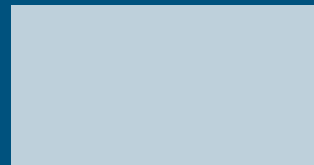




Australian Government

**Seafarers Safety, Rehabilitation
and Compensation Authority**

Seacare Scheme Data 2017–18



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1. Introduction

The Seacare scheme is a national scheme of occupational health and safety (OHS), rehabilitation and workers' compensation arrangements for employees on prescribed ships or units. The *Occupational Health and Safety (Maritime Industry) Act 1993* (OHS(MI) Act) covers seafarers for OHS, and the *Seafarers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1992* (Seafarers Act) covers seafarers for rehabilitation and workers' compensation arrangements.

The Seacare scheme is overseen by the Seafarers Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Authority (Seacare Authority). The Seacare Authority is a statutory body established under the Seafarers Act and oversees both the Seafarers Act and OHS(MI) Act, however the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) has regulatory (inspectorate) functions conferred on it under the OHS(MI) Act.

This document presents an overview of the Seacare scheme and includes statistical data on the scheme's performance.

1.1 Data sources

Workers' compensation data

The primary source of data used for reporting on Seacare scheme performance, including OHS performance, is from workers' compensation claims. Compensation claims data is nationally recognised as the most reliable available proxy for reporting OHS performance outcomes.

Seacare claims data is derived from copies of the claim forms forwarded to the Seacare Authority by scheme employers. There is no obligation on an injured seafarer to lodge a *Seacare Claim for Workers' Compensation* form so not every injury results in a claim. Also, it is possible employers do not advise all employee claims to the Seacare Authority or the employer's insurer, although most probably do.

In most cases, the claims data used for reporting Seacare OHS performance is for claims accepted during the year that result in one or more weeks compensation. While this excludes claims that are pending, in dispute, withdrawn or rejected, it includes claims lodged in previous years that have been accepted in this reporting year. This approach provides consistency and stability in reporting from year to year. Accepted claims are further adjusted by excluding 'journey claims' and 'property only' claims. Consequently, the data best reflects claims arising from work or training, including both on and off duty.

Accident and incident data

The Seacare Authority monitors data on accidents and dangerous occurrences (incidents) that are reported by employers and operators to the OHS inspectorate, AMSA. Accidents resulting in death or a serious injury that requires immediate medical treatment or could result in incapacity for five days or more, or where there was a dangerous occurrence, must be reported to AMSA. Operators and employers covered by the OHS(MI) Act and its regulations are required to notify AMSA of any accident or dangerous occurrence within four hours by submitting an OHS incident alert. The OHS incident report must be completed within 72 hours.

The *Seacare Report on the Employer Determination of a Claim for Workers' Compensation* form includes questions on injuries that arise from a notifiable incident, and on whether a report has been lodged with AMSA. This mechanism provides a means of monitoring and comparing the number of incidents reported against the number of claims made.

Employee and ship details

The Seacare Authority collects employee and ship detail reports from employers in January and July each year.

Employee numbers, as well as full time equivalent (FTE) values and hours worked data are used in calculating injury frequency and incident rates (the denominator data that is combined with workers' compensation claims data). Ship details—including ships covered by the Seacare scheme, the number of days a ship is operational under the scheme's legislation over the year, and standard crew numbers—are also recorded.

1.2 Calculation of data

Employee numbers

Employee data in this report includes total number of employees covered by the Seafarers Act derived from the numbers declared by each employer. To enable comparison with other Australian jurisdictions, a full time equivalent (FTE) employee value is used as a seafarer number denominator for calculating incidence rates. Seacare FTE employee numbers are calculated using the formula:

$$\frac{(\text{number of berths}) \times (\text{days operated in the period} / \text{total days in period}) \times (\text{standard shift hours per day} \times \text{standard work days per week})}{(\text{average weekly working hours—taken to be 40.4})}$$

Hours worked

Hours worked data is based on a formula agreed by the Seacare Authority and first applied in 2003–04. The formula takes into account the continuous nature of Seafarers Act coverage during a voyage where seafarers, who are generally on board a ship for 24 hours a day, are exposed to the risk of injury for the entire time on board a vessel whether on or off duty. The formula is:

$$(\text{number of berths}) \times (\text{days operated in period}) \times (\text{daily hours of operation})$$

2. Coverage

2.1 Seafarers Act coverage

Figure 1 and Table 1 provide the total number of employees (headcount), FTE employees and hours worked under the Seafarers Act as reported by scheme employers from 2013-14 to 2017-18.

The head count figure includes full-time and part-time employees as well as those who may have worked on limited term contracts and for multiple employers at different times throughout the year.

The scheme experienced an 11 per cent increase in the total number of employees under the Seafarers Act in 2017-18 from the previous year. The increase in hours worked, however, has resulted in an almost 20 per cent increase in full time equivalent employee numbers.

Figure 1: Seafarers Act—Employee numbers, FTE employees and hours worked (2013-14 to 2017-18)

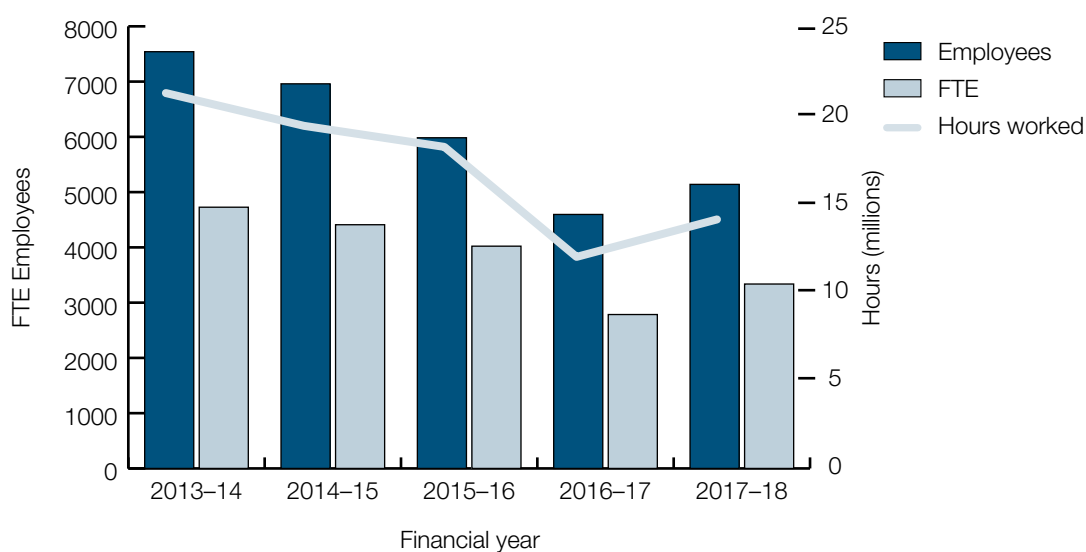


Table 1: Seafarers Act—Employee numbers, FTE employees and hours worked¹

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Total Employees	7541	6960	5984	4596	5140
Total FTE	4727	4410	4022	2785	3337
Total hours worked	21,315,138	19,495,844	18,023,548	11,941,378	14,260,414

¹ Employers provide information on employee numbers and hours worked biannually. As such, the figures reported in Table 1 are an average of the employee and hours worked figures provided over the relevant financial year.

