



Trends in health and safety accidents/incidents within the waste and recycling collection service

To: All APSE contacts

Key Issues and Trends

- This briefing provides analysis to understand the current statistics and trends in health and safety figures within the local authority refuse service.
- The analysis is based on figures collected by the APSE Performance Networks refuse service as well as figures supplied by the HSE with analysis covering the years 2008/09 to 2011/12.
- The average total number of deaths and major injuries (RIDDOR) per local authority has increased by 75% in 2011/12. Almost a third of the fatalities were due to employees being struck by vehicles. One third of the injuries were due to slips and trips.
- The average total number of 'over three day' injuries (RIDDOR) per local authority has decreased year on year since 2008/09- a 22%. Almost half of reported over three day injuries in waste and recycling were due to handling.
- The average number of reported cases of work-related diseases under RIDDOR has increased from zero in 2008/09 to 0.02 cases per LA in 2011/12.
- The average number of other dangerous occurrences under RIDDOR per LA has decreased year on year since 2008/09, to 1.68 occurrences per LA- a 49% reduction.
- The average number of days lost per FTE from RIDDOR accidents in local authorities has shown a dramatic decrease over the last four years from 11.07 in 2008/09 to 0.56 in 2011/12- a massive 95% decrease.
- The average percentage of applicable goods/materials covered by a documented COSHH assessment across the whole LA group in 2011/12 is the highest over the time period at 89.36%.
- The average percentage of applicable activities covered by a documented risk assessment across the whole LA group in 2011/12 is the highest over the time period at 96.32%.

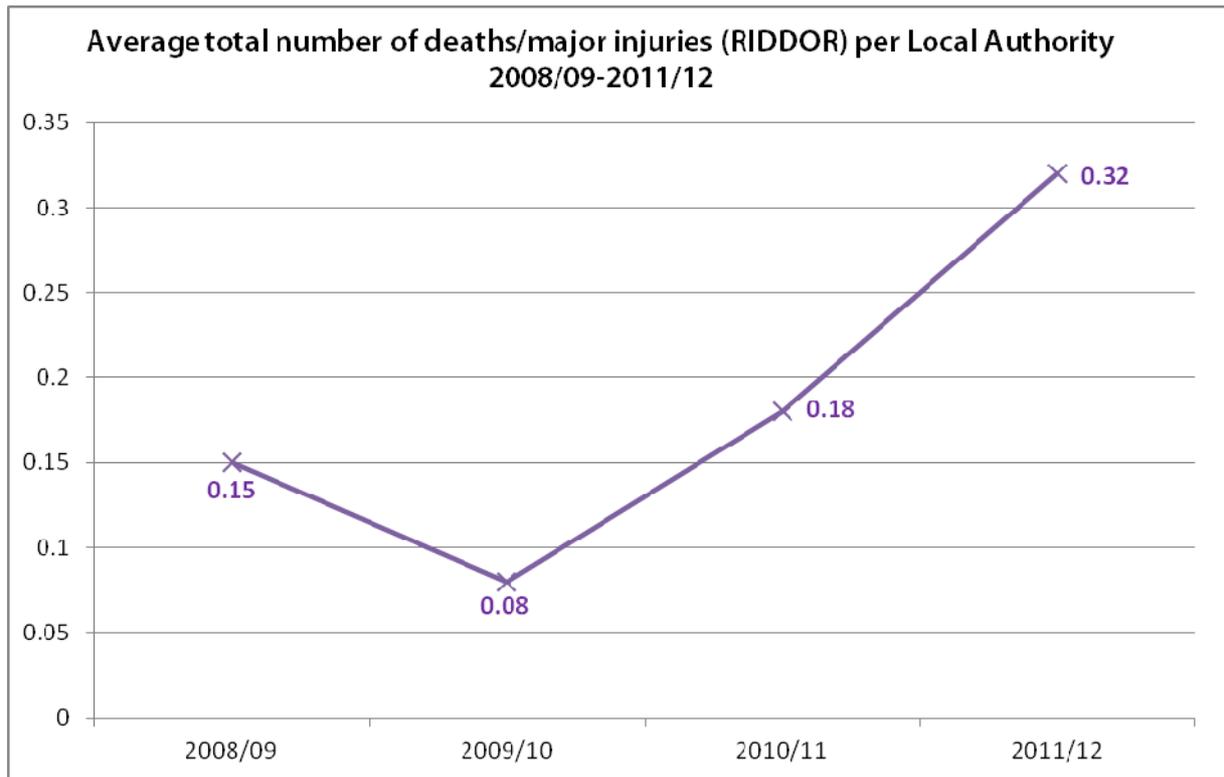
1. Overview

This briefing provides analysis to understand the current statistics and trends in health and safety figures within the local authority refuse service.

The analysis in this report is based on figures collected by the APSE Performance Networks refuse service. Data since 2008/09 up until the most current data set available, 2011/12, has been used to give a four year trend. Averages across the whole service are used, where by we mean the average data returns from all local authorities participating in the refuse performance networks service. Analysis is also supplemented using health and safety in waste and recycling figures collected by the HSE for the UK for 2007/08- 2011/12¹. The HSE figures include local authority providers but not exclusively.

