

Construction Industry: Productivity and Safety

ABS and Safe Work Australia data

Prepared by the Administrator of the CFMEU for use in cross-examination

Construction industry regulation: key dates

Date	Event
1 October 2002	Interim Building Industry Taskforce (IBIT) established — Hadgkiss head
March 2004	Building Industry Taskforce (BIT) established — Hadgkiss head
1 October 2005	Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC) established — Lloyd Commissioner, Hadgkiss Deputy Commissioner
11 October 2010	Johns appointed Commissioner of ABCC
March 2012 – October 2013	Hadgkiss Director, Victorian CCCU (Victorian Code drafted in this period)
1 June 2012	Fair Work Building and Construction Inspectorate (FWBC) established — Johns acting director
21 October 2013	Hadgkiss appointed Director of FWBC
2 December 2016	ABCC re-established — Hadgkiss Commissioner
13 September 2017	Hadgkiss resigned
September 2017 – February 2023	ABCC continued under successors (McBurney from February 2018)
6 February 2023	ABCC abolished

Labour Productivity

Labour productivity, Construction industry (E), 2005-06 to 2024-25

ABS Catalogue 5260.0.55.002, Table 6 (quality adjusted hours worked basis)

Year	Index	Year	Index
2005-06	106.74	2015-16	108.85
2006-07	100.90	2016-17	107.37
2007-08	100.04	2017-18	108.97
2008-09	101.70	2018-19	104.07
2009-10	104.87	2019-20	103.57
2010-11	102.51	2020-21	104.31
2011-12	112.43	2021-22	102.51
2012-13	118.16	2022-23	99.15
2013-14	123.36	2023-24	100.00
2014-15	113.88	2024-25	97.07

Labour productivity (ABS):

"Labour productivity is defined as a ratio of output to labour input, that is, the amount of output produced for an hour of work."

Source: ABS, Estimates of Industry Multifactor Productivity methodology, 2024-25.

Quality adjusted hours worked basis (QALI):

"The ABS compiles a quality adjusted labour input (QALI) measure which captures changes in hours worked and in labour composition. Changes in labour composition such as changes in educational achievement and experience are sourced from the Census of Population and Housing..."

Source: ABS, Estimates of Industry Multifactor Productivity methodology, 2024-25.

Source of data: Australian Bureau of Statistics
5260.0.55.002 Estimates of Industry Multifactor Productivity, Australia
Table 6: Labour Productivity Indexes (a) (b)

Labour productivity, construction industry

Peak (2013-14) → last full year of ABCC (2022-23)