The age of workers under the Seafarers Act has remained relatively constant over time – as shown in Table 2, approximately 5 per cent are aged under 25 years and almost half of the workers have been aged 45 years or older. This may well be reflective of the skills and qualifications required for maritime occupations.

Table 2: Employees by Age Range under the Seafarers Act²

	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
<20	<1%	<1%	1%	1%	<1%
20–24	5%	4%	4%	4%	3%
25–29	10%	10%	10%	9%	7%
30–34	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%
35–39	11%	12%	12%	13%	12%
40–44	14%	14%	13%	14%	14%
45–49	13%	14%	13%	13%	14%
50–54	14%	13%	14%	14%	14%
>55	20%	20%	21%	20%	22%

Table 3 shows that for the past five years approximately one third of seafarers were employed as integrated ratings. This has remained the leading occupational grouping over time, while the relative proportion of employees in the Catering grouping has been steadily increasing over time.

Table 3: Employees by Occupational Grouping under the Seafarers Act

	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
Deck Officers	24%	25%	28%	28%	25%
Engineers	22%	21%	22%	21%	22%
Integrated Ratings	34%	32%	29%	29%	27%
Catering	15%	18%	17%	19%	23%
Trainees	4%	4%	3%	3%	2%

² The employee figures reported in Table 2 and 3 are based on the employees who were engaged at the conclusion of the relevant financial year.

2.2 OHS(MI) coverage

Figure 2 shows the total number of FTE employees and total hours worked under the OHS(MI) Act, as reported by scheme employers, between 2013-14 and 2017-18. The raw data is provided in Table 4.

Similar to the Seafarers Act, there has been an increase in the total number of FTE employees and total hours worked under the OHS(MI) Act in the 2017-18 financial year as compared to the previous year.

Figure 2: OHS(MI) Act—FTE employees and Hours Worked—2013-14 to 2017-18

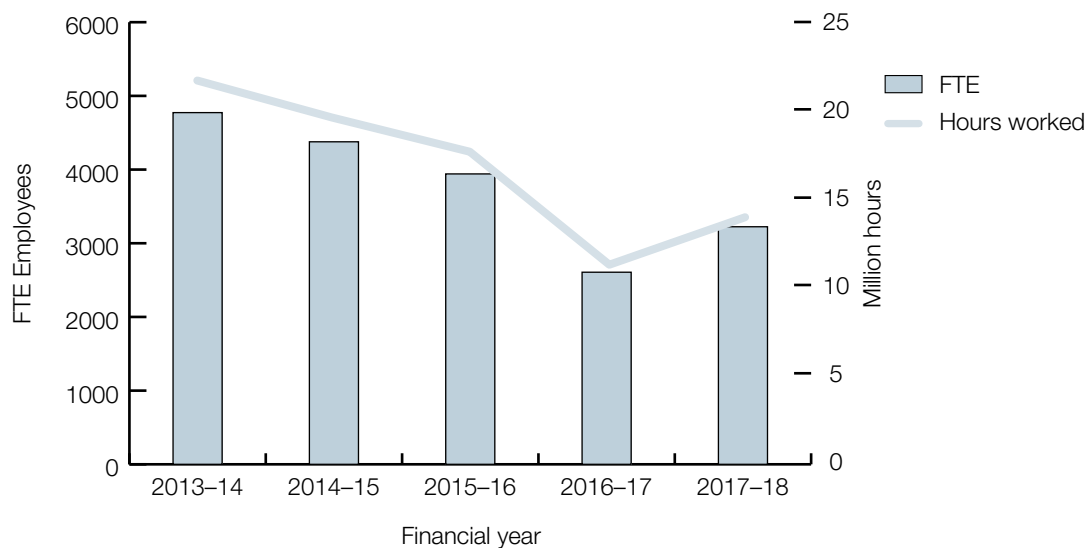


Table 4: OHS(MI) Act—FTE employees and hours worked

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Total FTE	4773	4377	3941	2607	3224
Total hours worked	21,561,704	19,343,400	17,681,248	11,178,058	13,651,030

3. Occupational health and safety

3.1 Workers' compensation data

The injury (and disease) incidence and frequency rates are two nationally recognised, high-level OHS outcome indicators. The incidence rate is derived from the number of claims (accepted claims, excluding journey claims) per 1000 FTE employees while the frequency rate is based on accepted claims per one million hours worked.

Using the frequency rate reflects the 24 hour a day nature of seafaring work and the fact that injuries occurring at any time while on board are potentially compensable. In addition, most employers generally use a 24-hour divisor in calculating enterprise OHS performance indicators such as lost time injury frequency rates. Therefore, the injury frequency rate data provided in this report is generally comparable with indicators used by many scheme employers.

Figure 3 and Table 5 provide the incidence rate of claims resulting in one, four and 12 weeks of time off work, as well as the frequency rate of claims resulting in one week of time off work. They show that in 2017-18, there has been an increase in the incidence and frequency rates of claims with one week or more of time off work, whilst the incidence of those claims with four and twelve weeks of time off work is lower than the 2016-17 full year outcomes.

Figure 3: Injury incidence and frequency rates (2013-14 to 2017-18)

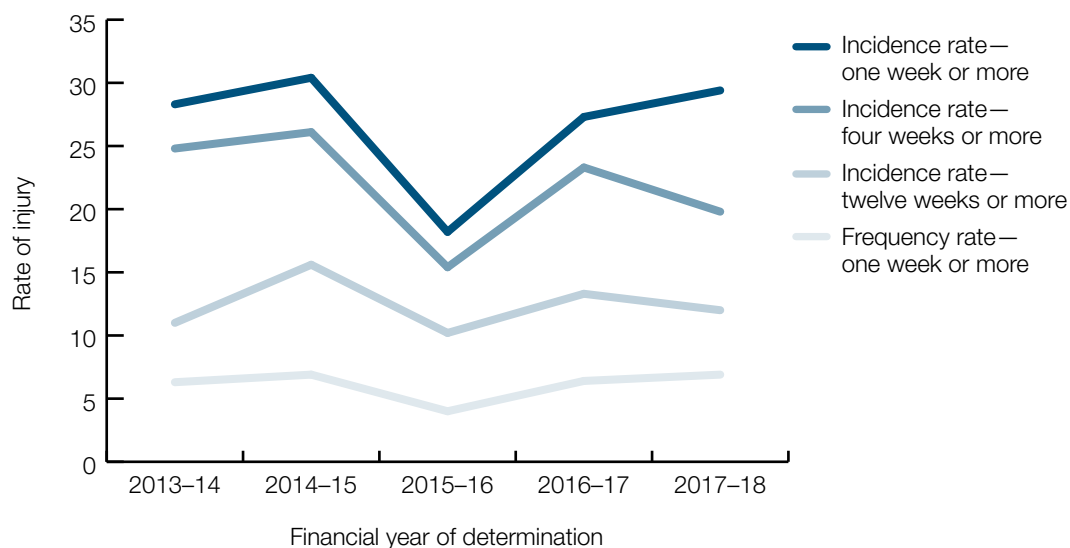


Table 5: Injury incidence and frequency rates (2012–13 to 2016–17)

