

Important note on insecure workers

For the purposes of this research, insecure work was defined as fixed-term contractors (including full-time and part-time), independent contractors, casuals, and gig workers. Permanent work refers to full-time and permanent part-time paid work.

	2021	2022	2023
Full time paid work (permanent)	65.7%	61.3%	61.8%
Part time paid work (permanent)	19.1%	17.8%	20.3%
Full time paid work (fixed term contract)	1.6%	2.5%	2.0%
Part time paid work (fixed term contract)	1.0%	2.6%	2.0%
Casual paid work	8.1%	10.6%	9.0%
Gig worker, e.g. Uber driver	0.5%	0.6%	0.1%
Independent contractor e.g. with ABN, sole trader, freelancer, etc	4.0%	4.7%	4.9%
Totals	100%	100%	100%

Table 1. 2023 Work status

Insecure workers experience

2023 is the first year of the survey where there has been a statistically significant difference between those classified as secure and insecure workers reporting physical injuries.

2023	Secure workers	Insecure workers
Physical	7%	11%
Mental	20%	20%
Both	4%	5%
None	69%	64%

Table 22. 2023 Secure and insecure workers injury type

There has been a steady increase, across the years on the WSH survey, in physical and mental injuries reported by those in insecure work. It is statistically significant.

Insecure work	2021	2022	2023
Physical	6%	7%	11%
Mental	13%	16%	20%
Both	5%	4%	5%
None	76%	73%	64%

Table 23. 2021-2023 Insecure workers injury type

Time off for work injury and work status

The difference between those respondents classified as secure and insecure workers in their responses to a work injury persists – more insecure workers didn't take time off in both 2022 and 2023. The differences do not reach statistical significance.

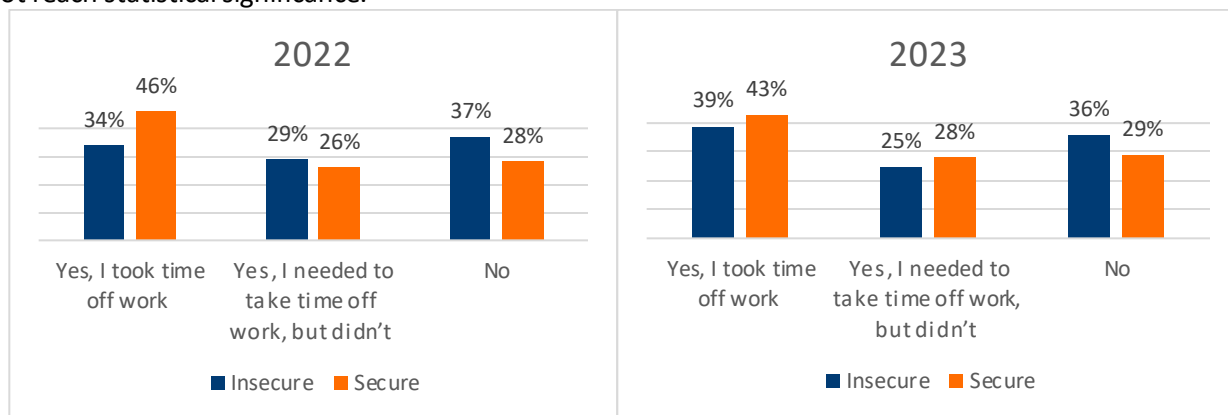


Figure 33. Time off work and work status

As in previous years, the reasons for not taking time off work differed between secure and insecure workers. The larger percentage of insecure workers who reported that they had no paid leave available was statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. More insecure workers also reported that they couldn't afford to stop working – this difference was statistically significant at $p < 0.1$.

