

Tradespeople Losing £Thousands In Lost Income

Skilled trades professions come with occupational hazards and thus the risk of loss of income. A recent study asked over 300 skilled tradespeople what impact being injured had on them physically, mentally and financially.

The study was commissioned by Markel Direct, the specialist insurer of tradespeople. Half of respondents had lost income or a contract as a result of their injury.

Of those asked, 35% miss 1-2 weeks of work a year due to work-related sickness or accidents. Based on the average day rate of £238, those that have had to take up to two weeks off work would be losing over £2,380 annually.

The study also explored the



maximum amount of time tradespeople have had to take off due to an injury or illness, with the most common answer (23%) being four months. Based on the same day rate, those who take four months off for an injury could have lost up to £20,508 of income in that year. More than 4 in 10 tradespeople reported not having insurance to cover them against accidents.

Rob Rees, a divisional director at Markel Direct, says: "Taking adequate health and safety precautions is key to staying safe, yet it's important to have a safety net in the event something happens. Arranging insurance cover, such as occupational personal accident insurance, can help support you financially if you can't work because of an injury on the job, minimising the impact of lost days on your income".

As well as personal cost, the economic cost of workplace injury and ill health in the construction sector was estimated at £1.3 billion for the year 2021/22, according to HSE data. Faulty equipment, lack of PPE and poor site safety plans are to blame for most injuries. [i](#)

Dispelling The Myths Around U-Values

Paul Booth, the R&D director at AluK, writes: It is good to see so many agreeing with AluK on the topic of U-Value compliance.

However, there are still some myths circulating about how you can achieve compliance, which I wish to correct:

Energy ratings (DSERs and WERs) can be used to show Part L compliance for new build developments. Wrong! Energy ratings can only be used for replacement product installations and in extensions.

The CEN standard window shown in BS EN 14351 (1230 x 1480 single opener) can be used to demonstrate compliance with U-Values. There is no option to use the CEN standard configuration window in Part L. U-Values should be assessed using the methods set out in

BR443 and applied to both the glass and the frame. For windows in dwellings, that means either calculated using the actual size and configuration or calculated for a standard 1230 x 1480 window with one of the following configurations:

- A central vertical divider and one fixed and one opening light for a casement.
- A central horizontal divider with one fixed and one opening light for a vertical sliding sash.
- No divider for a roof window.

The third on my list of myths is that bi-folds (such as the one pictured) can be shown to comply via the U-Value route using a French door sample. In fact, Part L states 'when a single U-Value is calculated for a product range of doors, the configuration of the door chosen



for the calculation should be the worst performing in the product range.

Myth 4 is 'I don't need a CE/UKCA mark for windows and doors which I place on the market, provided they comply with BBuilding Regs (inc Part L). No, no, no! All windows and doors placed on the market in the UK must be CE/UKCA marked and thermal performance is one of the essential characteristics which must be declared on that mark. This is a legal requirement. [i](#)

No Workers, No New Homes

The UK's construction sector faces a critical skills gap with 244,000 apprentices needed by 2032, as a third of workers over 50 approach retirement.

This is according to Fix Radio's National Construction Audit, which highlights the urgent need for government action to inspire a new generation of tradespeople. 65% of Brits were not encouraged into trade or construction professions during their academic years. 24% of Brits (8.7 million) didn't pursue a trade or construction job because they didn't have any role models. 18% of British parents (2.3 million) would not want their children to work in the construction industry. Over 400,000 Brits were made to wait a year for a builder.

The Audit also surmised that the UK construction industry


cannot build 1.5 million homes in five years (as promised by the Labour government) because of the deepening workforce crisis. The sector has 100,000 fewer workers than in 2019, says ONS data, with pandemic-related exits, an ageing workforce and post-Brexit visa restrictions creating a severe skills shortage.

The problem is set to worsen, as a third of construction workers are over 50 and due to retire within the next decade. Capital Economics and Checkatrade estimate that 244,000 qualified apprentices will be needed by 2032 to bridge the skills gap.

Despite government efforts to fast-track apprenticeships, construction firms remain sceptical, arguing that current measures, such as reducing apprenticeship lengths, do not go far enough.



In 2022-23, there were 337,140 apprenticeship starts, a sharp drop from over half a million in 2011-12. The sector is also grappling with high drop-off rates and a significant level of self-employment at 37%, making this the challenge of closing the skills gap even more urgent. Clive Holland, host of The Clive Holland Show on Fix Radio, says: "Since Brexit, record numbers of tradespeople have left the country and the stresses of an overstretched workforce are prompting thousands to leave the industry entirely.

"Years of continually missed homebuilding targets is now pricing millions of people out the property market, and it's only going to get worse. We simply need more builders." 



Twenty-Year Report On Window & Door Trends

www.windowbase.co.uk/windowdoortrends24

WindowBASE and Tommy Trinder have jointly published an in-depth analysis of the glazing industry, using data from the

last 20 years together with insights from monthly retail quotations by 550 leading installers.

The Window & Doors Market Trends report looks at how the numbers of fabricators and installers have changed over the past 20 years, which products (eg flush casements, French Doors, composite doors, bi-folds,

sliders, etc) are more popular and what materials (aluminium, PVC-U, timber) and colours are more in demand.

"We've analysed market share and value and compared results nationally and by region," says Mike Rigby, the CEO of WindowBASE, which supplies trade prospect data including contact and product details for over 13,200 window installers, fabricators and stockists. "This data and the changes recorded from over 30 years of trading provided the basis of the report."

The report includes analysis from more than 80,000 items quoted monthly on Tommy Trinder software.

"Installers are juggling a vast array of material, colours and options in order to shore up conversion rates and keep growth on track," says Chris Brunson, the CEO of Tommy Trinder. "Eighty-five per cent of installers now sell aluminium products, now, up from 78% a year ago, with 'steel look' profile a growing trend. Bi-folds are ahead of sliders but the latter are closing the gap. Meanwhile, 24% of all PVC-U window sales are flush casements and 81% of these are foiled – although colour choices are fairly conservative, with Anthracite and Agate grey and white grain the most popular options." 