	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
Incidence rates—per 1000 FTE					
One week or more duration	28.3	30.4	18.2	27.3	29.4
Four weeks or more duration	24.8	26.1	15.4	23.3	19.8
Twelve weeks or more incapacity	11.0	15.6	10.2	13.3	12.0
Frequency rate—per 1,000,000 hours worked					
One week or more incapacity	6.3	6.9	4.0	6.4	6.9

3.2 Claim characteristics

This section provides a breakdown of claims based on a number of key characteristics: sector, types and cause of injuries, body location, location on the ship where the injury occurred and the age and occupation of the employee.

Figure 4 provides a breakdown of accepted claims by sector in 2017-18. While the offshore sector accounted for the largest proportion of employees under the Seafarer's Act, however the 'Other' sector accounted for the highest proportion of accepted claims. This sector covers ship types including Passenger, Dredge, Tugs and Special.

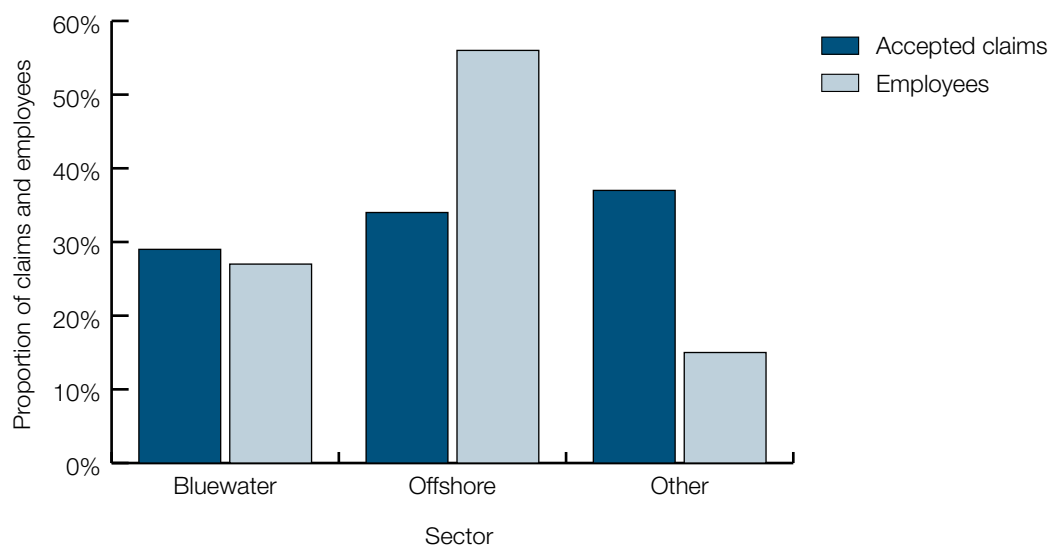
Figure 4: Accepted compensation claims and employees by sector—2017–18

Figure 5 and Table 6 provide a breakdown of claims by the condition claimed (nature) for claims accepted between 2013-14 and 2017-18. Sprains and strains continue to be the most prevalent type of injury, accounting for approximately 56 per cent of all injuries recorded.

Figure 5: Claims by nature of injury (2013–14 to 2017–18)

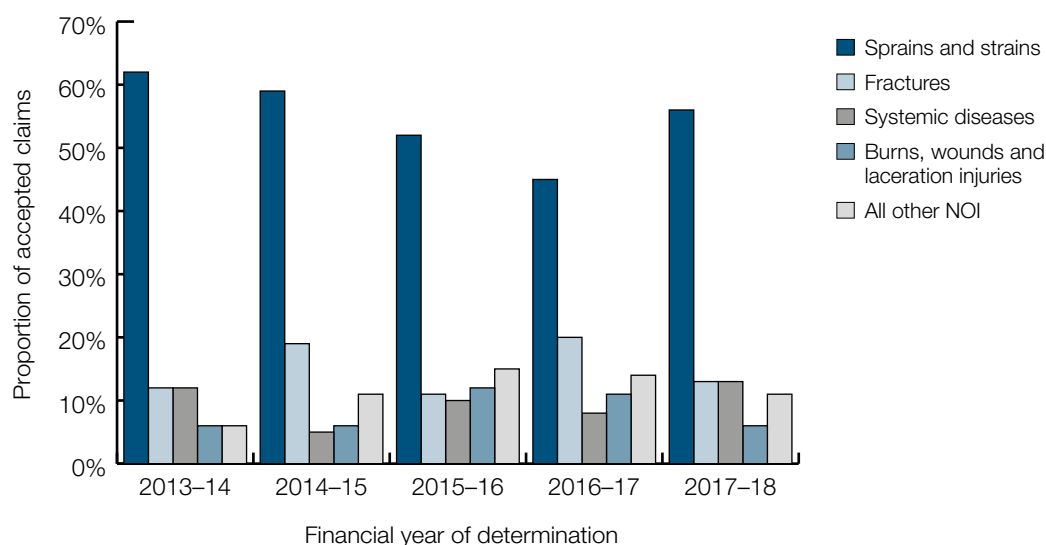


Table 6: Number and proportion of claims by nature of injury (2013–14 to 2017–18)

Nature of injury	2013–14		2014–15		2015–16		2016–17		2017–18	
	Claims	%	Claims	%	Claims	%	Claims	%	Claims	%
Sprains and Strains	111	62%	96	59%	51	52%	40	45%	70	56%
Fractures	22	12%	31	19%	11	11%	18	20%	17	13%
Systemic Diseases	22	12%	8	5%	10	10%	7	8%	16	13%
Burns, Wounds and Laceration Injuries	10	6%	10	6%	12	12%	10	11%	8	6%
Other Injuries	2	1%	2	1%	4	4%	4	4%	5	4%
Musculoskeletal Diseases	4	2%	7	4%	6	6%	4	4%	4	3%
Mental Diseases	2	1%	2	1%	3	3%	2	2%	4	3%
Head, Brain, Nerve and Spinal Cord Injuries	2	1%	3	2%	0	0%	3	3%	1	1%
Cancer Diseases	2	1%	3	2%	2	2%	1	1%	0	0%
Other Diseases and Claims	0	0.0	1	0.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

Figure 6 and Table 7 provide a breakdown of claims by the mechanism of incident for claims accepted between 2013-14 and 2017-18. The mechanism of incident identifies the overall action, exposure or event that best describes the circumstances that resulted in the most serious injury or disease. Body stressing continues to be the most prevalent cause of injury within the Seacare scheme, followed by falls, slips and trips.

