



Athena Research Corporation
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Selected Summary of Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics Report on Workplace Violence in 2007

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Selected Summary of Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics Report on Workplace Violence in 2007

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Overview

On August 20, 2008, the Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) released its annual report, *The National Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries in 2007*, reporting on fatal workplace injuries. The total number of workplace fatalities was 5,488, a decrease of six percent from 2006. Of these, there were 610 workplace homicides, compared to 540 in 2006, an increase of 13%. According to the report and supplementary information:

- ◆ Workplace homicides **increased** by 13% from 2006 to 2007.
- ◆ Convenience store homicides **increased** by 9% from 35 in 2006 to 38 in 2007.
- ◆ Gas station homicides **decreased** by 21%, from 39 in 2006 to 31 in 2007.
- ◆ There has been a 44% **decrease** in workplace homicides since 1994, when the number was at an all time high of 1,080 (610 in 200).
- ◆ Assaults and violent acts accounted for 15% of all workplace fatalities in 2007, up from 13% in 2006.
- ◆ For women, 27% of all workplace deaths were due to homicide in 2007. For men, 10% of all workplace deaths were due to homicide.
- ◆ Workplace suicides **decreased** 9% from 208 in 2006, to 189 in 2007.

Workplace Homicides in Selected Industries

Table 1 shows the number of workplace homicides in selected industries with changes over the past year. Total workplace homicides increased from 2006 to 2007 by 13%. Retail trade homicides increased at a greater rate of 17%. Within retail trade, convenience store homicides increased by 9%. Eating/drinking establishments experienced a 2% increase. Gas/service stations saw a 21% decrease. There is no clear

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definition in reporting between convenience stores and gas stations. Over the past year, workplace homicides increased the most for taxicabs by 26%.

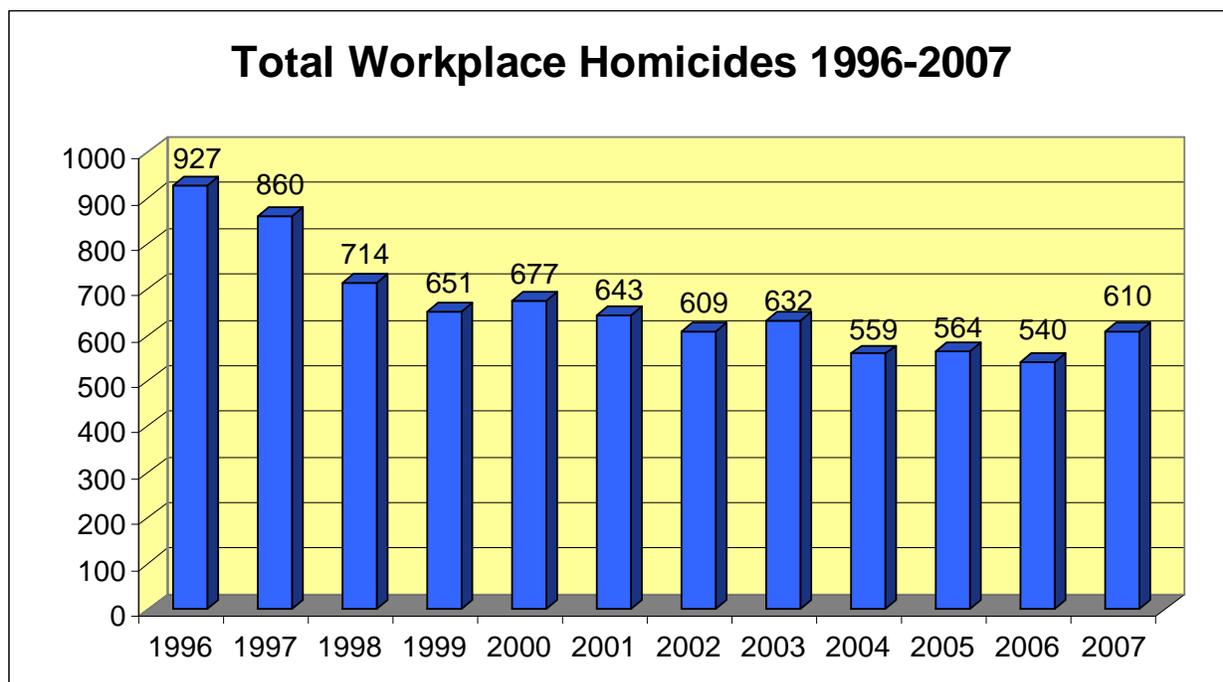
Table 1: Workplace Homicides in Selected Industries

Industry	2006	2007	Percentage Change
Total workplace homicides	540	610	+ 13%
Retail trade	138	161	+ 17%
Convenience stores	35	38	+ 9%
Eating/drinking establishments	88	90	+ 2%
Gas/service stations	39	31	-21%
Taxicab	27	34	+ 26%

Workplace Homicides over Time

Over the past twelve years, as shown below in Chart A, workplace homicides have gone up and down, but are well below the numbers experienced in 1996.

