



# 2021 Annual Report – Occupational Injuries in the Canadian Federal Jurisdiction



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## Table of Contents

<b>Overview .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Sectors under federal jurisdiction .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Highlights .....</b>	<b>4</b>
General overview .....	4
DIFR highlights .....	5
FIFR highlights .....	5
<b>Section 1: Occupational injuries in the Canadian federal jurisdiction by sector in 2021 .....</b>	<b>7</b>
Disabling injuries .....	7
Fatal injuries .....	15
<b>Section 2: Occupational injuries in the Canadian federal jurisdiction by province and territory in 2021 .....</b>	<b>18</b>
Disabling injuries .....	18
Fatal injuries .....	20
<b>Annex 1: List of Terms.....</b>	<b>22</b>

## Overview

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The data reported in this publication originates from the Employer's Annual Hazardous Occurrence Report (EAHOR) submitted by federally regulated employers to the Labour Program. The *Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Regulations* under the *Canada Labour Code (Code)* require that employers subject to federal jurisdiction submit the EAHOR each year by March 1 for the period from January 1 to December 31 of the preceding calendar year.

This publication presents both information and analysis on the Disabling Injury Frequency Rate (DIFR) and the Fatal Injury Frequency Rate (FIFR) for 2021. These 2 rates allow for equal comparison between sectors based on hours worked as a constant (DIFR: Reported disabling and fatal injuries per **1 million reported hours worked**; FIFR: Reported fatal injuries per **1 billion reported hours worked**). Higher DIFR or FIFR values is an indication of higher risk within a specific unit of analysis (industry sector, organization, workplace, etc.) based on factors outside of hours worked, such as the nature of the work itself.

This publication also provides the statistics at the level of sector and province/territory for employers under federal jurisdiction. The List of terms explains the definitions of injury rates and other relevant terms. Historical data on all injury rates dating back to 2008 are available at the Government of Canada's Open Data Portal.

## Sectors under federal jurisdiction

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According to the *Canada Labour Code*, federal jurisdiction encompasses any work and/or undertaking or business that is within the legislative authority of the Parliament of Canada. This includes all work deemed to be for the common good of at least 2 provinces and outside the exclusive authority of provincial legislatures. Part II of the Code also applies to employers and employees covered under the Parliamentary Employment and Staff Relations Act.

## Highlights

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### General overview

The total reported number of disabling and fatal injuries remained relatively consistent from 2020 to 2021. In 2021, a total of 36,736 injuries (including disabling injuries, fatal injuries and minor injuries) was reported. This is a decrease of 288 total injuries from 2020 (37,024).

Out of the total number of injuries reported in 2021, 16,342 (44.5%) were disabling injuries, 44 (0.1%) were fatal injuries and 20,350 (55.4%) were minor injuries. While disabling injuries increased compared to 2020 (2020: 15,799), fatal (2020: 49) and minor (2020: 21,176) injuries saw a decrease.

The Road Transportation (ROAD), Federal Public Services (PUBS), Air Transportation (AIRT), and Postal Services (POST) sector accounted for 80.7% of disabling injuries in 2021. The Federal Public Services sector is the only one of these 4 sectors where the number of disabling injuries decreased, from 2,810 in 2020 to 2,612 in 2021.

In 2021, 82.7% of all reported disabling injuries occurred in 4 provinces (Alberta, British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec). Alberta is the only one of these 4 provinces where the number of disabling injuries decreased, from 1,909 in 2020 to 1,675 in 2021.

The Road, Air and Rail Transportation and Federal Public Services sectors have reported fatal injuries every year from 2012 to 2021.

Five provinces (Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec) accounted for 88.6% of all reported fatal injuries. Ontario reported an increase in fatal injuries, from 15 in 2020 to 18 in 2021.

Manitoba and New Brunswick were the only other provinces to report an increase in fatal injuries (see Chart 2.3).

## DIFR highlights

The 2021 DIFR for the federal jurisdiction is the lowest to date since 1982. It dropped from 7.29 in 2020 to 7.10 in 2021 (a 2.6% decrease).

The 2021 DIFR values for 6 sectors (Postal Services, Road Transportation, Air Transportation, Longshoring, Water Transportation and Feed, Flour and Seed) were greater than the federal jurisdiction rate. The Road, Air and Water Transportation and Longshoring sectors reported higher DIFR values in 2021 compared to 2020.

Although the DIFR for Postal Services decreased by 0.2% compared to 2020, it still had the highest DIFR among the federally regulated sectors in 2021 (see Chart 1.4) The Communications sector reported a 49.8% increase in its DIFR compared to 2020, which was the largest percentage increase of any DIFR.

Nunavut, British Columbia, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and Quebec reported DIFR values higher than the federal jurisdiction rate in 2021 (see Chart 2.2). Nunavut and British Columbia presented higher DIFR values than in 2020, while the remaining 5 provinces presented lower DIFR values.

## FIFR highlights

The 2021 FIFR dropped from 22.54 in 2020 to 19.07 in 2021 (a 15.4% decrease). It is the lowest rate since 1998 (17.36).

Five sectors reported FIFR values higher than the federal jurisdiction rate in 2021. These were Road Transportation (66.58), First Nations band councils and Indigenous self-governments (certain activities) (59.13), Postal Services (42.36), Air Transportation (37.48) and Broadcasting (21.70). The historical FIFR values for Road Transportation have been consistently higher than the federal jurisdiction rate since 2008.

Five provinces reported FIFR values higher than the federal jurisdiction rate: Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia (see Chart 2.4).

Note: More detailed and historical injury data is available at the Government of Canada's [Open Data Portal](#).

# Section 1: Occupational injuries in the Canadian federal jurisdiction by sector in 2021

## Disabling injuries

### Number of disabling injuries and hours worked

In which sectors did the most disabling injuries occur?

In 2021, there was a total of 16,342 disabling injuries in the federal jurisdiction, up by 543 from 15,799 in 2020. This was a 3.4% increase. A large majority (80.7%) of these injuries came from the following 4 sectors (see Chart 1.1):

- Road Transportation (39.3%)
- Federal Public Services, Public Service Departments and Crown Corporations (16.0%)
- Air Transportation (13.1%)
- Postal Services and Postal Contractors (12.3%)

Of these 4 sectors, Air Transportation reported an increase in disabling injuries of 20.7%, followed by Road Transportation and Postal Services, which reported smaller increases of 4.7% and 0.2% respectively. Only the Federal Public Services sector reported 198 fewer disabling injuries in 2021, which corresponds to a 7.0% decrease compared to 2020. Overall, these 4 sectors reported 12,720 disabling injuries in 2020 and 13,184 disabling injuries in 2021, a combined 3.6% increase.

All 4 sectors reported an increase in hours worked in 2021 compared to 2020. Hours worked in Federal Public Services increased by 5.3%, in Postal Services by 0.5%, in Air Transportation by 0.2%, and in Road Transportation by 0.1%. In total, the hours worked reported by these 4 sectors in 2021 amounted to 57.4% of all hours worked reported in the federal jurisdiction.

The Communications and Longshoring sectors reported notable increases of approximately 54% and 80% respectively in the number of disabling injuries between 2020 and 2021. However, the large share of disabling injuries in the 4 sectors listed above means that substantial percentage changes in smaller sectors, such as Communications and Longshoring, do not have a significant impact on the overall percentage change in the federal jurisdiction.