Figure 6: Claims by mechanism of injury (2013–14 to 2017–18)

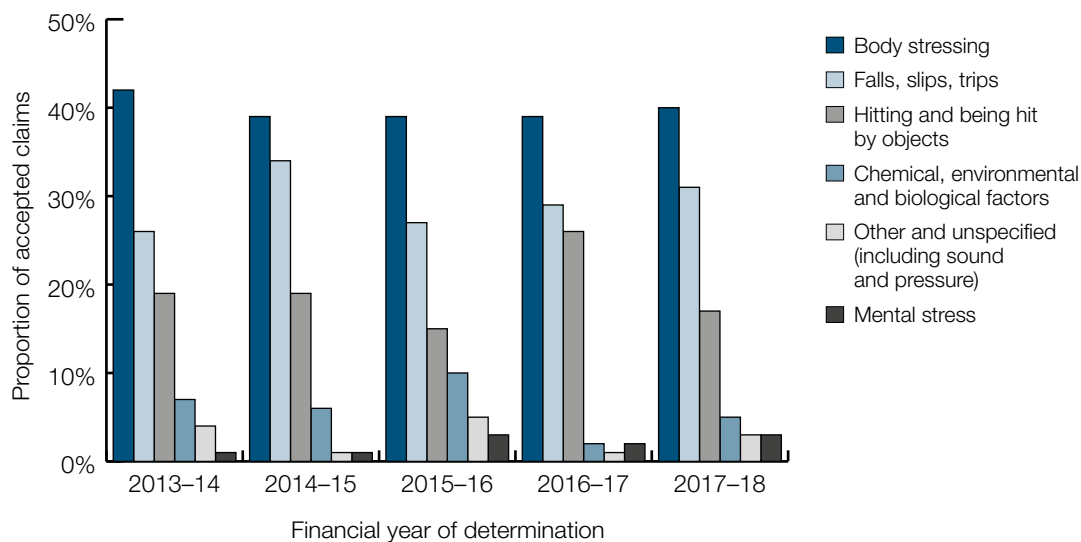


Table 7: Number and proportion of claims by mechanism of injury (2013–14 to 2017–18)

Mechanism of injury	2013–14		2014–15		2015–16		2016–17		2017–18	
	Claims	%	Claims	%	Claims	%	Claims	%	Claims	%
Body Stressing	75	42%	63	39%	39	39%	35	39%	51	40%
Falls, slips, trips	46	26%	55	34%	27	27%	26	29%	39	31%
Hitting and being hit by objects	34	19%	31	19%	15	15%	23	26%	22	17%
Chemical, environmental and biological factors	13	7%	9	6%	10	10%	2	2%	6	5%
Other and unspecified (including sound and pressure)	8	4%	2	1%	5	5%	1	1%	4	3%
Mental stress	2	1%	2	1%	3	3%	2	2%	4	3%

The breakdown of claims by body location for claims accepted between 2013-14 and 2017-18 is presented in Figure 7 and Table 8 below. Injuries to the upper limbs continue to be the most common body location of injury, increasing from approximately 33 per cent of all accepted claims in 2016-17 to 39 per cent in 2017-18. This is followed by injuries to the lower limbs and trunk.

Figure 7: Claims by body location (2013-14 to 2016-17)

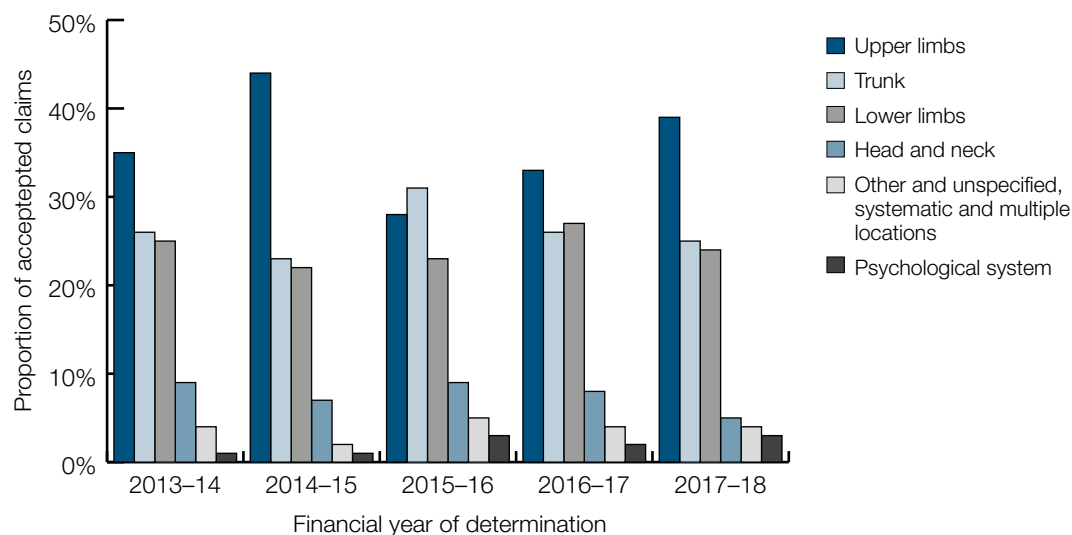


Table 8: Number and proportion of claims by body location (2013-14 to 2017-18)

Body location	2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17		2017-18	
	Claims	%	Claims	%	Claims	%	Claims	%	Claims	%
Upper Limbs	62	35%	72	44%	28	28%	29	33%	49	39%
Lower Limbs	46	26%	38	23%	31	31%	23	26%	32	25%
Trunk	45	25%	36	22%	23	23%	24	27%	30	24%
Head and Neck	16	9%	11	7%	9	9%	7	8%	6	5%
Other and unspecified, systematic and multiple locations	7	4%	3	2%	5	5%	4	4%	5	4%
Psychological System	2	1%	2	1%	3	3%	2	2%	4	3%

Figure 8 and Table 9 provide a breakdown of the most common areas on a ship for injuries to occur. These both show that Deck Spaces continue to be the leading ship location of injury across the scheme, followed by Machinery Spaces and Stairs/Gangways.

