



# Impacts arising from workplace health and safety research for a government authority

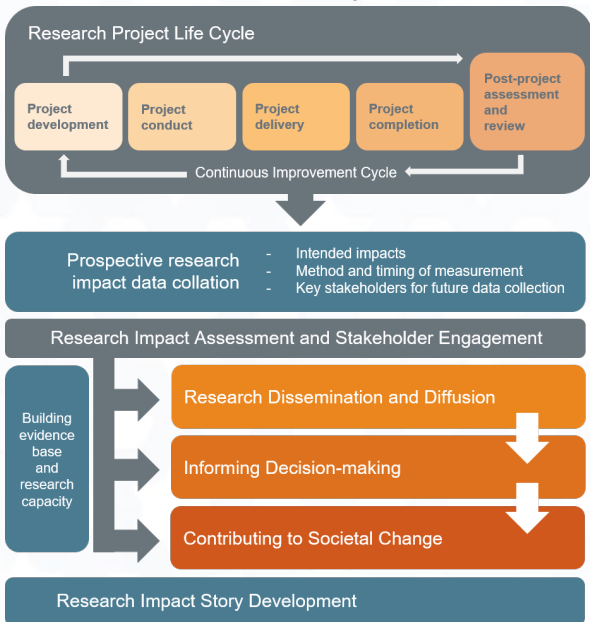
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## Introduction

Based on work by the Institute for Work & Health (Canada)<sup>1</sup>, a research impact framework was co-developed between the Institute for Safety, Compensation and Recovery Research (ISCRR, Australia) and their research partner, WorkSafe Victoria (WorkSafe, Australia), to measure and evaluate the impact of ISCRR research on policies, procedures and decision-making. WorkSafe is Victoria's workplace health and safety regulator, and workplace injury insurer.

### Overview of ISCRR's Research Impact Framework<sup>2</sup>



## Methodology

A total of 53 ISCRR projects carried out for WorkSafe underwent research impact assessment. These were projects completed between September 2019 and February 2024 and comprised of 217 different research and translation outputs. These projects were grouped according to the themes of prevention (n=28) and recovery (n=25) of/from workplace injury and illness.

Verifiable measured research impacts were categorized according to three main levels:

<b>Research dissemination and diffusion</b>	ISCRR research outputs (inc. reports, presentations, infographic summaries, publications) to WorkSafe research users and key stakeholder groups
<b>Informing decision-making</b>	Decisions relating to strategy, implementation, policy, practice, and further research
<b>Contribution towards societal change</b>	Measured benefit to the individual injured worker, compensation system and/or community

For each project, research impact data was collected by a combination of:

- Research administration data collected during the project life cycle
- Anecdotal data collected during and after project life cycles
- Interviews with WorkSafe research users
- Desktop scanning

## Results

All ISCRR projects demonstrated evidence of research dissemination and diffusion, a total of 66% (n=35) informed decision-making, and 6% (n=3) already exhibited evidence of contributing to societal change:

- Improved injured worker outcomes and claims experience
- Reducing distress to the injured worker through improved claims processes

	Prevention	Recovery	Total
<b>Research dissemination and diffusion</b>	28 (100%)	25 (100%)	53 (100%)
<b>Informing decision-making</b>	18 (64%)	17 (68%)	35 (66%)
<b>Contributing to societal change</b>	1 (4%)	2 (8%)	3 (2%)
<b>Total</b>	28	25	

No difference was seen between impact levels and research area.

### 35 projects were identified with decision-making impacts

- > 29% informed **WorkSafe strategy** (n=10)
- > 23% informed **program implementation** (n=8)
- > 14% informed **treatment guidelines** (n=5)
- > 14% informed **working group activities** (n=5)
- > 14% informed **policy** (n=5)
- > 6% informed **further research** (n=2)
- > 3% informed **training** (n=1)

For the 18 projects without verifiable decision-making impacts, contributing factors included being too early time-wise for impacts to occur (8 projects completed within 14 months of time of analysis), and difficulty in obtaining metrics. Two projects have been flagged with no further impact opportunity.

## Discussion

The ability to collect impact measures was largely based on good communication and the ability to identify a champion within WorkSafe.

### Success factors for research impact

- Prospective approach
- Feasible goals
- Researcher / research user engagement
- Research co-design
- Timeliness of research
- Research independence
- Tailored outputs
- Resource commitment
- Industry engagement

*"[ISCRR research] was actually a really important piece of work and has had a big impact for us here. We really needed to understand the research that was out there... from that psychiatric perspective. The piece of work that ISCRR did then fed into the policy development. There has been much quicker turn-around time in the decision-making process."*

## Conclusion

ISCRR aims to inform decision-making with its research projects, and will use this data as a guiding strategy for research translation activities and impact promotion through impact stories.

## References

- 1 – <https://www.iwh.on.ca/research-impact>
- 2 – <https://www.iscrr.com.au/impact>