Chart 1.1 presents the shares of the total reported disabling injuries alongside the shares of the total work activities (expressed in total reported hours worked) by the top 4 sectors in the federal jurisdiction. It is notable that these sectors' shares of the total disabling injuries were not proportional to their shares of total hours worked. As shown in the chart, Road Transportation's share of total disabling injuries was about 2.6 times its share of total hours worked. Similarly, the shares of total disabling injuries in the Air Transportation and Postal Services sectors were respectively 2.3 and 3.0 times greater than their shares of total hours worked. In contrast, the share of disabling injuries in the Federal Public Services sector was approximately half its share of total hours worked.

Chart 1.1: Share of disabling injuries and hours worked in the federal jurisdiction by sector in 2021

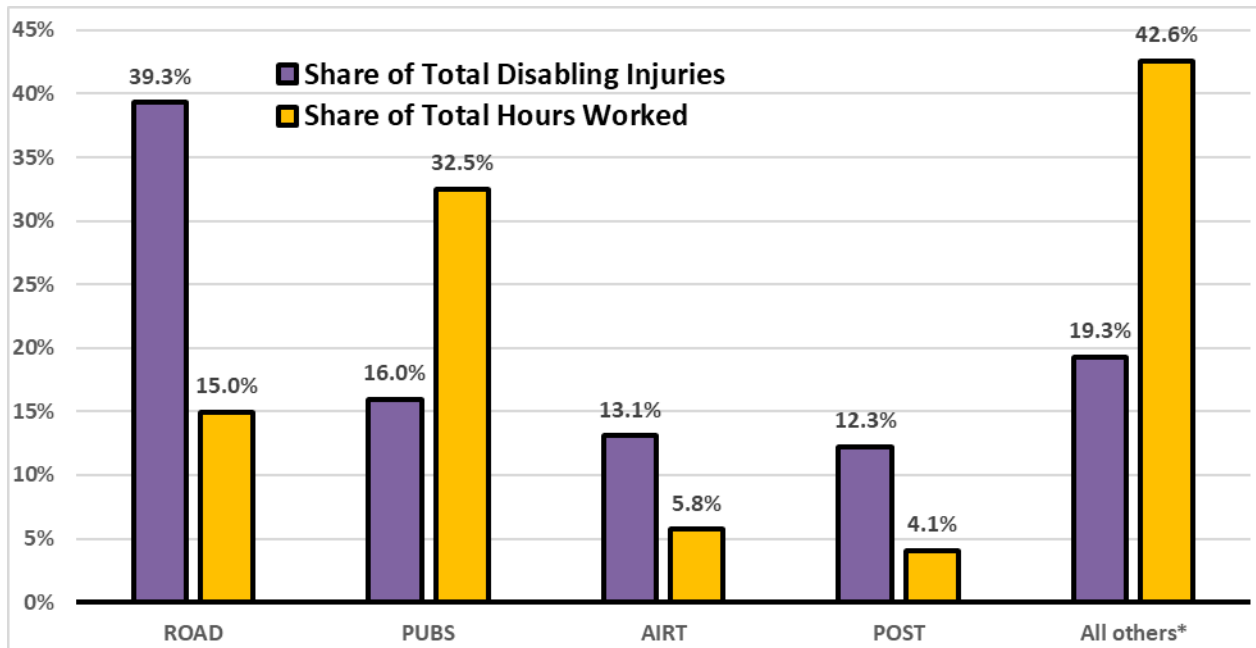


Table 1.1: Share of disabling injuries and total hours worked by all other federally regulated sectors in 2021

*All others	Share of total disabling injuries	Share of total hours worked
Communications	6.5%	8.3%
Banking and Banks	3.4%	22.7%
Longshoring, Stevedoring, Port, Harbour Operations and Pilotage	2.3%	1.4%
Rail Transportation	1.9%	2.9%
Water Transportation (Shipping and Ferries)	1.8%	1.3%
Broadcasting (Television, Radio, Internet)	1.3%	2.0%
Feed, Flour and Seed	1.1%	0.9%
First Nations band councils and Indigenous self-governments (certain activities)	0.5%	1.5%
Grain Handling and Grain Elevators	0.4%	0.6%
Energy, Mining and Mineral Processing	0.1%	0.5%
Pipeline Transportation	0.0%	0.6%
Interprovincial Infrastructure (Bridges, Tunnels, Canals, Causeways)	0.0%	0.0%



## Changes in disabling injuries

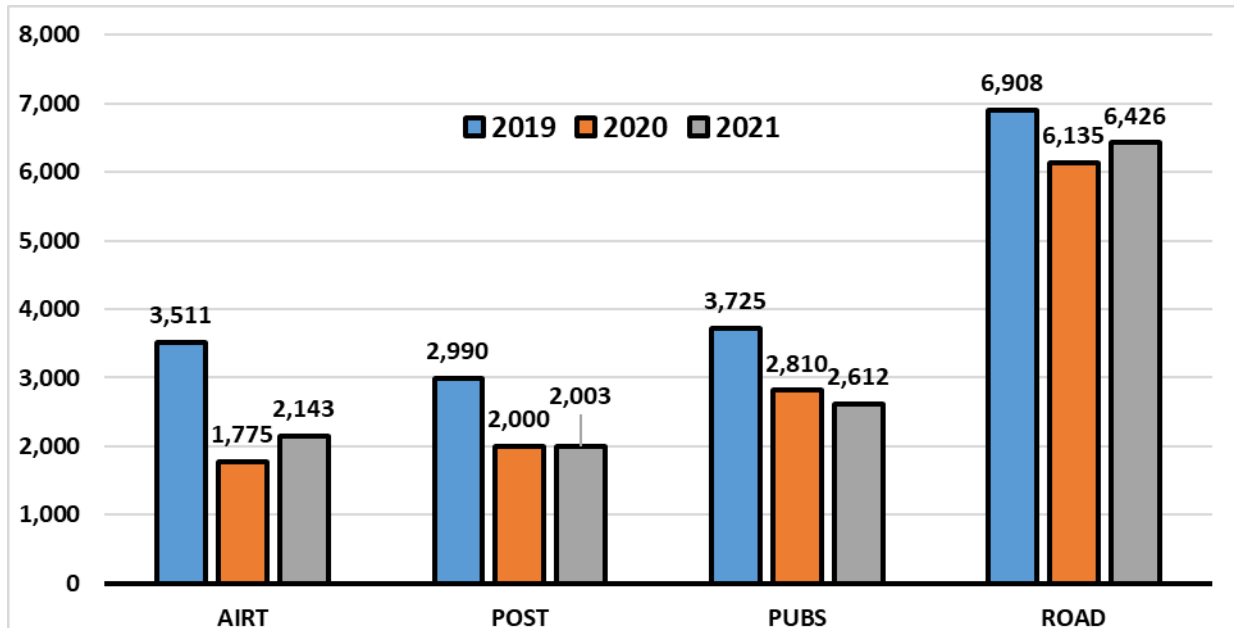
How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted injury reporting?

The following section presents an analysis of 4 sectors that reported a noticeable decrease in disabling injuries from 2019 to 2021, with 2019 being the last EAHOR reporting year prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and 2021 being the second year of reporting during the pandemic.

From 2019 to 2021, the largest changes in disabling injuries were decreases in following sectors (see Chart 1.2):

- Air Transportation
- Postal Services and Postal Contractors
- Federal Public Services, Public Service Departments and Crown Corporations
- Road Transportation

Chart 1.2: Largest changes in disabling injuries by federally regulated sector, 2019 to 2021



The decrease in disabling injuries from 2019 to 2020 was the largest decrease in the past 4 years for all 4 sectors, coinciding with the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Notably, disabling injuries were already decreasing year-over-year in Postal Services since 2017 (see Chart 1.3).

From 2020 to 2021, disabling injuries decreased again in Federal Public Services, but increased in Air and Road Transportation and Postal Services.