2. Trend analysis

2.1 Total number of deaths / major injuries (RIDDOR)

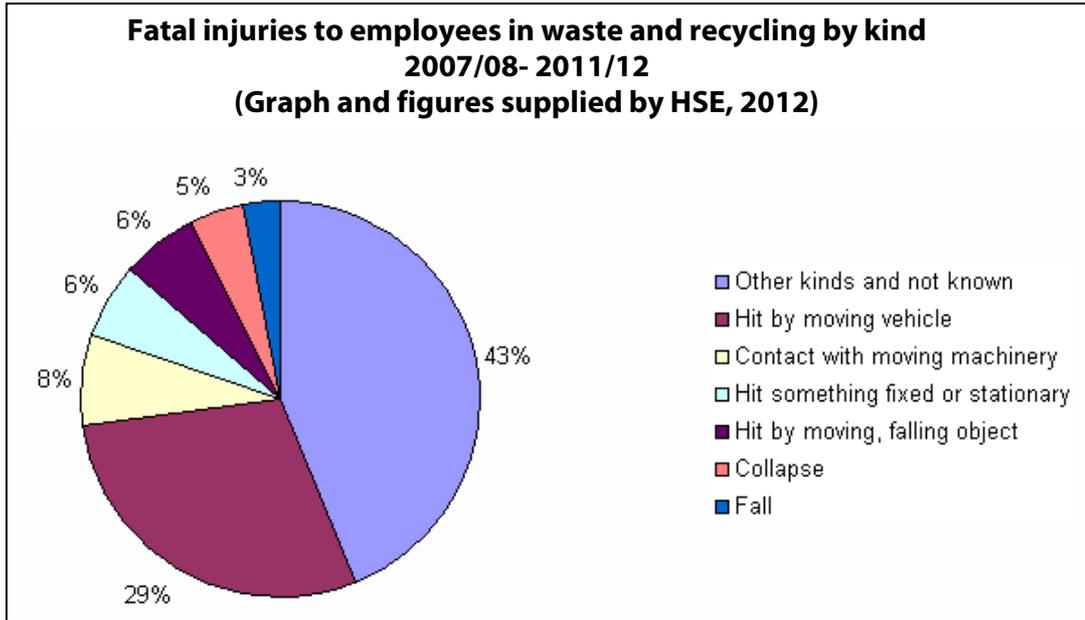


The average total number of deaths and major injuries which fall under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR) per local authority has increased by 75% in 2011/12 (9 incidents in total) compared to the 0.08 low in 2009/10 (4 incidents). This was due to a number of local authorities reporting 3 deaths in the period 2011/12 compared to the highest number reported in 2009/10 of 1 death per local authority. Data tables showing highest, lowest, average and total figures can be found in section 3 of this report.

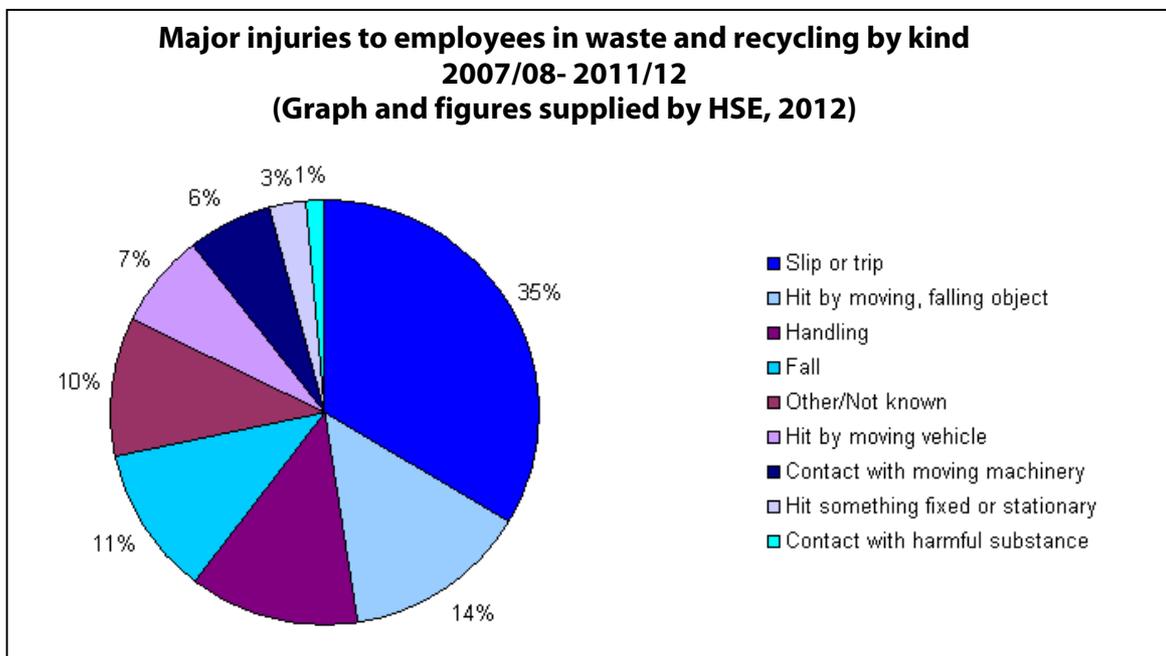
How did the injuries happen- (UK wide figures collected by HSE relating to the waste and recycling services)

The main kinds of fatality over the last 5 years (2007/08-2011/12) are shown in the graph below. Almost a third of the fatalities were due to employees being struck by vehicles. Between 2001/02 and 2011/12 there were 13 fatalities involving moving machinery. Half of these happened in either December or January. This might be because more machinery maintenance is done during the holidays, but there is no equivalent peak in reported non-fatal machinery injuries.

