

**INQUIRY INTO 2022 REVIEW OF THE WORKERS
COMPENSATION SCHEME**

Name: Professor John Buchanan

Date Received: 22 July 2022



To: Hon Chris Rath MLC
Chair
Standing Committee on Law and Justice
Parliament House
6 Macquarie St
Sydney NSW 2000

Re: 2022 Review of the Workers Compensation Scheme

Dear Mr Rath

I write concerning the Standing Committee on Law and Justice's current review of Workers Compensation Schemes operating in NSW.

I am an academic in the University of Sydney Business School and a Co-Director of the University's Mental Wealth Initiative. This Initiative is a collaboration of researchers from the Business School and Brain and Mind Centre. I have particular expertise in the changing nature of work. A summary of my abbreviated CV is provided at Attachment 1.

The Mental Wealth Initiative is examining how factors beyond material wealth creation shape individual and societal well-being. A short summary of the key ideas underpinning this research program is provided at Attachment 2. Further details about the Initiative itself can be found here: <https://www.sydney.edu.au/brain-mind/our-research/youth-mental-health-and-technology/mental-wealth-initiative.html>

In March this year I was approached by icare to undertake a scoping study of identify the key factors that need to be understood if we are to (a) better understand and (b) better track changes in return to work rates for people suffering compensable injuries covered by the Workers Compensation Schemes run by the NSW Government.

A copy of the first progress report arising from this research is provided at Attachment 3. Given data limitations and the short time since this project commenced it is only possible to report modest findings – many in the form of *prima facie* conclusions. That said, the research team feels confident about the initial findings and believes there is significant value in sharing them with the Committee. The findings are summarised as brief statements of fact or observations worthy of further analysis. Supporting documentation – in the form of figures and tables - is also attached.

I would be happy to engage directly with your Committee if it would like me to explain in more detail the material in this Initial progress report.

PROFESSOR JOHN BUCHANAN

Co-Director,
Mental Wealth Initiative
(A collaboration of the University of Sydney Business School
and the University's Brain and Mind Centre)

Professor John Buchanan – Summary CV

Title/Academic Level – Professor (Level E)

Current positions: Business Information Systems, University of Sydney
Business School and Co-Director, Mental Wealth Initiative

Contact details:

Degrees/Qualifications

| | |
|--------------------|--------|
| BA (Hons H1), ANU | (1982) |
| LLB, ANU | (1985) |
| Grad Dip Econ, ANU | (1989) |
| Ph D, USyd | (2001) |

Positions Held

| | |
|--------------|--|
| 2021 - | Co-Director, Mental Wealth Initiative, University of Sydney |
| 2017 - 2020 | Facilitator (and subsequently Co-Director) for John Grill Institute of Projects |
| 2017 | Facilitator, Academic Strategy, USyd Westmead Precinct Initiative |
| 2015 - 2020 | Head of Discipline, Business Analytics, USyd Business School |
| 2014 – 2015 | Principal Advisor, Engaged Research, USyd Business School |
| 1991 – 2014 | Deputy Director and then Director (from 2006) of Workplace Research Centre (Formerly ACIRRT), USyd Business School |
| 1985 – 1991: | Policy Adviser + Researcher in the Australian Public Service (and voluntary union official) |

Managerial and Professional Expertise

- (a) **Managerial** – managing staff at all levels, stakeholder management, business development, operations management (especially relevant to managing a research program involving up to 15 full time research staff and a lecturing workforce of up to 25), conflict prevention and resolution.
- (b) **Professional** – Research leadership involving both primary data generation and analysis as well as leadership of inter-disciplinary collaborations. Seasoned researcher in following aspects of qualitative research: document analysis, life history and workplace case studies, focus groups. For quantitative research: extensive experience in all aspects of social and economic survey research (mailout, internet based, phone based, interviewer administered). Education: leadership in curriculum and pedagogical reform, all aspects of design and delivering masters level course work.

Education and Teaching

- (a) Current courses: SMBA6122/HPOL5006 The Business of Health (offered jointly with Associate Professor Gillespie in School of Public Health), QBUS5017 People Analytics and the Fourth Industrial Revolution and INFS6018 Managing with Information and Data
- (b) Actively helped with facilitation of comprehensive curriculum redesign of B Com (Business Analytics Component) and M Com (both data science element and re-casting of the core curriculum).

Research

(a) *Current and Longstanding interests*

Current

- The evolution of expertise and social solidarity in a world shaped by mass under-employment and growing diffusion of AI
- The measurement, development and deployment of mental wealth

Longstanding

- The changing nature of work, especially issues associated with the development of human and organisational capability.
- Using data science to help better understand and redefine the nature of current social and economic challenges such as the development of skills for and at work (eg Vocational Education Reform Research Collaboration between the University and the NSW Department of Education).
- The changing nature of labour market segmentation: implications and opportunities for the renewal of vocational and life long education
- The role of skills and workforce development in strategies for economic renewal

(b) Key recent publications

- Occipinti, J, Buchanan, J, Skinner, A, Song, Y, Tran, K, Rosenberg, S, Fels, A, Boraiswamy, P, Meier, P, Prodan, A and Hickie, I (2022) 'Measuring, modelling and forecasting the Mental Wealth of Nations', *Frontiers of Public Health*, <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpubh.2022.879183/abstract>
- Gillespie, J, Buchanan, J, Huckel Schneider, C and Paolucci, F (2022) 'Covid 19 Vaccines and the Australian health care state', *Health Policy and Technology*, February, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hlpt.2022.100607>
- Buchanan, J, Froud, J, Lang, M, Lloyd, C, Smith, B and Williams, K (2021) *Enabling Renewal: Further Education and Building Better Citizenship, Occupations and Business Communities in Wales*, Report prepared for ColegauCymru (Colleges Wales), Cardiff [80 pages]
<https://www.colleges.wales/image/publications/reports/Enabling%20Renewal%20-%20FE/Enabling%20Renewal%20-%20FE.pdf>
- Buchanan, J, Allais, S, Anderson, M, Calvo, R, Peter, S and Pietsch, T (2020) *The futures of work: what education can and cannot do*, Paper prepared for UNESCO's – Futures of Education Initiative – [30 pages]
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000374435>
- Buchanan, J, Curtis, H, Tierney, S and Callus, R (2020) *New South Wales' Teachers' Pay: How it has changed and how it compares*, Report prepared for the Commission of Inquiry into the Work Value of NSW Public School Teachers, Sydney [50 pages]
- Buchanan, J and Tierney, S (2019) *Meeting changing skill requirements in NSW in the 2020s: Understanding and working with non-linear, lateral and upward inter-occupational labour flows*, Report prepared for the NSW Department of Education, Sydney (October)
- Buchanan, J (2019), 'Skills Planning for South Africa: getting the questions right' in Kruss, G, Wildschunt, A and Petersen, I (eds) *Skilling for the future: new research perspectives on education, work and development in South Africa*, Human Sciences Research Council Press, Cape Town
- Oliver, D, Yu, S and Buchanan, J (2019), 'The Political Economy of Skills' in L Unwin et al *The Handbook on Vocational Education and Training*, Wiley, London
- Buchanan, J, Leesa Wheelahan and Serena Yu (2018), 'Increasing young people's adaptability and mobility: from competency approach and twenty-first-century skills to capabilities and vocational streams' in Akiko Sakamoto and Johnny Sung, *Skills and the Future of Work: Strategies for Inclusive Growth in Asia and the Pacific*, Geneva, 2018: 125 – 160 available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---sro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms_650239.pdf
- Buchanan, J, Ryan, R.; Anderson, M.; Calvo, R.; Glozier, N.; Peter, S. 2018. *Preparing for the best and worst of times*. A report for the NSW Department of Education on the key implications for school education of artificial intelligence and other emerging transformations (Sydney, Australia, Policy Lab, University of Sydney). Available at: https://education.nsw.gov.au/our-priorities/innovate-for-the-future/education-for-a-changing-world/research-findings/future-frontiers-analytical-report-preparing-for-the-best-and-worst-of-times/Future-Frontiers_University-of-Sydney-exec-summary.pdf [3 Aug. 2018].
- Buchanan, J., Anderson, P. and Power, G. (2017) 'Skill Ecosystems' in Chris Warhurst, Ken Mayhew, David Finegold and John Buchanan (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Skills and Training*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, United Kingdom, pp. 444-65.
- Buchanan, J, Finegold, D, Mayhew, K and Warhurst, C (2017), 'Introduction – Skills and Training: Multiple Targets, Shifting Terrain' in Chris Warhurst, Ken Mayhew, David Finegold and John Buchanan (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Skills and Training*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, United Kingdom, pp. 1 – 14
- Buchanan, J. and Oliver, D. (2016) 'Fair Work' and the Modernization of Australian Labour Standards: A Case of Institutional Plasticity Entrenching Deepening Wage Inequality', *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, vol. 54, no. 4, pp. 790-814.

(c) Recent research income (major grants only)

icare [Insurance and Care] NSW (2022) "Understanding return to work: an exploratory research study" (CI of a project involving icare personnel and Business School researchers.)

Department of Industry (NSW), 2018 – 2019, "Disadvantage, Disability and the NSW VET System", (Jointly with Jennifer Smith-Merry)

Research Collaboration with NSW Department of Industry, 2016 - 2019, "Three Year Collaborative Research Partnership on Vocational Education and Training (VET) Reform in NSW", (Jointly with Stephen Tierney, Bala Rajaratnam, Jie Yin, Gordon MacDonald, Emily Neo)

Mental wealth – the neglected force in national prosperity

As the immediate threat of the pandemic recedes, governments worldwide strive to restore 'business as usual'.

We can do better than that.

Just as Adam Smith's [Wealth of Nations](#) identified the determinants of material prosperity at the onset of the modern industrial era, now is our opportunity to clarify what constitutes a nation's mental wealth. For Smith, the key determinants of prosperity included material factors like the division of labour, trading arrangements and a stable legal system.

Success in these domains is necessary to secure the pre-conditions for material prosperity. On their own, however, they are not sufficient to ensure wellbeing more broadly conceived.

The [Mental Wealth Initiative](#) at the University of Sydney aims to build mental health and wellbeing and foster healthier, more resilient societies that are capable of responding to future global challenges.

Our mission is to discover:

What arrangements – especially within communities, businesses, governments and the economy – deepen our mental wealth?

Mental wealth in action

Our response to the pandemic revealed the power of large-scale collective action.