These 4 sectors reported a combined decrease of 3,950 disabling injuries from 2019 to 2021 (see Table 1.2), which accounts for 87.6% of the total decrease over this same

period. This indicates the impact that these 4 sectors can have on the total number of disabling injuries in the federal jurisdiction.

Overall, 8 sectors in the federal jurisdiction reported a decrease in disabling injuries in 2020 and an increase in 2021. This may be attributed to the public health measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic that were implemented in the federal jurisdiction in early 2020, which began easing by the end of 2021. However, 4 sectors reported the opposite trend, where their reported disabling injuries increased in 2020 and decreased in 2021. These included:

- Banking and Banks
- Grain Handling and Grain Elevators
- First Nations band councils and Indigenous self-governments (certain activities)
- Pipeline Transportation

Furthermore, 3 sectors reported a decrease in disabling injuries in both 2020 and 2021. These included:

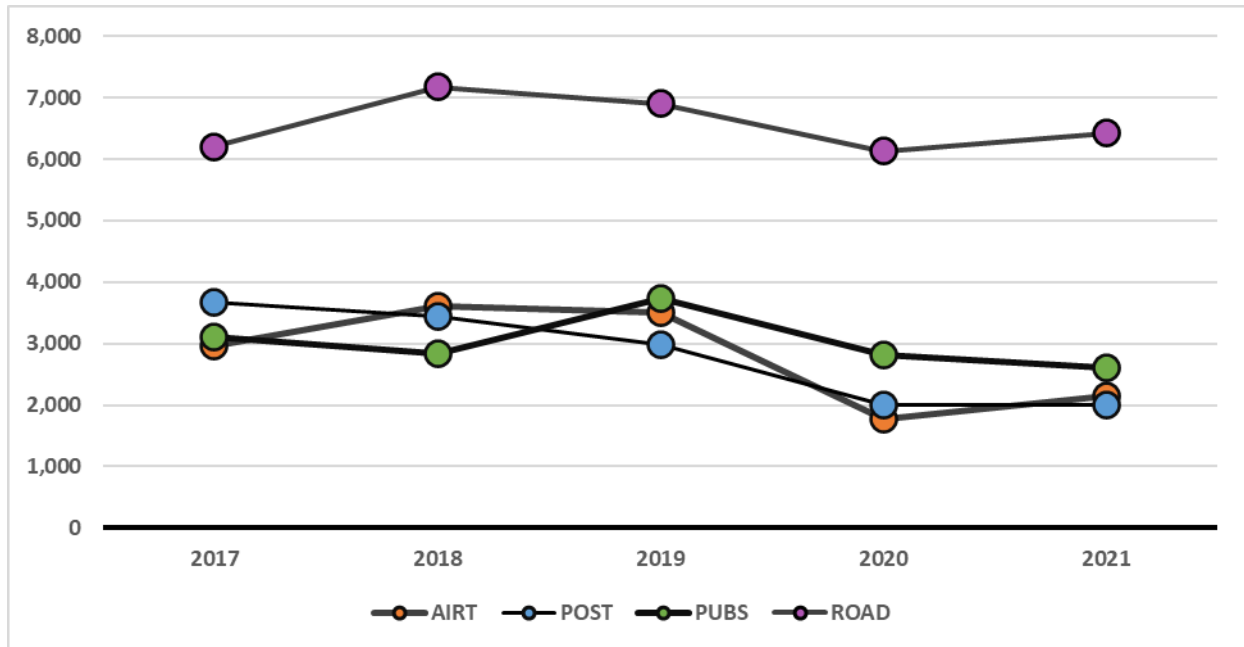
- Federal Public Services, Public Service Departments and Crown Corporations
- Broadcasting (Television, Radio, Internet)
- Feed, Flour and Seed

Finally, the Interprovincial Infrastructure sector reported 0 disabling injuries in 2020 and 2021.

Table 1.2: Changes in disabling injuries by federally regulated sector, 2019 to 2021

Sector	2019	2020	2021	Change from 2019 to 2020		Change from 2020 to 2021		Change from 2019 to 2021	
ROAD	6,908	6,135	6,426	-773	-11.2%	291	4.7%	-482	-7.0%
PUBS	3,725	2,810	2,612	-915	-24.6%	-198	-7.0%	-1,113	-29.9%
AIRT	3,511	1,775	2,143	-1,736	-49.4%	368	20.7%	-1,368	-39.0%
POST	2,990	2,000	2,003	-990	-33.1%	3	0.2%	-987	-33.0%
COMM	801	687	1,059	-114	-14.2%	372	54.1%	258	32.2%
BANK	822	872	557	50	6.1%	-315	-36.1%	-265	-32.2%
LONG	342	210	377	-132	-38.6%	167	79.5%	35	10.2%
RAIL	726	411	310	-315	-43.4%	-101	-24.6%	-416	-57.3%
WATER	269	233	293	-36	-13.4%	60	25.8%	24	8.9%
BROAD	325	249	207	-76	-23.4%	-42	-16.9%	-118	-36.3%
FEED	223	195	184	-28	-12.6%	-11	-5.6%	-39	-17.5%
INDG	90	97	79	7	7.8%	-18	-18.6%	-11	-12.2%
GRAIN	92	106	62	14	15.2%	-44	-41.5%	-30	-32.6%
ENER	14	10	24	-4	-28.6%	14	140.0%	10	71.4%
PIPE	8	9	6	1	12.5%	-3	-33.3%	-2	-25.0%
BRID	4	0	0	-4	-100.0%	0	0 in 2020	-4	-100.0%
Canada	20,850	15,799	16,342	-5,051	-24.2%	543	3.4%	-4,508	-21.6%

Chart 1.3: Largest changes in disabling injuries by federally regulated sector, 2017 to 2021



Note: PUBS was divided between Public Service Departments and Crown Corporations prior to 2018. Public Service Departments reported 2838 disabling injuries in 2017, while Crown Corporations reported 268.

The Air Transportation sector reported several notable changes from 2019 to 2021, with hours worked decreasing by 41.7% and disabling injuries decreasing by 39.0% (see Table 1.3). This change in hours worked highlights the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on air travel. Since disabling injuries increased from 2020 to 2021, the sector’s DIFR increased by 4.6% from 2019 to 2021. Although fatal injuries also increased from 2020 to 2021, they have decreased compared to 2019 by 54.5%. Similarly, the sector’s FIFR has decreased by 22.1% from 2019 to 2021.

Table 1.3: Changes in the Air Transportation sector, 2019 to 2021

AIRT data	2019	2020	2021	% Change from 2019 to 2021
Hours worked	228,673,147	133,188,214	133,388,659	-41.7%
Disabling injuries	3,511	1,775	2,143	-39.0%
DIFR	15.40	13.34	16.10	4.6%
Fatal injuries	11	2	5	-54.5%
FIFR	48.1	15.02	37.48	-22.1%

