

# The State of Safety 2022

**300 safety leaders share  
their views, risks, goals,  
blockers, costs & more**

**SLIP  
SAFETY  
SERVICES**

Guaranteeing you safer,  
cleaner floors.



# Executive summary



What is happening in safety in 2022?

That was the mission of our State of Safety research and the report you're about to read.

What keeps safety leaders up at night? Which are their largest exposures to incidents, their biggest causes of accidents and costs?

What are their priorities? What would they like to achieve? Is it lower harm, protecting their organisation's reputation, avoiding a serious incident, or something else?

What blocks them from achieving these objectives?

And what are attitudes towards, actions being taken to address, and ways of achieving better outcomes in the area of slips and falls?

As our research shows, slips remains the largest area of relevant risk to the safety profession. Year after year, it's the biggest cause of RIDDORs published by the HSE. AXA insurance alone spends £80m a year on slip claims (with trip claims on top), suggesting an annual UK-wide £1.5bn of claims per year.



# Executive summary



Yet, in spite of the clear data, we suffer from large misperceptions in this area of risk (I call this “The SLIP Problem”). How can we overcome this?

Thanks to the generosity of just over 300 safety leaders, sharing their time to reveal their insights and experiences, we have some of these answers.

**SLIP  
SAFETY  
SERVICES**

Guaranteeing you safer,  
cleaner floors.

Additionally, with the help of an IOSH & HSE report from 2008 (*Slips and trips: Survey of IOSH members – wave 2 results and comparison with wave 1*), and by asking some of the exact same questions now, we can see how attitudes and actions have developed over the last 10+ years.



ROSPA recently shared some research on Slips, trips and Falls (Slip Trip Fall Research - RoSPA RSA falls prevention programme preliminary report) and we cite some of their findings for reference, too.



Our aim is that the State Of Safety will give you some insights on how your fellow safety leaders see the world, which can shape your approach to managing safety in your organisation.

If we aren't already, do connect with me on LinkedIn and I'd love to get your feedback on this report:  
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/christian-harris-slip-safety/>





# Executive summary



I'm already looking forward to seeing what the State Of Safety 2023 has to bring.

Yours,

**Christian Harris**



**Founder, Slip Safety Services**

**Host, Safety And Risk Success Podcast**



PS: if you're reading this, you are probably someone like me: we want to make the world a safer place. As such, I've included some free resources that you might enjoy: our weekly **Safety Roundtable**, the **Safety And Risk Success Podcast**, and our **Slip Safety Scorecard** self-assessment tool