The University of Sydney's Brain and Mind Centre [modelling suggested that Australia's most successful mental health initiative](#) in the first phase of the crisis was the Jobkeeper program.

This was not just about income support. At its heart was maintaining the large scale social connections that flow from employment relationships. Supporting this relationship was a powerful investment not only in individual job security – it kept the social fabric knitted together as people were not cast adrift and workplaces could hold tight until the physical danger passed.

Mental Wealth defined

The Mental Wealth research program builds on a number of analytical tributaries. One of the most significant is the '[Mental Capital and Wellbeing Foresight Project](#)' (published 2008). This was a large scale study led by the UK's Chief Scientist, Sir John Beddington.

This integrated the insights of more than 450 researchers from a dozen-plus nations. Their quest was to discover ‘the factors that influence an individual’s mental development and wellbeing from conception until death.’

One of this project’s most critical findings was deceptively simple: national success will depend on developing mental not just material resources. In understanding the ‘mental’ dimension it is argued it is vital distinguish between two distinct but interrelated concepts: mental capital and mental wellbeing. **Mental capital** is the stock of our cognitive and emotional capabilities. Unlike physical capital, it is not necessarily depleted with use. Dynamics of **mental wellbeing** determine how mental capital is developed and deployed: sound mental wellbeing deepens mental capital, compromised mental wellbeing depletes it.

The Mental Wealth Initiative is advancing this foundational work.

So what are we talking about? Conceptually and metrically, mental wealth includes the economy as traditionally measured by GDP *plus* the value created by the dynamic relationship between mental capital and mental wellbeing that strengthens the fabric of society and underpins quality of life for all.

Mental wealth is:

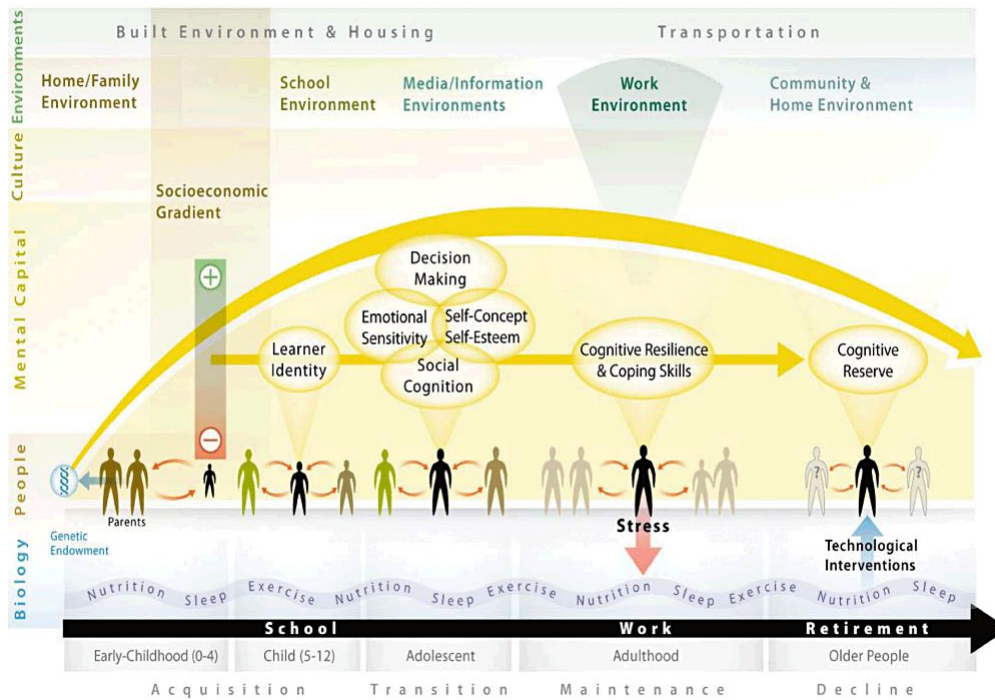
a measure of national prosperity that captures the value generated by the deployment of collective mental assets and supporting social infrastructure and focuses on the contributions made by human beings to material and non-material standards of living – whether traded in markets/recognised in monetary terms or not.

If we are interested in deepening mental capital we must foster conditions of high collective mental wellbeing. On this analysis, mental wellbeing is not just important in its own right: it is just as critical for deepening mental capital as a factor of economic and community development.

Boosting mental wealth

The British researchers further explored how mental capital accumulates and atrophies over the life course. The following figure summarises their findings. It highlights the multiplicity of factors shaping the development of mental capital from conception to old age. While biological factors provide the foundations, social forces such as the socio-economic gradient, family, school, community and working life all have a role to play. Each in turn varies at different stages of the life course.

Factors Influencing the Trajectory of Mental Capital Across the Life Course



from [Foresight Mental Capital and Wellbeing Project](#)
via [Global aging and the brain](#)

The UK researchers emphasised the **individual** conceived as experiencing commonly shared phases across a life span. However they stopped short in their analysis concerning the broader social settings shaping peoples' "mental wellbeing".

Despite its exceptional quality, the Foresight project did not receive the attention it deserved. The Global Financial Crisis (GFC) and subsequent austerity turn in public policy interrupted the further development of the agenda it proposed.

The next step

The University of Sydney's Mental Wealth Initiative is building on this highly original work. We are especially interested in how social and contextual factors (things like social structures of support in local labour markets, networks of production and communities) can be strengthened to help with reconstructing collective mental wellbeing, and through that deepen our nation's mental capital.

In this change from a deficit to an asset approach to mental health, we are calling for recognition of and investment in the things that advance our society collectively and will help communities flourish.

The projects aims are to challenge

1. Current policy pre-occupation with maximising GDP growth and
2. Not just pursuing a remedial approach to mental illness – it is time to also engage more deeply with the foundations of human development and human flourishing.

Strong partnerships have already been established with leading researchers internationally as well as with organisations like the World Economic Forum. We are seeking collaboration with other researchers, government agencies and civil society organisations such as unions and non-government social services. These partnerships will not only generate new knowledge of what develops and undermines mental wealth – they will experiment with new ways of working and conducting social life to lift the mental wealth of the nation.

The GFC disrupted the initial effort to elevate interest in mental capital and mental wellbeing. It is vital that history is not repeated. The University of Sydney initiative is being undertaken to help ensure a concern with mental wealth guides (and is not again sidelined) our trajectory out of a deep economic crisis and towards a new era of social and economic prosperity. Key matters of interest are creating quality sustainable work for all who want it, reconstructing structures of support that lift social and not just economic development and revitalising lifelong learning in workplaces and community setting, not just educational institutions.

[John Buchanan](#) and [Jo-An Occhipinti](#)



John Buchanan

John is the Co-Director of the Mental Wealth Initiative and a Professor in the Business Information Systems Discipline at the University of Sydney Business School. John is an expert in labour market structuring and its implications for skills and education. Current research interests include the future of expertise and social solidarity in a world of mass underemployment and AI.



Jo-An Occhipinti

Jo-An is Co-Director of the Mental Wealth Initiative and Head of Systems Modelling, Simulation & Data Science at the Brain and Mind Centre at the University of Sydney. She works with policy makers nationally and internationally to use these tools to understand the likely impacts of policy decisions before they are implemented in the real world.

Understanding changing return to work (RTW) trends in NSW – First report on progress from the University of Sydney Research Team

To: Heather Smith
Project Steering Group

Purpose

This paper provides a summary of initial findings of the scoping project directed at generating a better understanding of RTW trends in NSW.

Background

This project commenced in late March. To date we have been examining publicly available data and publications as a prelude to engaging with unit records and other original data sources (eg case managers) under the control of icare. The guiding questions for this project are:

Why have RTW rates for workers compensations schemes administered by icare declined?

How can better ways of tracking the factors shaping RTW rates be devised?

Report on progress to date

Given data limitations and the short time since this project commenced it is only possible to report modest findings – many in the form of *prima facie* conclusions. That said, the research team feels confident about the initial findings and believes there is significant value in moving to the next stage to either validate or refine them. The findings are summarised in brief statements of fact or observations worthy of further analysis. Supporting documentation – in the form of figures and tables - is attached. We also have a number of internal research source documents that are available to icare if personnel within the organisation are interested in more detail.

1. Clarification of what needs to be explained: More than administrative factors internal to icare appear to be associated with declining RTW rates over recent years.

As is well known the dramatic drop in RTW rates from mid-2017 to mid-2019 generated a significant policy research literature. We have not endeavoured to replicate or second guess that work. Our expertise is primarily in the changing nature of the labour market – and that is the perspective applied to the research questions.

Figure 1 provides a typical time series of developments in RTW rates over the period 2015 to 2021. The orange line shows the dramatic declines that attracted so much attention in recent years. It is important, however, to keep these data in perspective. As is evident in this figure, RTW rates have been experiencing an underlying decline over this period in its entirety – not just the period of extreme turbulence. It is not possible to generate lines of best fit on this data as we only had access to the figure from Finity. Figure 2, however, provides corroborating data on the Australia wide experience with RTW from 2001 – 2019. This reports on Safe Work Australia data that summarises median time lost in weeks and median compensation payments for workers with compensable injuries and diseases over the last two decades. As is clear from that figure these indicators were stable until 2006, rose by around 25% until 2012/2013 and then rose even more profoundly over the rest of the decade. A similar trend is evident in data collected from a different source: that gathered by the Social Research Centre directly from recipients of workers comp payments (Figure 3). These data should not be used for comparing the performance between jurisdiction in absolute terms due to different regulatory features associated with different jurisdictions. What is striking,

however, is the common trends on NSW, Victoria and Queensland: all have experienced declining RTW rates since 2018.

2. A range of labour market factors appear to be associated with declining RTW rates

It is well known that psychological injuries have been on the rise in recent years. It is well known that amongst all injury types, these have the lowest RTW rates. Figure 4 provides recent evidence based on data from SIRA. What is less studied are the changing labour market factors associated with the declining RTW. We have explored variables on both the supply (ie worker) and demand (ie job/employer) side of the labour market. While factors on both sides are worthy of further analysis, the most serious changes in recent years appear to have been on the demand side.