## Disabling Injury Frequency Rate (DIFR)

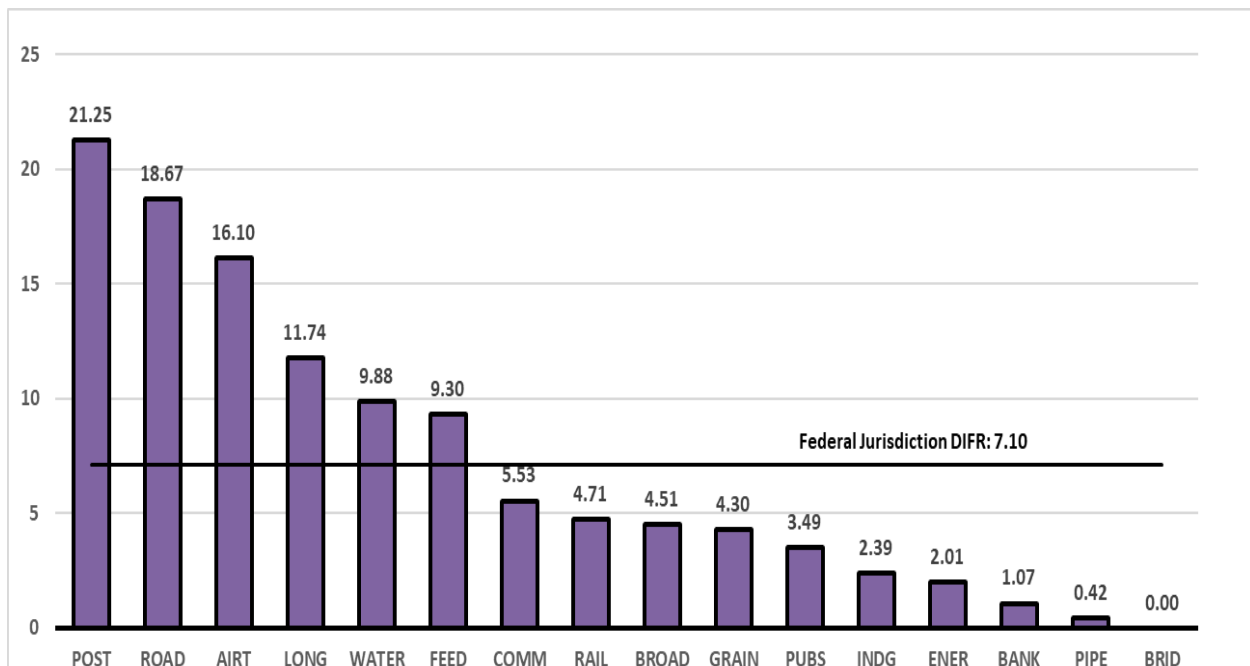
Which sectors have presented the highest disabling injury rate in 2021?

The DIFR is the total number of disabling and fatal injuries per 1 million hours worked. It can be used to measure risk within the Canadian federal jurisdiction by comparing trends over time within a specific sector and among multiple sectors. These trends help prioritize which sectors may be subject to proactive inspections by the Labour Program.

In 2021, 6 of the 16 federally regulated sectors reported DIFR values higher than the federal jurisdiction rate of 7.10 (see Chart 1.4). These sectors were:

- Postal Services and Postal Contractors
- Road Transportation
- Air Transportation
- Longshoring, Stevedoring, Port, Harbour Operations and Pilotage
- Water Transportation (Shipping and Ferries)
- Feed, Flour and Seed

Chart 1.4: Disabling Injury Frequency Rates (DIFR) by federally regulated sector in 2021



These 6 sectors have almost consistently reported DIFR values higher than the federal jurisdiction rate over the past 5 years, as outlined in Charts 1.5 (a) and (b) below.

Chart 1.5 (a): Federally regulated sectors with the 3 highest 2021 DIFR values, 2017 to 2021

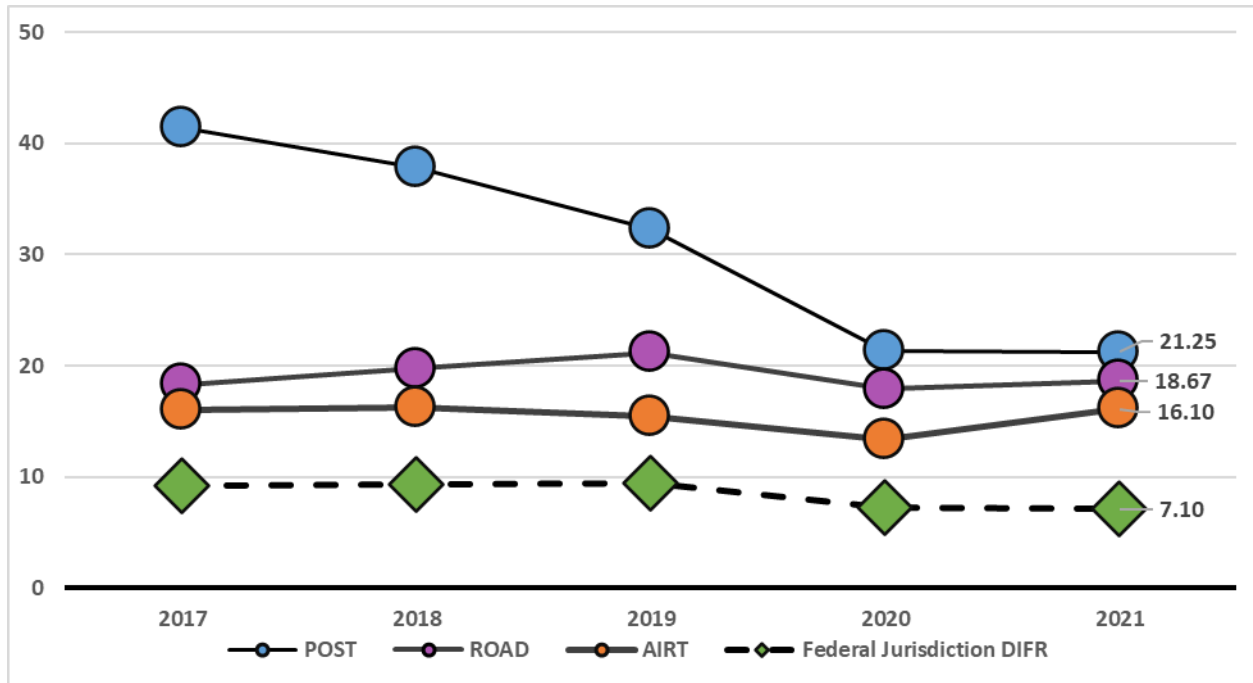
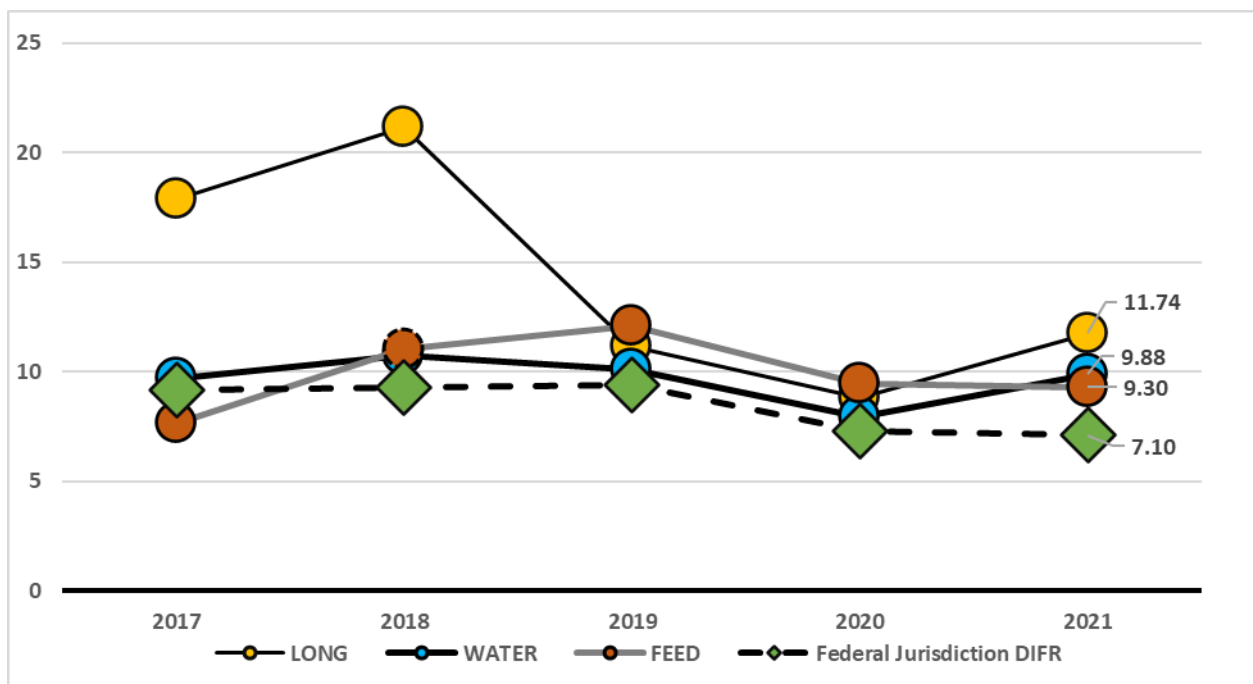


