

## Background:

This annual factsheet contains information on occupational health data in Great Britain.

It includes information on cases of **occupational disease** reported to the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) between 2016-17 and 2020-21. This covers mainline, London Underground Limited (LUL) and non-mainline networks.

It also includes data on incidents of **manual handling** and **shock/trauma** between 2012-13 and 2020-21. This covers mainline and LUL only.

**Source:** Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB), LUL and ORR.

**Latest year:** 2020-21 (April 2020 to March 2021)

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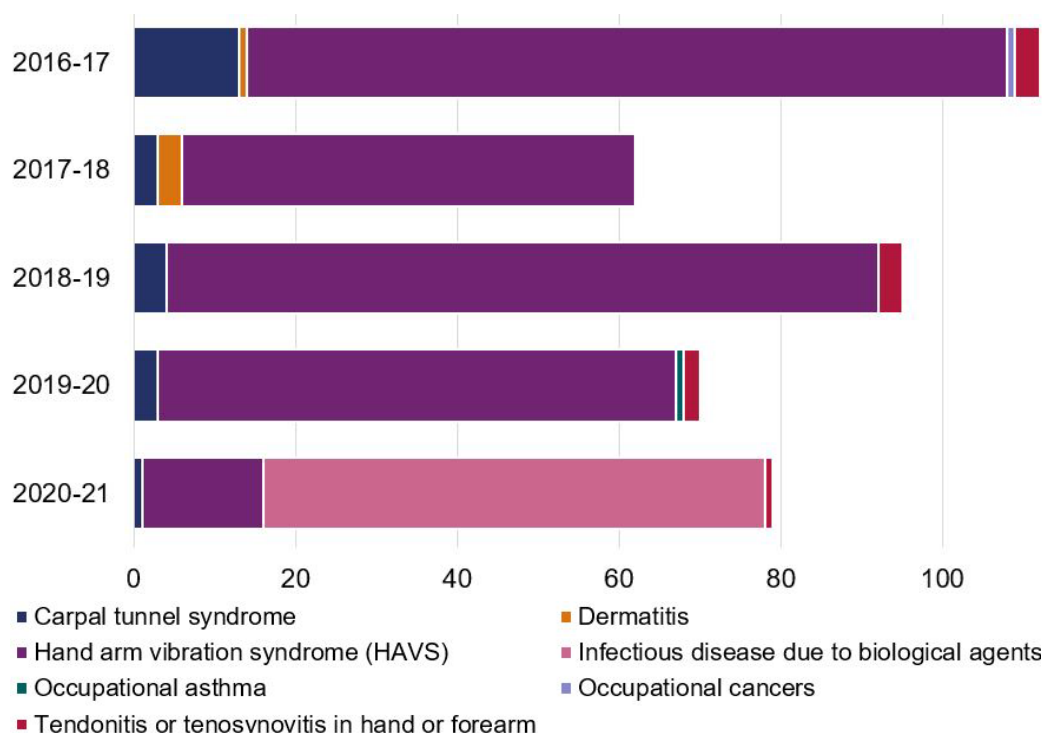
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**Next publication:**  
June 2022

The impact of COVID-19 on railway workers resulted in **infectious disease due to biological agents** becoming the predominant occupational health disease reported to ORR in 2020-21.

**Figure 1.1: Occupational health disease cases increased in 2020-21 as a result of COVID-19 cases**

Disease cases reported to ORR under RIDDOR, mainline and non-mainline networks, 2016-17 to 2020-21 (Table 5110)



