



ACCIDENT STATISTICS 2000 AND 2001

Association House, 99 West Street, Farnham, Surrey, GU9 7EN
t: 01252 739150 f: 01252 739140 e: info@irata.org w: www.irata.org

Report on Accident Returns for 2000 and 2001

This latest summary to year end 2001 completes 13 years of collating safety records from IRATA members. It clearly demonstrates the excellent safe working record of IRATA members. This is a reflection of the controls which have been put into place by IRATA including the training and registration scheme for technicians, General Requirements for Safe Working, and the Guidelines for the use of Rope Access Methods for Industrial Purposes. In addition to these each member undergoes a stringent vetting procedure by third party auditors before IRATA membership is approved.

From table 1 it can be seen that the hours spent on the rope have almost quadruped since 1989. However the total incident rate for work on ropes over the 13 years is very similar to that obtained in 1989.

Malcolm James who undertook the compilation of the statistics has compared the above figures with the HSC publication "Health and Safety Statistics 2000-01". This publication reports the incident rate for non fatal injuries for men aged 25-34 years as 875.1. This figure is based on man years. Malcolm's comparison shows that the IRATA equivalent is 272 for the year 2000 and 578 for the year 2001. These results clearly show the value of using highly trained and disciplined workers in exposed situations.

In table 3.1 for both years an attempt has been made to identify the main responsibility for the accidents. Simple cuts, falling objects and strain injuries have been generally placed at the door of the operator himself while those occurring because the operator did not appear aware of a problem have been blamed on the supervisor. As these tables show that the operator was the person most responsible for the accidents it indicates that the IRATA systems are sound.

On tables 3.1 the time lost through accidents has been noted.

Tables 3.4 show the grades of the workers involved in incidents.

There was one major injury recorded in 2001 which was the result of a fall when working off ropes. This was not included as a class A incident in tables 4 as the potential of the accident was very much the actual result recorded. The class A accidents shown were mainly falling object accidents.

Tables of results

Table 1. Brief summary of accidents over the thirteen years 1989 - 2001 based on hours worked on ropes.

	No of companies submitting returns.	Hours on ropes	Dangerous occurrences	None notifiable accidents	Notifiable accidents under RIDDOR	Incident rate for dangerous occurrences	Incident rate for all accidents	Total incident rate
1989	9	267,504	4	8	0	1.5	3	4.5
1990	12	327,645	4	7	0	1.2	2.1	3.3
1991	16	457,928	5	17	0	1.1	3.7	4.8
1992	22	537,920	3?	13	1	0.5?	2.6	3.16
1993	23	327,000		21	0		6.42	6.42
1994	32	348,749	1	11	0	0.28	3.15	3.44
1995	32	484,285	8	16	0	1.65	3.3	4.95
1996	26	559,035	5	18	2	0.89	3.58	4.47
1997	31	699,688	13	11	9	1.86	2.86	4.72
1998	37	1,006,538	14	23	10	1.395	3.288	4.67
1999	33	803,365	10	29	3	1.24	3.98	5.23
2000	34	887,206	6	21	3	0.79	2.70	3.38
2001	49	999,010	15	25	4	2.0	5.3	4.40
Totals		7,705,873	88	220	28	1.22	3.58	4.36

Note: The number of companies submitting returns for each year given above will not be the same as the number of companies members of the association for the relevant years.

Table 2a. Summary of main details for the year 2000.

	Hours worked on ropes	Total hours worked on rope access sites *	Number of incidents reported								Total number of incidents on ropes	Total number of incidents offropes	O/a total
			On ropes				Off ropes						
			NRA **	D.O.	Reportable accidents	Health or other	NRA	D.O.	Reportable accidents	Health or other.			
Large companies	820,210	1,194,066	14	4	3	2	15	6	2	2	23	25	48
Small companies	60,474	69,033	4	2	0	0	4	1	0	0	6	5	11
Very small companies	6,522	8,713	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	2	3
Total all companies	887,206	1,271,812	18	6	3	3	20	8	2	2	31	32	62

* The returns for hours worked on sites were not completed by several companies and although the figures should give a good guide they are probably an under estimate of the true figures.

** NRA = none reportable accidents i.e. those that resulted in absence from work of less than 4 days.

The total incident rates (i.e. for all types of incidents) while working on ropes are -

Large companies	2.80
Small companies	9.92
Very small companies	15.33
Total all companies	3.38

TABLE 3.1 a. Details of the number of incidents in 2000 and a main responsibility for these.

	Equipment failure	Supervision failure	Operator failure	Other	Reportable accidents			Non Reportable accidents	Dangerous Occurrences	Ill health	Time lost in hours
					Fatal	Major	Minor *				
Incidents on ropes	4	2	18	4	Nil	Nil	3	17	5	3	133
Incident off ropes	1	2	23	6	Nil	Nil	2	20	8	2	445
Incidents to trainees	1	Nil	2	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	1	2	Nil	N/a
Total incidents	6	4	43	10	Nil	Nil	5	38	15	5	578

- Minor = reportable accident that results in absence from work of more than 3 days.

Table 3.2 a Details of how the incidents occurred for the year 2000.