123.36

2013-14

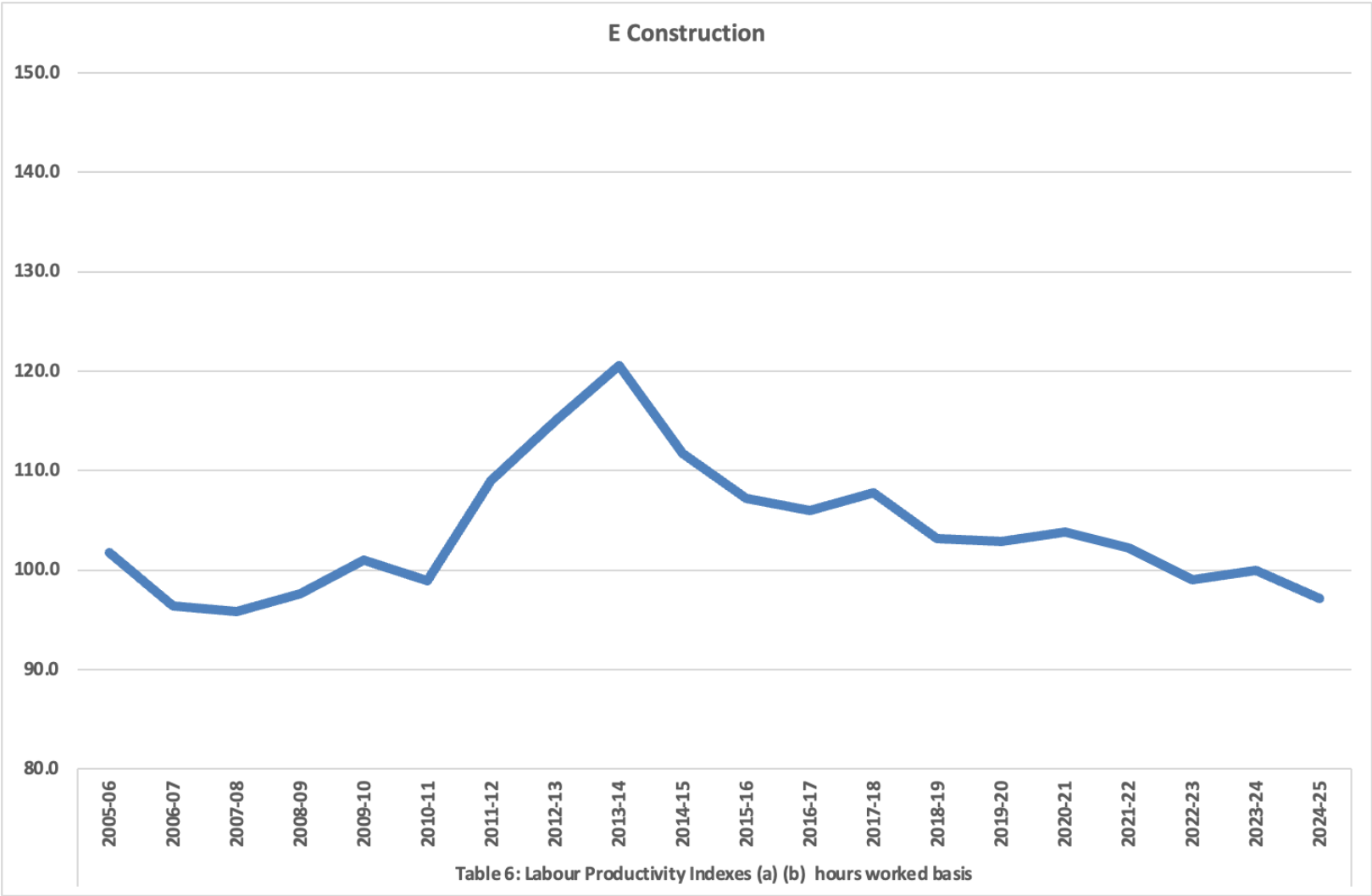


99.15

2022-23

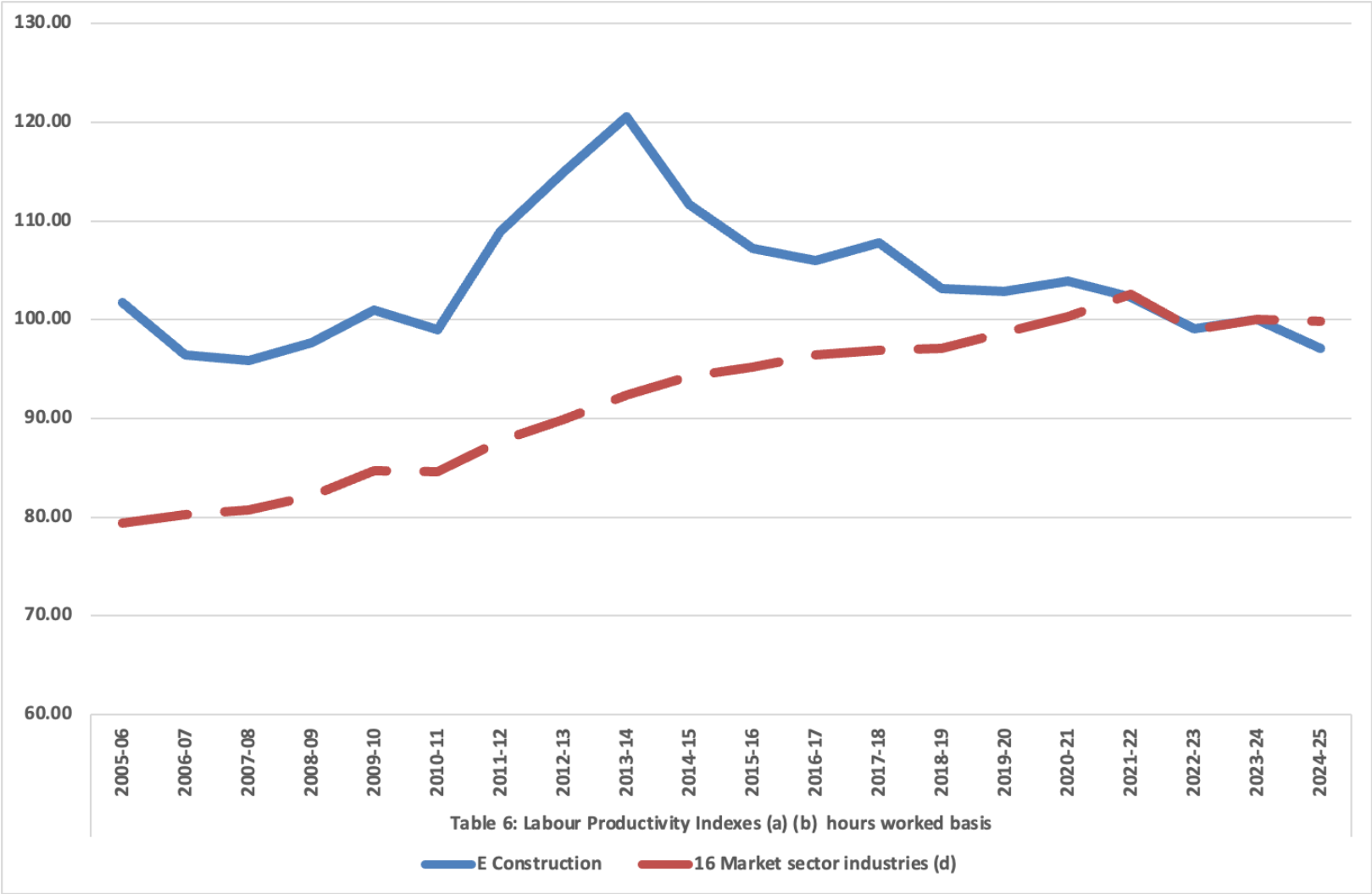
A decline of around 20 per cent across nine years

Labour productivity, Construction industry, 2005-06 to 2024-25



Source of data: Australian Bureau of Statistics
5260.0.55.002 Estimates of Industry Multifactor Productivity, Australia
Table 6: Labour Productivity Indexes (a) (b)