Chart 1.5 (b): Federally regulated sectors with the 4-6<sup>th</sup> highest 2021 DIFR values, 2017 to 2021



All these sectors reported DIFR values higher than the federal jurisdiction rate over the last 5 years, except for Feed, Flour, and Seed in 2017. This sector reported a DIFR of 9.30 in 2021, which corresponds to a 1.3% decrease from its 2020 DIFR of 9.43.

Although the DIFR for Postal Services and Postal Contractors also decreased by 0.2% compared to 2020, it remained the highest DIFR among the federally regulated sectors since 2017.

Outside of the 6 sectors that reported DIFR values higher than the federal jurisdiction rate in 2021, the Communications sector reported a DIFR increase compared to 2020. More specifically, it reported a 49.8% increase in its DIFR compared to 2020 (from 3.69 to 5.53), which was the highest percentage increase of any DIFR.

## Fatal injuries

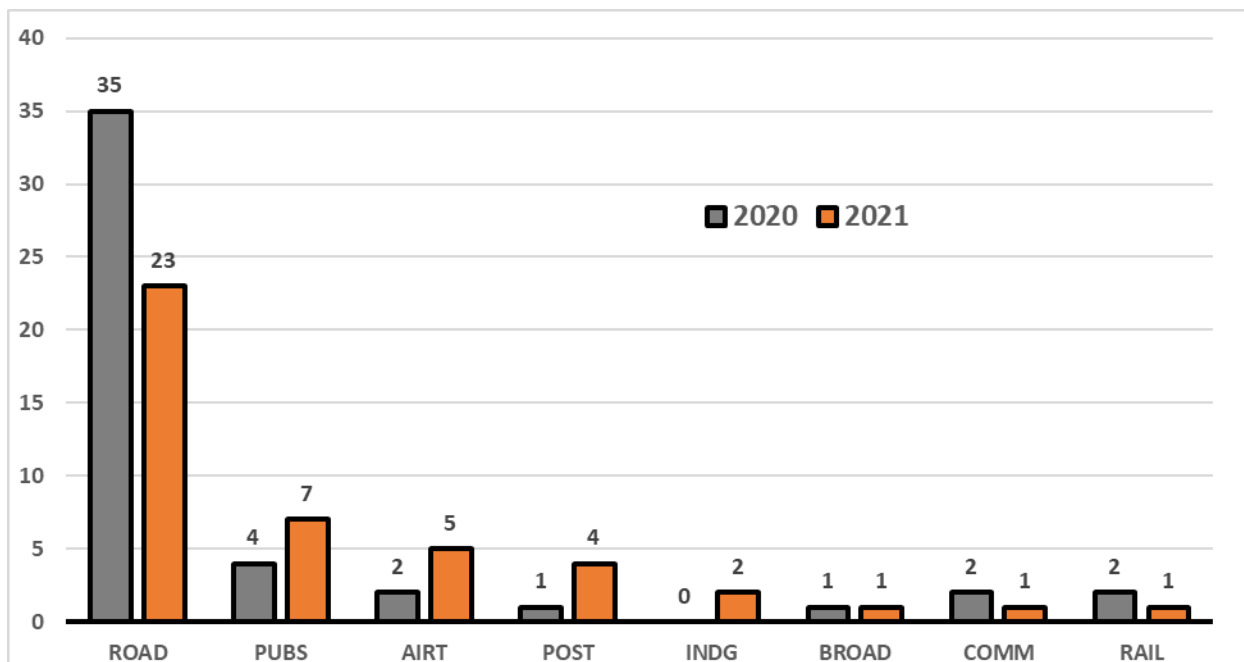
### Number of fatal injuries

In which sectors did the most fatal injuries occur?

The Road Transportation, Federal Public Services, Air Transportation and Postal Services sectors accounted for 39 of the 44 reported fatal injuries. The Federal Public Services sector reported 7 fatal injuries, the second highest in 2021 behind Road Transportation. As with the DIFR, the number of reported hours worked by the Federal Public Services sector when compared to its proportion of reported fatal injuries resulted in a lower FIFR value.

Notably, Federal Public Services, Air Transportation and Postal Services sectors all reported 3 more fatal injuries in 2021 compared to 2020. Fatal injuries in Federal Public Services increased from 4 to 7, in Air Transportation from 2 to 5, and in Postal Services from 1 to 4. In contrast, fatal injuries in Road Transportation decreased from 35 in 2020 to 23 in 2021, a 34.3% decrease (see Chart 1.6).

Chart 1.6: Number of fatal injuries by federally regulated sector, 2020 vs 2021



## Fatal Injury Frequency Rate (FIFR)

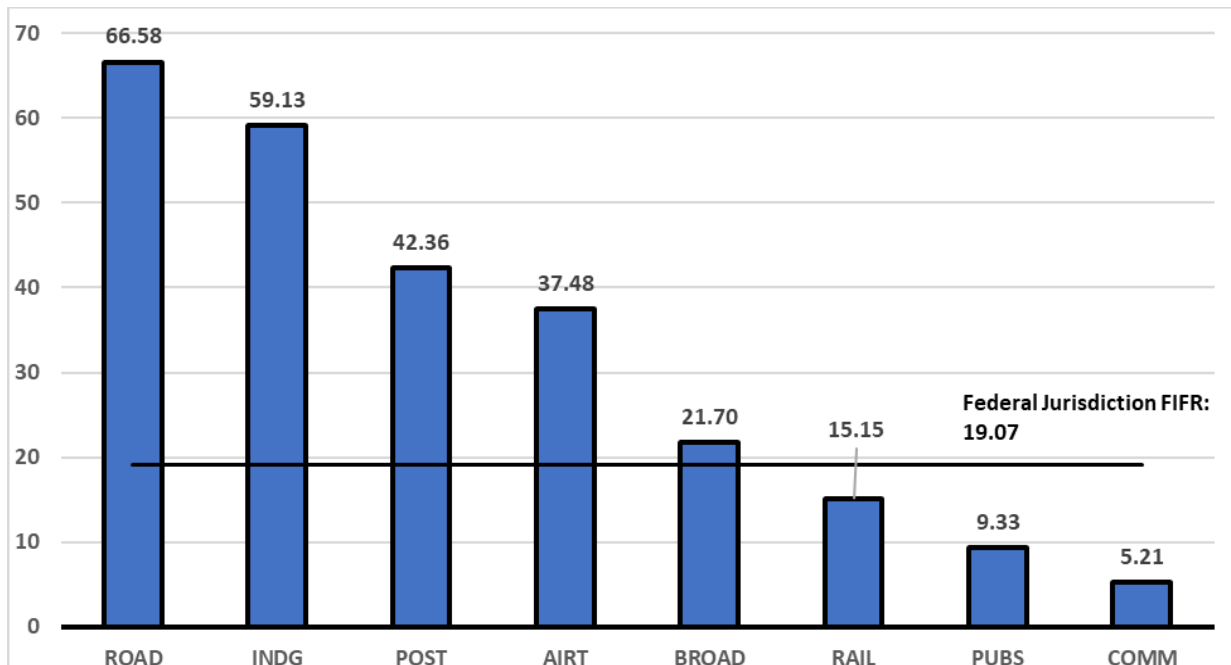
Which sectors have presented the highest fatal injury rate in 2021?