Figure 8: Claims by location on ship (2013–14 to 2017–18)

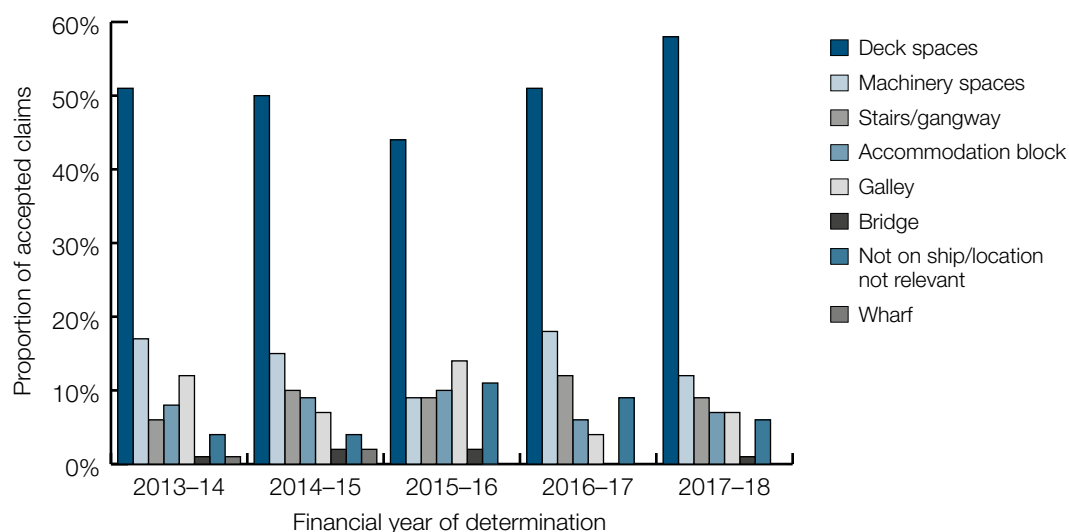


Table 9: Number and proportion of claims by location on ship (2012–13 to 2016–17)

Location on ship	2013–14		2014–15		2015–16		2016–17		2017–18	
	Claims	%	Claims	%	Claims	%	Claims	%	Claims	%
Deck Spaces	90	51%	81	50%	44	44%	45	51%	73	58%
Machinery Spaces	31	17%	25	15%	9	9%	16	18%	15	12%
Stairs/gangway	11	6%	17	10%	9	9%	11	12%	11	9%
Accommodation Block	14	8%	15	9%	10	10%	5	6%	9	7%
Galley	22	12%	11	7%	14	14%	4	4%	9	7%
Bridge	2	1%	4	2%	2	2%	0	0%	1	1%
Not on ship/ location not relevant	7	4%	6	4%	11	11%	8	9%	8	6%
Wharf	1	1%	3	2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

A comparison of claims by the age of the employee at the time of injury and by occupational category provides a view of how the scheme's claims experience has changed over the last five years.

Figure 9 and Table 10 compare the proportion of accepted claims and number of employees in 2013–14 and 2017–18 by age grouping. In 2017–18, employees aged 45 or over made up approximately half of both accepted claims and number of employees. This is a shift from 2013–14 where the same age group represented approximately 48 per cent of employees and 62 per cent of accepted claims.

Figure 9: Proportion of claims and employees by age grouping (2013–14 and 2017–18)

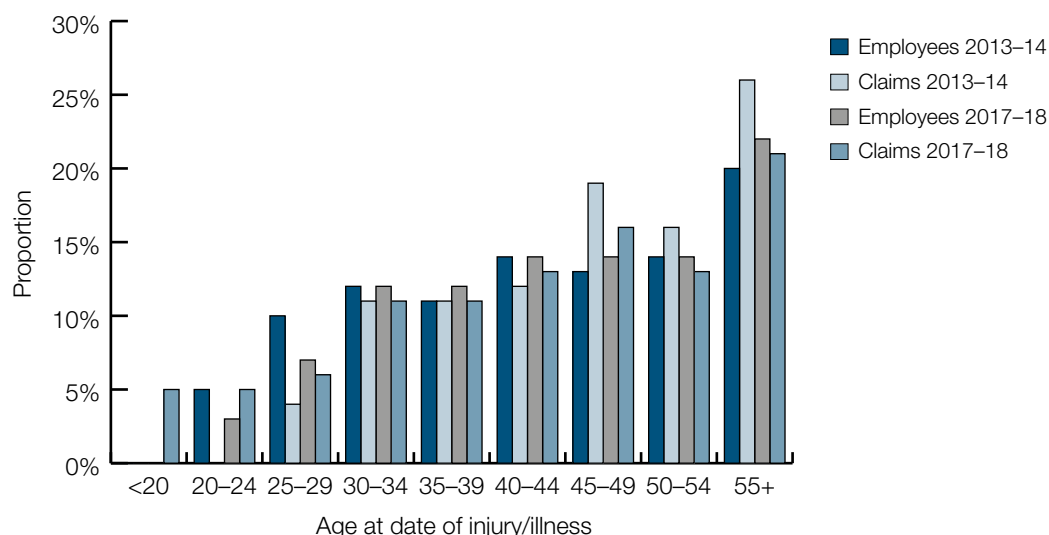


Table 10: Number and proportion of claims and employees by age grouping (2013–14 and 2017–18)

Age range	2013–14				2017–18			
	Employees		Claims		Employees		Claims	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<20	35	0%	0	0%	20	0%	6	5%
20–24	331	5%	0	0%	146	3%	6	5%
25–29	738	10%	8	4%	363	7%	7	6%
30–34	818	12%	19	11%	586	12%	14	11%
35–39	814	11%	20	11%	601	12%	14	11%
40–44	967	14%	21	12%	701	14%	16	13%
45–49	934	13%	34	19%	697	14%	20	16%
50–54	1,000	14%	29	16%	671	14%	16	13%
55+	1,442	20%	47	26%	1081	22%	27	21%

Figure 10 and Table 11 compare the proportion of accepted claims in 2013-14 and 2017-18 across the five key occupational groupings. Integrated ratings account for the highest percentage of employees (27 per cent) and make up the highest proportion of accepted claims (62 per cent) in the 2017-18 financial year. Deck officers account for the second highest proportion of employees (25 per cent) but made up only 9 per cent of accepted claims.

Figure 10: Proportion of claims by occupational category (2013-14 and 2017-18)

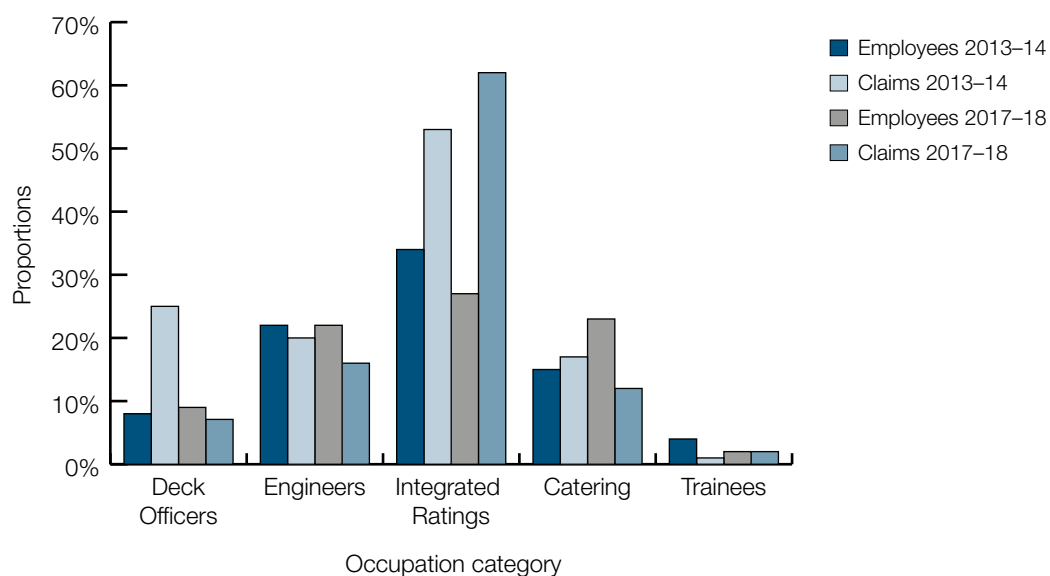


Table 11: Number and proportion of claims by occupational category (2013-14 and 2017-18)