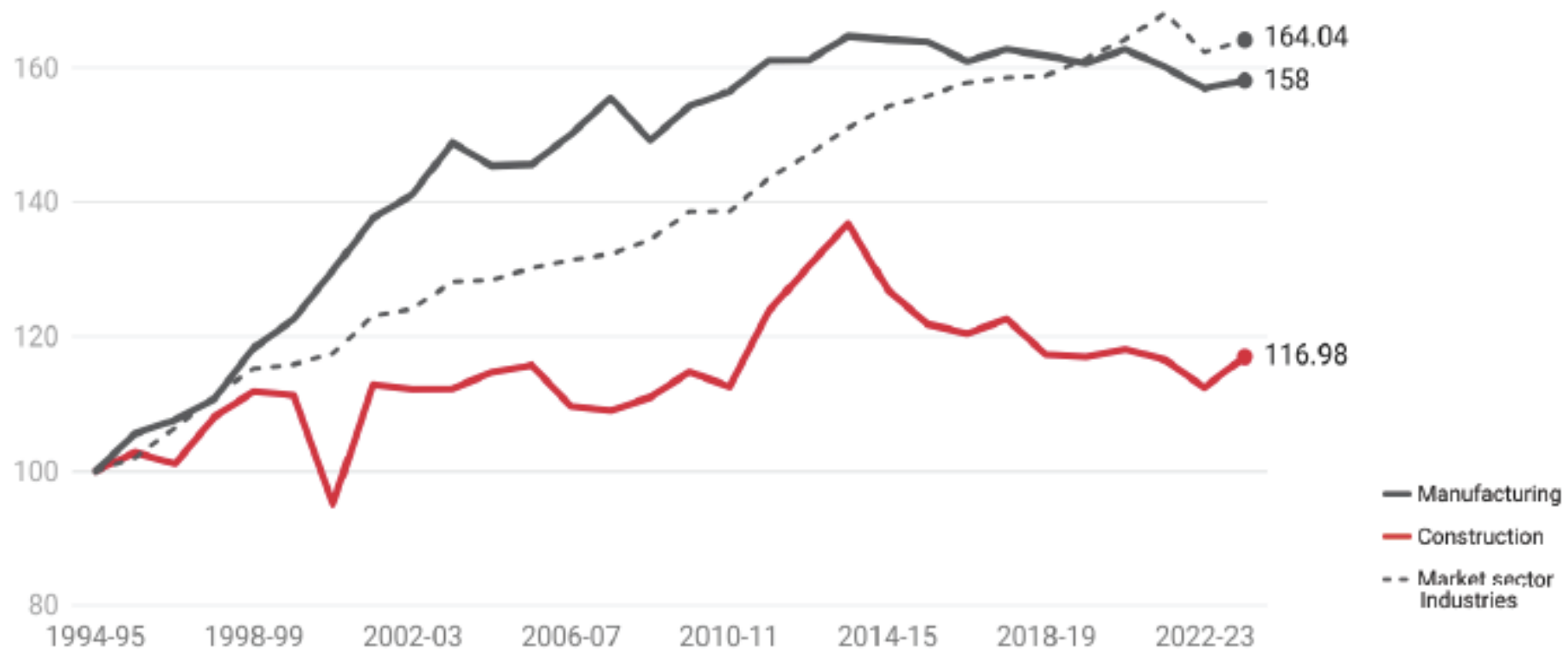
Labour productivity: Construction v 16 Market sector industries, 2005-06 to 2024-25



Source of data: Australian Bureau of Statistics
5260.0.55.002 Estimates of Industry Multifactor Productivity, Australia
Table 6: Labour Productivity Indexes (a) (b)

Figure 1 - Labour productivity

ABS estimates of labour productivity hours worked basis; 1994 =100.

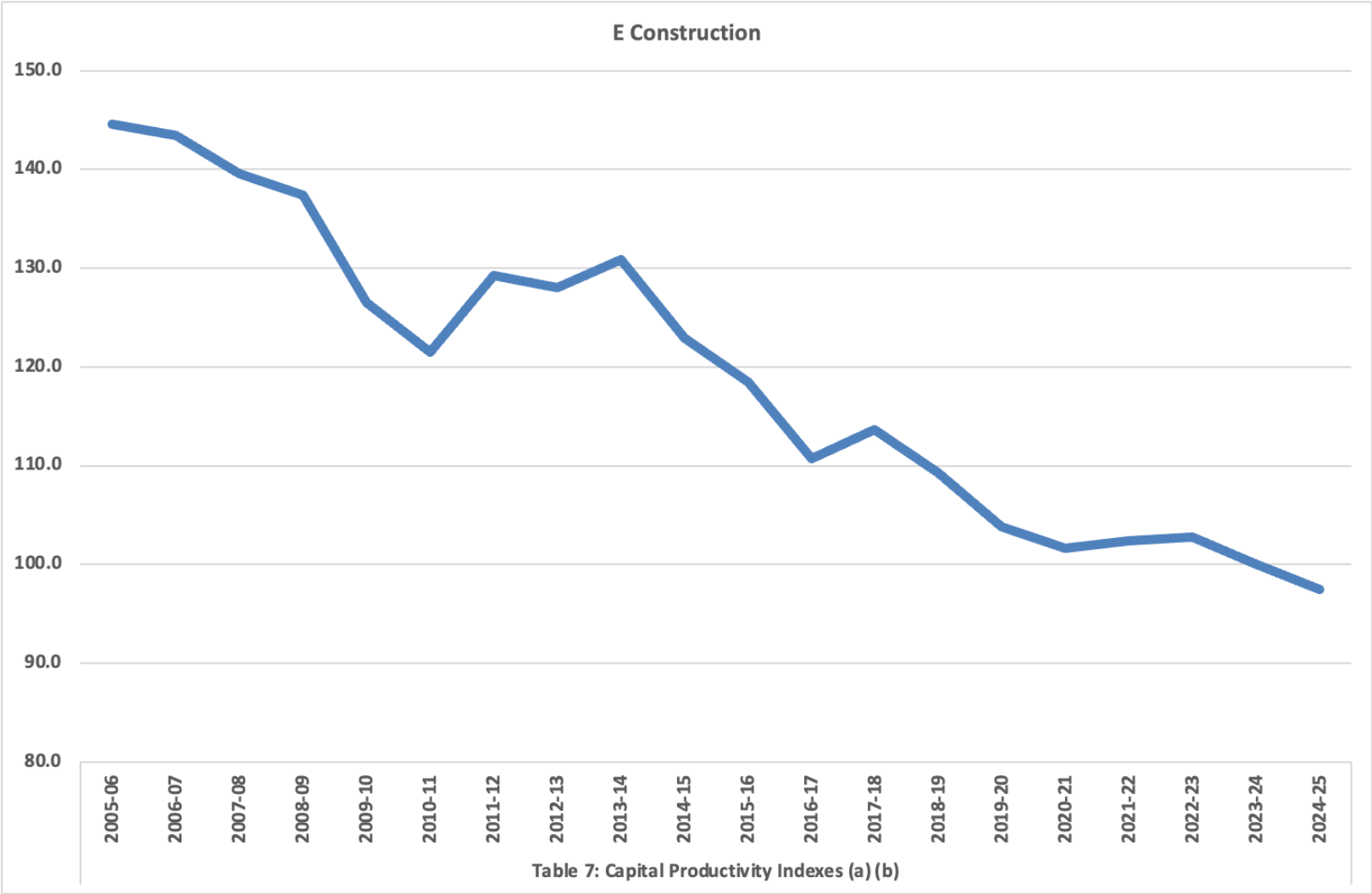


Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 5260.0.55.002 Estimates of Industry Multifactor Productivity, Australia, table 6.