Given the small number of fatal injuries reported to the Labour Program each year compared to the number of disabling injuries, any change in this number will have an impact on both an individual sector's FIFR and the federal jurisdiction FIFR. This results in fluctuating FIFR values over time, as shown in Chart 1.8 below.

The FIFR is the total number of reported fatal injuries per one billion hours worked. In 2021, 8 of the 16 federally regulated sectors reported a combined 44 fatal injuries, a decrease of 5 from 2020. Of these, the following 5 sectors presented higher FIFR values than the federal jurisdiction rate (19.07), as shown in Chart 1.7:

- Road Transportation
- First Nations band councils and Indigenous self-governments (certain activities)
- Postal Services and Postal Contractors
- Air Transportation
- Broadcasting (Television, Radio, Internet)

Chart 1.7: Fatal Injury Frequency Rates (FIFR) by federally regulated sector in 2021

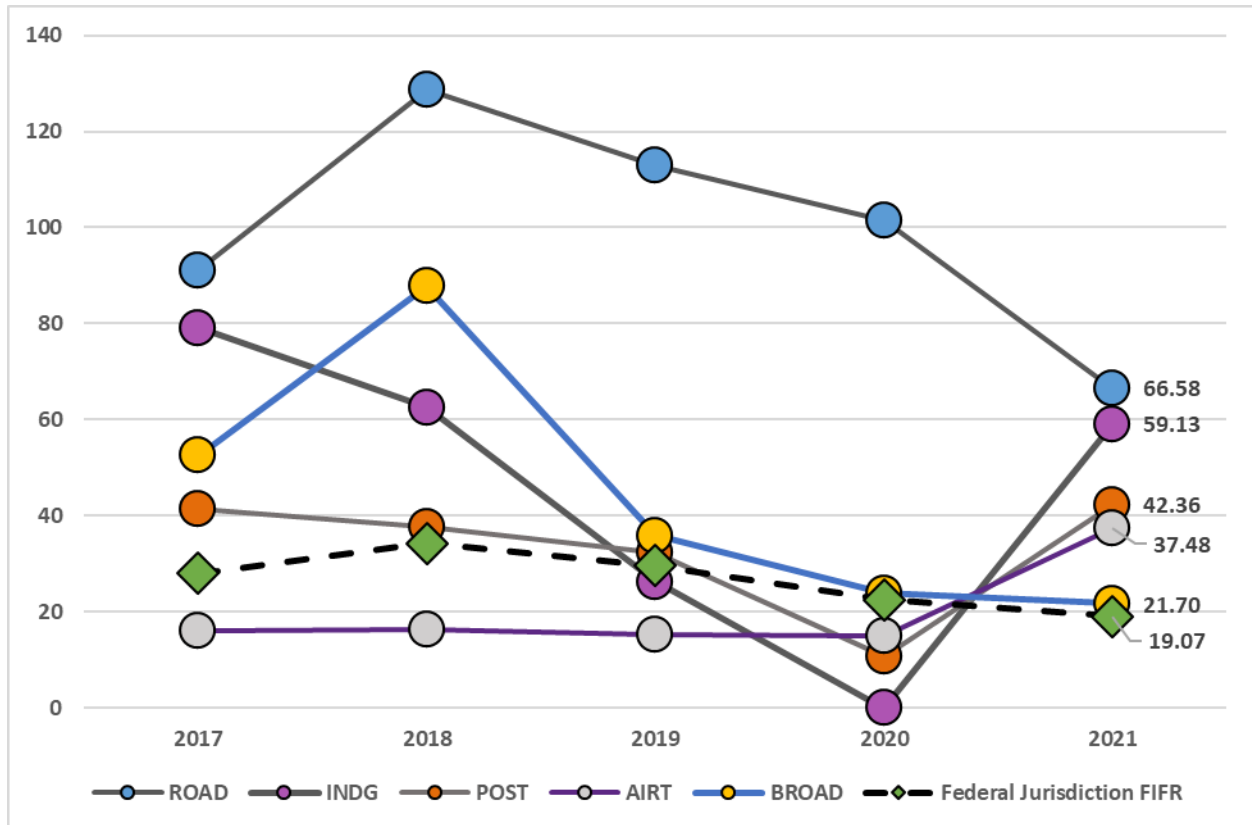


From 2020 to 2021, the FIFR values of First Nations band councils and Indigenous self-governments (certain activities), Postal Services and Air Transportation increased, while the FIFR values of Road Transportation and Broadcasting decreased. Since 2008, Road Transportation has consistently presented higher FIFR values than the federal jurisdiction rates. From 2020 to 2021, Road Transportation's FIFR decreased from 101.44 in 2020 to 66.58 in 2021 (a 34.4% decrease).



The largest increases in FIFR values were observed in the Postal Services, Air Transportation and Federal Public Services sectors. From 2020 to 2021, Postal Services' FIFR increased by 298.1%, from 10.64 to 42.36, and Air Transportation's FIFR increased by 149.6%, from 15.02 to 37.48. Federal Public Service's FIFR increased by 66.3%, from 5.61 to 9.33.

Chart 1.8: Federally regulated sectors with the 5 highest 2021 FIFR values, 2017 to 2021



## Section 2: Occupational injuries in the Canadian federal jurisdiction by province and territory in 2021

### Disabling injuries

#### Number of disabling injuries and hours worked

Of the 16,342 disabling injuries reported in 2021, 82.7% occurred in 4 provinces (Alberta, British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec). Similarly, 85.2% of all reported total hours worked in the federal jurisdiction were in these 4 provinces (see Chart 2.1). The regional shares of disabling injuries and total hours worked were relatively stable from 2020 to 2021.

Chart 2.1 presents the shares of total disabling injuries in the federal jurisdiction of the top 4 provinces compared to their shares of total work activities (expressed in total hours worked) in the federal jurisdiction. It is interesting to note that 2 of these provinces' shares of the total disabling injuries were not proportional to their shares of total hours worked. As is shown in the chart, Ontario's share of total disabling injuries was approximately 73% of its share of total hours worked. In contrast, British Columbia's share of total disabling injuries was approximately 55% greater than its share of total hours worked.