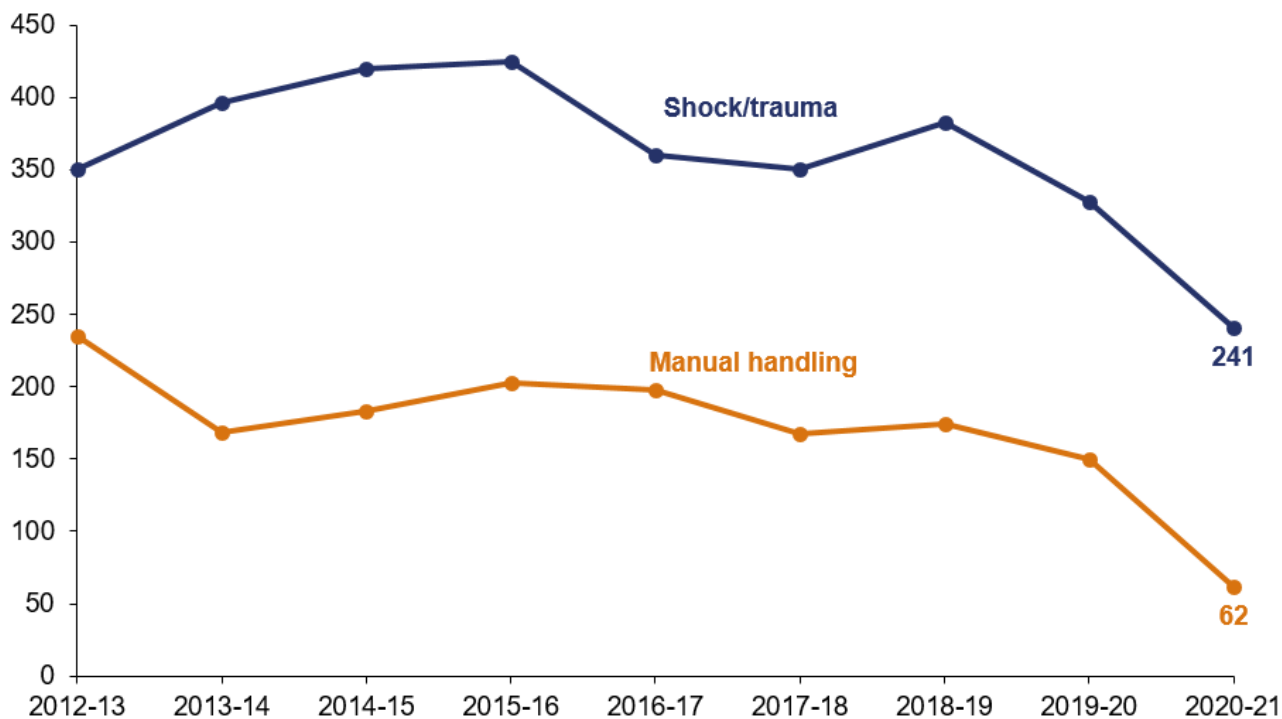
There has been a **76.6% decrease** in reported cases of **HAVS** between 2019-20 and 2020-21.

There were **62 cases** of **infectious disease due to biological agents** in 2020-21. COVID-19 cases are included within this category.

All data tables and an interactive dashboard associated with this factsheet are published on the [occupational health page](#) of the data portal. Key definitions are at the end of this factsheet.

## Figure 1.2: Manual handling and shock/trauma incidents both fell to a historical low

Manual handling and shock/trauma incidents resulting in lost time, mainline and LUL, 2012-13 to 2020-21 (Table 5123)

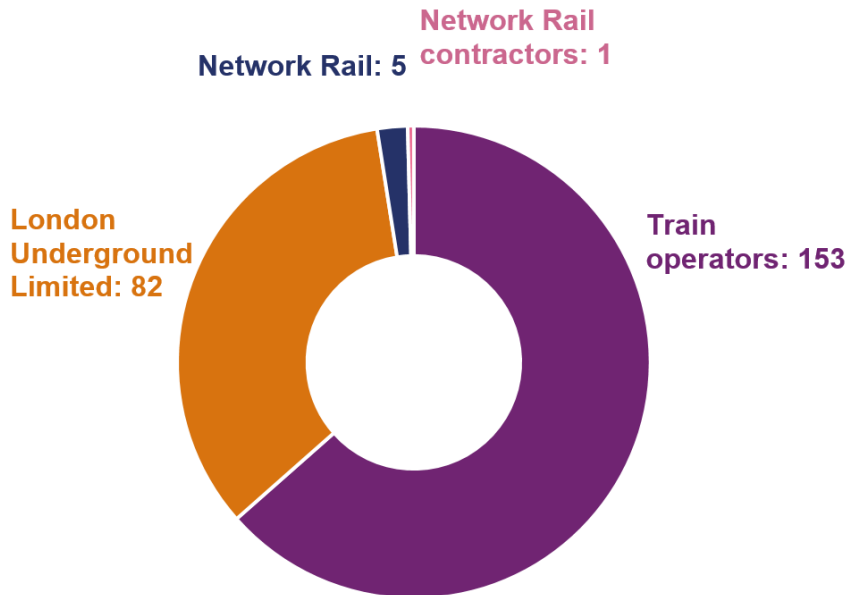


**Manual handling** incidents resulting in lost time **decreased by 58.7%** compared with 2019-20. There were 62 incidents in 2020-21. This represented the lowest number of incidents in any year throughout the time series.