Source: Melissa Wilson & James Brooks, 'Size Matters, Why Construction Productivity is So Weak', Committee for the Economic Development of Australia (CEDA), presented at joint Australian Bureau of Statistics & Reserve Bank of Australia conference, Opening Doors: Data and Analytics Shedding Light on Housing Challenges, Sydney, 23-24 June 2025, p 6

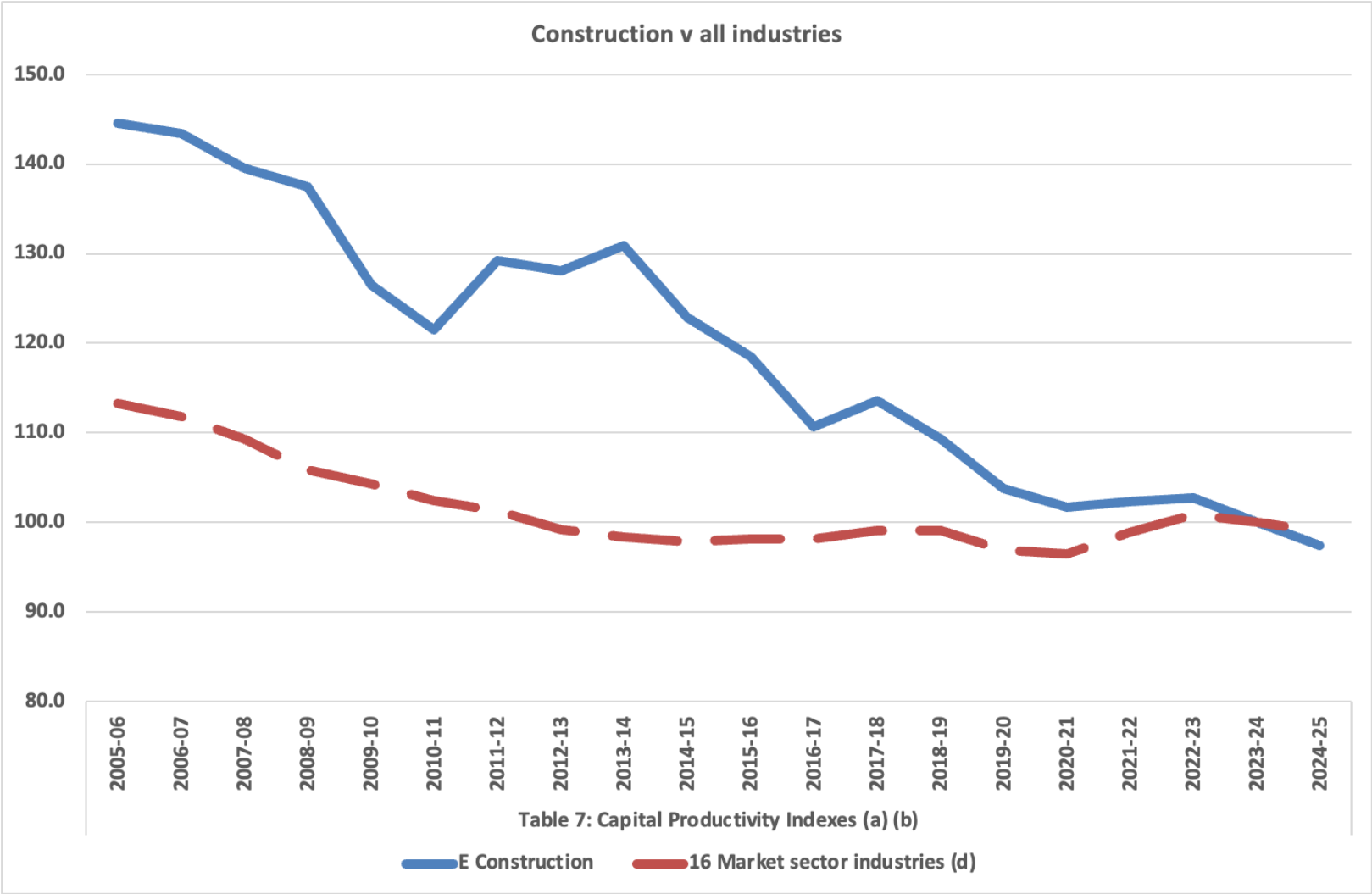
Capital Productivity

Capital productivity, Construction industry, 2005-06 to 2024-25



Source of data: Australian Bureau of Statistics
5260.0.55.002 Estimates of Industry Multifactor Productivity, Australia
Table 7: Capital Productivity Indexes (a) (b)

