

## **Injuries Board reiterates the importance of workplace safety as €24m awarded for workplace accidents in 2013**

*Highest number of workplace accidents occur on Thursdays in November*

*Year on year increase recorded in employer liability awards*

Thursday is the most likely day of the week for workplace accidents, resulting in employer liability awards, according to an analysis of 2013 workplace claims released by the Injuries Board today.

The Injuries Board awarded compensation of €24m in respect of 826 claims for workplace accidents in 2013, compared to €22m compensation for 807 awards in 2012. The average award for a workplace accident last year also increased from €27,286 in 2012 to €28,886 in 2013. The highest award for a workplace accident last year was €432,000, a substantial increase on the previous year's figure of €332,143. The highest award in 2013 related to a fatal accident.

Commenting on these figures, Patricia Byron, CEO of the Injuries Board, noted the increasing numbers in employment as the economic recovery gathers pace. "From a peak rate of unemployment in 2012, increasing numbers of workers are re-joining the workforce. Perhaps reflective of this, our data shows a year on year increase in the number of awards made as a result of accidents in the workplace. As the economy starts to grow again, and as businesses around the country begin to expand, it is important that a renewed focus on health and safety is cultivated."

Continuing, Ms. Byron said "Construction activities are likely to increase, as are the numbers of people driving for, or to and from, work. The onus is on us all - business owners, sole traders, and employees to promote and adhere to the highest levels of health and safety compliance. While we do not tend to receive many claims for injuries resulting from farming accidents as, in the main, most farmers are their own employers, we are particularly cognisant of the high levels of accidents in the farming industry and echo the advice and concerns of the Health & Safety Authority. Those driving for a living, or workers commuting long distances, should heed the advice of agencies such as the Road Safety Authority. As the economy grows, the health and well-being of workers needs to be at the fore to mitigate the social and economic cost of accidents in the workplace."

### **Key statistics from the Injuries Board analysis of employer liability awards in 2013 are as follows:**

- Slips, trips and falls were the most common accident type accounting for almost one third (30.8%) of all awards for workplace accidents.
- The vast majority of awards (80%) were under €38,000.
- The average award for a workplace accident was €28,886. The average award for men was slightly higher at €29,523, while women received an average award of €27,441.
- The majority of awards were to workers in the 25 to 34 age group (31.6%).

- Men are twice as likely as women to sustain a workplace injury with men accounting for 7 in 10 awards (69.4%), slightly up on last year, while women accounted for the remaining 3 in 10 (30.6%) awards.
- Over the last three years, Thursdays in November have proven to be the most common days for workplace accidents while the least number of accidents occurred on Sunday, and the safest month was April.
- Dublin, Cork and Limerick were the counties with the highest number of awards, whereas Leitrim, Roscommon, Sligo and Longford had the lowest.

**Ends**

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**For reference:**

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**Notes to editor:**

**About the Injuries Board**

The Injuries Board is the independent statutory body which makes personal injury compensation awards arising from motor, workplace and public liability accidents. The Board is self-funded predominantly through fees charged to those who are responsible for injuries (or their insurers) arising from such accidents.

Claims can be made direct to the Injuries Board via:

- Phone: Lo-Call helpline on 1890 829 121 between 8am and 8pm from Monday to Friday
- Online at [www.injuriesboard.ie](http://www.injuriesboard.ie), 24 hours per day, every day
- By Post to: InjuriesBoard.ie, P.O. Box 8, Clonakilty, Co. Cork.

Information on the claim process is available via our smartphone app

Awards continue to be delivered faster and more cost effectively than the previous litigation based system. The Injuries Board model has to date delivered direct and indirect savings of approximately €1billion to the economy.

By law, personal injury claims (with some minor exclusions) must come to the Injuries Board for assessment regardless of whether the claimant has legal representation or not. Direct claimants can have their claim assessed for a refundable fee of €45. In assessing claims the Board makes no distinction between a direct applicant and a claimant with representation who can typically pay an intermediary the equivalent of up to 10% or more of the value of their award. An Order to Pay, issued by the Injuries Board is legally binding and

has the same effect as an award of Court. During 2013, the self-funding Injuries Board made its highest ever compensation award of €1.39m at a delivery cost of €6,000, or 0.5%. There is no cap on the level of awards that the Board can make.

**Table 1: Highest 10 awards for workplace accidents in 2013**

Accident cause	Compensation award
1. Trapped in machine	€432,001.76
2. Fall from a height	€272,465.60
3. Fall from a height	€258,507.24
4. Struck by an object	€185,367.28
5. Struck by flying object	€178,712.32
6. Work pressure	€163,406.00
7. Fall from a height	€162,726.83
8. Unsafe system of work	€160,398.65
9. Animal attack	€157,275.00
10. Explosion	€154,928.49

**Table 2: Top 5 accident types**

Accident type	No. of awards	% of awards
Slip, trips and falls	255	30.8%
Struck by object / falling object	111	13.4%
Unsafe system of work	66	7.9%
Lifting / manual handling	64	7.7%
Cuts	34	4.1%

**Table 3: County by county ranking of employer liability awards by volume in 2013**

County	No. of Awards per County	Average Award per County	Total compensation per County
Dublin	281	€22,901	€6,435,081.90
Cork	74	€30,485	€2,255,879.58
Limerick	55	€30,336	€1,668,454.33
Kildare	37	€33,264	€1,230,775.24
Tipperary	40	€29,535	€1,181,392.84
Galway	22	€47,400	€1,042,796.75
Meath	41	€22,881	€938,110.01
Clare	23	€40,448	€930,296.87
Louth	34	€25,243	€858,268.56

Kerry	18	€39,482	€710,677.14
Wexford	22	€28,837	€634,404.12
Waterford	22	€27,860	€612,922.76
Carlow	11	€55,073	€605,801.30
Wicklow	19	€30,294	€575,592.41
Mayo	15	€35,005	€525,075.47
Laois	18	€26,606	€478,905.36
Kilkenny	12	€37,093	€445,116.82
Monaghan	10	€39,567	€395,673.53
Donegal	10	€38,364	€383,635.87
Westmeath	11	€33,785	€371,634.20
Offaly	12	€29,911	€358,934.35
Cavan	10	€28,360	€283,600.30
Sligo	6	€23,264	€139,586.75
Longford	6	€16,002	€96,012.35

*\* For reasons of claimant confidentiality, awards volumes in Leitrim and Roscommon were too low to include in the above table.*