Occupational category	2013-14				2017-18			
	Employees		Claims		Employees		Claims	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Deck Officers	1697	24%	15	8%	1217	25%	11	9%
Engineers	1578	22%	35	20%	1088	22%	20	16%
Integrated Ratings	2440	34%	95	53%	1326	27%	78	62%
Catering	1050	15%	31	17%	1126	23%	15	12%
Trainees	314	4%	2	1%	109	2%	2	2%
Unranked/ other	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

3.3 Ratio of reported incidents to seafarers

The ratio of incidents reported and incidents involving five days or more incapacity, as reported to the Australian Maritime Safety Authority, are provide in Table 12 below. While this shows a fluctuation in the both the number and ratio of incidents reported over time, the 2017–18 financial year has recorded the lowest outcomes since 2013–14.

Table 12: Ratio of reported incidents to seafarers

	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
Number of seafarers (FTE employees) under the OHS(MI) Act	4773	4377	3941	2607	3224
All incidents reported	46	54	52	30	16
Ratio (incidents per 1000 seafarers)	9.6	12.3	13.2	11.5	5.0
Incidents reported involving an incapacity of five or more days	38	43	42	22	16
Ratio (incidents involving five or more days incapacity per 1000 seafarers)	8.0	9.8	10.7	8.4	5.0

4. Workers' compensation

4.1 Claims summary

Workers' compensation claims data reported by Seacare scheme employers to the Seacare Authority in accordance with the Seafarers Act is summarised in Table 13 below.

Table 13: Claims data 2013–14 to 2017–18

	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
Claims lodged					
Claims accepted	178	162	99	89	126
Claims rejected	22	20	13	14	5
Claims pending	0	0	0	0	1
Total	200	182	112	103	132
Claims accepted					
Claims accepted—on duty	169	155	90	82	114
Claims accepted—off duty	6	6	5	5	7
Journey claims	3	1	3	1	3
Claims while studying	0	0	1	0	1
Property claims	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	1	1
Total	178	162	99	89	126
Claims accepted—summary and duration					
Claims accepted—excluding property claims	178	162	99	89	126
Claims accepted—excluding journey and property claims	175	161	96	88	123
Claims accepted—one week or more duration (excluding journey claims)	134	134	73	76	98
Claims accepted—four weeks or more duration (excluding journey claims)	117	115	62	65	66
Claims accepted—twelve weeks or more duration (excluding journey claims)	52	69	41	37	40
Medical accepted claims					
(no lost time)	28	10	11	8	11
Claims accepted involving lost time	141	142	80	80	109
Claims accepted—work related fatalities	0	0	1	0	1
Claims accepted involving lost time (excluding journey claims)	138	141	77	79	106

4.2 Timeliness of decision making

Over time, the proportion of claims that are lodged within one month of the date of injury has been improving, with 92 per cent of claims lodged within 3 months of the date of injury (disease) (Table 14).

Table 14: Time from injury to lodgement

	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
Within first month	59%	69%	64%	64%	72%
Between 1 and 3 months	25%	21%	23%	20%	20%
Between 4 and 12 months	13%	6%	8%	10%	4%
After 12 months	3%	4%	4%	6%	5%

The Seafarers Act requires that all claims for injury or disease are determined within 12 days from the date that the claim is lodged with the employer. Claims for permanent impairment and those relating to deceased employees are required to be determined within 30 and 60 days respectively.

Table 15 shows that 73 per cent of claims were determined within the relevant statutory time frames in 2017–18—this is an improvement on the 2016–17 outcome of 64 per cent of claims determined within timeframes.

Table 15: Claims determined within statutory timeframes

	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
Proportion determined within statutory timeframes	78%	76%	69%	64%	73%
Within 4 weeks	9%	8%	12%	18%	17%
More than 4 weeks	13%	16%	20%	17%	11%

Where an injury lasts, or is expected to last, 28 days or more, the Seafarers Act states that the employer must arrange an assessment of the employees' capacity to undertake a rehabilitation program.

During 2017–18, approximately 41 per cent of rehabilitation assessments undertaken occurred within 31 days from the date of injury. This is an improvement on the previous year in which 36 per cent of assessments occurred within 31 days from the date of injury.

Table 16: Time from injury to rehabilitation assessment

	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
1 to 7 days	25%	26%	12%	11%	20%
8 to 14 days	9%	14%	18%	11%	14%
15 to 21 days	4%	7%	9%	0%	6%
22 to 31 days	9%	8%	9%	14%	2%
1 to 3 months	26%	26%	27%	36%	35%
4 to 12 months	26%	15%	15%	23%	18%
> 12 months	0%	5%	9%	5%	6%

4.3 Claim payments

Of the total claim payments during 2017-18, weekly compensation (time off work) accounts for approximately 60 per cent of all claims payments. This is followed by Lump Sum payments, which account for approximately 22 per cent of all claim costs in the period.

