

## Return to Work



Division of Workers' Compensation  
Research Unit

Los Angeles, February 15, 2007  
San Francisco, February 20, 2007

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## PD-related Analyses at DWC

- Preliminary Results: Return to Work (RTW)
- Wage Loss - Mandated by the Legislature
- Illness and Injury Incidence Rates

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## RTW: Data Sources & Sample

### Data Sources:

DEU – Disability Evaluation Unit  
WCIS – Workers' Compensation Information System  
EDD – Employment Development Department  
(base wage file)

### Data Sample: (used in calculating Preliminary Results)

Date of Injury	Referenced Periods	Number of injured workers in sample
Pre-2003	Q4 2000 to Q4 2002	57,934
2003 & 2004	Q1 2003 to Q4 2004	30,118
2005	Q1 2005 to Q2 2005	3,323
Total	Q4 2000 to Q2 2005	91,375

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## Criteria for Inclusion in the RTW Sample

- DEU rating > 0
- Rating issued within 18 months after the quarter of Date of Injury (to control for severity)
- DEU cases were included that match to WCIS cases, based on SSN, Name and Date of Injury
- Workers returning to work with any employer in the base wage file are counted as returning to work.

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## Notes on Inclusion Criteria:

- The results discussed today are preliminary and subject to revision as additional data become available.

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## RTW Methodology

- Match DEU data to WCIS data
- Match DEU/WCIS Info to EDD employment
- Calculate using DEU date of injury
  - For example: 1Q 2005

12-month RTW rate =

$$\frac{\text{\# of workers injured in 1Q 2005}}{\text{\# of workers injured in 1Q 2005}} \times \frac{\text{\# of workers working in 1Q 2006 (~12 months after injury)}}{\text{\# of workers injured in 1Q 2005}}$$

- Use the presence of a wage in the EDD base wage file to indicate whether or not someone is working in a given quarter.

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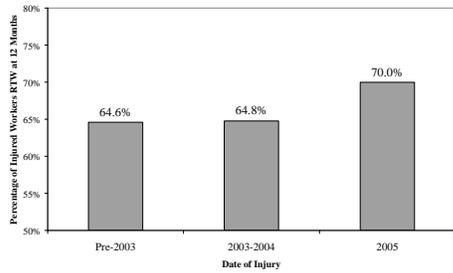
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**Preliminary Result:**  
The overall RTW rate increased for workers injured in the 2005 sub-period by about 5 percentage points.

**CHART 1. 12-MONTH RETURN-TO-WORK RATES**



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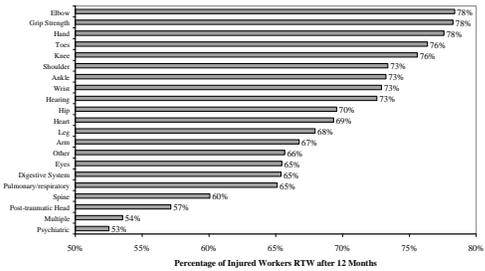
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RTW rates vary significantly by part of body.

**CHART 2. 12-MONTH RETURN-TO-WORK RATES  
By Part of Body  
Injuries Occurring 10-1-2000 to 6-30-2005**



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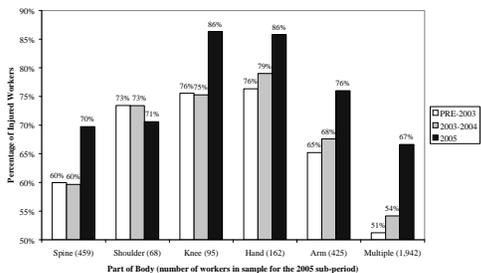
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RTW rates increased in the 2005 sub-period for most major parts of body

**CHART 3. 12-MONTH RETURN-TO-WORK RATES,  
for Selected Parts of Body**



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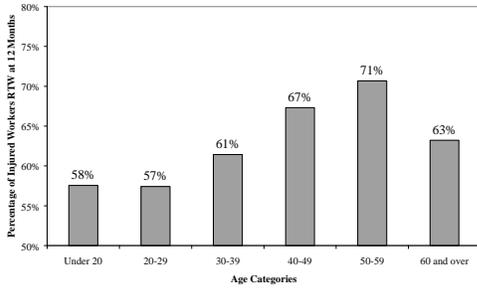
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## RTW rates rise with age, up to age 60.

CHART 4. RETURN-TO-WORK RATES BY AGE



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## Final RTW estimates will include:

- Additional data
  - All DEU data
- Types of employers:
  - Any Employer
  - At-injury Employer
  - Multiple Employers
- Age and severity
- Analyze the multiple injury category
- Average wages pre- and post-injury
- Cumulative RTW rates
- Other

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## Next Steps

- Wage Loss Study - Estimate post-injury wage change due to permanent disability.
- Calculate and analyze illness and injury incidence rates.

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