- It is well known that Australia's population is aging. Figure 5 reveals that not only are workers becoming older – their median time lost from work while on compensation has also been rising – especially since 2017. Other demographic groups – primarily women and younger workers were also examined – but their RTW experience does not appear to have changed to anything like the degree as that of Australia's mature workers.
- The actual nature of injuries experienced at work has not changed that much over the period 2017 – 2021 (See Figure 6). Given this we suspect the major labour market variables associated with extended RTW that are worthy of further consideration concern the character of the jobs on offer.
 - o Figure 7a and 7b summarises developments at industry level. These data are reported in terms of raw numbers – not percentages – which is important for getting a feel for the absolute nature of the changes underway. What stands out here are the huge surges in employment in Health and Community Services in particular – with strong growth also underway in Education and Finance. Figure 7c reveals that not only has Finance increased significantly as a source of work – the drop in its RTW rate has been the worst of any industry – by a sizeable margin.
 - o Figures 8a and 8b summarise the situation by occupation. There has been very strong growth in the employment of professionals – now the single largest occupational group. And this is especially the case for women (Figure 8b). The other occupational group growing very strongly for women has been Community and Personal Service Workers. The rise of both is associated with declining RTW rates. We are not saying there is causation – but there is a strong case for exploring these dimensions of change more closely to generate better insights into where the changes are occurring and how, if at all, they align with changing RTW outcomes.

3. There appears to be a need to look into businesses and their RTW performance

Most discussions of RTW are based on data concerning workers. There are, however, two sides to the labour market – and it important we devote attention to the performance of both. Our initial work here provides strong pointers on the need to explore the employer aspect of the RTW situation more fully.

Figure 9 is a table based on material collected by the Social Research Centre from a random sample of workers receiving compensation. The questions reported on this figure concerned the nature of employer support provided to those involved in the survey. From 2013 – 2018 there was little reported change. Between 2018 and 2021, however, there has been a distinct falling away in the level of employer support provided to workers with compensable injuries and diseases. For example, whereas in 2018 just under two thirds (65.2%) of workers reported 'their employer helped with [their] recovery' this fell to 58.4% last year. Such changes are, potentially very important. Figures 10a and b and 11a and b highlight the difference in

return to work rates by degree of employer support. Where employers have weak contacts with injured workers return to work rates were around 20 – 25% lower than more engaged businesses. For workers with psychological injury return to work rates were 79% where employers were reported to be positive and only 52% where they were reported to be negative (Figure 10b). It is important to recognise that declining employer commitment to helping people return to work after injury is not confined to their work and health and safety practices. Data on businesses' commitment to developing their able-bodied workforce shows employer engagement with the development of human capability (as measured by levels of employer provided on-the-job training) has been in decline for some time. Figure 11 provides details.¹

There is a small, but innovative literature emerging on the issue of social capital at the workplace. Some of this is exploring its impact on return to work. Social capital refers to the degree of social connection and support at work. Figure 12 provides a snapshot of the types of issues being explored in this research. This appears to be a promising line of inquiry as it is identifying the precise practices in a workplace that make a difference in helping injured workers find a path back to paid employment.

4. Next steps

Our work to date has uncovered important lines for further analysis. All the material reported here is on the public record. Our contribution has been to link it up and provide observations about prima facie associations. In the next stage of work we propose, with icare's permission, to generate original insights using the data, experience and insights held by the organisation. We propose two lines of work in particular.

4.1 Use of unit record data to go beyond the aggregates.

There are some strong prima facie associations between declining RTW rates and labour market developments on the demand side. It would be especially useful to identify, using unit records, clusters that link RTW rates to factors such as industry, occupation, age and employer size. It is our experience that greater disaggregation allows us to get a better handle on exactly where the concentration of matters of interest are located in the labour market.

4.2 Interview icare staff to capture their insights as key informants about the realities of businesses' return to work performance

The work on businesses' return to work practices is something that is relatively understudied in the literature. From our experience there is often deep knowledge within communities of case managers and the like for understanding employer practice. This is a fast way of generating important new information on the labour demand side factors shaping return to work dynamics.

Conclusion

The research team has been surprised at how rich the extant public data is and how little of it has been used for a labour market analysis of the dynamics of RTW. We look forward to discussing our progress to date and your feedback on our next phase of research priorities.

Professor John Buchanan
Ilker Cingillioglu
Kristen Tran

13 May 2022

¹ Note these data are of workers' reports of changed practice. It is possible there could be changes in workers' expectations about these matters over the years. Data on workers' increased propensity to train themselves indicates, however, they appear to be taking on more of this responsibility directly themselves.

Figure 1: 13-week RTW (physical injuries) rates differences among organizations by various sizes (by number of employees). Adapted from Finity report (2022)

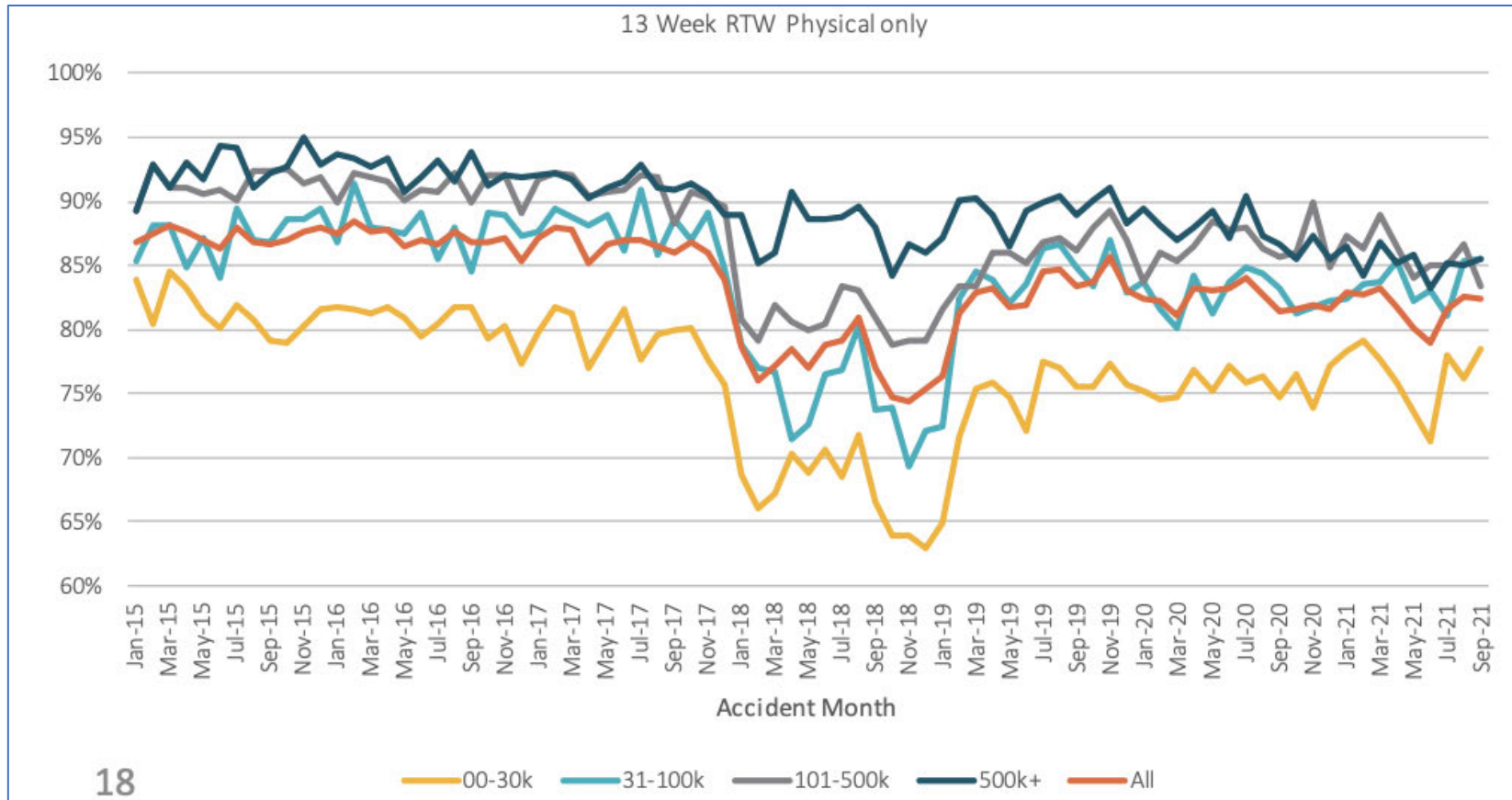


Figure 2: Median Time Lost (working weeks) and Median Compensation (AUD) by Male and Female workers between 2000-2001 and 2018-2019 in Australia. Data Source: Safe Work Australia (2021).