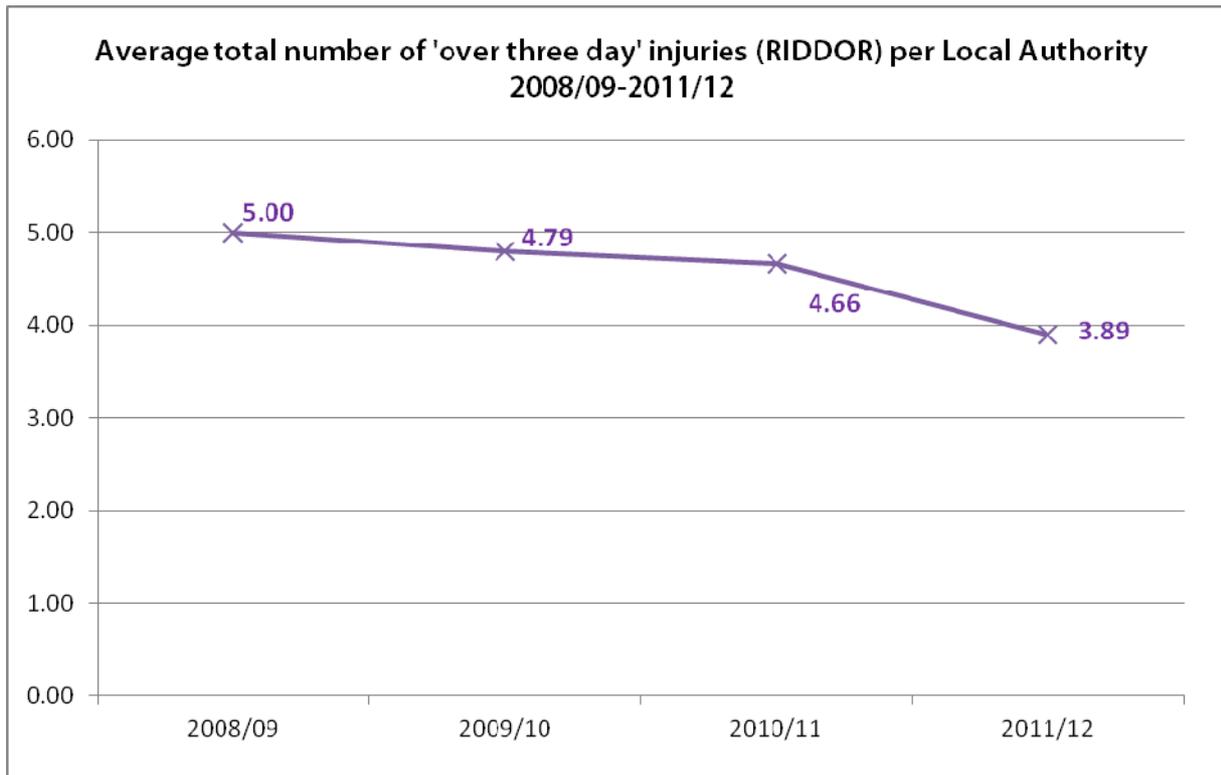
¹ HSE's full report can be viewed here: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/industry/waste-recycling/waste-recycling.pdf>



The situation with major injuries is quite different. Over the last five years (2007/08-2011/12) one third were due to slips and trips and another two fifths (38%) were fairly evenly divided between being hit by moving/falling objects, handling injuries and falls. Over the ten years from 2001/02 to 2010/11, a quarter of reported major injuries were due to slips and trips happened in either December or January. Over three day injuries due to slips and trips also peaked in January. This is probably due to snowy and icy weather. There were a small number of reported assaults over the 10 years. January and August were peak months. These coincide with peak holiday times.