Chart A: Total Workplace Homicides 1996-2007



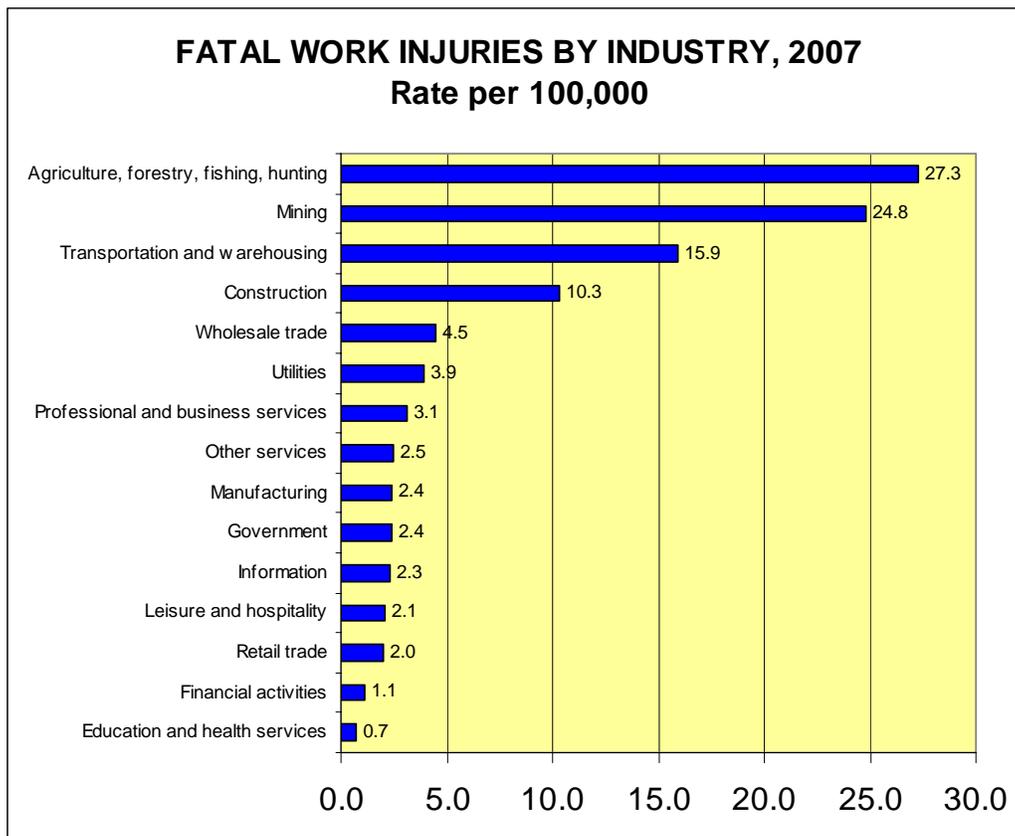
Workplace Deaths Overall

Transportation incidents continued to be the leading cause by far of death in the workplace in 2007 (41%), followed by contact with objects and equipment (17%) Falls and assaults/violent acts each accounted for 15% of all workplace deaths. Homicides accounted for 11% of the fatalities with 610 cases. Of these, 491 were deaths by shooting compared to 436 the previous year, an increase of 13%. Forty-three deaths were by stabbing. There were 189 workplace suicides, down from 208 the previous year.

Industry Differences

The industries with the highest fatality rates are shown below, rank ordered, with the most dangerous industry listed first, for the year 2007. According to the rates and as shown in Chart B, the most dangerous industry is agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting. The rate of death in the mining industry is over 12 times that of retail trade. Regarding the number of fatalities, the construction industry accounted for the largest number of fatalities in 2007 with 1,178 deaths, while retail had less than one-third that number at 336.