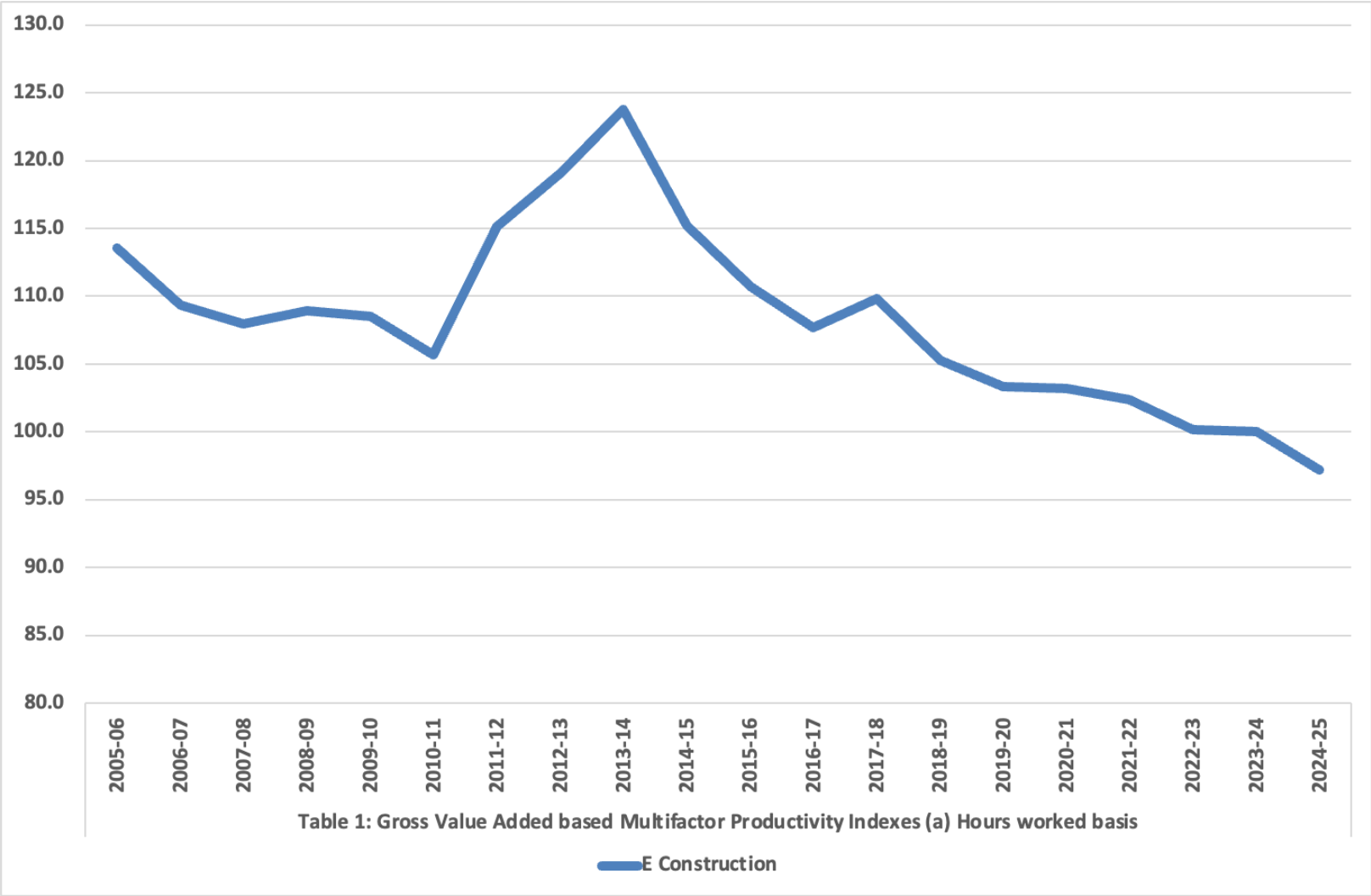
Capital productivity: Construction v 16 Market sector industries, 2005-06 to 2024-25



Source of data: Australian Bureau of Statistics
5260.0.55.002 Estimates of Industry Multifactor Productivity, Australia
Table 7: Capital Productivity Indexes (a) (b)

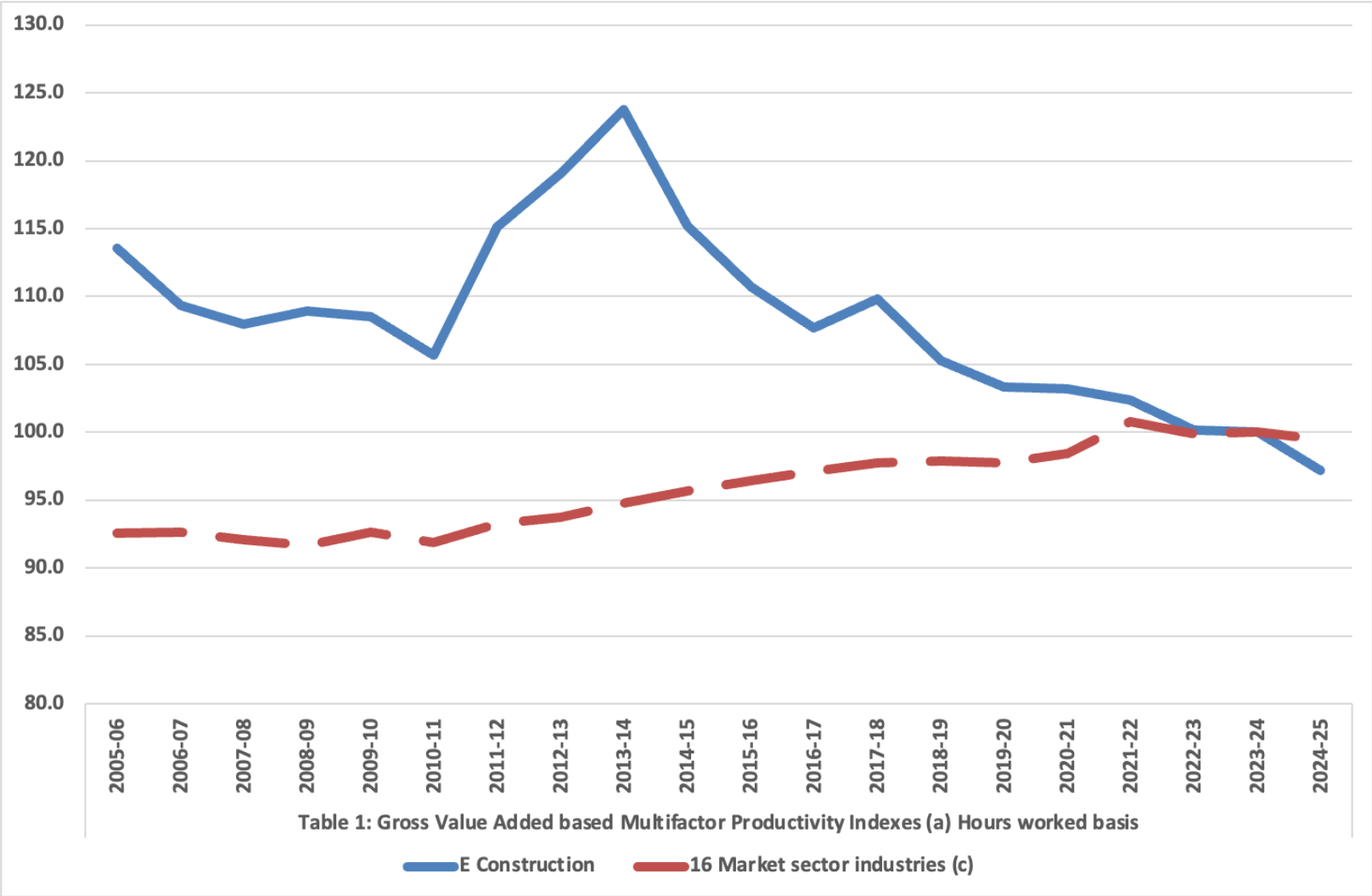
Multi-factor Productivity

Multi-factor productivity, Construction industry, 2005-06 to 2024-25



Source of data: Australian Bureau of Statistics
5260.0.55.002 Estimates of Industry Multifactor Productivity, Australia
Table 1: Gross Value Added based Multifactor Productivity Indexes (a) (Hours worked basis)