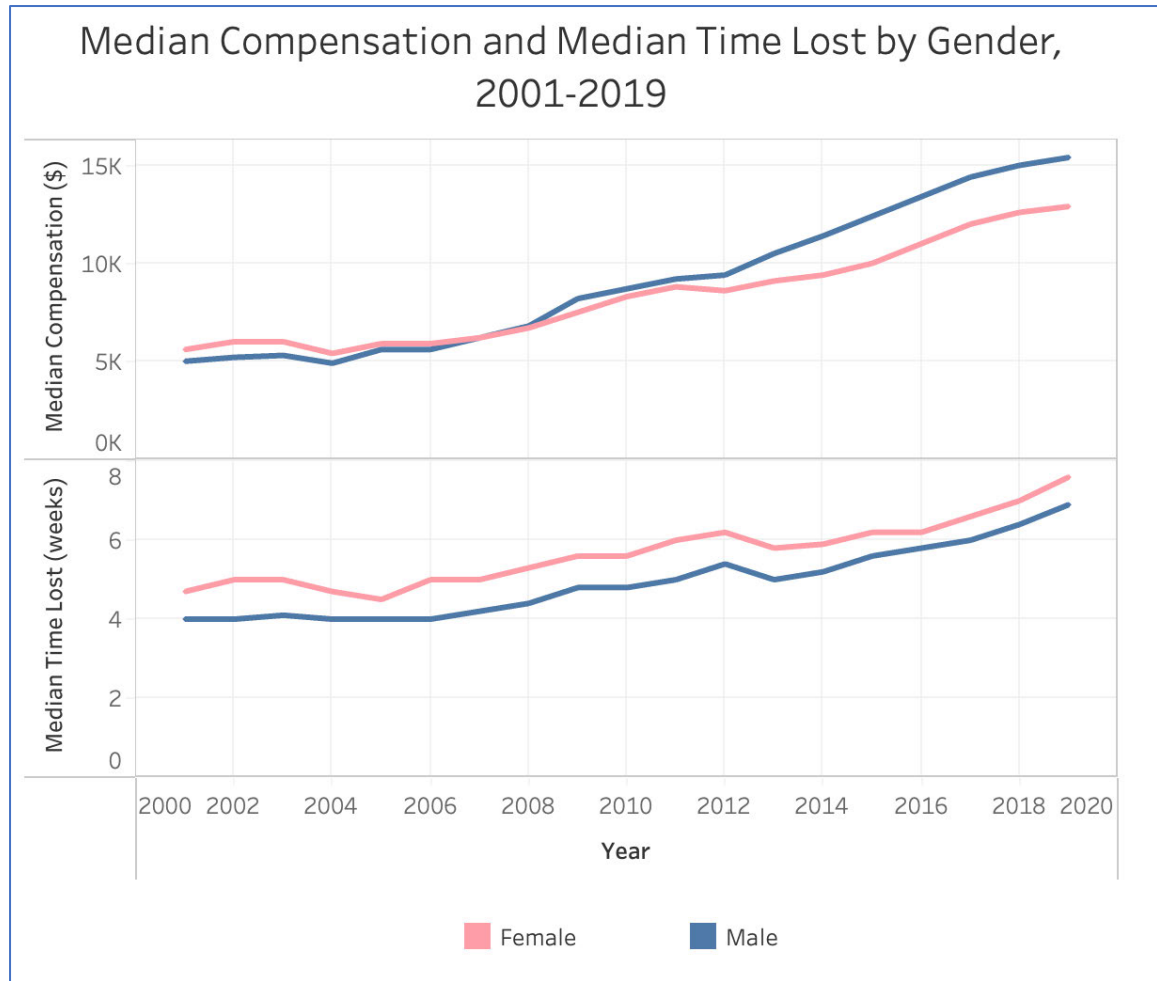


Figure 3: Return to Work rate comparisons among NSW, VIC and QLD from 2016 to 2021 based on two questions: (1) "Have you returned to work at any time since your work-related injury?" and (2) "Having returned to work, are you currently in paid employment?". Data from Social Research Centre (2021).

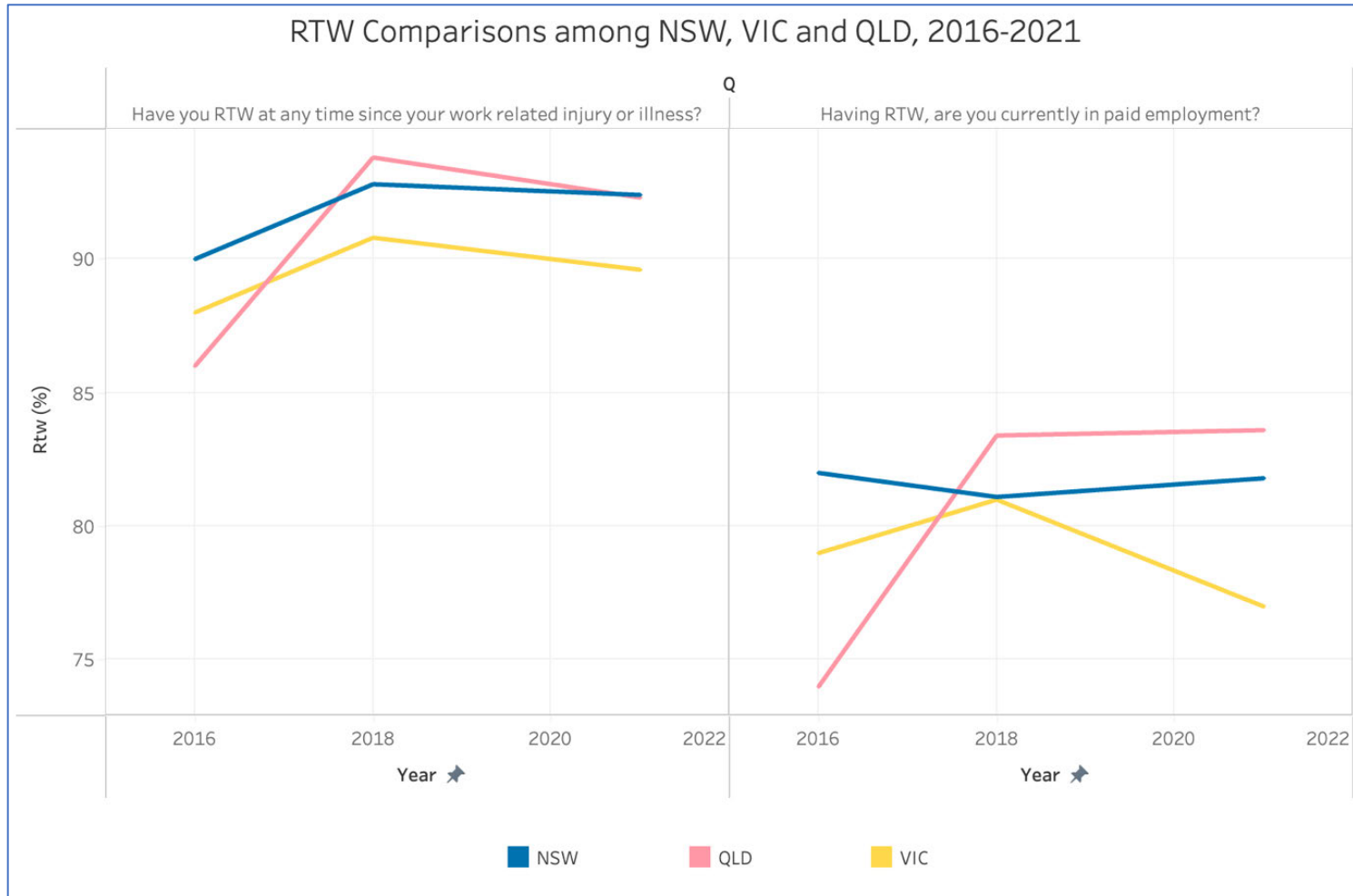


Figure 4: Average RTW rates by Mechanism of injury from 2018 to 2021 (4, 13 and 26 weeks combined) in NSW. Data from SIRA (2022).

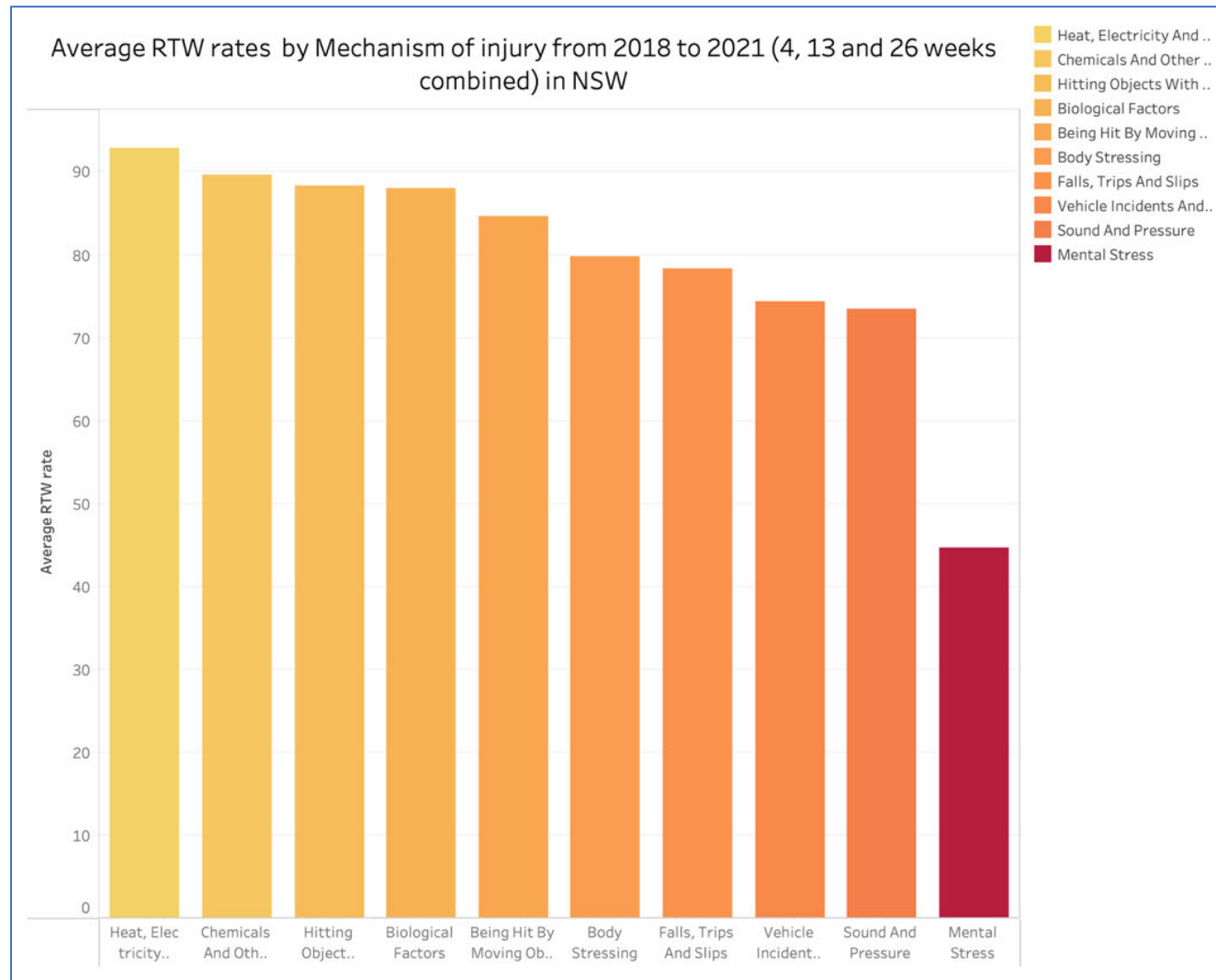


Figure 5: Median time lost (weeks) by Age Group in Australia, 2007 to 2019. Data Source: Safe Work Australia (2021).

