

Mining Operations

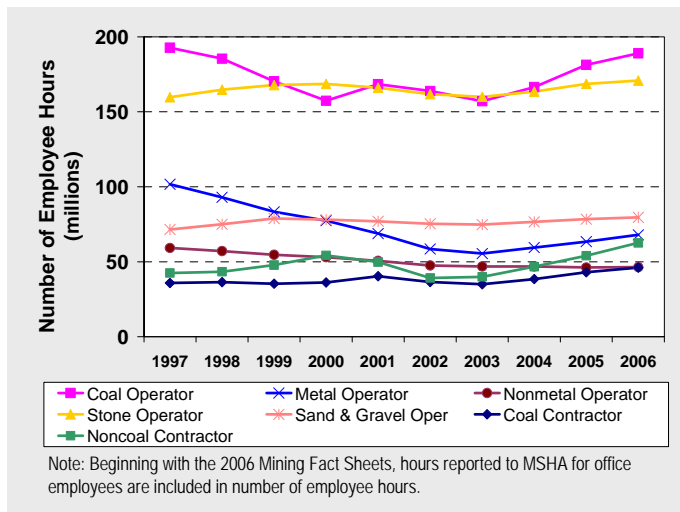
In 2006, a total of 280 metal mining operations reported employment to the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA).¹ Metal mines were the smallest mining commodity sector, comprising 1.9% of all mining operations.

- Gold mines comprised 46.8% (n=131) of all metal mining operations. Other common types of metal mines were copper ore (n=34; 12.1%), and iron ore (n=33; 11.8%).
- Nevada had the largest number of metal mines (n=53; 18.9%), followed by Alaska (n=31; 11.1%).

Employees

A total of 32,874 employees,² corresponding to 33,972 full-time equivalent (FTE)³ employees, were reported by metal mine operators.

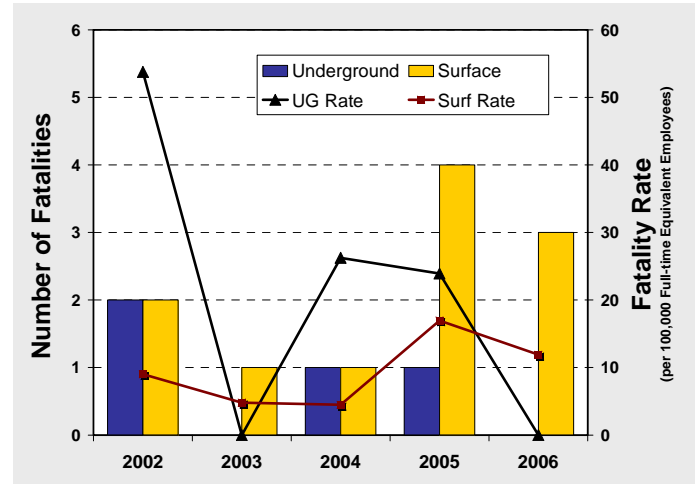
- Within the mining sectors,⁴ metal mine operator employees accounted for 10.3% of all employee hours reported to MSHA.
- Metal operator employee hours were reported for both underground (13.5%) and surface (86.5%) work locations.⁵



Fatalities

Three occupational fatalities occurred among metal mine operator employees in 2006, compared to five fatalities in 2005.

- The metal mine operator fatality rate was 10.1 fatalities per 100,000 FTE employees.

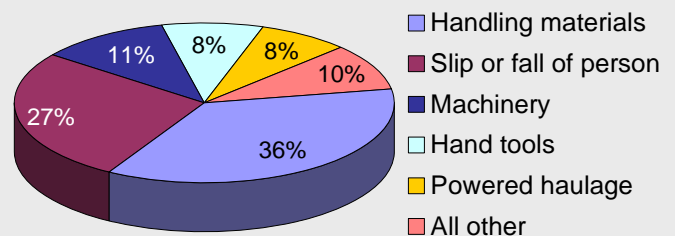


Nonfatal Lost-time Injuries

There were 665 nonfatal lost-time injuries (141 at underground and 524 at surface work locations) among metal operator employees occurring at a rate of 2.2 injuries per 100 FTE employees. A total of 35,287 days lost⁶ from work resulted from these injuries.