	Fall or slip	Falling object	Collapse or overturn	Caught or struck by tool or materials *	Electric shock	Gassing/Asphyxiation	Burn or explosion	Equipment failure	Other including none reportable strain or other health incidents.
Incidents on ropes	1	2	nil	14	nil	nil	nil	1	10
Incident off ropes	2	3	1	11	nil	nil	nil	Nil	14
Incidents to trainees	1	Nil	1	Nil	nil	nil	nil	1	Nil
Total incidents	4	5	2	25	nil	nil	nil	2	24

- Caught by accidents include blown grit or paint, cuts and abrasions etc.

TABLE 3.3 a. Details of the parts of the body injured for the year 2000.

	Head/ face	Eyes	Neck/ shoulder	Back	Arm	Hands/ fingers	Chest	Stomach	Leg	Foot/ Ankle/ toes	Other.
Incidents on ropes	Nil	8	nil	1	2	5	nil	nil	5	2	1
Incident off ropes	nil	5	nil	4	1	8	nil	nil	3	2	1
Incidents to trainees	nil	1	nil	nil	Nil	Nil	nil	nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total incidents	6	14	nil	5	3	13	nil	nil	8	4	2

Table 3.4.a. Qualifications of those involved in the accident for the year 2000.

	Accidents				Dangerous occurrences		Other	
	None reportable		Reportable		On rope.	Off rope.	On rope.	Off rope.
	On rope.	Off rope.	On rope.	Off rope.				
Trainees.	1	nil	nil	nil	2	nil	nil	nil
Level 1.	5	7	nil	nil	1	1	2	nil
Level 2.	6	4	1	1	1	2	1	2
Level 3.	4	7	1	1	nil	3	nil	nil
Total	16	18	2	2	4	6	3	2

Table 4. a. Summary of class A and class B incidents for the year 2000.

	On rope	Off rope	Totals
Class A	3	nil	3
Class B	26	33	59
Totals	29	33	62

Table 2. b. Summary of main details for the year 2001.

	Hours worked on ropes	Total hours worked on rope access sites	Total number of incidents on ropes						Total incidents on ropes	Total incidents off ropes	Total incidents o/a
			Incidents on ropes			Incidents off ropes					
			NRA	D.O.	Reportable accidents	NRA	D.O.	Reportable accidents			
Large companies	933,576	1,194,042	22	12	4	16	5	3	38	24	62
Small companies	62,521	81,442	2	2	Nil	6	Nil	Nil	4	6	10
Very small companies	2,913	3,817	1	1	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	2	Nil	2
Total all companies	999,010	1,194,042	25	15	4	22	5	3	44	30	74

The total incident rates (i.e. for all types of incidents) while working on ropes are -

Large companies	4.07
Small companies	6.40
Very small companies	68.66
Total all companies	4.40

TABLE 3.1 b. Details of the number of incidents in 2001 and a main responsibility for these.

	Equipment failure	Supervision failure	Operator failure	Other	Reportable accidents			Non Reportable accidents	Dangerous Occurrences	Ill health	Time lost in hours
					Fatal	Major	Minor				
Incidents on ropes	4	7	30	1	Nil	nil	4	19	14	5	496
Incident off ropes	1	4	23	nil	Nil	1	2	15	7	3	240
Incidents to trainees	1	3	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	2	2	N/a
Total incidents	6	14	53	1	Nil	1	6	34	23	10	736

Table 3.2 b Details of how the incidents occurred for the year 2001.

	Fall or slip	Falling object	Collapse or overturn	Caught or struck by tool or materials	Electric shock	Gassing/Asphyxiation	Burn or explosion	Equipment failure	Other including none reportable strains or health	Total
Incidents on ropes	1	11	1	14	nil	1	nil	nil	16	44
Incident off ropes	5	3	nil	9	1	1	nil	nil	11	30
Incidents to trainees	Nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	Nil
Total incidents	6	14	1	23	1	2	nil	nil	27	74
% on ropes	2%	26%	2%	32%	Nil	2%	Nil	Nil	36%	100%
% off ropes	17%	10%	Nil	30%	3%	3%	Nil	Nil	37%	100%
% of all incidents	8%	19%	1%	31%	1%	3%	nil	nil	36%	100%

TABLE 3.3 b. Details of the parts of the body injured for the year 2001.

	Head/ Face	Eyes	Neck/ shoulder	Back	Arm	Hands/ fingers	Chest	Stomac h	Leg	Foot/ Ankle/ toes	Other.	Total
Incidents on ropes	1	3	2	5	3	11	nil	nil	1	1	1	28
Incident off ropes	2	4	1	3	7	5	2	1	3	1	1	30
Incidents to trainees	Nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	Nil	Nil	nil	Nil	nil	Nil	Nil
Total incidents	3	7	3	8	10	16	2	1	4	2	2	58

Table 3.4.b. Qualifications of those involved in the accident for the year 2001.

	Accidents				Dangerous occurrences		Other	
	None reportable		Reportable		On rope.	Off rope.	On rope.	Off rope.
	On rope.	Off rope.	On rope.	Off rope.				
Trainees.	nil	nil	nil	nil	2	nil	1	
Level 1.	10	7	2	1mj	1	3	1	nil
Level 2.	2	4	2	1	2	Nil	2	2
Level 3.	6	2	nil	1	1	1	1	1
Other	1	2	nil	nil	9	4	1	nil
Total	19	15	4	3	15	8	6	4

Table 4. b. Summary of class A and class B incidents for the year 2001.

	On rope	Off rope	Totals
Class A	12	7	19
Class B	29	26	55
Totals	41	33	74