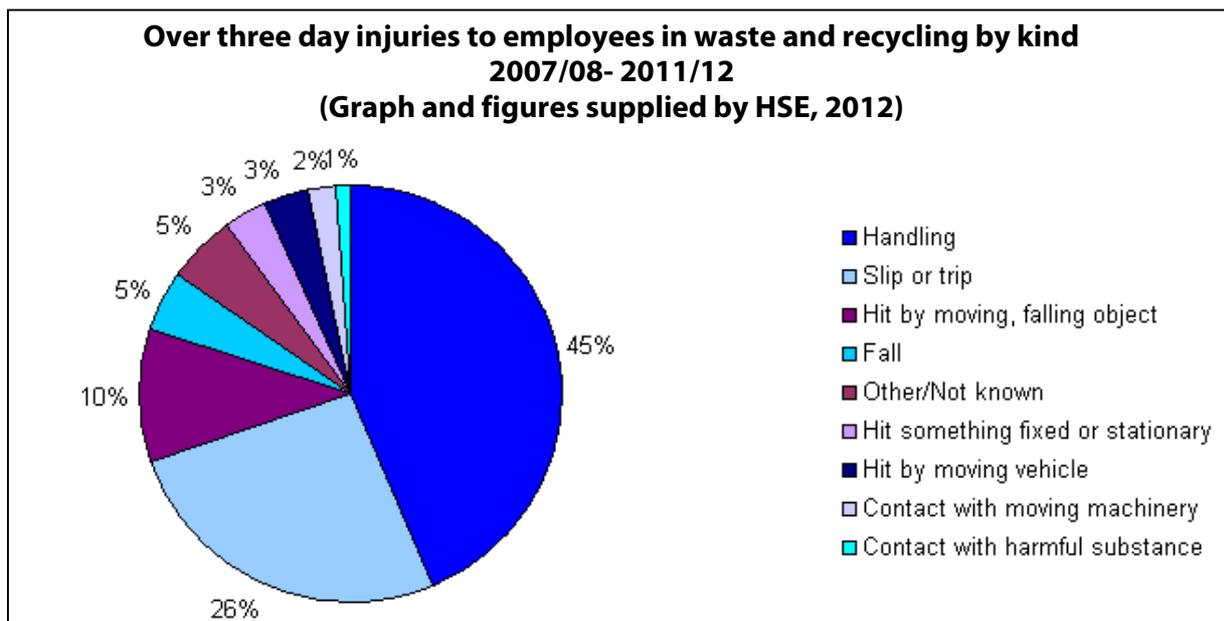


2.2 Total number of 'over three day' injuries (RIDDOR)



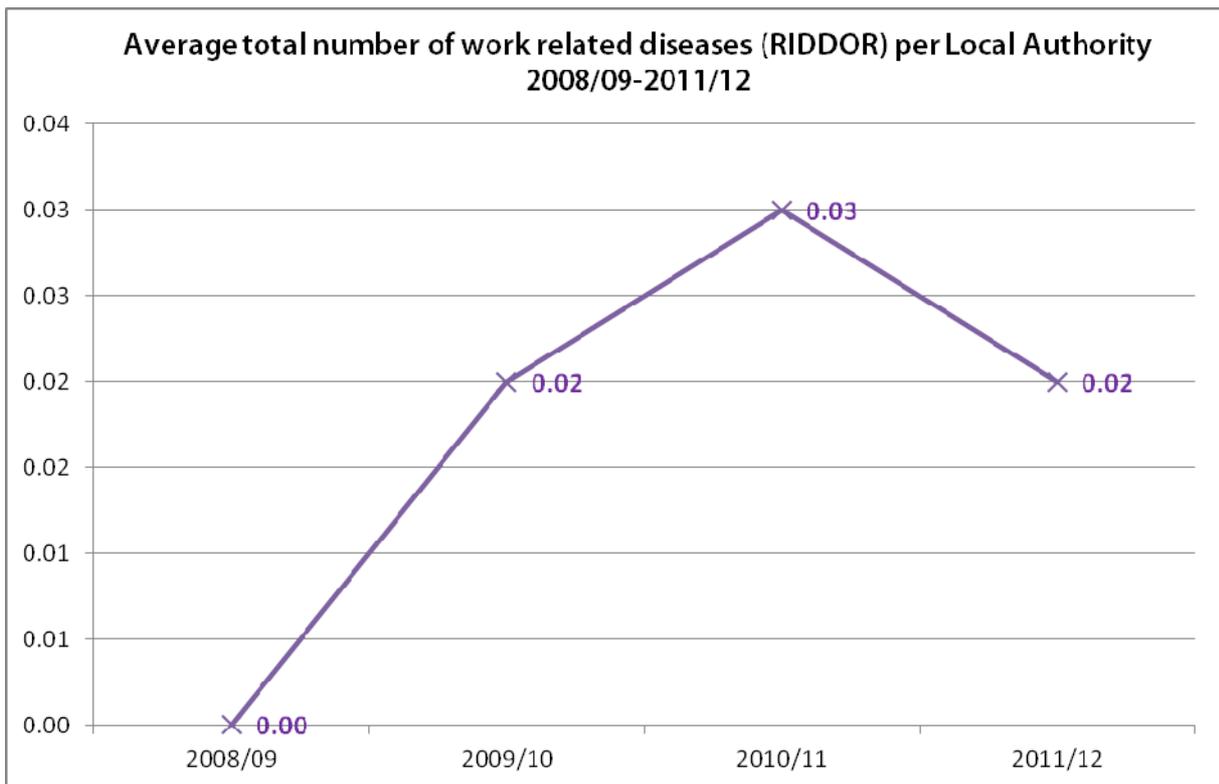
The average total number of 'over three day' injuries (RIDDOR) per local authority has decreased year on year since 2008/09 by 22% in 2011/12 (160 incidents in total) compared to the 5 days per LA in 2008/09 (301 incidents in total). This could be due to the increased focus on health and safety training and monitoring in local authorities. Data tables showing highest, lowest, average and total figures can be found in section 3 of this report.