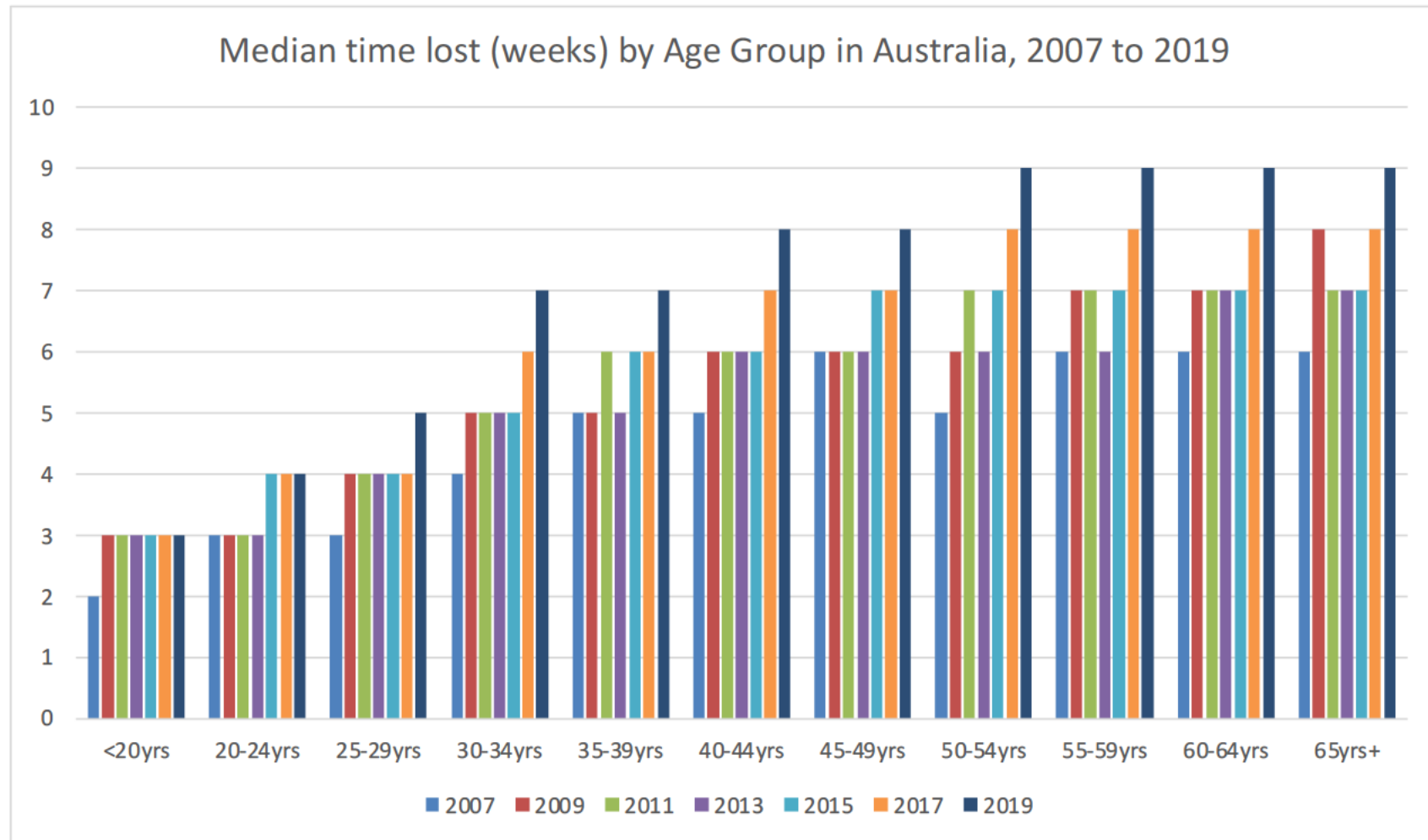


Figure 6: Return to Work rates at 26 weeks by Nature of Injury in NSW from 2017 to 2021. Data from SIRA (2022).

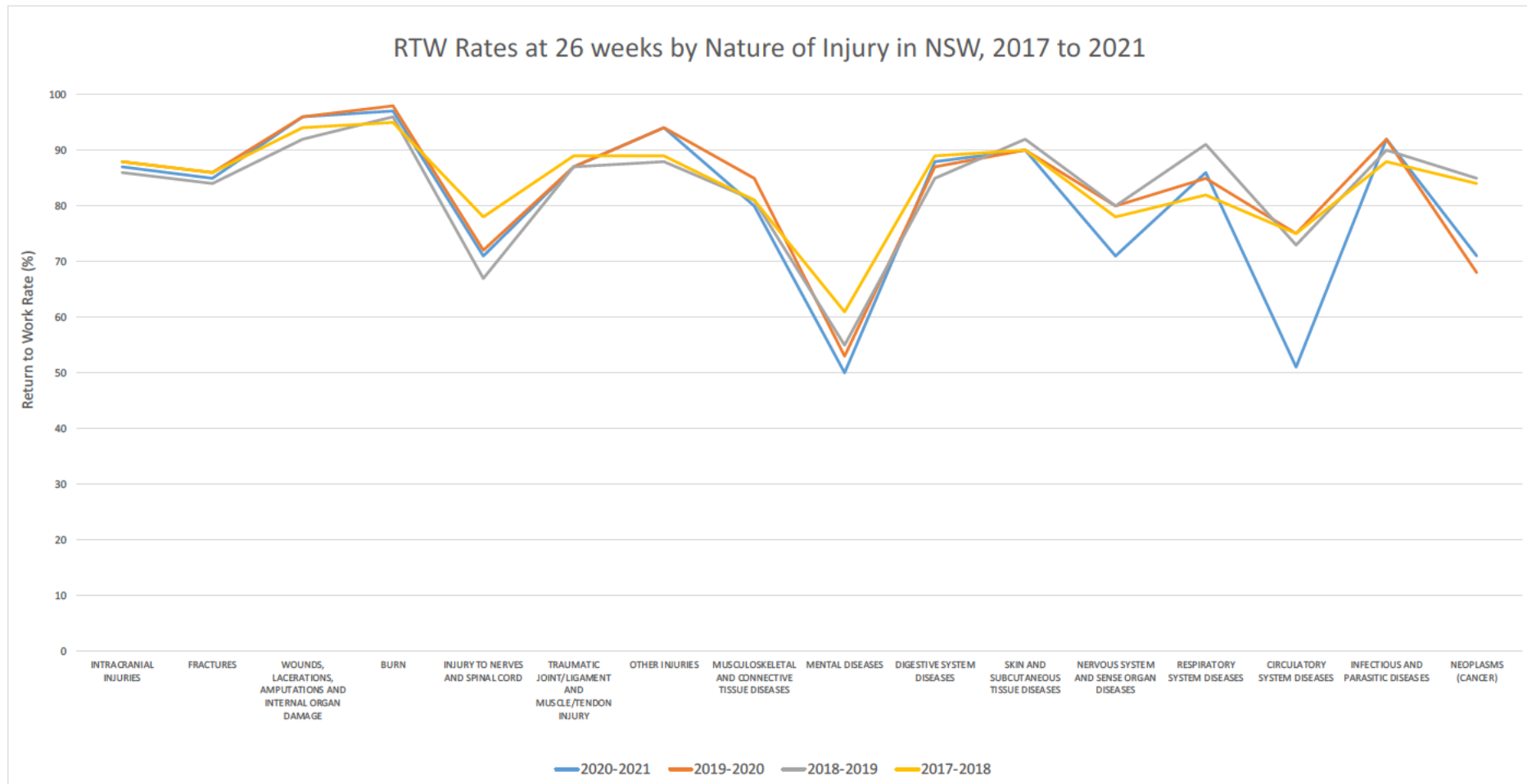


Figure 7a: Persons Employed by Industry Division of Main Job (ANZSIC) in Australia, Feb 2012-Feb 2022. Data Source: ABS (2022).

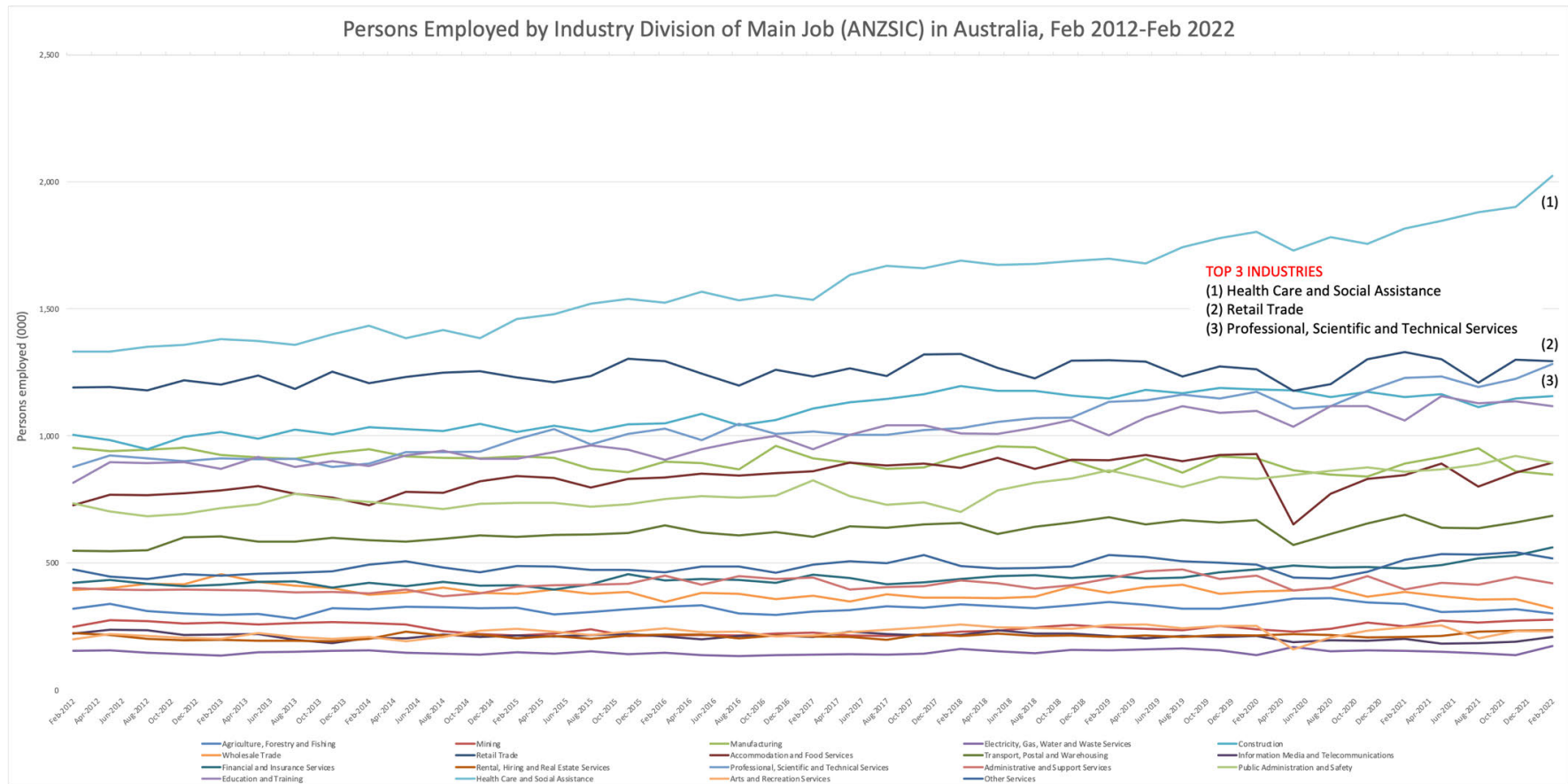


Figure 7b: Percent Change in Employed Persons between Feb 2012 and Feb 2022 by Industry Division of Main Job (ANZSIC) in Australia. Data Source: ABS (2022).

