	1,697	1
Lumber and wood products	24	204	204	199	3	817	1
Transportation and public utilities		922	970	1,002	16	7,594	6
Local and interurban passenger transportation	41	113	79	106	2	551	-
Trucking and warehousing	42	484	520	569	9	2,560	2
Transportation by air	45	93	115	83	1	822	1
Electric, gas, and sanitary services	49	85	89	89	1	1,060	1
Wholesale trade		260	270	241	4	4,896	4
Retail trade		741	681	665	11	21,782	17
Food stores	54	209	180	189	3	3,643	3
Automotive dealers and service stations	55	120	98	115	2	2,217	2
Eating and drinking places	58	182	166	150	2	6,581	5
Finance, insurance, and real estate		119	116	97	2	8,080	6
Services		782	776	722	12	36,346	28
Business services	73	207	168	181	3	6,024	5
Automotive repair, services, and parking	75	102	104	109	2	1,623	1
Government³		693	605	624	10	19,393	15
Federal (including resident armed forces)		228	184	162	3	4,461	3
State		127	130	127	2	5,031	4
Local		331	289	331	5	9,901	8
Police protection	9221	99	76	113	2	-	-

¹ Standard Industrial Classification Manual, 1987 Edition.

² The employment is an annual average of employed civilians 16 years of age and older, plus resident armed forces, from the Current Population Survey, 1997.

³ Includes fatalities to workers employed by governmental organizations regardless of industry.

NOTE: Totals for major categories may include subcategories not shown separately. Percentages may not add to totals because of rounding. There were 31 fatalities for which there was insufficient information to determine a specific industry classification, though a distinction between private sector and government was made for each. Dashes indicate less than 0.5 percent or data that are not available or that do not meet publication criteria.

SOURCE: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, in cooperation with state and federal agencies, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, 1992-1997.

Table 4. Fatal occupational injuries and employment by selected worker characteristics, 1997

Characteristics	Fatalities		Employment (in thousands) ¹		Most frequent events ² (percent of total)
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Total.....	6,218	100	130,810	100	Highway (22 percent), homicide (14 percent)
Employee status					
Wage and salary workers	4,959	80	120,126	92	Highway (24), homicide (13)
Self-employed ³	1,259	20	10,684	8	Homicide (18), highway (14)
Sex and age					
Men.....	5,743	92	70,769	54	Highway (21), homicide (12)
Women	475	8	60,041	46	Highway (36), homicide (31)
Both sexes⁴					
Under 16 years.....	21	-	-	-	Nonhighway vehicle-related (38)
16 to 17 years	41	1	2,650	2	Highway (22), homicide (22)
18 to 19 years	113	2	4,102	3	Highway (16), struck by object (16)
20 to 24 years	503	8	12,758	10	" (23)
25 to 34 years	1,319	21	32,288	25	" (21)
35 to 44 years	1,520	24	36,174	28	" (20)
45 to 54 years	1,298	21	26,780	20	" (24)
55 to 64 years	870	14	12,297	9	" (25)
65 years and over	519	8	3,761	3	" (22)
Race					
White.....	5,098	82	110,819	85	Highway (23)
Black.....	676	11	14,211	11	Highway (24)
Asian or Pacific Islander	189	3	-	-	Homicide (46)
American Indian, Aleut, Eskimo.....	35	1	-	-	Fall to lower level (17)
Other or not reported	220	4	-	-	Highway (18)
Hispanic origin					
Hispanic ⁵	656	11	12,813	10	Homicide (17)

¹ The employment is an annual average of employed civilians 16 years of age and older, plus resident armed forces, from the Current Population Survey, 1997.

² "Highway" includes deaths to vehicle occupants resulting from traffic incidents that occur on the public roadway, shoulder, or surrounding area. It excludes incidents occurring entirely off the roadway, such as in parking lots and on farms. "Nonhighway" includes transport-related deaths of vehicle occupants that occur or originate entirely off the roadway. Incidents involving trains and deaths to pedestrians or other nonpassengers are excluded from both categories.

³ Includes paid and unpaid family workers and may include owners of incorporated businesses or members of partnerships.

⁴ There were 14 fatalities for which age was not reported.