How did the injuries happen- (UK wide figures collected by HSE relating to the waste and recycling services)



In the period from 2007/08 to 2011/12, almost half of reported over three day injuries in waste and recycling were due to handling. The HSE category of 'handling' includes work-related injuries due to strains; sprains; lifting; carrying; pushing or pulling loads; trapped fingers and cuts from sharp objects. Slips and trips (26%) and being struck by moving or falling objects (10%) were the next most common. Over the ten years from 2001/02 to 2010/11, slips and trips numbers are highest in January (13%), but not in December, unlike with major injuries. This probably reflects the fact that snowfall is most likely in January and that a lot of people take holiday in December. June accounts for 13% of reports of contact with a harmful substance. There is no obvious reason for June to be more hazardous than other months. There were 125 reported over three day injuries to waste and recycling staff caused by animals. August (18%) was the worst month for animal injuries.

2.3 Total number of work related diseases (RIDDOR)

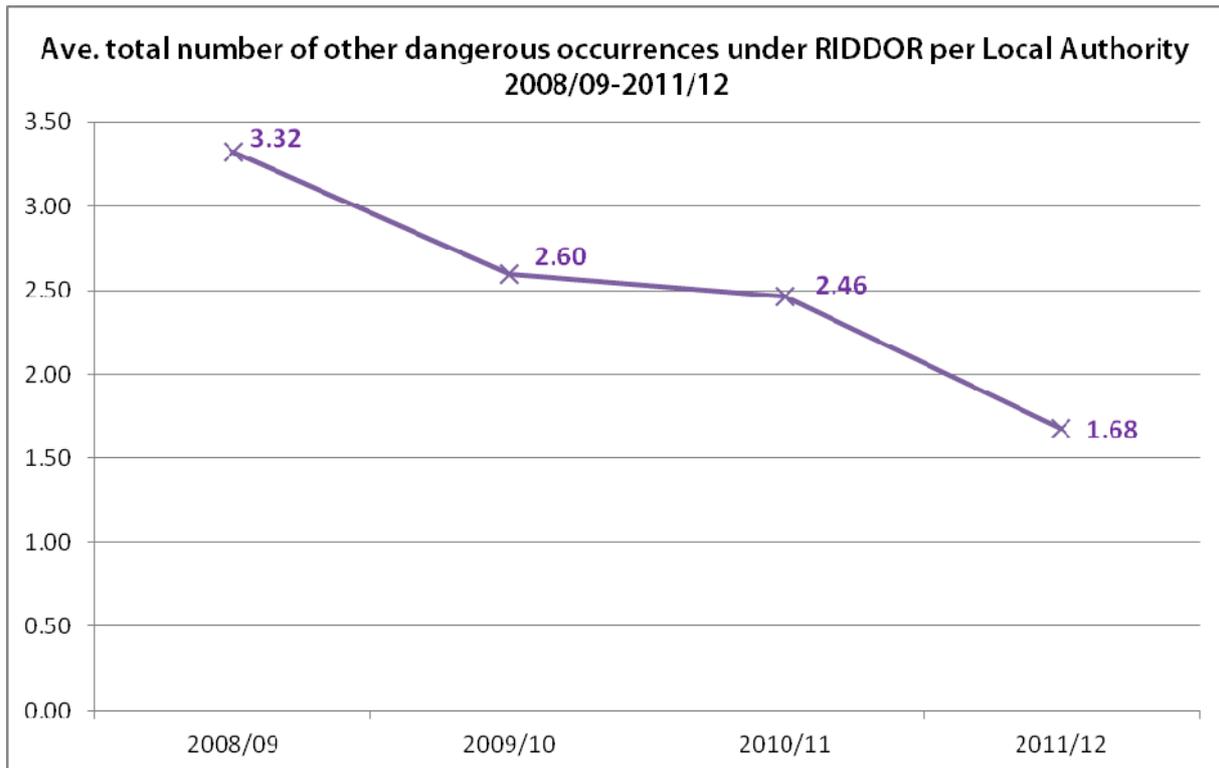


Reportable work-related diseases under RIDDOR can include: some skin diseases, such as occupational dermatitis; infections such as viral hepatitis, tuberculosis, legionellosis and tetanus; any other infection reliably attributable to work with biological agents, exposure to blood or body fluids, or any potentially infective material².

The numbers of reported cases of work-related diseases under RIDDOR were very low amongst local authorities participating in performance networks. However the average number cases has increased from zero in 2008/09 to 0.03 (1 incident) in 2010/11 and now rest at an average of 0.02 cases per LA (2 incidents in total).