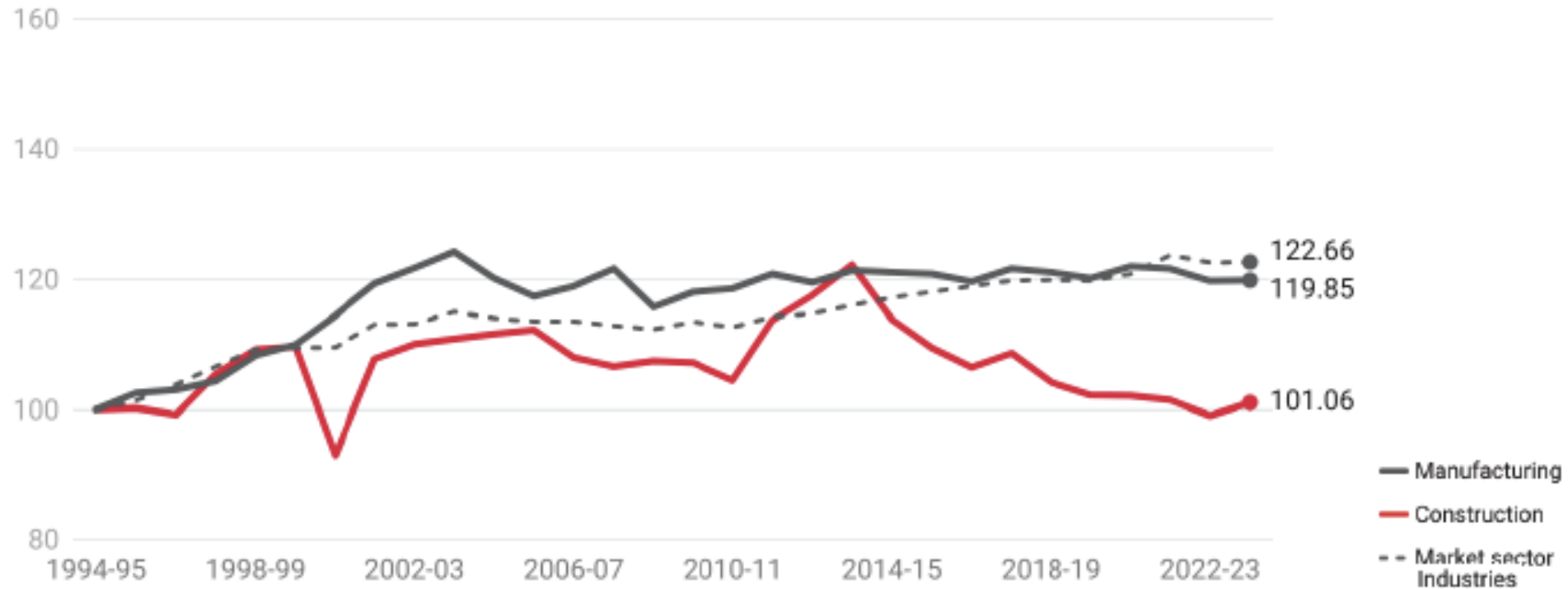
Multi-factor productivity: Construction v 16 Market sector industries, 2005-06 to 2024-25



Source of data: Australian Bureau of Statistics
5260.0.55.002 Estimates of Industry Multifactor Productivity, Australia
Table 1: Gross Value Added based Multifactor Productivity Indexes (a) (Hours worked basis)

Figure 2 - Multifactor productivity

ABS estimates of multifactor productivity hours worked basis; 1994 = 100.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 5260.0.55.002 Estimates of Industry Multifactor Productivity, Australia, table 1.

Source: Melissa Wilson & James Brooks, 'Size Matters, Why Construction Productivity is So Weak', Committee for the Economic Development of Australia (CEDA), presented at joint Australian Bureau of Statistics & Reserve Bank of Australia conference, Opening Doors: Data and Analytics Shedding Light on Housing Challenges, Sydney, 23-24 June 2025, p 6

Workplace Safety

Safe Work Australia NDS - methodology (cover page extract)

Safe Work Australia - National Dataset for Compensation Based Statistics detailed data file 2023-24

Background:

Safe Work Australia (SWA) compiles national workers' compensation statistics using data obtained from workers' compensation authorities in each state, territory and the Commonwealth government. These data are collated into the National Data Set for Compensation-based Statistics (NDS), which is SWA's primary source of information on work-related injuries and diseases.

All data provided in NDS detailed data file are derived from the NDS and present workers' compensation claims data aggregated by financial year for the most currently available 10-year period (up to and including 2023-24), limited to instances of serious claims.

Please be aware of the footnotes in the below table with respect to specific content provided:

All Tables:

- 'Serious' workers' compensation claims are defined as 'All accepted workers' compensation claims' which have resulted in one or more working weeks lost. 'All accepted workers' compensation claims' defined as the entire NDS with the limitations of:
 - Limiting to 'Accepted' claims.
 - Excluding claims that fall outside jurisdiction scope of 'Australia'.
 - Excluding claims involving fatality.
 - Excluding claims with specific Duty status's, including 'Commuting/journey' or 'Away from work during recess period'.
- The latest year of NDS results are preliminary (denoted by 'p').

Tables 1.2, 2.2, 8.2, and 9.2:

- The 'Claims frequency rate' is defined as the number of Claims per million hours worked in filled jobs covered under workers' compensation schemes.
 - There are significant differences in the number of hours worked by different groups of employees, and employees at different points in time. The Claims frequency rate accounts for these differences and allows more accurate comparisons between different groups of workers.