Table 17: Claims payments by financial year of payment

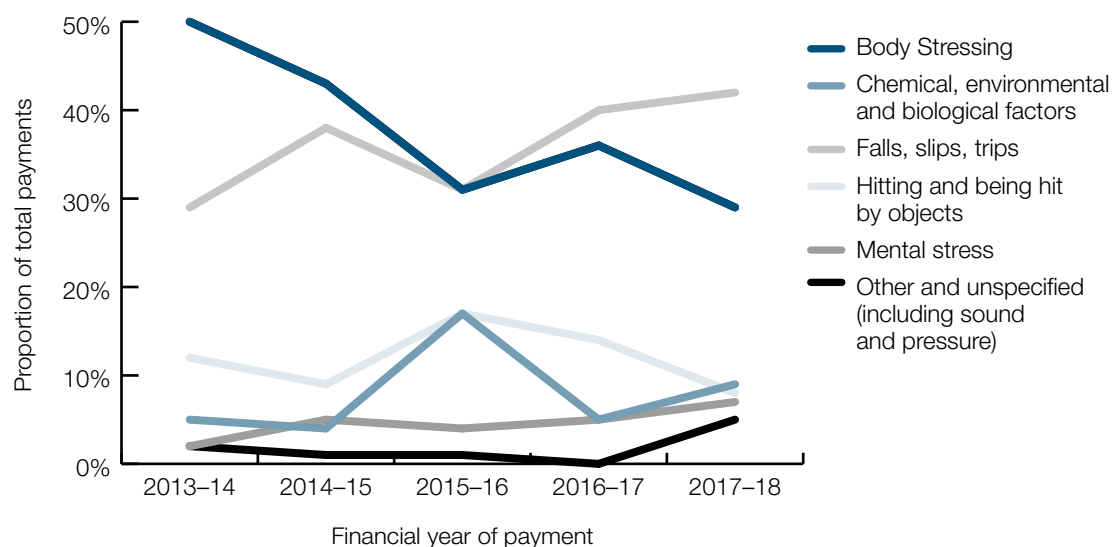
	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
Weekly compensation	\$9,234,239	\$8,396,553	\$5,882,909	\$6,483,713	\$7,483,462
Lump Sum	\$3,807,409	\$5,035,258	\$3,725,116	\$2,897,121	\$2,766,266
Medical	\$1,542,496	\$1,110,515	\$986,259	\$730,986	\$916,734
Rehabilitation	\$425,758	\$373,953	\$299,625	\$354,240	\$468,021
Legal Costs	\$805,081	\$641,713	\$603,421	\$536,139	\$506,084
Medical Report	\$68,475	\$71,135	\$45,417	\$41,947	\$139,815
Investigation	\$79,055	\$105,901	\$110,277	\$39,086	\$50,954
Other	\$164,883	\$421,527	\$141,743	\$126,209	\$110,498
Total	\$16,127,396	\$16,156,556	\$11,794,767	\$11,209,440	\$12,441,834

Table 18 and Figure 11 show that by mechanism of injury, Falls, Slips and Trips accounting for the largest proportion of payments made in the 2017-18 financial year followed by Body Stressing. Mental Stress claims, while accounting for a relatively small proportion of total payments in each year, has been increasing over time.

Table 18: Claims payments by financial year of payment—mechanism of injury

	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
Body Stressing	50%	43%	31%	36%	29%
Chemical, environmental and biological factors	5%	4%	17%	5%	9%
Falls, slips, trips	29%	38%	31%	40%	42%
Hitting and being hit by objects	12%	9%	17%	14%	8%
Mental stress	2%	5%	4%	5%	7%
Other and unspecified (including sound and pressure)	2%	1%	1%	0%	5%
Body Stressing	50%	43%	31%	36%	29%

Figure 11: Claims payments by financial year of payment—mechanism of injury



4.4 Reconsiderations

Under subsection 78(4) of the Seafarers Act an employer must, upon receipt of a written request from an employee for a reconsideration of a claim determination, arrange for an industry panel or a Comcare officer to assist in reconsidering the determination. This review is the first stage of the review process under the Seafarers Act. As there is no industry panel in place in accordance with section 78 of the Seafarers Act, Comcare conducts all reviews requested by employers for assistance to reconsider a determination.

In 2017-18, 17 determinations were reviewed on behalf of eight employers. Of these, Comcare made recommendations to vary the determinations of the employer in six cases (13 per cent) and revoke determinations in a further six cases. Table 19 provides a summary of the assistance provided by Comcare.

Table 19: Reconsideration assistance provided by Comcare

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Determinations reviewed	43	34	13	15	17
Recommendations affirming determination	20	20	11	12	4
Recommendations varying determination	5	1	0	2	6
Recommendations revoking determination	12	10	1	0	6
Investigate	0	0	0	1	1
Number of employers	19	19	9	8	8

4.5 Disputation

The Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) is the second tier of review for disputed claims. The AAT review process usually begins with a conference to enable applicants to discuss with their employer, in the presence of an AAT official, the reasons for challenging the employer's determination of their claim. The conference provides an opportunity for the parties to agree on a decision. If, following the conference process, the matter has not been settled, a compulsory conciliation conference will be listed. If the matter fails to settle at the conciliation conference it will go to a hearing unless both parties and the AAT agree on mediation.

Figure 12 and Table 20 show both the rejection rate and the disputation rate for the scheme. The disputation rate is taken as the total number of AAT applications lodged in the period as a percentage of active claims in the period (an active claim is defined as a claim with a payment of any kind made in the reporting period). The disputation rate would ideally measure the number of AAT applications lodged in relation to the total number of determinations made in a year, however this information is not currently collected.

The rejection rate of the primary determination (calculated as the claims rejected in a financial year divided by the claims received in the same year) has reduced significantly in the 2017-18 financial year to four per cent of claims lodged, down from 14 per cent in 2016-17.

The disputation rates for all years in Figure 12 and Table 20 have been calculated using the above methodology and show that the disputation rate for 2017-18 (20 per cent) has maintained the overall reduction in the disputation rate over time.

Figure 12: Rejection rate and disputation rate

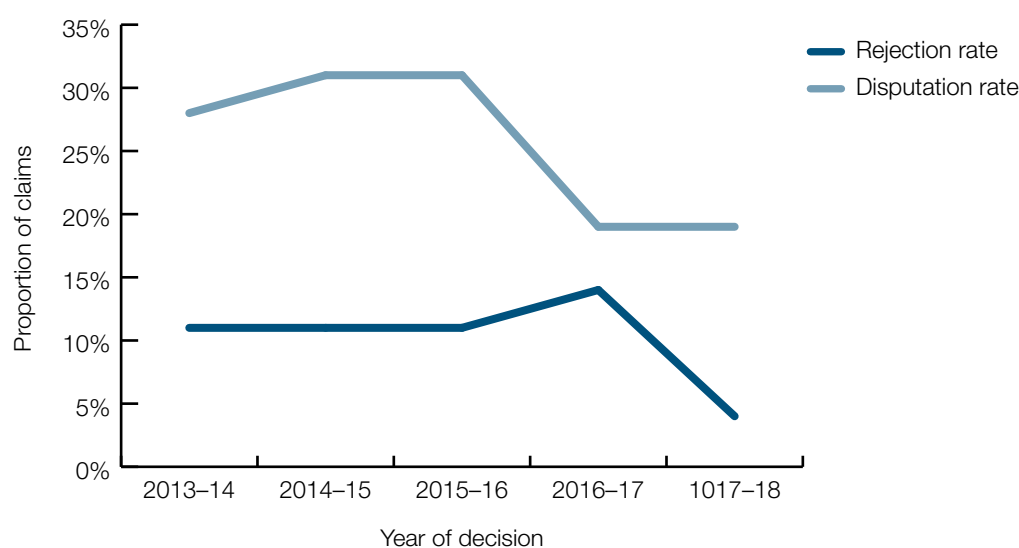


Table 20: Rejection rate and disputation rate

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Claims lodged	200	182	112	103	132
Claims rejected	22	20	13	14	5
Rejection rate (per cent)	11%	11%	11%	14%	4%
Active claims by payment year	309	266	196	190	210
AAT applications lodged	85	83	61	37	40
Disputation rate (per cent)	28%	31%	31%	19%	19%

The outcomes of the AAT's review of decisions on Seacare claims is provided in Table 21. The AAT have updated the way that this information is presented—as a result the information provided in this edition of the Compendium will differ from that presented previously. This shows that the number of AAT applications lodged has been reducing over time, with 2017-18 having the lowest number of applications of the 2013–14 through 2017–18 period.