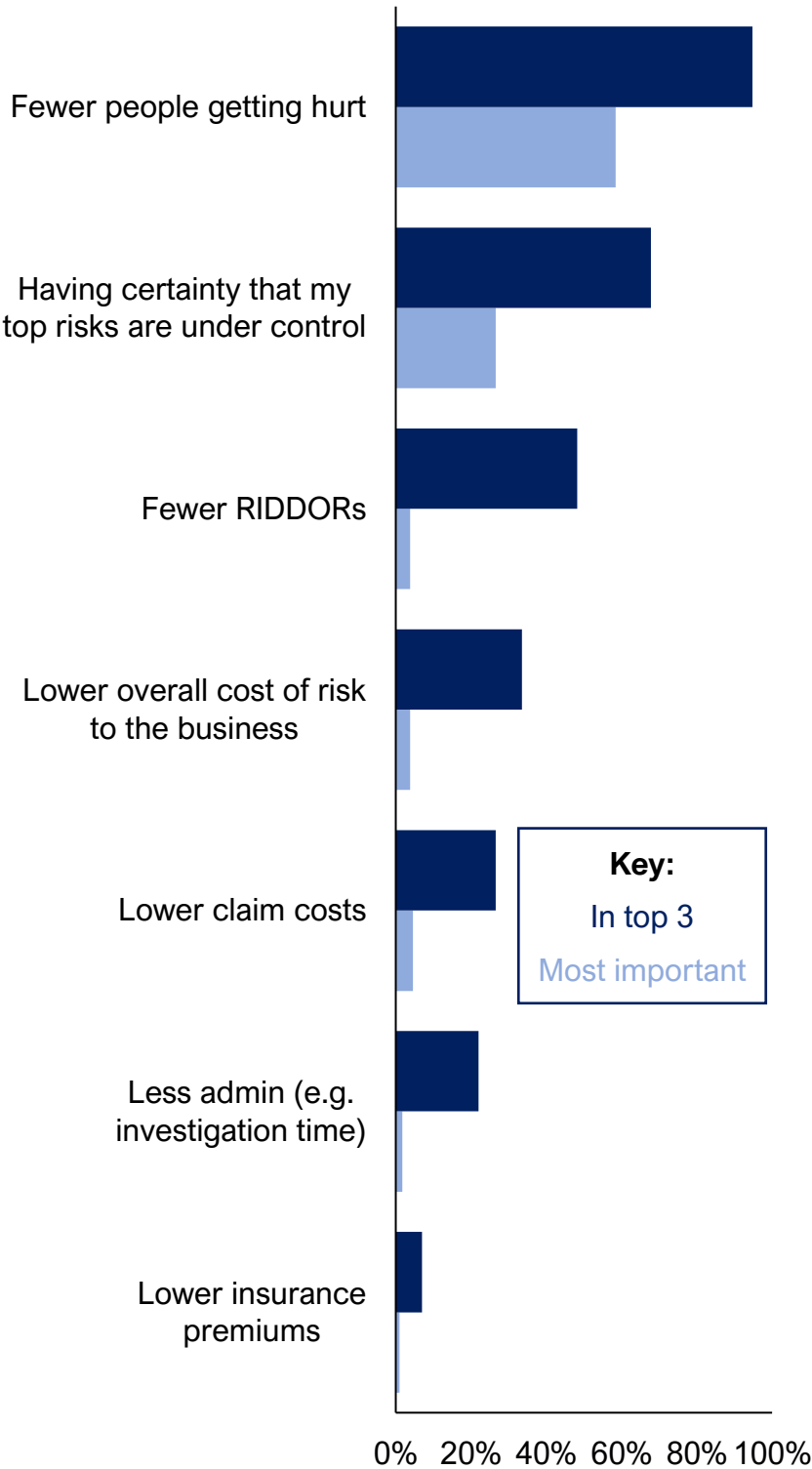
**300 safety  
leaders spoke...**

**...here's what  
they said**



# What's important?

Please rank these outcomes in order of importance to you personally right now



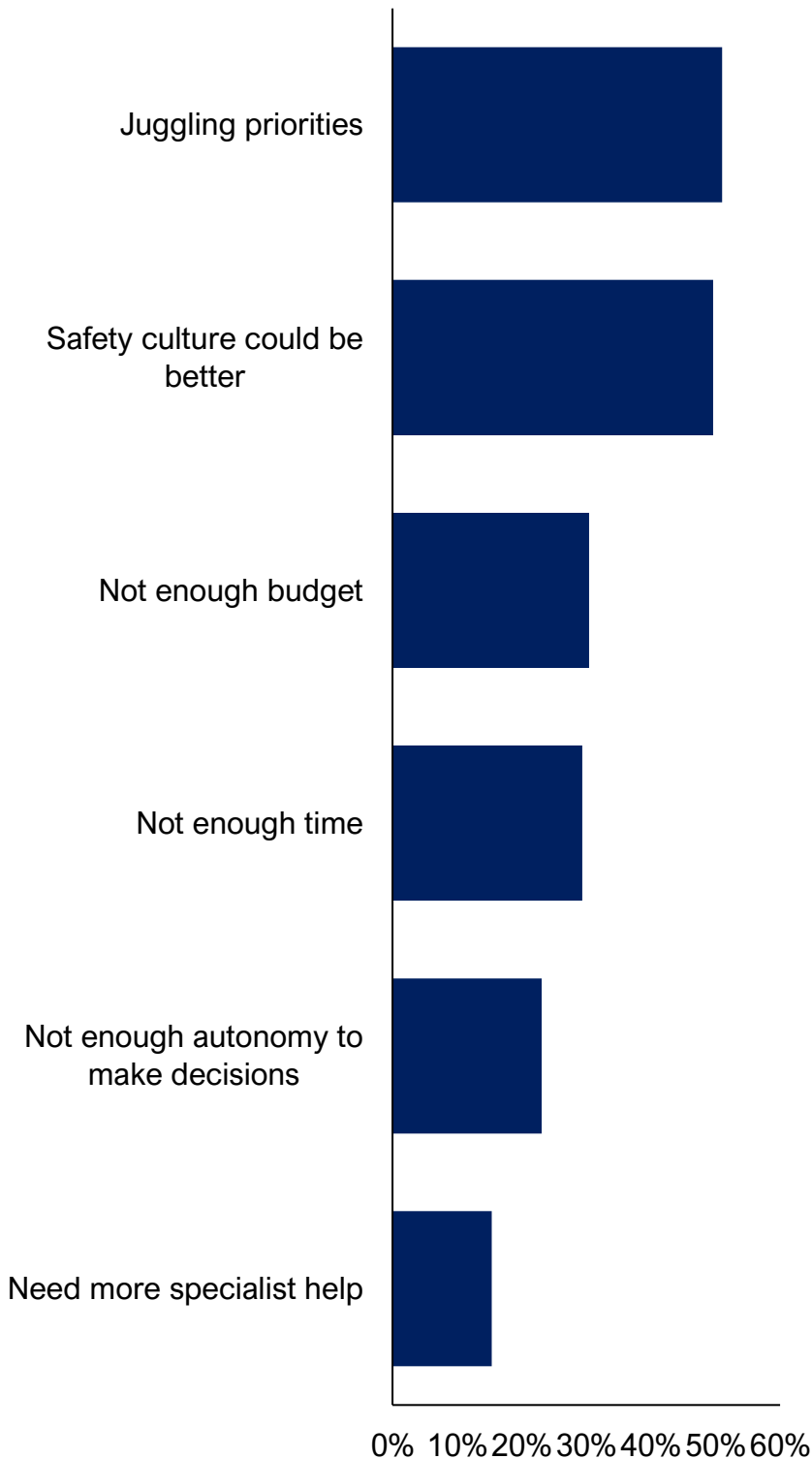
### Comments & insights:

- It's no surprise that a survey of safety leaders cites fewer people getting hurt as a key objective – after all, this is why we are in the jobs we are!
- However, interesting was the fact that “having certainty that my top risks are under control” was so important. Anything that can offer this certainty / proof should be of great value to safety leaders.
- Claims and insurance costs are perceived as of lower importance to the safety leaders surveyed than to their businesses and boards. Does this suggest a lack of linkage between safety and insurance/risk/finance when it comes to business outcomes and objectives?



# What gets in the way?

Which of these are blockers / inhibitors to achieving those objectives?



## Comments & insights:

- Safety leaders have been taking on an increasingly large and broad workload for a number of years now, accelerated by the pandemic. The need to juggle priorities is, to no one's surprise, therefore a key blocker to achieving the safety outcomes we seek.
- A deficiency in safety culture is cited as a blocker by a full 50% of respondents. Work to improve this situation can take a long time. It's important to have clarity on this point: we must be careful not to use waiting for safety culture as a crutch; instead we must focus on the controls that are more readily achievable.
- Budget and time, perennial challenges, are of secondary importance, too.

# Key quotes

**“Any accident of any type I’d take seriously.”**

State Of Safety 2022 respondent  
#StateOfSafety

**“Maintaining healthy staff in a safe environment means high moral, good productivity, and a “happy”, motivated environment.”**

State Of Safety 2022 respondent  
#StateOfSafety

**“Safety in the workplace has a significant impact on many business KPIs. In other words, safer working environments benefit from fewer accidents, which results in fewer occupational health costs, better employee retention and satisfaction, less employee downtime, and less retraining time.”**