⁵ Persons identified as Hispanic may be of any race. Hispanic employment does not include resident armed forces.

NOTE: Totals may include subcategories not shown separately. Percentages may not add to totals because of rounding. Dashes indicate less than 0.5 percent or data that are not available or that do not meet publication criteria.

SOURCE: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, in cooperation with state and federal agencies, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, 1997.

Table 5. Fatal occupational injuries by State and event or exposure, 1997

State of injury	Total fatalities ¹		Event or exposure ² (percent of State total for 1997)					
	1996 (revised)	1997	Transportation incidents ³	Assaults and violent acts ⁴	Contact with objects and equipment	Falls	Exposure to harmful substances or environments	Fires and explosions
Total ⁵	6,202	6,218	42	18	17	11	9	3
Alabama.....	155	139	50	19	17	6	7	-
Alaska.....	63	51	65	12	12	-	8	-
Arizona.....	77	58	36	26	14	12	9	-
Arkansas.....	88	102	47	15	19	5	10	5
California.....	641	636	36	26	12	13	8	3
Colorado.....	90	120	48	14	15	15	6	-
Connecticut.....	35	32	47	-	16	22	-	-
Delaware.....	18	17	53	-	-	-	-	-
District of Columbia.....	19	23	-	52	-	22	-	-
Florida.....	333	366	39	22	12	13	10	3
Georgia.....	213	241	43	16	17	12	10	2
Hawaii.....	27	19	37	-	-	-	21	-
Idaho.....	62	56	45	9	34	-	-	-
Illinois.....	262	240	39	21	14	15	8	2
Indiana.....	143	190	42	19	17	11	6	4
Iowa.....	70	80	44	5	22	14	11	-
Kansas.....	85	93	61	5	16	11	-	4
Kentucky.....	141	143	52	16	15	7	8	-
Louisiana.....	134	137	41	12	16	12	15	4
Maine.....	23	19	47	-	26	-	-	-
Maryland.....	82	82	32	29	12	13	12	-
Massachusetts.....	62	69	36	19	13	25	6	-
Michigan.....	155	174	35	18	20	13	7	6
Minnesota.....	92	72	47	10	21	12	7	-
Mississippi.....	103	104	40	22	12	14	11	-
Missouri.....	140	123	44	16	14	10	15	-
Montana.....	50	56	45	29	14	7	-	-
Nebraska.....	56	46	48	-	17	11	13	-
Nevada.....	52	55	38	25	16	13	7	-
New Hampshire.....	11	23	30	30	26	-	-	-
New Jersey.....	100	101	31	18	13	16	20	-
New Mexico.....	60	50	44	10	8	-	24	8
New York (except N.Y.C.).....	169	155	43	10	21	8	7	9
New York City.....	148	109	13	47	9	25	4	-
North Carolina.....	191	210	43	15	23	10	7	2
North Dakota.....	23	35	40	-	26	26	-	-
Ohio.....	201	201	45	13	23	10	6	2
Oklahoma.....	87	104	46	14	15	12	5	7
Oregon.....	85	84	49	12	20	12	-	-
Pennsylvania.....	282	259	43	15	17	13	9	4
Rhode Island.....	6	10	80	-	-	-	-	-
South Carolina.....	109	129	36	36	16	5	5	-
South Dakota.....	32	23	52	-	30	-	-	-
Tennessee.....	152	168	41	18	18	10	7	5
Texas.....	514	460	46	14	16	9	12	4
Utah.....	64	66	50	8	27	6	-	-
Vermont.....	7	9	78	-	-	-	-	-
Virginia.....	153	166	40	16	19	13	8	-
Washington.....	128	112	46	13	18	11	10	-
West Virginia.....	66	53	38	-	34	-	15	-
Wisconsin.....	108	114	40	10	19	13	13	4
Wyoming.....	28	29	41	-	14	-	-	-

¹ Includes other events and exposures such as bodily reaction, in addition to those shown separately.

² Based on the 1992 BLS Occupational Injury and Illness Classification Structures.

³ Includes highway, nonhighway, air, water, and rail fatalities and fatalities to workers struck by vehicles.

⁴ Includes violence by persons, self-inflicted injuries, and assaults by animals.