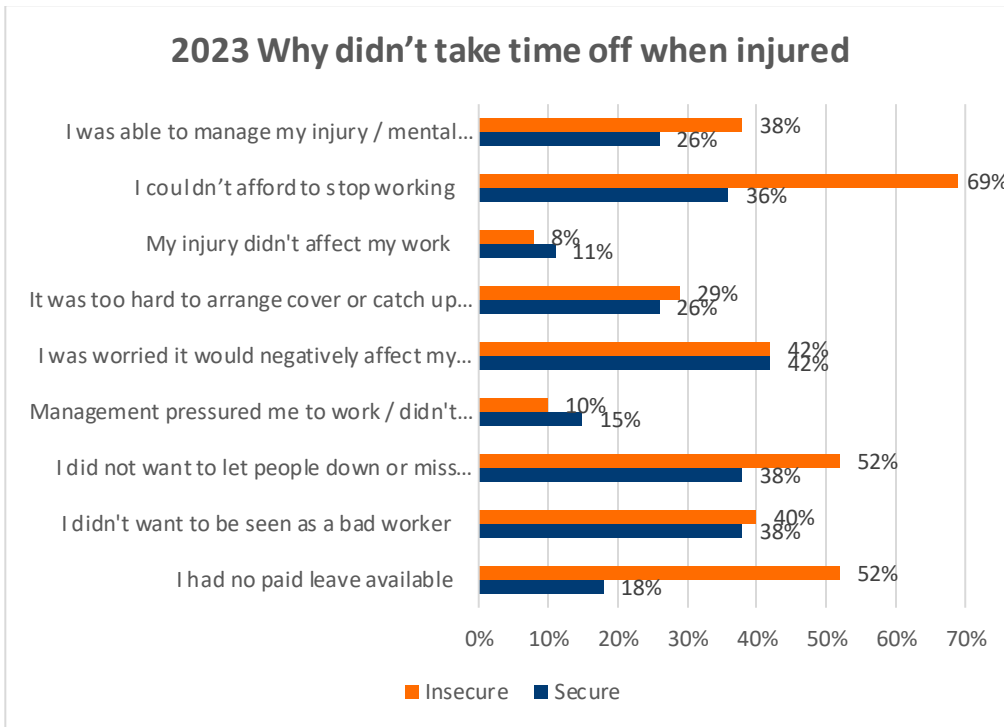


Figure 34. 2023 Why no time off work when injured

In 2023, there was an increase in the percentage of insecure workers who couldn't afford to stop working and who did not want to let people down or miss deadlines. For secure workers there was a statistically significant decrease from 2022 to 2023 for those who reported that it was too hard to arrange cover or catch up when returning to work.

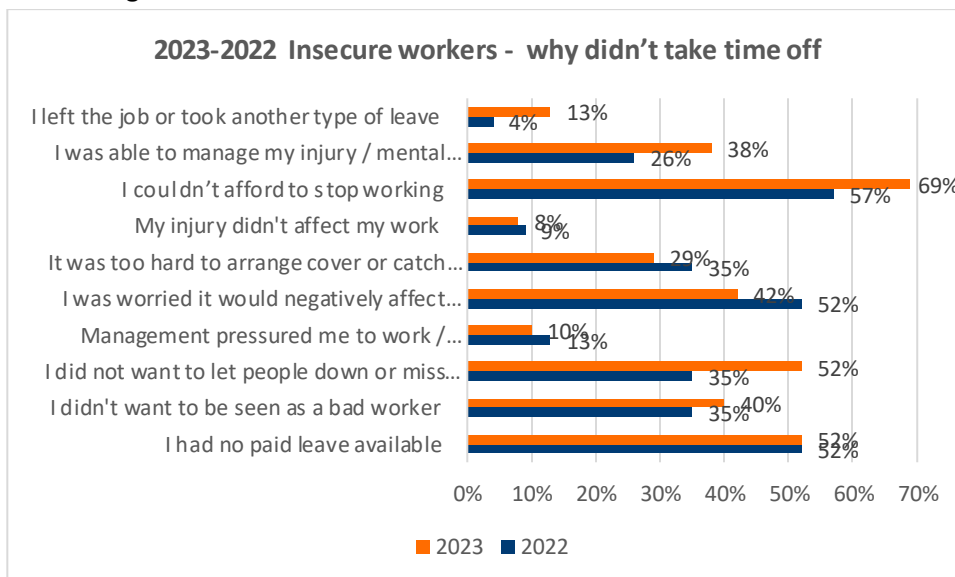


Figure 35. 2023-2022. Insecure workers - Why no time off work when injured

Methodology

An external panel was used to survey a broadly representative sample of Australian workers, with quotas for age, gender, and state. There were 3,043 respondents who completed the survey in 2023.

In 2023, 17.9% of respondents were insecure workers compared with 22% in 2022.

The measure for statistical significance¹ was a p value of <0.05, using the Z score for 2 population comparisons.²

¹ Statistical significance refers to the claim that a result from data generated by testing or experimentation is likely to be attributable to a specific cause. A high degree of statistical significance indicates that an observed relationship is unlikely to be due to chance.

² [Z Score Calculator for 2 population Proportions \(socscistatistics.com\)](https://www.socscistatistics.com)