Tables 1.3, 2.3, 8.3, and 9.3:

- The 'Claim incidence rate' is defined as the number of Claims per thousand filled jobs covered under workers' compensation schemes.

Table 1.1: Construction industry - number of serious claims, 2014-15 to 2023-24

Claims (count) - Construction (ANZSIC Division E)

Year	Serious claims (number)
2014-15	12,397
2015-16	12,753
2016-17	12,958
2017-18	13,834
2018-19	14,429
2019-20	15,438
2020-21	16,077
2021-22	16,101
2022-23	17,156
2023-24p	17,609

ANZSIC = Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification. Used by SWA to record "the range of economic activities undertaken by a business to produce goods and services" (item 8 cover page).

Division E in ANZSIC = Construction industry. ANZSIC sub-divisions: 30 Building Construction; 31 Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction; 32 Construction Services.

Source for Division E definition: ABS ANZSIC classification (linked from item 8 cover page).

Tables 1.2 and 1.3: Construction industry - claims frequency and incidence rates

Construction (ANZSIC Division E)

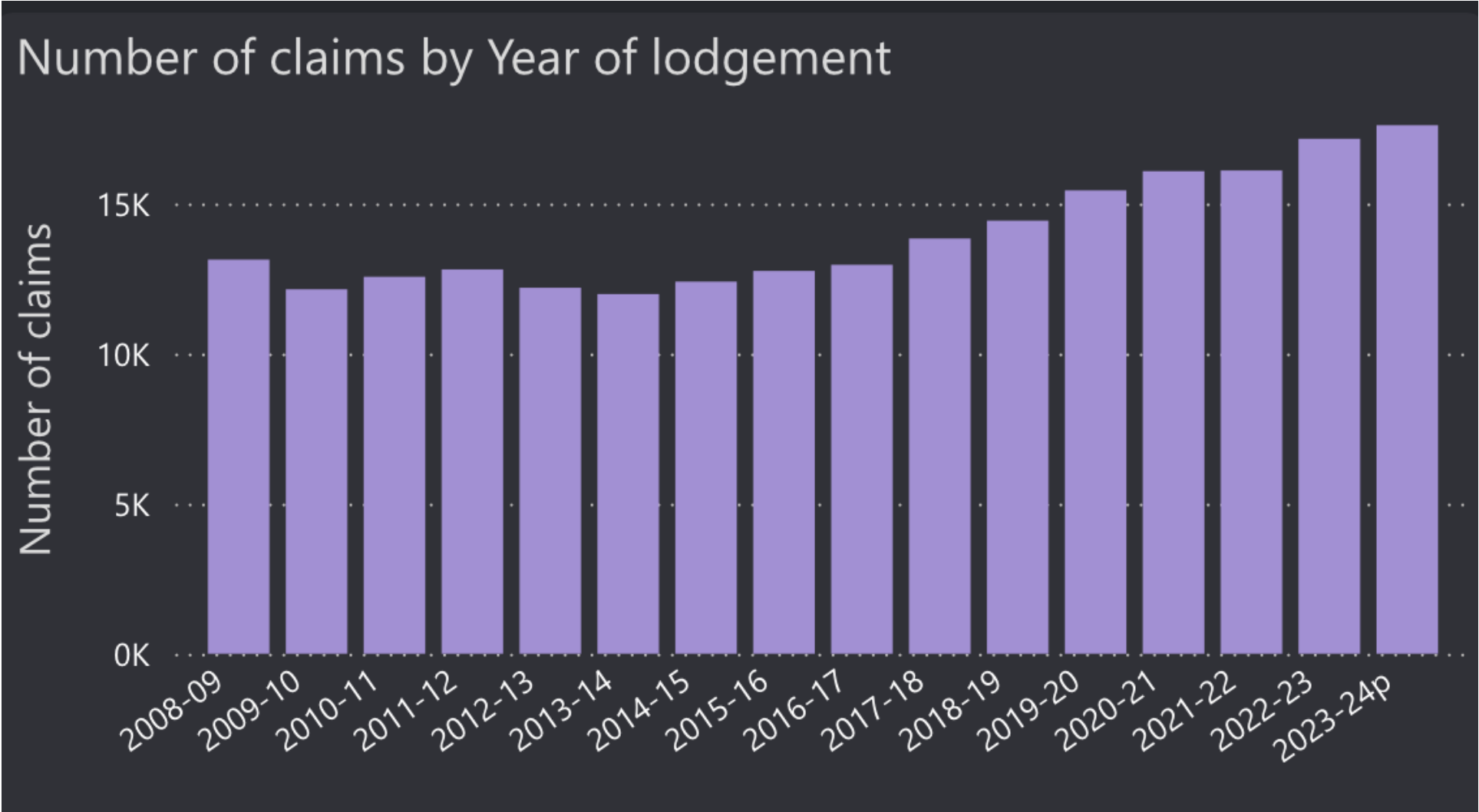
Year	Frequency rate	Incidence rate
2014-15	7.9	15.6
2015-16	8.0	16.0
2016-17	7.8	15.5
2017-18	7.5	14.9
2018-19	7.7	15.4
2019-20	8.4	16.2
2020-21	8.8	16.8
2021-22	10.5	19.8
2022-23	9.0	17.7
2023-24p	9.3	17.7

COVID-19

Frequency rate (SWA, item 8 cover page):
"The 'Claims frequency rate' is defined as the number of Claims per million hours worked in filled jobs covered under workers' compensation schemes."

Incidence rate (SWA, item 8 cover page):
"The 'Claim incidence rate' is defined as the number of Claims per thousand filled jobs covered under workers' compensation schemes."