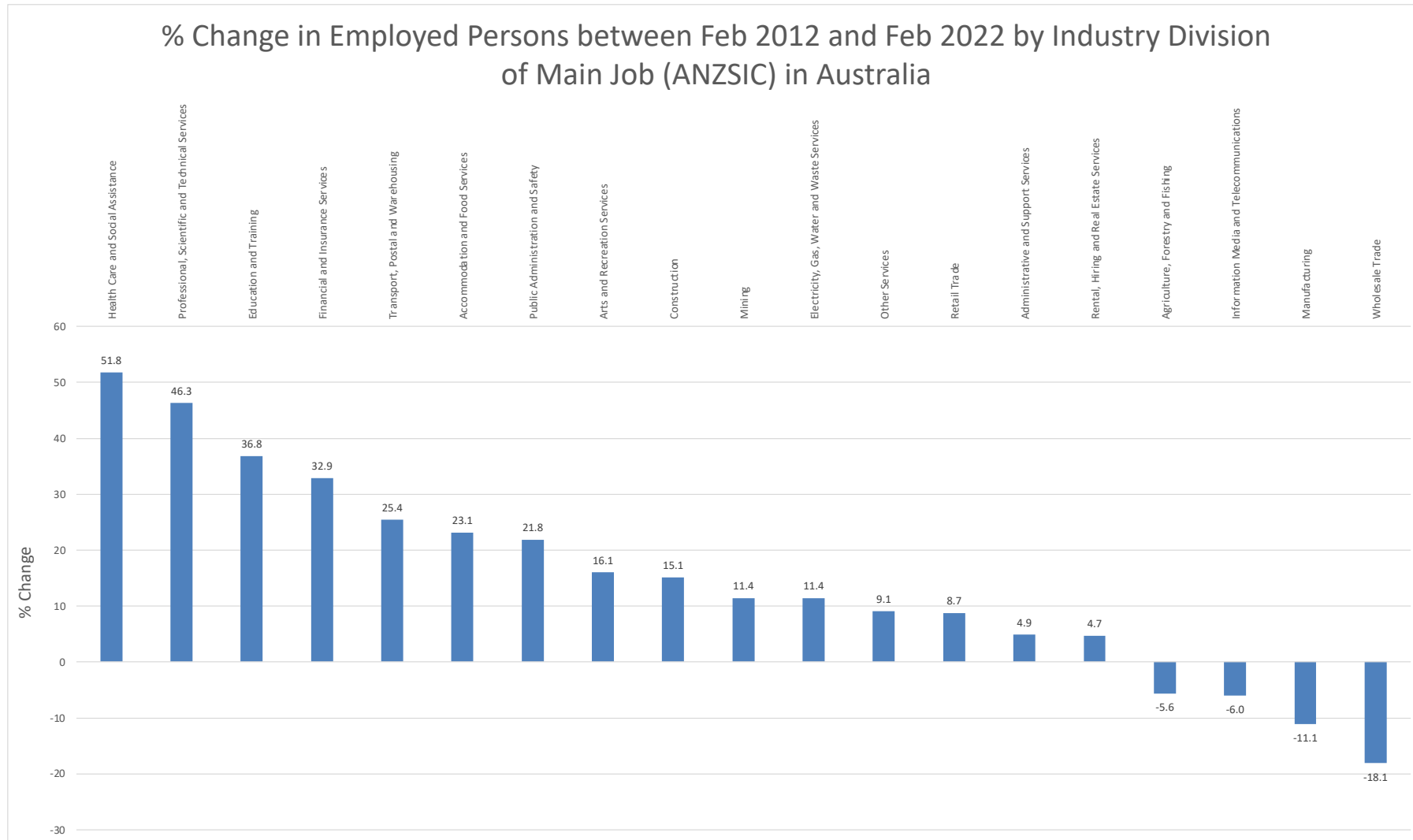


Figure 7c: Return to Work rates at 26 weeks by Industry Division in NSW from 2017 to 2021. Data from SIRA (2022).

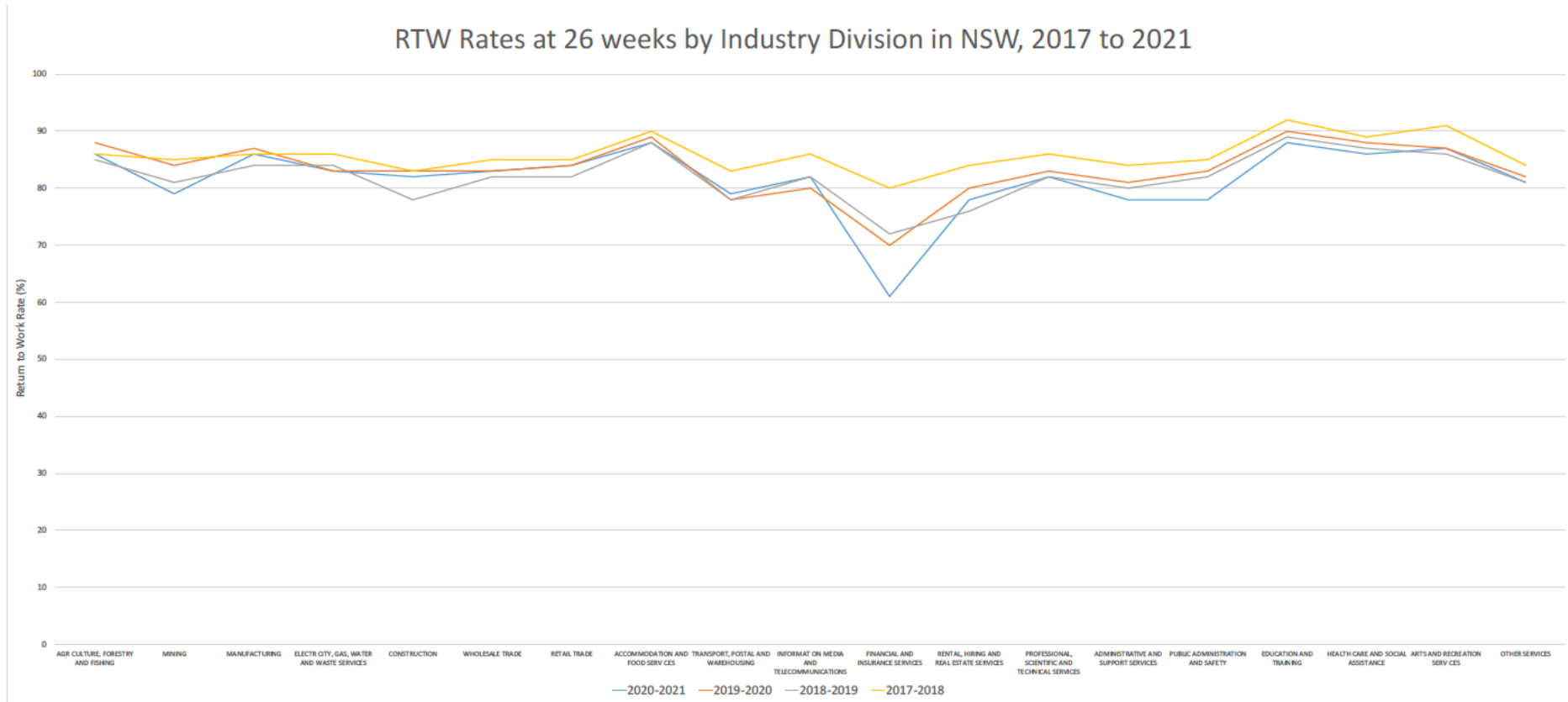


Figure 8a: Total Employed Males by Occupation major group of main job (ANZSCO) in Australia, Feb 2012-Feb 2022. Data Source: ABS (2022).