⁵ Includes fatalities that occurred outside the territorial boundaries of the 50 States.

NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding. Dashes indicate less than 0.5 percent or data that are not available or that do not meet publication criteria.

SOURCE: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, in cooperation with State and Federal Agencies, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, 1996-1997.

Table 6. CFI participating State agencies and telephone numbers

State	Agency	Telephone
Alabama	Department of Labor	(334) 242-3460
Alaska	Department of Labor/Research & Analysis	(907) 465-4539
Arizona	Industrial Commission	(602) 542-3739
Arkansas	Department of Labor	(501) 682-4542
California	Department of Industrial Relations	(415) 972-8625
Colorado	Department of Public Health	(303) 692-2163
Connecticut	Labor Department	(860) 566-4380
Delaware	Department of Labor	(302) 761-8221
District of Columbia	Center for Health Statistics	(202) 645-5963
Florida	Dept. of Labor and Employment Security	(850) 922-8953
Georgia	Department of Labor	(404) 656-2966
Hawaii	Dept. of Labor and Industrial Relations	(808) 586-9001
Idaho	Industrial Commission	(208) 334-6090
Illinois	Department of Public Health	(217) 785-7130
Indiana	Department of Labor	(317) 232-2679
Iowa	Workforce Development	(515) 281-3661
Kansas	Department of Health & Environment	(785) 296-5641
Kentucky	Labor Cabinet	(502) 564-6895
Louisiana	Department of Labor	(504) 342-3126
Maine	Department of Labor	(207) 624-6454
Maryland	Division of Labor and Industry	(410) 767-2356
Massachusetts	Department of Public Health	(617) 624-5628
Michigan	Dept. of Consumer and Industry Services	(517) 322-1850
Minnesota	Department of Labor and Industry	(612) 297-7429
Mississippi	Department of Health	(601) 960-7741
Missouri	Department of Health	(573) 751-6103
Montana	Department of Labor and Industry	(406) 444-3297
Nebraska	Workers' Compensation Court	(402) 471-3547
Nevada	Division of Industrial Relations	(702) 687-3298
New Hampshire	Department of Public Health	(603) 271-4647
New Jersey	Department of Health	(609) 984-1863
New Mexico	Health and Environment Division	(505) 827-4230
New York	Department of Health	(518) 458-6228
New York City	Department of Health	(212) 788-4585
North Carolina	Department of Labor	(919) 733-0337
North Dakota	Bureau of Labor Statistics	(816) 426-2483
Ohio	Department of Health	(614) 466-4183
Oklahoma	Department of Labor	(405) 528-1500
Oregon	Dept. of Consumer/Business Services	(503) 378-8254
Pennsylvania	Department of Health	(717) 783-2548
Rhode Island	Department of Health	(401) 277-2812
South Carolina	Department of Labor/Licensing & Regulation	(803) 734-4298
South Dakota	Bureau of Labor Statistics	(816) 426-2483
Tennessee	Department of Labor	(615) 741-1748
Texas	Workers' Compensation Commission	(512) 440-3852
Utah	Labor Commission	(801) 530-6823
Vermont	Bureau of Labor Statistics	(617) 565-2300
Virginia	Department of Labor & Industry	(804) 786-8011
Washington	Department of Labor & Industries	(360) 902-5510
West Virginia	Department of Labor	(304) 558-7890
Wisconsin	DWD, Workers' Compensation Research	(608) 266-7850
Wyoming	Bureau of Labor Statistics	(816) 426-2483

TECHNICAL NOTES

Definitions

For a fatality to be included in the census, the decedent must have been employed (that is working for pay, compensation, or profit) at the time of the event, engaged in a legal work activity, or present at the site of the incident as a requirement of his or her job. These criteria are generally broader than those used by federal and state agencies administering specific laws and regulations. (Fatalities that occur during a person's commute to or from work are excluded from the census counts.)

Data presented in this release include deaths occurring in 1997 that resulted from traumatic occupational injuries. An injury is defined as any intentional or unintentional wound or damage to the body resulting from acute exposure to energy, such as heat, electricity, or kinetic energy from a crash or from the absence of such essentials as heat or oxygen caused by a specific event, incident, or series of events within a single workday or shift. Included are open wounds, intracranial and internal injuries, heatstroke, hypothermia, asphyxiations, acute poisonings resulting from short-term exposures limited to the worker's shift, suicides and homicides, and work injuries listed as underlying or contributory causes of death.