Chart 2.1: Share of disabling injuries and hours worked in the federal jurisdiction by province/territory in 2021

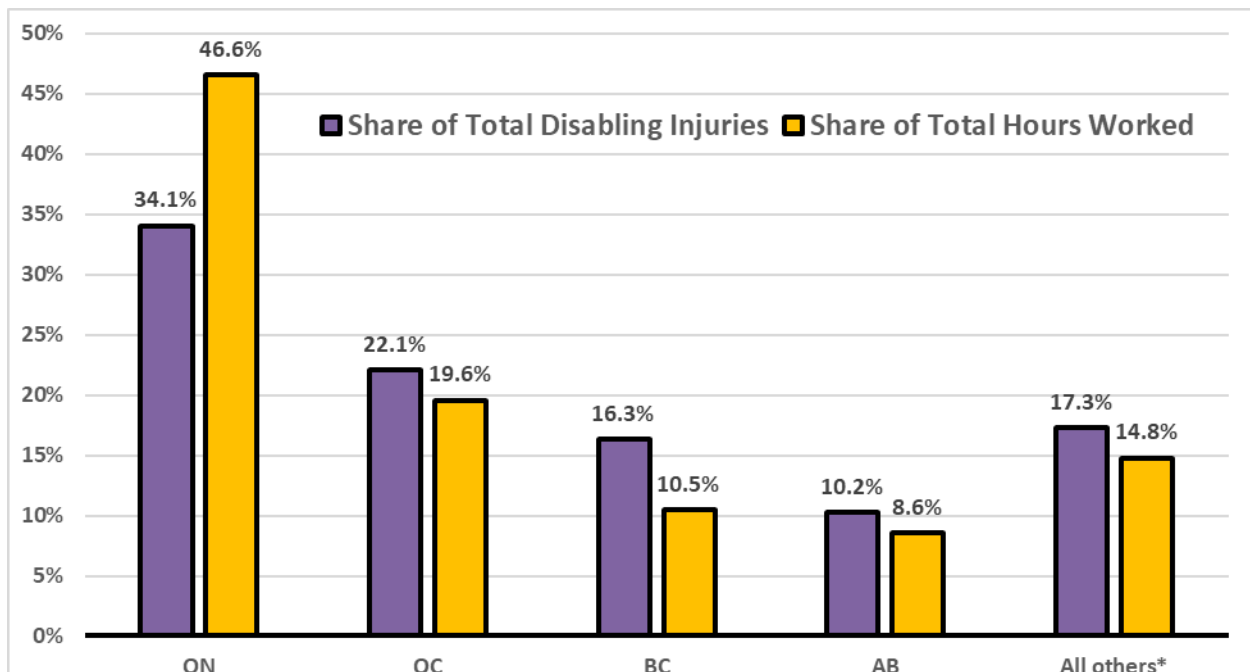


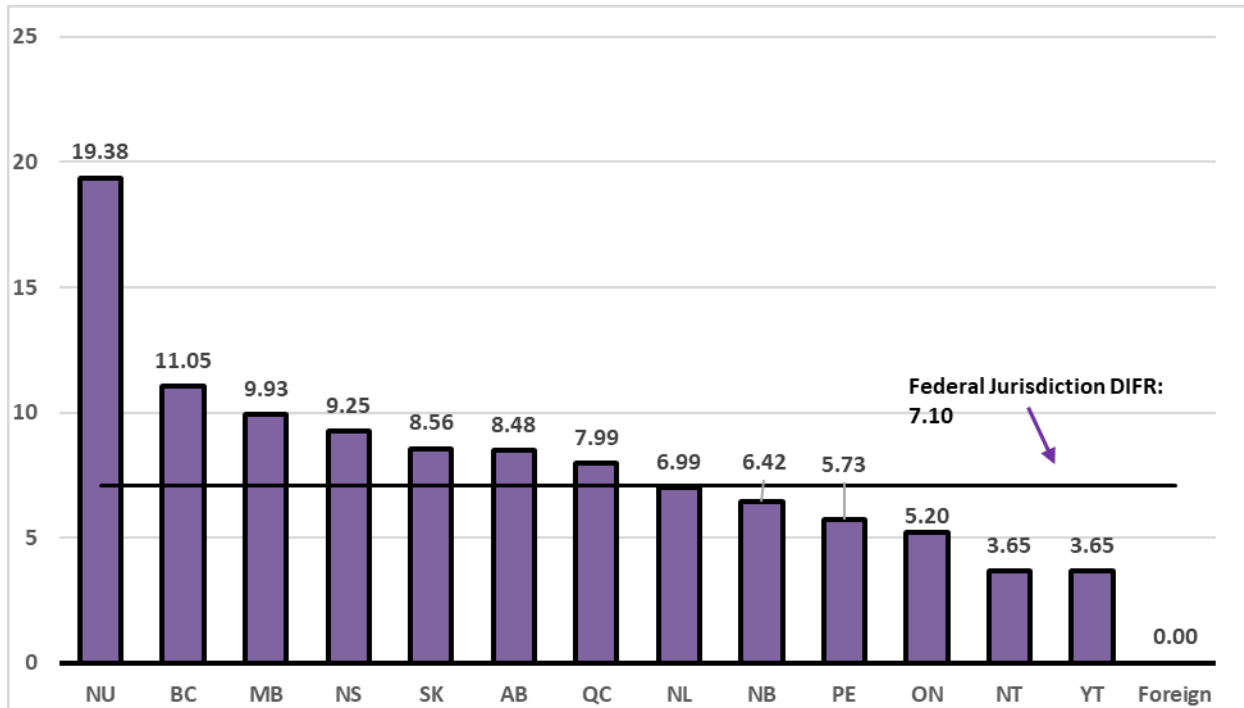
Table 2.1: Share of disabling injuries and total hours worked by all other provinces/territories

<b>*All others</b>	<b>Share of total disabling injuries</b>	<b>Share of total hours worked</b>
Manitoba	5.6%	4.0%
Nova Scotia	3.5%	2.7%
Saskatchewan	3.4%	2.8%
New Brunswick	2.4%	2.7%
Newfoundland and Labrador	1.5%	1.5%
Prince Edward Island	0.5%	0.6%
Nunavut	0.3%	0.1%
Northwest Territories	0.1%	0.2%
Yukon	0.1%	0.1%
Foreign	0%	0.1%

### **Disabling Injury Frequency Rate (DIFR)**

In 2021, Nunavut, British Columbia, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and Quebec presented DIFR values higher than the federal jurisdiction rate (7.10) (see Chart 2.2). While Nunavut and British Columbia presented higher DIFR values compared to 2020, the remaining 5 provinces presented lower DIFR values. As in 2019 and 2020, Nunavut and British Columbia continued to have the highest DIFR values in 2021.