² Further detail on reporting RIDDOR cases see HSE’s guidance for employers: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/hsis1.pdf>

2.4 Total number of other dangerous occurrences under RIDDOR

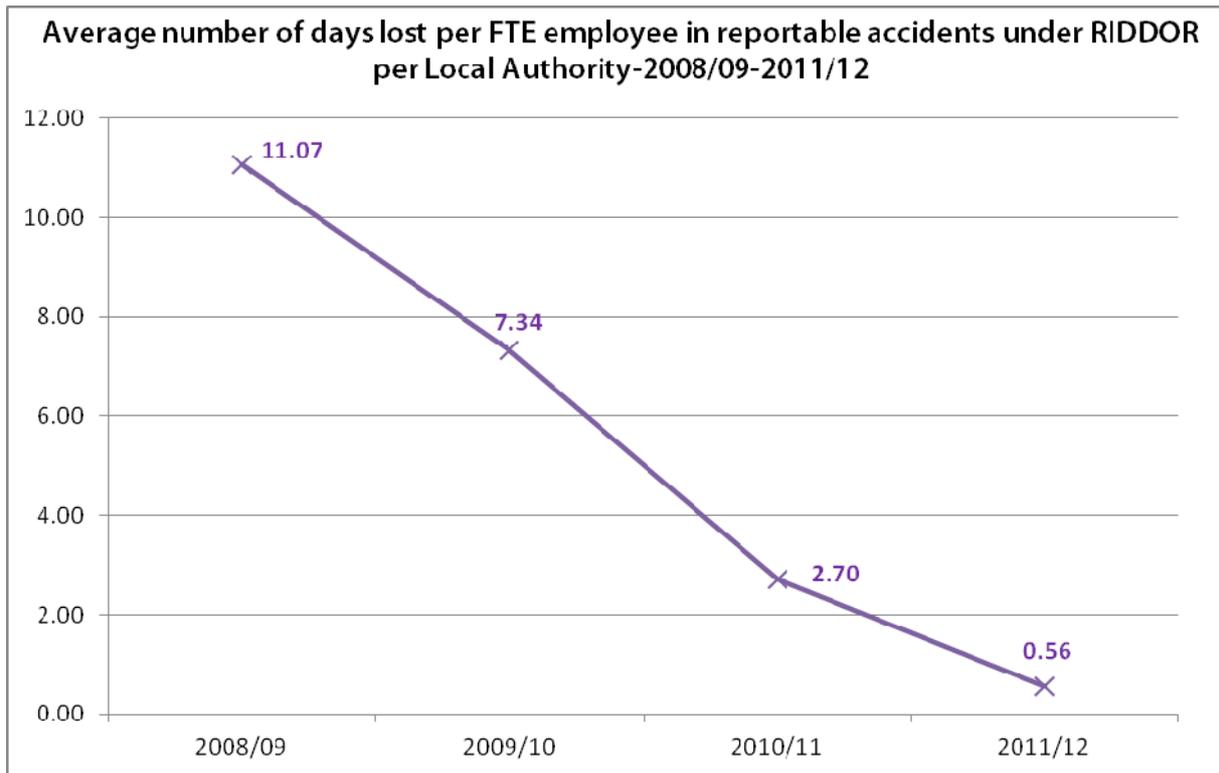


Other dangerous occurrences describe certain listed near-miss events. Not every near-miss event must be reported but examples of those that are reportable include³: collapse, overturning or failure of load-bearing parts of lifts and lifting equipment; plant or equipment coming into contact with overhead power lines; unintended collision of a train with any vehicle; a dangerous substance being conveyed by road is involved in a fire or released. Many examples of near-misses involve travel and the road/highways network so waste and recycling services are particularly exposed to this criterion of RIDDOR events.

In spite of this, the average number of other dangerous occurrences under RIDDOR per LA has decreased year on year since 2008/09, from 3.32 in 2008/09 (206 occurrences) to 1.68 occurrences per LA (94 in total) - a 49% reduction.

