



Media Release

Statistics on Occupational Fatalities

16.04.2015

With reference to the reports in the media pertaining to the news release issued by the National Statistics Office (NSO) yesterday on fatalities at work (2007-2014), the Occupational Health and Safety Authority (OHSA) would like to clarify certain issues.

It is indeed positive that the NSO collated data regarding occupational accidents and fatalities in Malta as it did in the afore-mentioned news release (NSO Release No 071/2015).

The information included is divided according to various parameters through which, the relevant authorities can focus their attention on those areas associated with the greatest risk and would therefore tend to benefit most (such as age group, nationality, employment status, size of enterprise, economic activity and occupation).

From this one can for instance extract the number of occupational fatalities amongst the self-employed and micro-enterprises, foreign workers and older workers, thus highlighting the particular needs of these sectors. One can see that older workers are prone to suffer accidents which have the most serious consequences. The construction sector on its own contributed to more than half of the fatal accidents covered by the news release. The majority of the victims in this sector were foreigners; indeed all the foreigners who perished at the place of work during the said period of time (17%) were construction workers. These same findings are also reported by many other countries.

The OHSA is however concerned that the NSO news release covers a very short period of time and is not presented within a wider picture. In the case of occupational accidents, the procedure in Malta is that the statistics are based on the data relating to requests for benefits under the Social Security Act that are collated by

the relevant department. The number of fatalities is collated by the OHSA and passed on to the NSO, the national competent entity responsible for issuing a holistic news release every quarter.

“When one talks about statistics, a stand-alone period of 8 years is not ideal to make a precise analysis of the real situation or about trends. A better result would have been obtained had the NSO’s news release included a longer time span or compared the number of fatal accidents over two five-year periods of time. In this way, one would have been able to see certain trends coming to the fore,” said Dr Mark Gauci, the OHSA’s Chief Executive Officer.

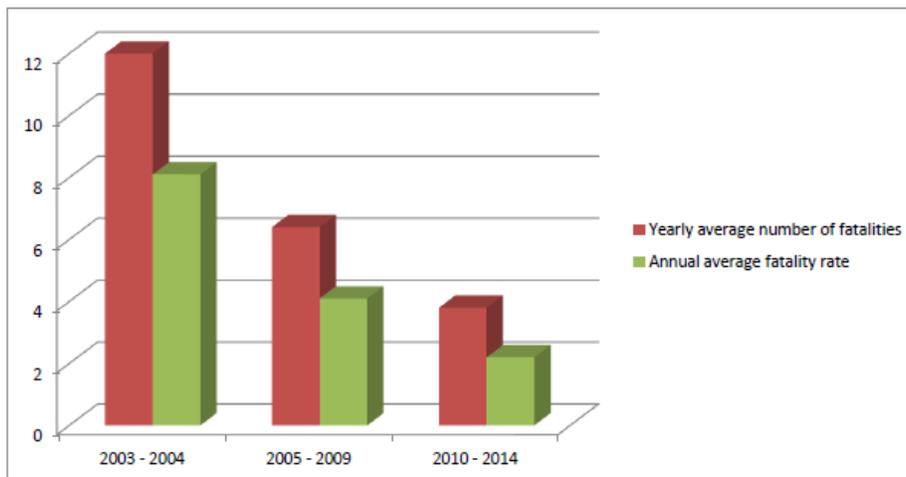
Statistical trends are best observed through the rate of accidents (i.e. the number of fatalities per 100.000 worker) as can be seen by the table below. The downward trend in both the number and the rate of fatal accidents is clearly evident.

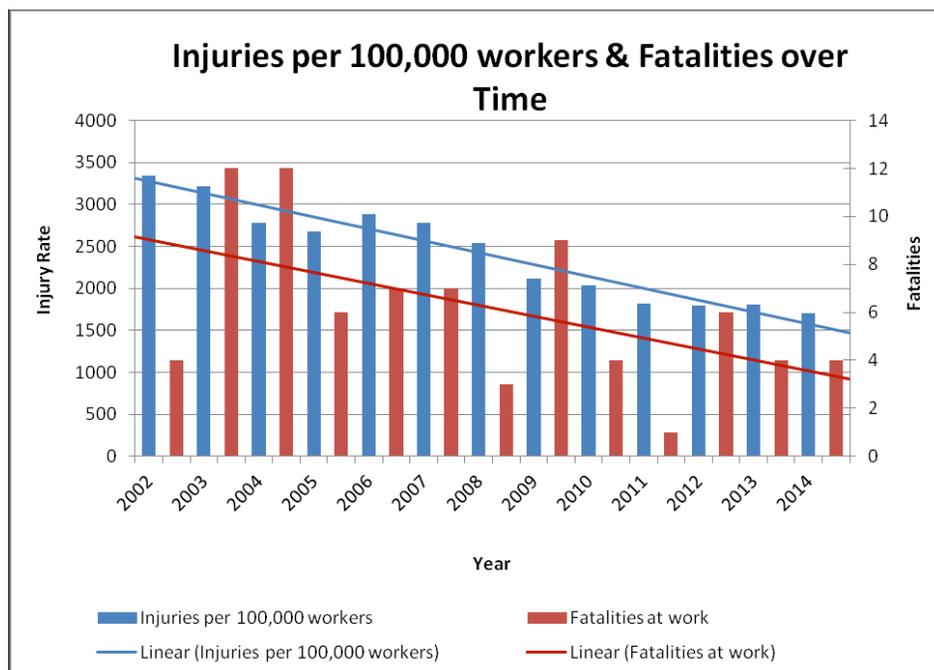
The first period covers only two years since officially published data in respect of fatalities at work prior to 2003 did not include all fatal accidents and therefore could not be used for the purpose of identifying real trends.

Period	Total Fatalities	Yearly average number of fatalities	Annual average employed population *	Annual average fatality rate
2003 - 2004	24	12	147843	8.1
2005 - 2009	32	6.4	154795	4.1
2010 - 2014	19	3.8	170880	2.2

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* According to Labour Force Surveys





Source: OHSA Annual Report 2014

Even in the case of the afore-mentioned construction sector, one can get a better picture when one analyses the data over a longer period of time, as is evidenced by the table below compiled by .

Year	Employed Population (Labour Force Survey)	Number of fatal accidents	Fatal accidents (construction)	FA – construction (foreign workers)
2002	147,570	4	3	2
2003	147,815	12	7	1
2004	147,870	12	9	2
2005	149,307	6	3	0
2006	151,145	7	3	1
2007	155,486	7	5	2
2008	158,635	3	2	1
2009	159,404	9	2	0
2010	162,631	4	3	1
2011	166,628	1	0	0
2012	170,249	6	5	1
2013	175,911	4	2	0
2014	178,985	4	3	2
Total	2,071,636	79	47 (60%)	13 (28% of construction accidents) (17% of all accidents)

“Every year the OHSa does an analysis of the trends in injuries and accidents at work in its annual report, where one can also find information about its operations and activities”, Dr Gauci concluded.

The OHSa Annual Report can be accessed through:

<http://ohsa.org.mt/Portals/0/Docs/Reports/Report%20OHSa%202014.pdf>

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