- The underground nonfatal lost-time injury rate was greater than the surface injury rate (3.1 vs. 2.1 per 100 FTE workers).
- The most frequent classification of nonfatal lost-time injuries for metal operator employees involved handling materials (n=221; 33.2%).
- Sprains and strains were the most frequently reported nature of injury (n=350; 52.6%).
- The back was the most frequently reported body part injured (n=119; 17.9%) and accounted for 4,751 days lost from work.

Distribution of Nonfatal Lost-time Injuries by Accident Class, 2002-2006



Note: "Fall of ground" includes MSHA's Accident/Injury/Illness classification for fall of face, rib, pillar, side, or highwall (from in place); fall of roof, back, or brow (from in place); and underground machinery cases when the source of injury was caving rock, coal, ore, or waste.

Mine and Employment Characteristics, 2006

Commodity and Type of Employer	Number of Mining Operations ¹			Number of Employees ²			Number of FTE Employees ³		
	Underground	Surface	Total	Underground	Surface	Total	Underground	Surface	Total
Coal Operator	675	1,438	2,113	38,253	47,440	85,693	42,598	51,897	94,495
Metal Operator	92	188	280	4,539	28,335	32,874	4,575	29,397	33,972
Nonmetal Operator	46	695	741	2,374	20,677	23,051	2,415	20,806	23,221
Stone Operator	122	4,451	4,573	1,877	80,706	82,583	2,154	83,247	85,402
Sand and Gravel Operator	NA	7,178	7,178	NA	46,069	46,069	NA	39,796	39,796
Operator Total	935	13,950	14,885	47,043	223,227	270,270	51,742	225,144	276,886
	Number of Companies								
Coal Contractor	NA	NA	2,724	4,762	32,520	37,282	2,903	20,175	23,078
Noncoal Contractor	NA	NA	4,686	1,815	54,130	55,945	1,401	29,893	31,294
Contractor Total	NA	NA	7,410	6,577	86,650	93,227	4,304	50,068	54,372
TOTAL				53,620	309,877	363,497	56,046	275,212	331,258

Mining Occupational Fatalities and Injuries, 2006

Commodity and Type of Employer	Occupational Fatalities (per 100,000 FTE employees)						Nonfatal Lost-time Injuries (per 100 FTE employees)					
	Underground		Surface		Total		Underground		Surface		Total	
	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate
Coal Operator	36	84.5	6	12.4	42	46.2	2,218	5.2	803	1.7	3,021	3.3
Metal Operator	0	0.0	3	11.9	3	10.1	141	3.1	524	2.1	665	2.2
Nonmetal Operator	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	73	3.0	344	2.0	417	2.1
Stone Operator	0	0.0	10	13.8	10	13.4	43	2.0	2,038	2.8	2,081	2.8
Sand and Gravel Operator	NA	NA	6	17.2	6	17.2	NA	NA	795	2.3	795	2.3
Operator Total	36	69.6	25	12.6	61	24.4	2,475	4.8	4,504	2.3	6,979	2.8
Coal Contractor	1	34.4	4	20.9	5	22.7	215	7.4	342	1.8	557	2.5
Noncoal Contractor	0	0.0	7	24.8	7	23.6	49	3.5	403	1.4	452	1.5
Contractor Total	1	23.2	11	23.2	12	23.2	264	6.1	745	1.6	1,009	2.0
TOTAL	37	66.0	36	14.6	73	24.2	2,739	4.9	5,249	2.1	7,988	2.6

NA Not applicable.

Data source: Publicly released data files of employment and accident/injury/illness collected by MSHA under 30 CFR 50.

Notes: All analyses of accident data exclude office employees. Occupational fatalities exclude all cases under 17 years of age. Further statistical methodology is available on the NIOSH Internet [<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/mining/statistics/method.htm>].

¹Mines at which only independent contractors were working did not show any employment and were not counted.

²Number of employees is the average number of employees working at individual mines during calendar quarters of active operations.

³Full-time equivalent employees computed using reported employee hours (2,000 hours = 1 FTE).

⁴Mining sectors: coal operators, metal operators, nonmetal operators, stone operators, sand and gravel operators, coal contractors, and noncoal contractors.

⁵Surface work locations include surface operations at underground mines, surface operations (strip or open pit), auger, culm banks, dredge, other surface operations, independent shops and yards, and mills or preparation plants.

⁶Includes actual days away from work and/or days of restricted work activity. For permanently disabling injuries only, statutory days charged by MSHA were used if they exceeded the total lost workdays.

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