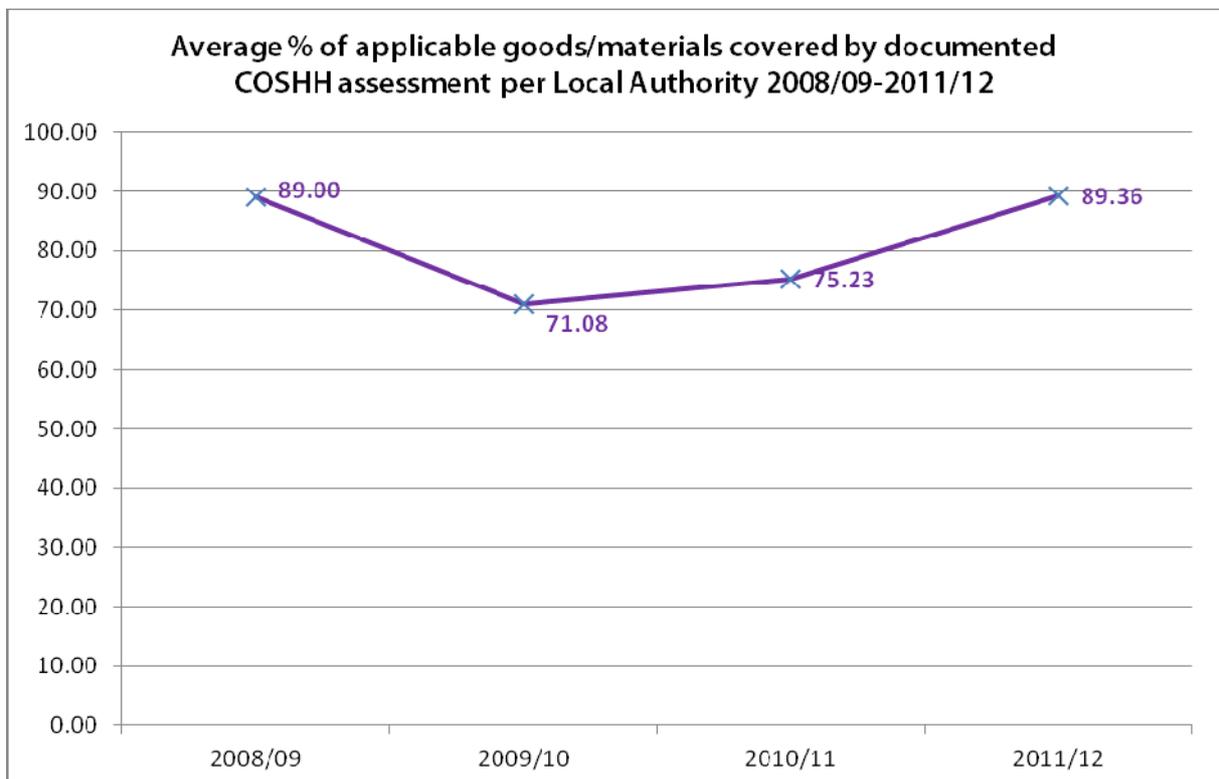
2.5 Average number of days lost per FTE employee in reportable accidents under RIDDOR

³ For further information see: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/what-must-i-report.htm#dangerous>



The average number of days lost per FTE from RIDDOR accidents in local authorities has shown a dramatic decrease over the last four years from 11.07 in 2008/09 to 0.56 in 2011/12- a massive 95% decrease. This should be commended and is a testament to local authorities strengthening their sickness absence reporting and monitoring processes and forwarding a prevention strategy in health and safety.

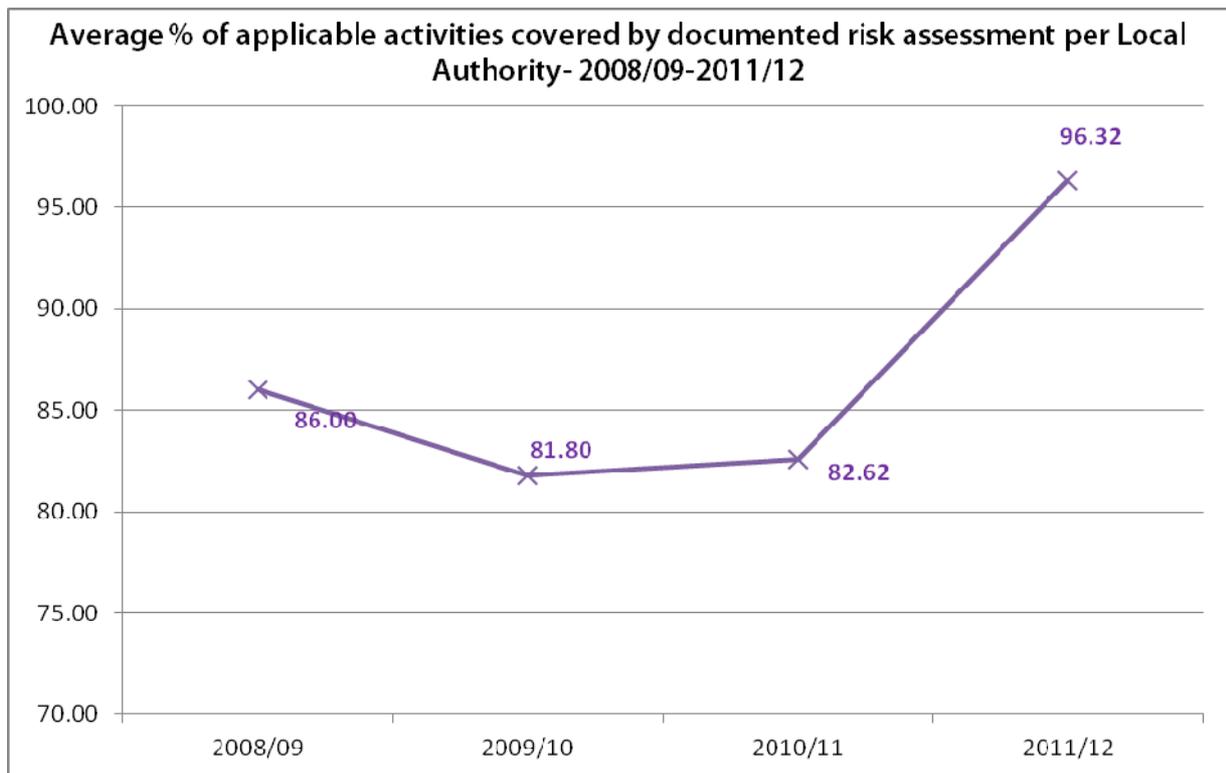
2.6 Percentage of applicable goods/materials covered by documented COSHH assessment



Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH) is a useful tool of good management which sets eight basic measures that employers, and sometimes employees, must take⁴. Examples of goods/materials which should be documented by a COSHH assessment include: adhesives, paints and cleaning agents.