Information on work-related fatal illnesses are not reported in the BLS census and are excluded from the attached tables because the latency period of many occupational illnesses and the difficulty of linking illnesses to work make identification of a universe problematic. Partial information on fatal occupational illnesses, compiled separately, is available in BLS Report 922.

Measurement techniques and limitations

Data for the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries are compiled from various federal, state, and local administrative sources--including death certificates, workers' compensation reports and claims, reports to various regulatory agencies, medical examiner reports, and police reports--as well as news reports. Diverse sources are used because studies have shown that no single source captures all job-related fatalities. Source documents are matched so that each fatality is counted only once. To ensure that a fatality occurred while the decedent was at work, information is verified from two or more independent source documents or from a source document and a follow-up questionnaire. Approximately 30 data elements are collected, coded, and tabulated, including information about the worker, the fatal incident, and the machinery or equipment involved.

Identification and verification of work-related fatalities.

Because some state laws and regulations prohibit enumerators from contacting the next-of-kin, it was not possible to independently verify work relationship (whether a fatality is job related) for 274 fatal work injuries in 1997; however, the information on the initiating source document for these cases was sufficient to determine that the incident was likely to be job-

related. Data for these fatalities, which primarily affected self-employed workers, are included in the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries counts. An additional 21 fatalities submitted by states were not included because the initiating source document had insufficient information to determine work relationship, which could not be verified by either an independent source document or a follow-up questionnaire.

States may identify additional fatal work injuries after data collection closeout for a reference year. In addition, other fatalities excluded from the published count because of insufficient information to determine work relationship may subsequently be verified as work related. States have up to one year to update their initial published state counts. This procedure ensures that fatality data are disseminated as quickly as possible and that no legitimate case is excluded from the counts. Thus, each year's report should be considered preliminary until the next year's data are issued. Increases in the published counts based on additional information have averaged less than 100 fatalities per year or less than 1.5 percent of the total.

Federal/state agency coverage

The Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries includes data for all fatal work injuries, whether they are covered by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) or other federal or state agencies or are outside the scope of regulatory coverage. Thus, any comparison between the BLS fatality census counts and those released by other agencies should take into account the different coverage requirements and definitions being used.

Several federal and state agencies have jurisdiction over workplace safety and health. OSHA and affiliated agencies in states with approved safety programs cover the largest portion of America's workers. However, injuries and illnesses occurring in several other industries, such as coal, metal, and nonmetal mining and water, rail, and air transportation, are excluded from OSHA coverage because they are covered by other federal agencies, such as the Mine Safety and Health Administration, the U.S. Coast Guard, the Federal Railroad Administration, and the Federal Aviation Administration. Fatalities occurring in activities regulated by federal agencies other than OSHA accounted for about 15 percent of the fatal work injuries for 1997.

Fatalities occurring among several other groups of workers are generally not covered by any federal or state agencies. These groups include self-employed and unpaid family workers, which accounted for about 20 percent of the fatalities; laborers on small farms, accounting for about 3 percent of the fatalities; and state and local government employees in states without OSHA-approved safety programs, which accounted for about 4 percent. (Approximately one-half of the states have approved OSHA safety programs, which cover state and local government employees.)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: BLS thanks the participating states for their efforts in collecting accurate, comprehensive, and useful data on fatal work injuries. BLS also appreciates the efforts of all federal, state, local, and private sector agencies that submitted source documents used to identify fatal work injuries. Among these agencies are the Occupational Safety and Health Administration; the National Transportation Safety Board; the U.S. Coast Guard; the Mine Safety and Health Administration; the Employment Standards Administration (Federal Employees' Compensation and Longshore and Harbor Workers' divisions); the Department of Energy; the National Association of Chiefs of Police; United Steelworkers of America; state vital statistics registrars, coroners, and medical examiners; state departments of health, labor, and industries and workers' compensation agencies; state and local police departments; and state farm bureaus.