Chart 2.2: Disabling Injury Frequency Rates (DIFR) by province/territory in 2021



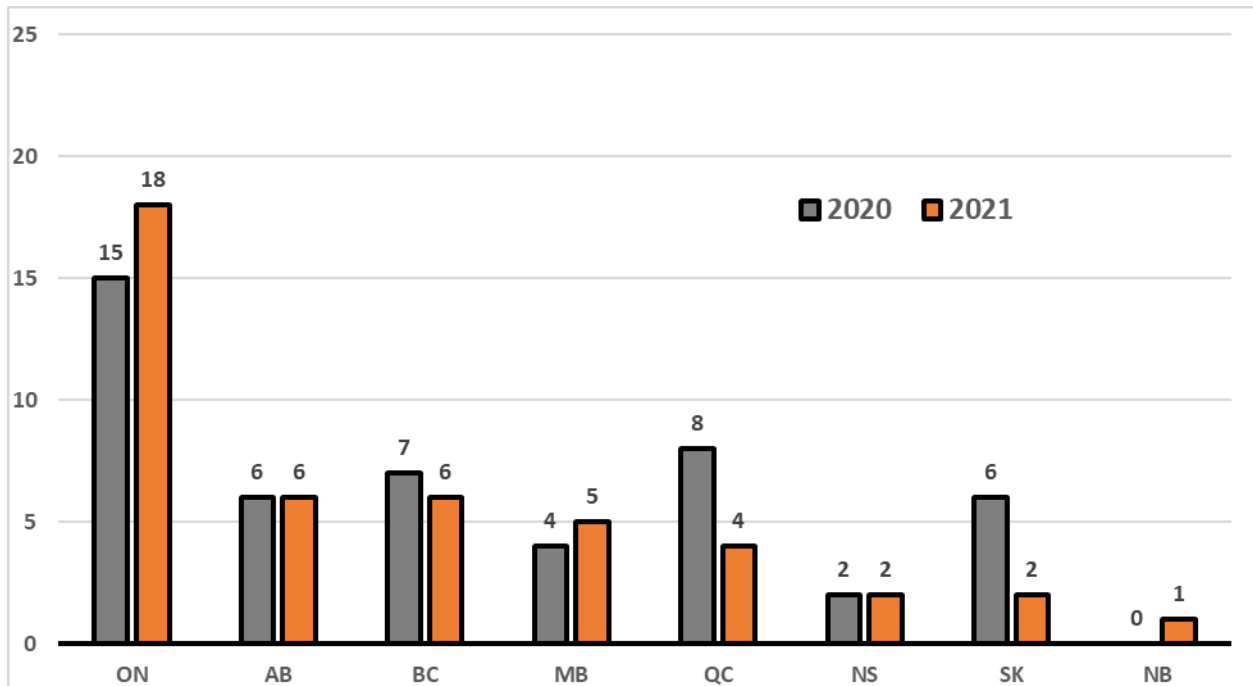
## Fatal injuries

### Number of fatal injuries

In 2021, 44 fatal injuries were reported in the federal jurisdiction. Five provinces (Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec) accounted for 88.6% of all reported fatal injuries in the federal jurisdiction (see Chart 2.3). Among these 5 provinces, only Ontario and Manitoba reported an increase in fatal injuries. While Alberta reported no change in its number of fatal injuries from 2020 to 2021, British Columbia and Quebec reported fewer fatal injuries in 2021 than in 2020.

Newfoundland and Labrador, the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Prince Edward Island and Yukon reported no fatal injuries in 2021.

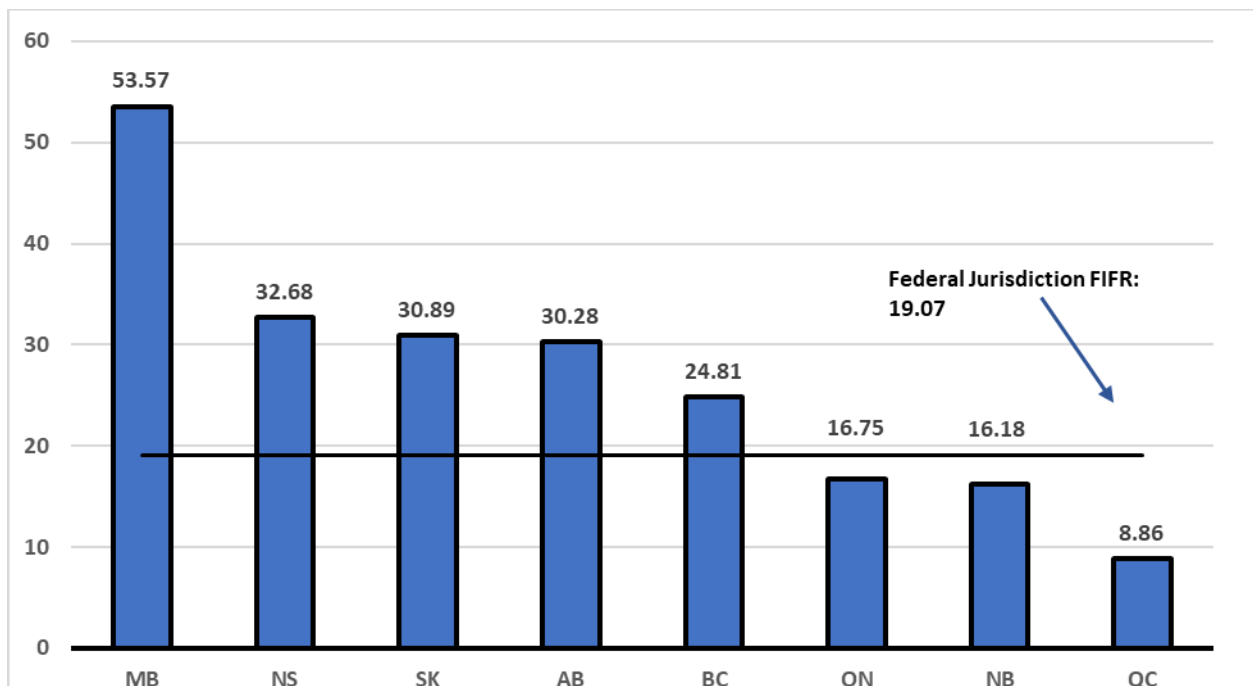
Chart 2.3: Number of fatal injuries by province/territory, 2020 vs 2021



### Fatal Injury Frequency Rate (FIFR)

Since 2019, the FIFR values for Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia have remained above the federal jurisdiction rate.

Chart 2.4: Fatal Injury Frequency Rates (FIFR) by province/territory in 2021



## Annex 1: List of Terms

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The following definitions are used in this publication.

### Disabling injury

“Disabling injury” means an employment injury or an occupational disease that:

- prevents an employee from reporting for work or from effectively performing all the duties connected with the employee's regular work on any day subsequent to the day on which the injury or disease occurred, whether or not that subsequent day is a working day for that employee
- results in the loss by an employee of a body member or part thereof or in the complete loss of the usefulness of a body member or part thereof, or
- results in the permanent impairment of a body function of an employee

### Disabling Injury Frequency Rate (DIFR)

The total number of disabling and fatal occupational injuries per 1 million hours worked. The calculation is:  $(\text{Total Disabling Injuries} + \text{Total Fatal Injuries}) * 1,000,000 / \text{Total Hours Worked}$ .

### Employee

Any person who has entered into or is employed under a contract of service or apprenticeship, written or oral, expressed or implied, whether by way of manual labour or otherwise. An employee is also any other person subject to the provisions of a workers' compensation board act or any direction or order of a board.

### Employment

“Employment” is defined as:

- all work or activities performed in carrying out assignments or requests made by the employer. It includes related activities not specifically covered by an assignment or request
- any voluntary work or activities undertaken while on duty for the benefit of the employer, or
- any activities undertaken while on duty with the consent or approval of the employer

### Fatal Injury

An occupational injury or disease resulting in death.

### Fatal Injury Frequency Rate (FIFR)

The total number of fatal occupational injuries per 1 billion hours worked. The calculation is:  $\text{Total Fatal Injuries} * 1,000,000,000 / \text{Total Hours Worked}$ .

## **Federal Jurisdiction**

Federal jurisdiction covers:

- any work, undertaking or business that is within the legislative authority of Parliament, and
- any work deemed to be for the common good of 2 or more provinces and outside the exclusive authority of provincial legislatures

## **Full-time Equivalent (FTE)**

Refers to the employment of one person full time. It may also refer to more than 1 person part time whose total working time is the equivalent of one person working full time. For example:

- 100 people employed full time equals 100 FTEs
- 10 people employed half time equals 5 FTEs
- all 110 people combined represent 105 FTEs

## **Minor Injury**

“Minor injury” means an employment injury or an occupational disease for which medical treatment is provided and excludes a disabling injury.

Note: Medical treatment means medical care provided at a medical treatment facility, such as a hospital, medical clinic or doctor's office where a patient in need of emergency care can be treated. Not to be confused with first aid.

## **Occupational Injury**

Any injury, disease or illness incurred by an employee in the performance of, or in connection with, his or her work.