The average percentage of applicable goods/materials covered by a documented COSHH assessment across the whole LA group in 2011/12 is the highest over the time period at 89.36%.

2.7 Percentage of applicable activities covered by documented risk assessment



Similarly, the average percentage of applicable activities covered by a documented risk assessment across the whole LA group in 2011/12 is the highest over the time period at 96.32%.

⁴ Details of the eight measures can be found here: <http://www.materials.ox.ac.uk/uploads/file/COSHHRegulations.pdf>

3. Data Tables

3.1 Whole service lowest, highest, average and total figures 2008/09-2011/12

	2008-2009			
	Lowest	Average	Highest	Total
Total number of deaths / major injuries (RIDDOR)	0.00	0.15	2.00	9.00
Total number of 'over three day' injuries (RIDDOR)	0.00	5.00	65.00	301.00
Total number of work related diseases (RIDDOR)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total number of other dangerous occurrences under RIDDOR	0.00	3.32	87.00	206.00
Average number of days lost per FTE employee in reportable accidents under RIDDOR	0.00	11.07	208.00	n/a
Percentage of applicable goods/materials covered by documented COSHH assessment	0.00	89.00	100.00	n/a
Percentage of applicable activities covered by documented risk assessment	0.00	86.00	100.00	n/a

	2009-2010			
	Lowest	Average	Highest	Total
Total number of deaths / major injuries (RIDDOR)	0.00	0.08	1.00	5.00
Total number of 'over three day' injuries (RIDDOR)	0.00	4.79	25.00	298.50
Total number of work related diseases (RIDDOR)	0.00	0.02	1.00	1.00
Total number of other dangerous occurrences under RIDDOR	0.00	2.60	85.00	165.00
Average number of days lost per FTE employee in reportable accidents under RIDDOR	0.00	7.34	167.00	n/a
Percentage of applicable goods/materials covered by documented COSHH assessment	0.00	71.08	100.00	n/a
Percentage of applicable activities covered by documented risk assessment	0.00	81.80	100.00	n/a

	2010-2011			
	Lowest	Average	Highest	Total
Total number of deaths / major injuries (RIDDOR)	0.00	0.18	3.00	12.00
Total number of 'over three day' injuries (RIDDOR)	0.00	4.66	26.00	299.00
Total number of work related diseases (RIDDOR)	0.00	0.03	1.00	2.00
Total number of other dangerous occurrences under RIDDOR	0.00	2.46	51.00	160.00
Average number of days lost per FTE employee in reportable accidents under RIDDOR	0.00	2.70	43.00	n/a
Percentage of applicable goods/materials covered by documented COSHH assessment	0.00	75.23	100.00	n/a
Percentage of applicable activities covered by documented risk assessment	0.00	82.62	100.00	n/a

	2011-2012			
	Lowest	Average	Highest	Total
Total number of deaths / major injuries (RIDDOR)	0.00	0.32	3.00	9.00
Total number of 'over three day' injuries (RIDDOR)	0.00	3.89	19.00	160.00
Total number of work related diseases (RIDDOR)	0.00	0.02	1.00	1.00
Total number of other dangerous occurrences under RIDDOR	0.00	1.68	84.00	94.00
Average number of days lost per FTE employee in reportable accidents under RIDDOR	0.00	0.56	4.00	n/a
Percentage of applicable goods/materials covered by documented COSHH assessment	0.00	89.36	100.00	n/a
Percentage of applicable activities covered by documented risk assessment	0.00	96.32	100.00	n/a

4. APSE Comment

Safeguarding the health and safety of operatives and the public in refuse collection and recycling operations is at the forefront of many local authority managers' minds. Many local authorities continue to improve their health and safety statistics via targeted improvement work in areas including: driving operations/reversing; route risk assessments; manual handling at the kerbside; procurement; and health and safety monitoring. There is also a productivity and cost benefit associated with lower health and safety incidents rate, with a reduction in sickness absence and service disruption along with a reduction in insurance claims and legal costs.

As local authorities continue to tighten their belts in the face of austerity and public spending cuts, the focus on efficiency and performance in the delivery of frontline local government services is essential for senior managers, councillors and staff. The pressure to demonstrate value for money to a range of internal and external stakeholders; continue to evidence that services are competitive both against their peers and other providers; and develop new and innovative approaches to transforming the shape of local public services has never been greater. There is an on going need for robust and good quality performance information in order to benchmark services, identify improvement opportunities and demonstrate value for money. APSE Performance Networks is a service that is designed to support local performance management frameworks.

Helen Burkhalter, APSE Principal Advisor, August 2013