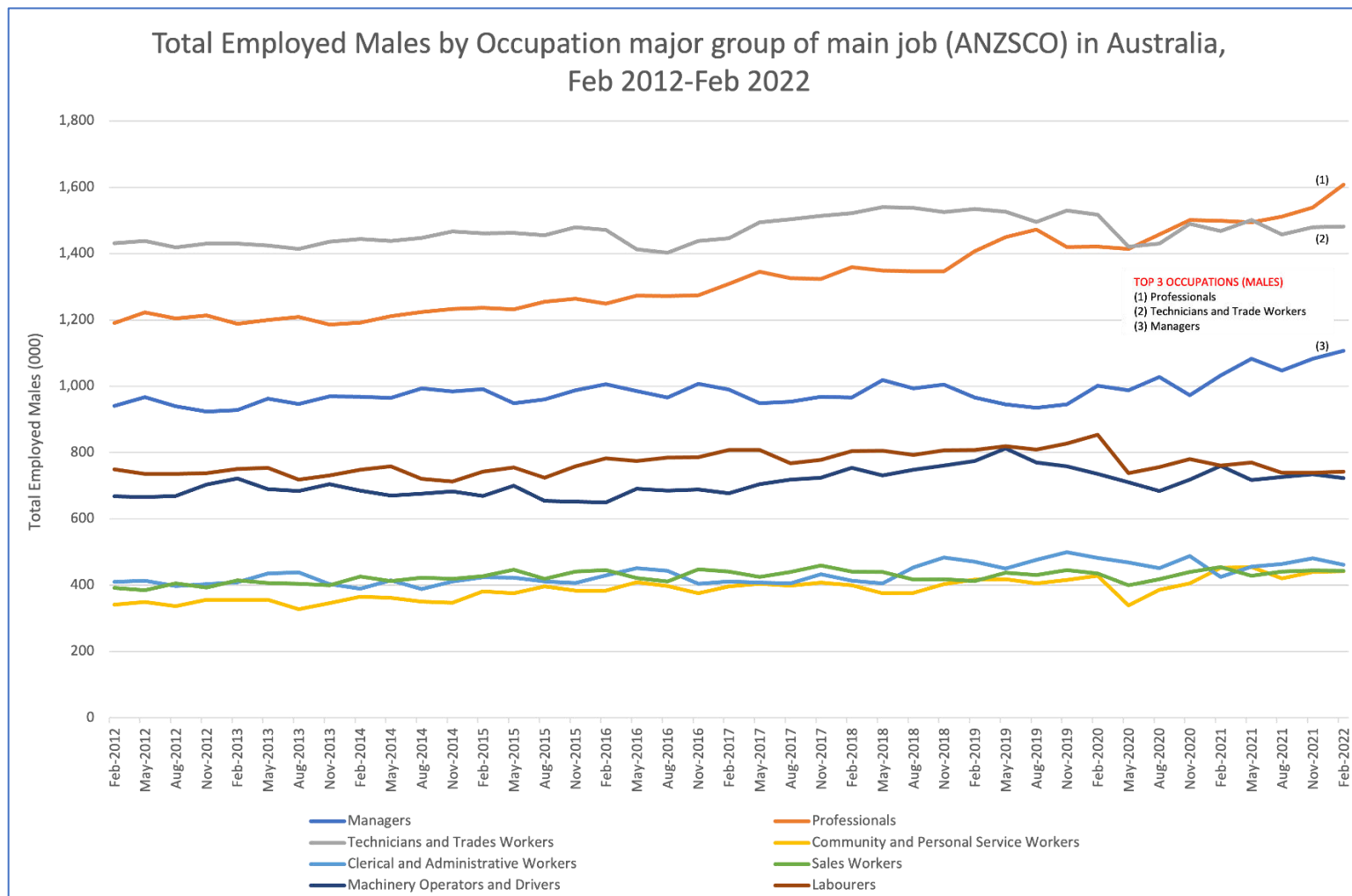


Figure 8b: Total Employed Females by Occupation major group of main job (ANZSCO) in Australia, Feb 2012-Feb 2022. Data Source: ABS (2022)

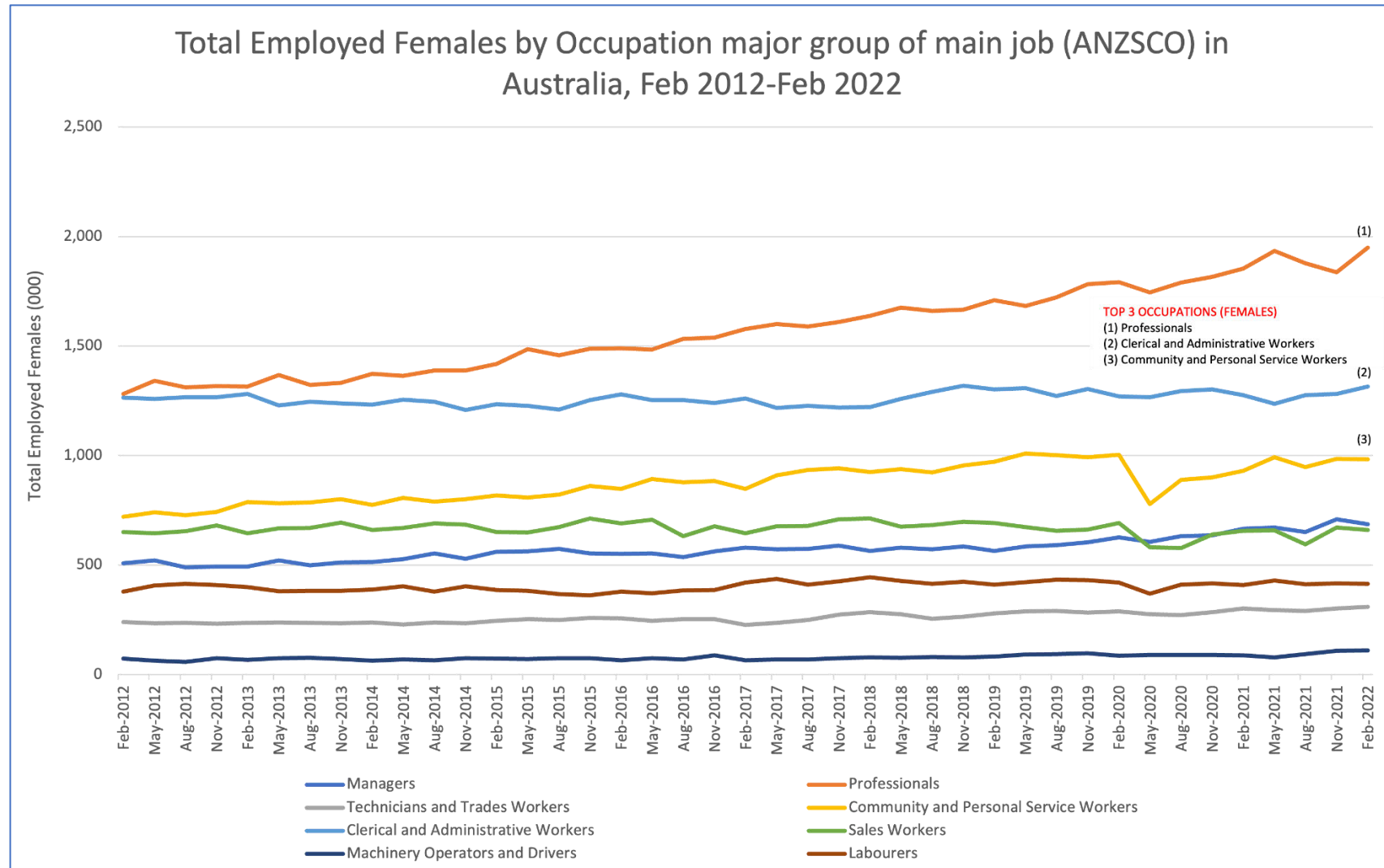


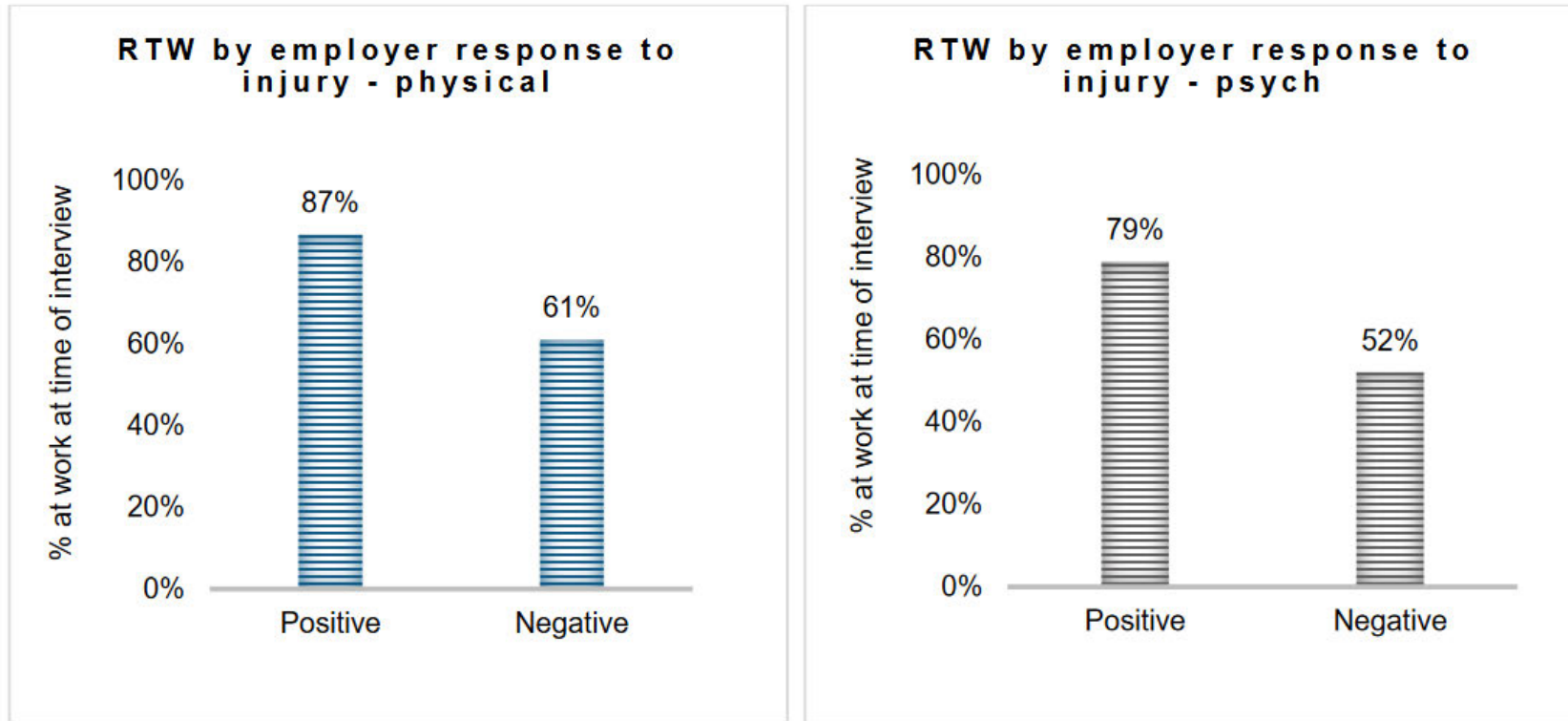
Figure 9 - Employer support attributes – time series (% ‘Strongly Agree’ / ‘Agree’)

| | 2013 | 2014 | 2016 | 2018 | 2021 |
|--|------|------|------|------|-------|
| Your employer did what they could to support you | 75.6 | 73.8 | 75.4 | 74.4 | 67.2* |
| Your employer provided enough information on your rights and responsibilities | 67.3 | 69.1 | 67.2 | 68.4 | 61.0* |
| Your employer made an effort to find suitable employment for you | 75.1 | 71.2 | 72.2 | 71.3 | 63.9* |
| Your employer helped you with your recovery | 68.4 | 67.5 | 65.2 | 65.2 | 58.4* |
| Your employer treated you fairly during the claims process | 81.4 | 78.2 | 79.3 | 79.1 | 73.0* |
| Your employer treated you fairly after the claims process | 82.6 | 78.5 | 79.6 | 79.5 | 74.4* |

Base: All respondents. 2013 (n=448 to n=522), 2014 (n=4,043 to n=4,425), 2016 (n=4,245 to n=4,486), 2018 (n=4,283 to n=4,530), 2021 (n=4,298 to n=4,524). EMP7Thinking about the role of your employer following your work-related injury or illness, do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Note: Don't know and Refused responses excluded from base. Asterisks indicate statistically significant difference (single asterisk (*) indicates a lower proportion; double asterisk (**) indicates a higher proportion) (p-value <=0.05).