Table 21: Outcome of AAT review of decisions

	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
Applications lodged	85	83	61	37	40
Applications finalised					
Applications finalised by decision of the AAT following a hearing ^a					
Decision affirmed	0	0	2	1	0
Decision varied or set aside	2	3	3	1	2
Subtotal	2	3	5	2	2
Applications finalised by consent of the parties					
Decision affirmed ^b	20	46	34	31	21
Decision varied or set aside ^b	17	18	17	15	7
Application dismissed ^c	2	0	0	0	0
Subtotal	39	64	51	46	28
Other					
Application withdrawn by the applicant ^d	6	17	7	14	1
Dismissed by Tribunal ^e	0	1	1	1	1
No jurisdiction ^f	3	4	1	1	4
Subtotal	9	22	9	16	6
Total	50	89	65	64	36
Timeframes					
Average time taken from lodgment to finalisation (days)	259	287	396	350	444

a Applications finalised by a decision of the AAT under section 43 of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal Act.

b Applications finalised by the AAT in accordance with terms of agreement reached by the parties either in the course of an alternative dispute resolution process (section 34D) or at any stage of review proceedings (section 42C).

c Applications dismissed by consent under section 42A(1).

d Applications withdrawn by the applicant under section 42A(1A).

e Applications dismissed under section 42A(2) (non-appearance at a case event), section 42A(5) (failure to proceed with an application or to comply with a direction of the AAT) and section 42B(1) (application is frivolous, vexatious, misconceived, lacking in substance, has no reasonable prospect of success or is an abuse of the process of the AAT).

f Applications finalised on the basis that the decision is not subject to review by the AAT, the applicant does not have standing to apply for a review, the application has not been made within a prescribed time limit, the AAT has refused to extend the time for applying for a review or the application fee has not been paid.

5. Return to work

5.1 Duration of claims

Duration indicators provide an insight into the performance of employers in claims management processes. Duration data can also provide an indication of return to work outcomes.

Table 22: Receipt of claim to end of compensation

	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
1 to 14 days	18%	16%	14%	15%	36%
15 to 31 days	10%	7%	9%	19%	10%
1 to 3 months	39%	30%	29%	26%	29%
4 to 12 months	26%	35%	36%	34%	26%
More than 12 months	8%	11%	12%	6%	0%

In 2017–18, compensation had been finalised within one month of the date of a claim being received by the employer in approximately 46 per cent of cases and within three months in 74 per cent of cases. While there were no claims that took more than 12 months to finalise in 2017–18, the data for this year is relatively immature and may differ in future reporting.

5.2 Median lost time

The median lost time is the middle point of lost time for accepted claims that have had one week or more lost time with an injury date between three and 21 months prior to the end of each financial year. Figure 13 and Table 23 show that as at 30 June 2018, the median weeks of time lost for claims determined in 2017–18 has remained relatively stable at 11.7 as compared to 2016–17 at 11.6 weeks of time lost.

Figure 13: Median lost time

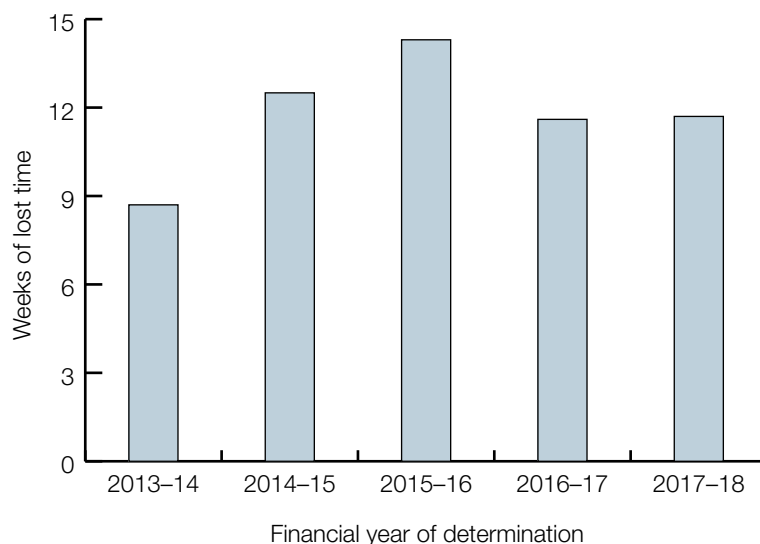


Table 23: Median lost time 2013–14 to 2017–18

	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
Weeks	8.7	12.5	14.3	11.6	11.7

5.3 Rehabilitation and return to work

Table 24: Rehabilitation and return to work outcomes (claims with 28 days or more lost time).

	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
Accepted claims	178	162	99	89	126
Claims of 28 days or more lost time	120	115	65	66	69
Percentage of claimants assessed for a rehabilitation program	37%	52%	45%	59%	61%
Percentage of claimants assessed that commenced a rehabilitation program	91%	90%	90%	87%	86%
Percentage of claimants that commenced a rehabilitation program who returned to work	80%	70%	77%	91%	58%

Table 24 shows that in 2017-18 there were 69 accepted claims with 28 days or more lost time. Of these, approximately 61 per cent were assessed for a rehabilitation program. Of those assessed for a rehabilitation program, 86 per cent commenced a rehabilitation program with 69 per cent of those claims resulting in a return to work.

The smaller claim numbers in more recent years mean the results are more susceptible to variation. It is also likely that with maturity, the final outcomes for the 2017-18 year will vary in future reporting.

5.4 Nature of duties on return to work

Table 25 reports the number of claims determined in each financial year that subsequently returned to work, irrespective of the length of time off work. A small number of employees may have had more than one claim determined in each reporting period.

Table 25: Return to work trend data

	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
Number of claims accepted in the period that returned to work	110	107	52	66	76
Full duties	88%	92%	85%	80%	79%
Light duties	12%	6%	10%	14%	18%
Same position	91%	93%	85%	83%	92%
Other position	9%	7%	15%	17%	8%
Full-time	95%	95%	92%	89%	96%
Part-time	5%	3%	4%	5%	3%
Ship	90%	92%	85%	85%	82%
Land	10%	8%	15%	15%	18%

While relative proportions have fluctuated over time, the majority of seafarers that return to work after injury do so to full duties, to full time work and/or to work on ship-based duties.