Construction industry: Number of serious workers' compensation claims by year of lodgement, 2008-09 to 2023-24



Source: Safework Australia
<https://data.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/interactive-data/topic/workers-compensation>

Apply Filters

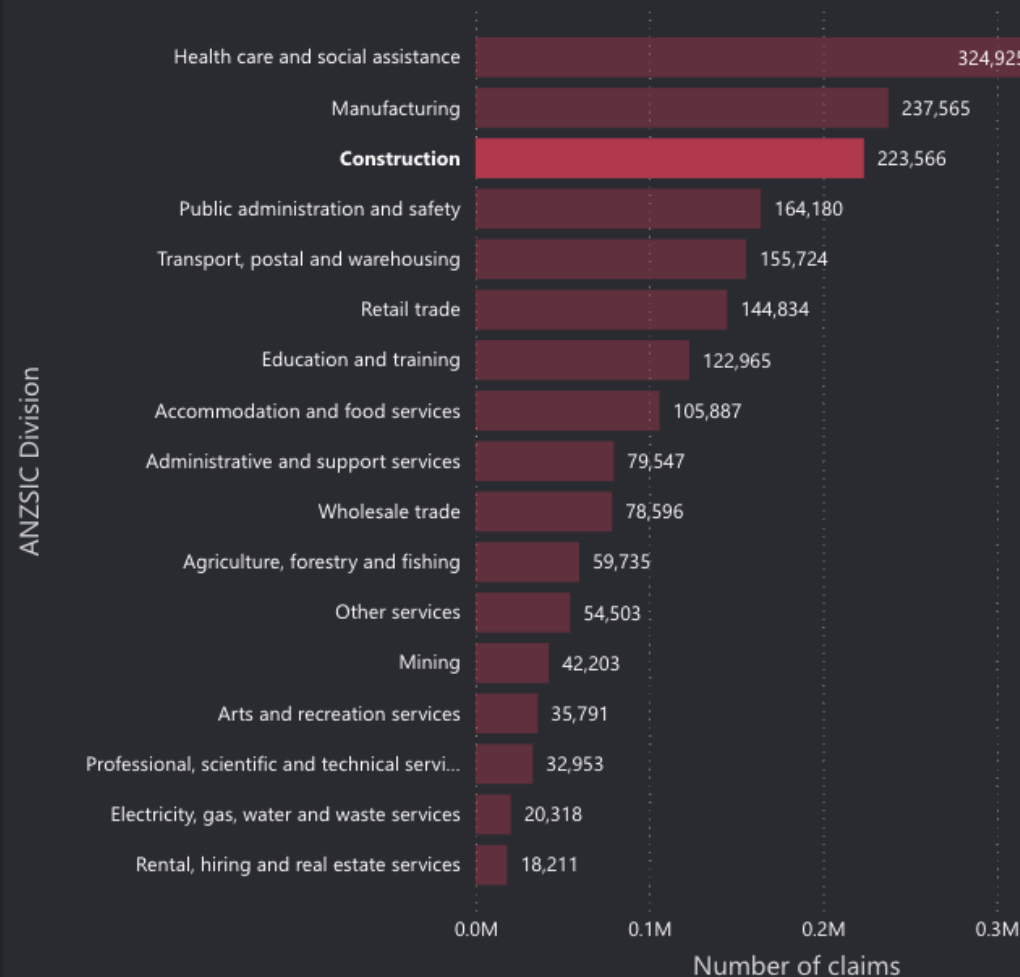
Pages

02 - Industry

2008-09 to 2023-24p

• Industry: Construction • Claims type: Serious claims

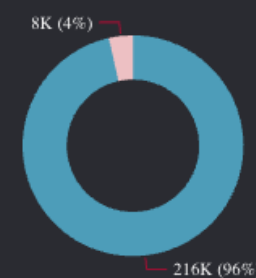
Number of claims by Industry



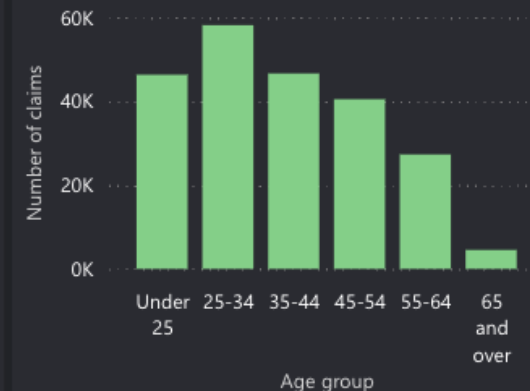
Tip: Click an industry to the left to see data for that industry below.

Number of claims by Sex

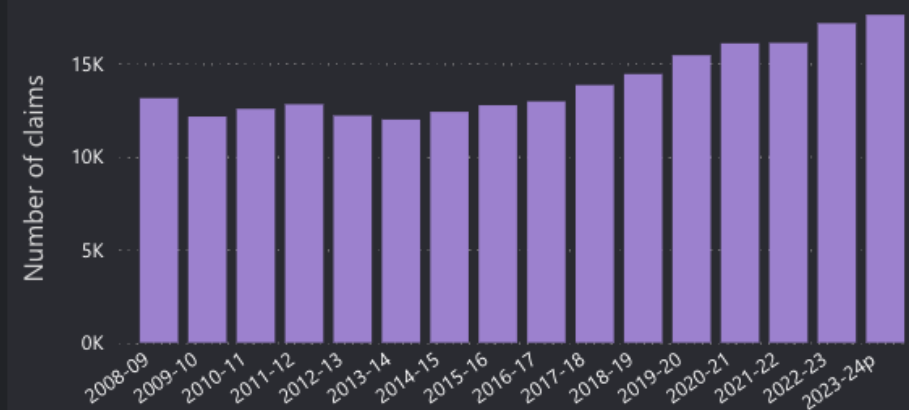
● Male ● Female



Number of claims by Age group



Number of claims by Year of lodgement



Source: Safework Australia

<https://data.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/interactive-data/topic/workers-compensation>

Sources

Productivity data

Australian Bureau of Statistics, Estimates of Industry Multifactor Productivity, Australia, 2024-25 (Catalogue 5260.0.55.002), released 6 February 2026. Data file: Tables 1 to 19, downloaded from <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/industry/industry-overview/estimates-industry-multifactor-productivity/latest-release>

Melissa Wilson & James Brooks, 'Size Matters, Why Construction Productivity is So Weak', Committee for the Economic Development of Australia (CEDA), presented at joint Australian Bureau of Statistics & Reserve Bank of Australia conference, Opening Doors: Data and Analytics Shedding Light on Housing Challenges, Sydney, 23–24 June 2025

Safety data

Safe Work Australia, Workers' Compensation interactive dataset, available at <https://data.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/interactive-data/topic/workers-compensation>