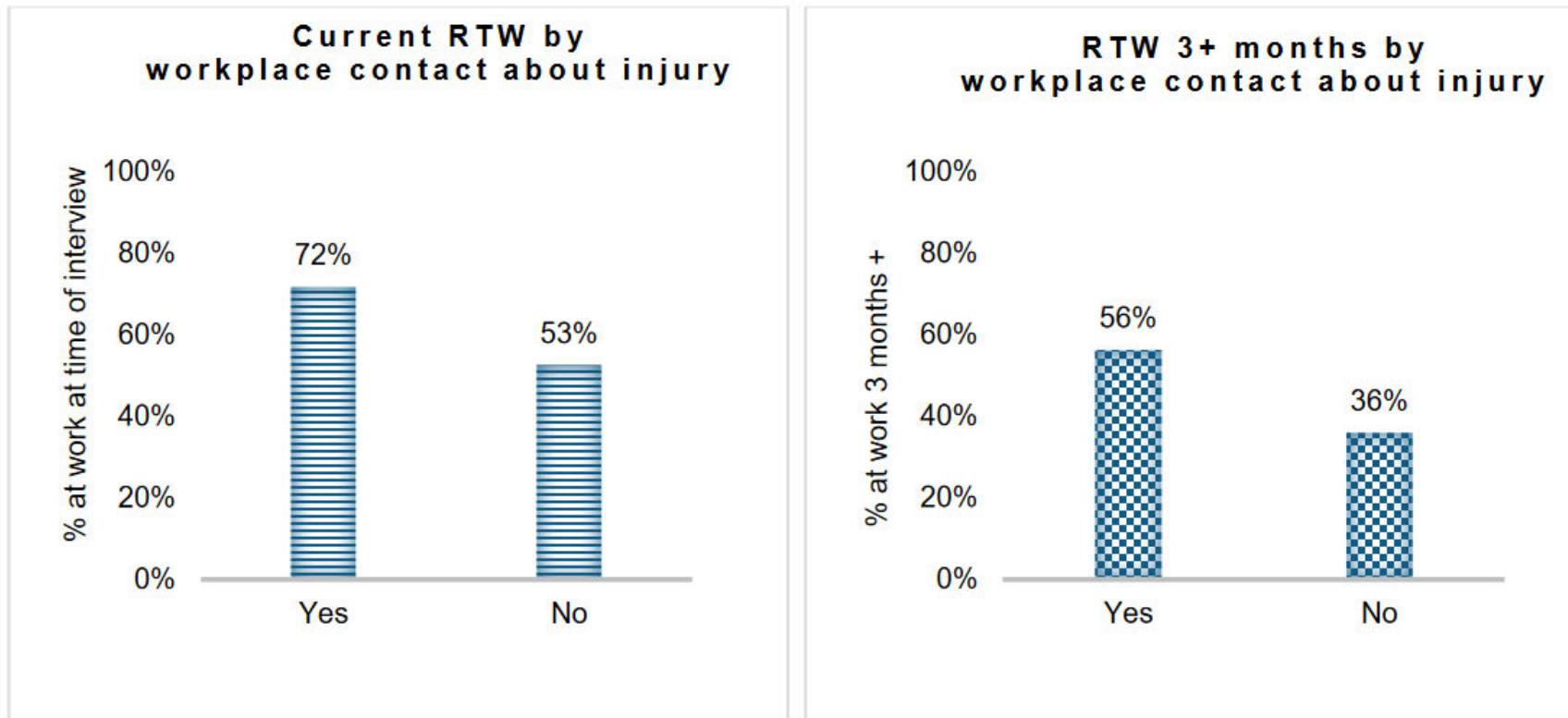
[2021 National Return to Work Survey Report]

Figure 10 - Percentage RTW by employer response to injury



[Wyatt, M. & Lane, T. (2017). Return to work: A comparison of psychological and physical injury claims. Safe Work Australia.]

Figure 11 - Percentage RTW by contact from the workplace



[Wyatt, M. & Lane, T. (2017). Return to work: A comparison of psychological and physical injury claims. Safe Work Australia.]

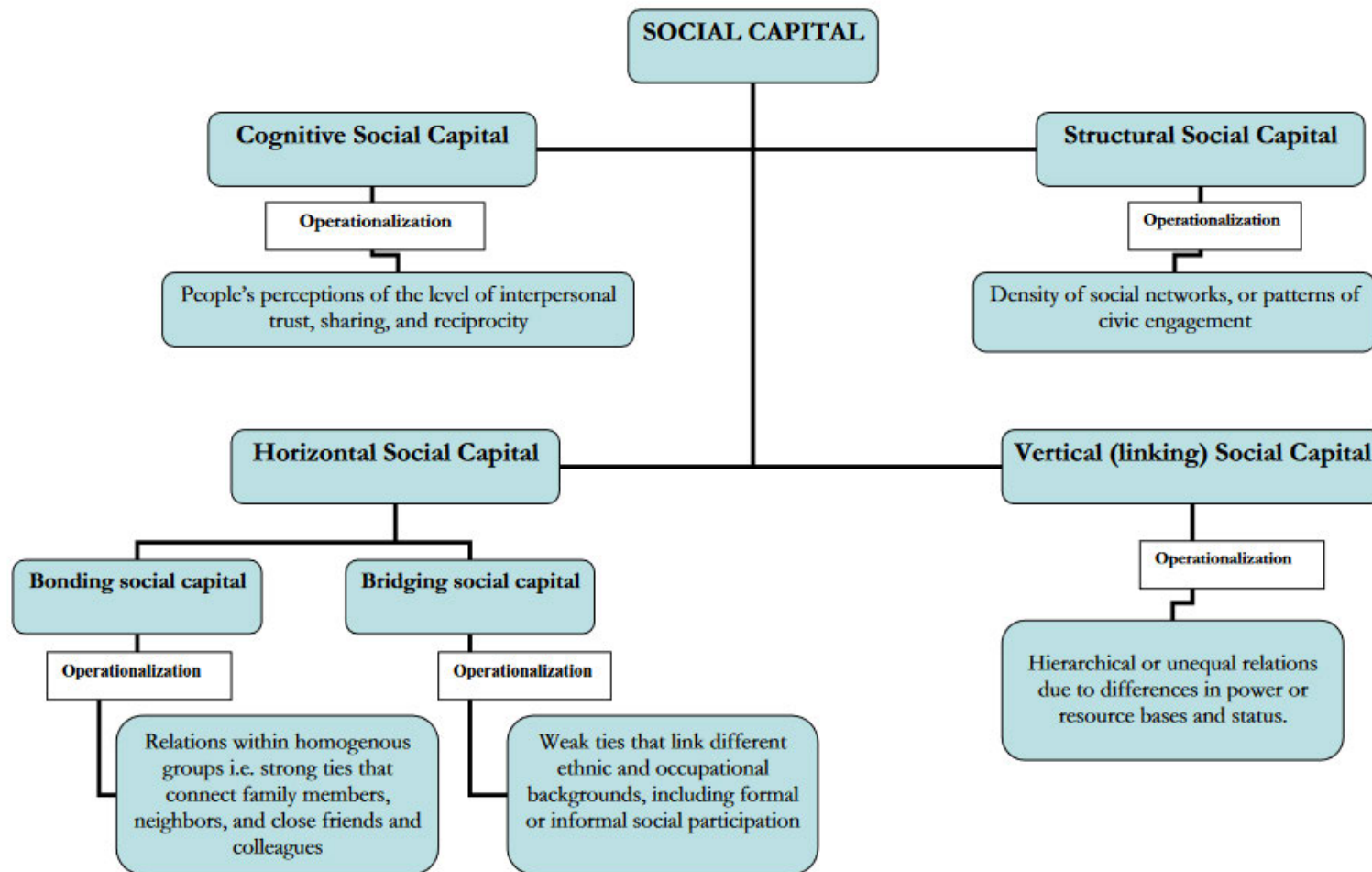
Figure 11 – Reported Learning and Training Received in Australia

| In the last 12 months Australians 15 – 74 reporting any... | 2005 (%) | 2013 (%) | 2016/17 (%) | Change 2005 – 2016/17 (%) | 2020/21 (%) | Change since covid |
|--|-------------|-------------|----------------|------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Formal learning | 18.5 | 21.6 | 21.0 | +2.5 | 21 | 0 |
| Non-formal learning | 37.9 | 32.1 | 25.5 | -12.4 | 27 | +1.5 |
| Work related training | 35.9 | 26.9 | 21.5 | -14.4 | 23 | +1.5 |
| Personal interest learning | NA | 8.4 | 6.1 | NA | 6 | 0.2 |
| Total (ie any formal or informal learning) | 48.9 | 46.4 | 40.9 | -8.0 | 42 | 1.1 |

[Source: Source: ABS, *Work-Related Training and Adult Learning*, Australia, 2016/17 and 2020/21 Cat No 4234.0]

The levels of reported learning have decreased between 2005 and 2017 in the non-formal learning, work related training and overall total learning categories. With the level of formal learning increasing over this time period by 2.5 per cent. This large decline in some types of learning calls for an inquiry into the changing nature of training and learning structures that have potentially induced this decline. Despite the impact of Covid, remarkably there was little change in the proportion of workers reporting that they were involved in formal learning. The change in work related training and non-formal learning is remarkable given the shift to home-based work for many white-collar workers.

Figure 12 – Forms and dimensions of social capital



[Islam, M. K., Merlo, J., Kawachi, I., Lindström, M., & Gerdtham, U.-G. (2006). Social capital and health: Does egalitarianism matter? A literature review. *International Journal for Equity in Health*, 5(1), 3–3.

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