**Shock/trauma** incidents resulting in lost time **decreased by 26.5%** compared with 2019-20. The 241 incidents recorded represented the lowest number of incidents recorded since the time series began.

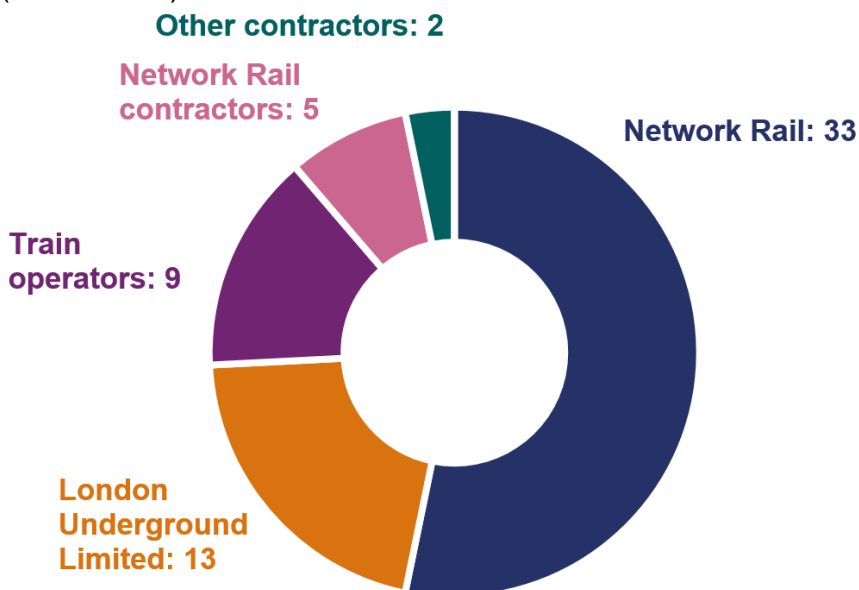
**Figure 1.3: Train operators accounted for more than half of shock/trauma incidents reported**

Shock/trauma incidents resulting in lost time by dutyholder, mainline and LUL, 2020-21 (Table 5123)



**Figure 1.4: Network Rail accounted for more than half of manual handling incidents reported**

Manual handling incidents resulting in lost time by dutyholder, mainline and LUL, 2020-21 (Table 5123)



## Definitions

- **Carpal Tunnel Syndrome:** work involves regular use of percussive (repeated impact) or vibrating tools.
- **Cramp in the hand or forearm due to repetitive movements:** work involves prolonged periods of repetitive movement of the fingers, hand or arm.
- **Dermatitis:** work involves significant or regular exposure to a known skin sensitiser or irritant.
- **Hand-arm vibration syndrome (HAVS):** work involves regular use of percussive or vibrating tools, or the holding of materials which are subject to percussive processes, or processes causing vibration.
- **Infectious disease due to biological agents:** any disease attributed to an occupational exposure to a biological agent. Includes COVID-19 cases.
- **Occupational asthma:** work involves significant or regular exposure to a known respiratory sensitiser.
- **Occupational cancers:** any cancer attributed to an occupational exposure to a known human carcinogen or mutagen (including ionised radiation).
- **Tendonitis or tenosynovitis in the hand or forearm:** work is physically demanding and involves frequent, repetitive movements.
- **Manual handling:** Physical injuries from moving of items either by lifting, lowering, carrying, pushing or pulling. They are part of a wider group of musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs), which covers any injury, damage or disorder of the joints or other tissues in the upper/lower limbs or the back.
- **Shock/trauma:** Shock or traumatic stress affecting any person who has been involved in, or has been a witness to, an event, and not suffered any physical injury. Shock/trauma cases are **not** RIDDOR reportable.
- **Other contractors:** Contractors working for duty holders other than Network Rail

There is further [guidance on RIDDOR](#) and information on all the [different disease cases reported to ORR](#).

There is further information on [occupational health within the rail industry](#).

## Data tables

Table 5110 - *Occupational Health disease cases*, Table 5123 - *Occupational Health manual handling and shock/trauma incidents (lost time) by duty holder*, and Table 5133 - *Occupational Health manual handling and shock/trauma incidents (no lost time) by duty holder* can be accessed on the [occupational health page](#) of the data portal free of charge in OpenDocument Spreadsheet (.ods) format. We can also provide data in csv format on request.



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