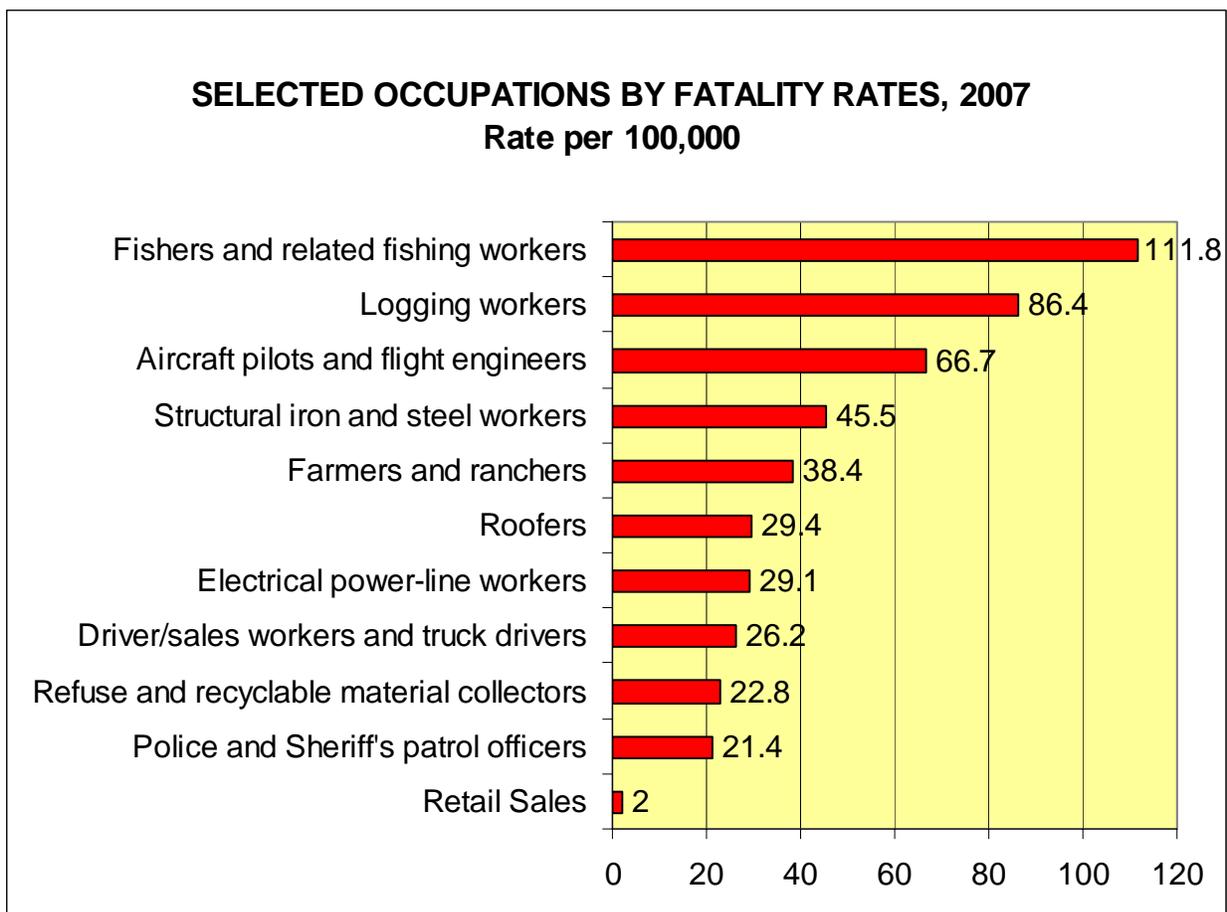
Chart B: Fatal Work Injuries by Industry



The Most Dangerous Occupations

The average worker fatality rate by occupation in 2007 was 3.7 per 100,000. Fishers and fishing workers experienced the highest fatality rate in 2007, at 111.8 per 100,000 employed. Logging workers experienced 86.4 fatalities per 100,000. Aircraft pilots and flight engineers had fatalities at the rate of 66.7 per 100,000. Fatalities in protective service occupations rose 19% from 2006 to 2007. BLS reports that fatalities for police officers were up 30%, fire fighters up 17%, and security guards up 11%. Chart C below provides a list of BLS-selected occupations showing fatality rates in 2007, including the retail sales fatality rate. By comparison, it is over 50 times safer to be in retail sales than to be a fisherman, as shown in Chart C below.

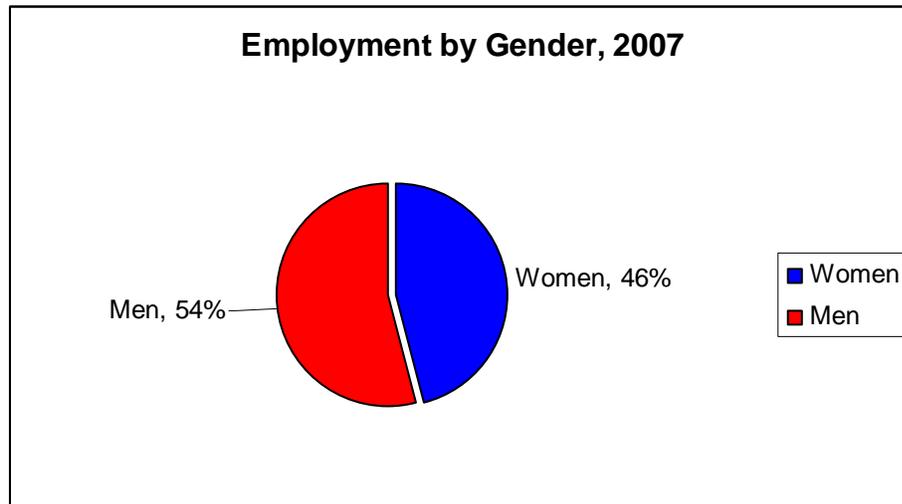
Chart C: Selected Occupations by Fatality Rates



Demographic Characteristics

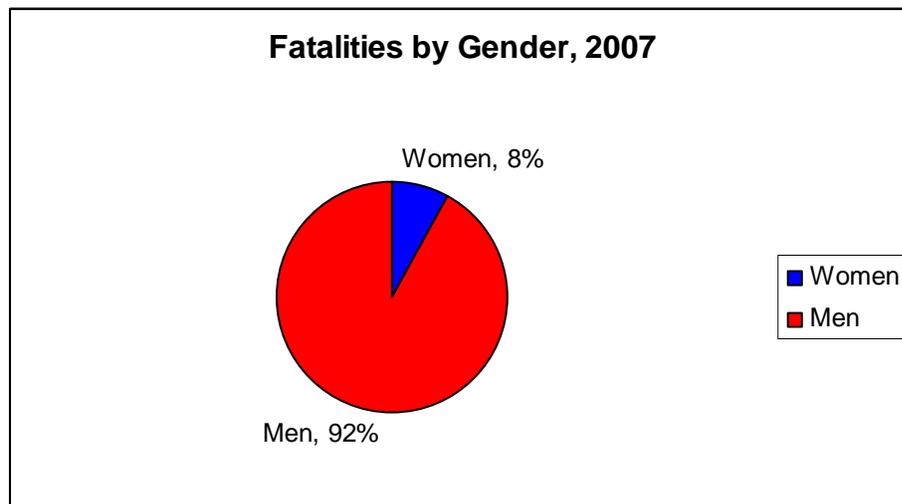
Males make up 54% of the workplace, and women make up 46%, as shown below in Chart D.

Chart D: Employment by Gender



Men, however, accounted for 92% of the workplace deaths and women only 8% in 2007, as shown in Chart E. Those percentages remain consistent with previous years. Far more men than women die on the job – more than ten times as many – because men are in the more dangerous occupations, and there are more males than females in the workforce. There were 5,071 fatalities for men and 417 for women.

Chart E: Fatalities by Gender



As shown below in Chart F, the rate of fatalities increases with age. For workers 65 and older, the rate is 9.9 per 100,000. That is a decrease of 7% from the previous year.

Chart F: Fatalities by Age Group



Authors' Conclusion

Workplace homicides were up 13% in 2007 compared to 2006, while the FBI reports that homicides were down slightly for the same period (0.6%). Protective services such as police, fire fighters and guards all showed dramatic increases in fatalities. Although men make up 54% and women 46% of the work force, men accounted for 92% of the workplace deaths and women 8% in 2007. For women, 27% of all workplace deaths were due to homicide in 2007, while for men, 10% of all workplace deaths were due to homicide.

With workplace homicides up 17% in 2007 in retail trade, employers need to stay focused on the crime prevention strategy that has been in place for nearly three decades in certain retail settings, particularly convenience stores. It incorporates the validated crime-reducing measures of good cash control; limiting escape routes; maintaining good visibility throughout the store; adequate lighting inside and outside stores; and training employees in safety and anti-violence measures.

Data Collection Methods

The BLS CFOI data for workplace injuries utilizes a combination of data-gathering techniques. The BLS relies on death certificates, worker's compensation reports and claims, reports to regulatory agencies, medical examiner reports, police reports and news reports. The report above is extrapolated by the authors from the BLS CFOI report entitled: *The National Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries in 2007*, and the BLS News Release.