State Of Safety 2022 respondent  
#StateOfSafety

**“Wellbeing at work is paramount and we have to ensure safety at all times.”**

State Of Safety 2022 respondent  
#StateOfSafety

**“Prevention is key to reducing accidents.”**

State Of Safety 2022 respondent  
#StateOfSafety

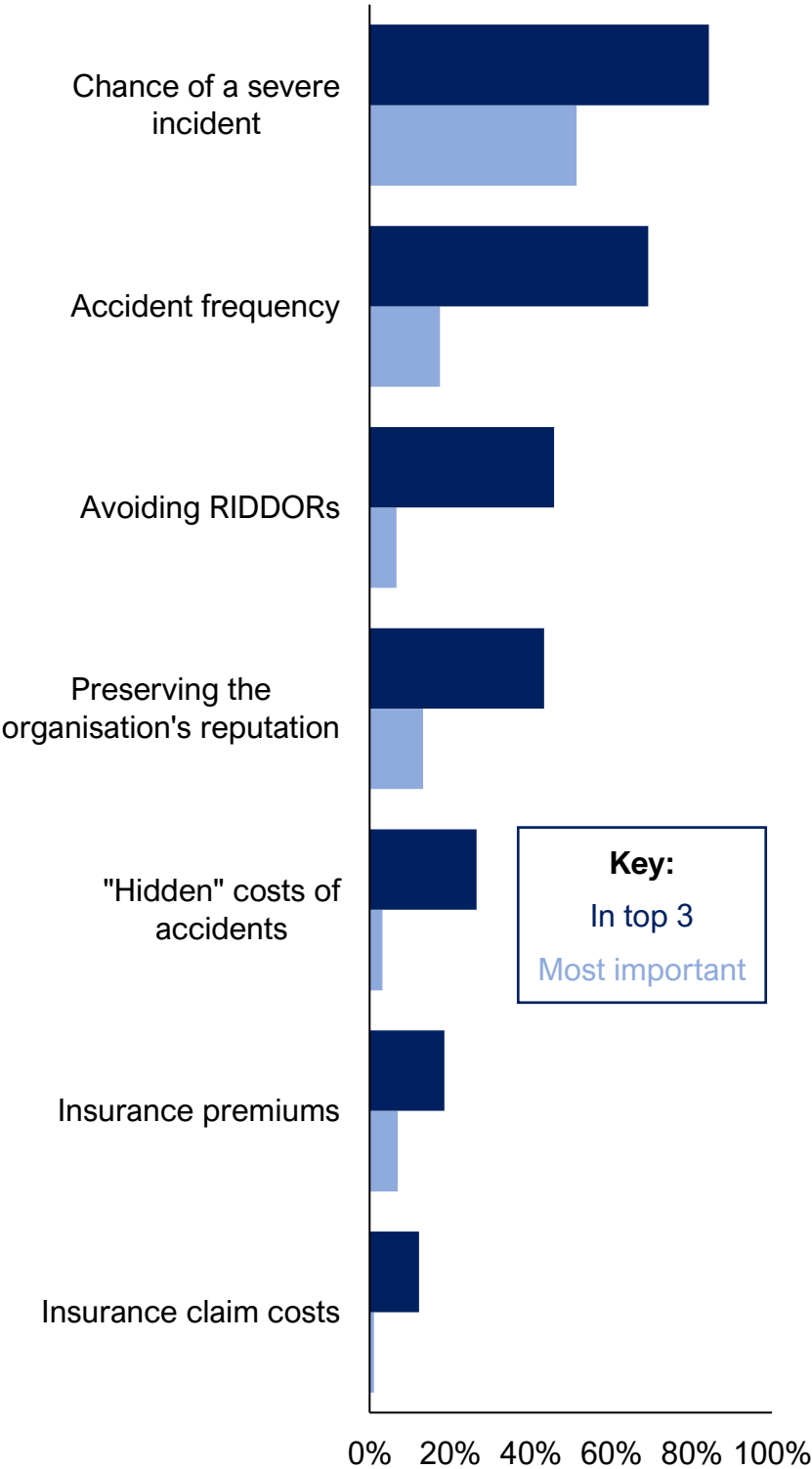
**“Failing to provide a safe environment will result in incidents, insurance claims and damage the business’ reputation.”**

State Of Safety 2022 respondent  
#StateOfSafety



# Biggest concerns

Please rank the below in order of concern to you personally right now  
– greatest concern vs top three concerns

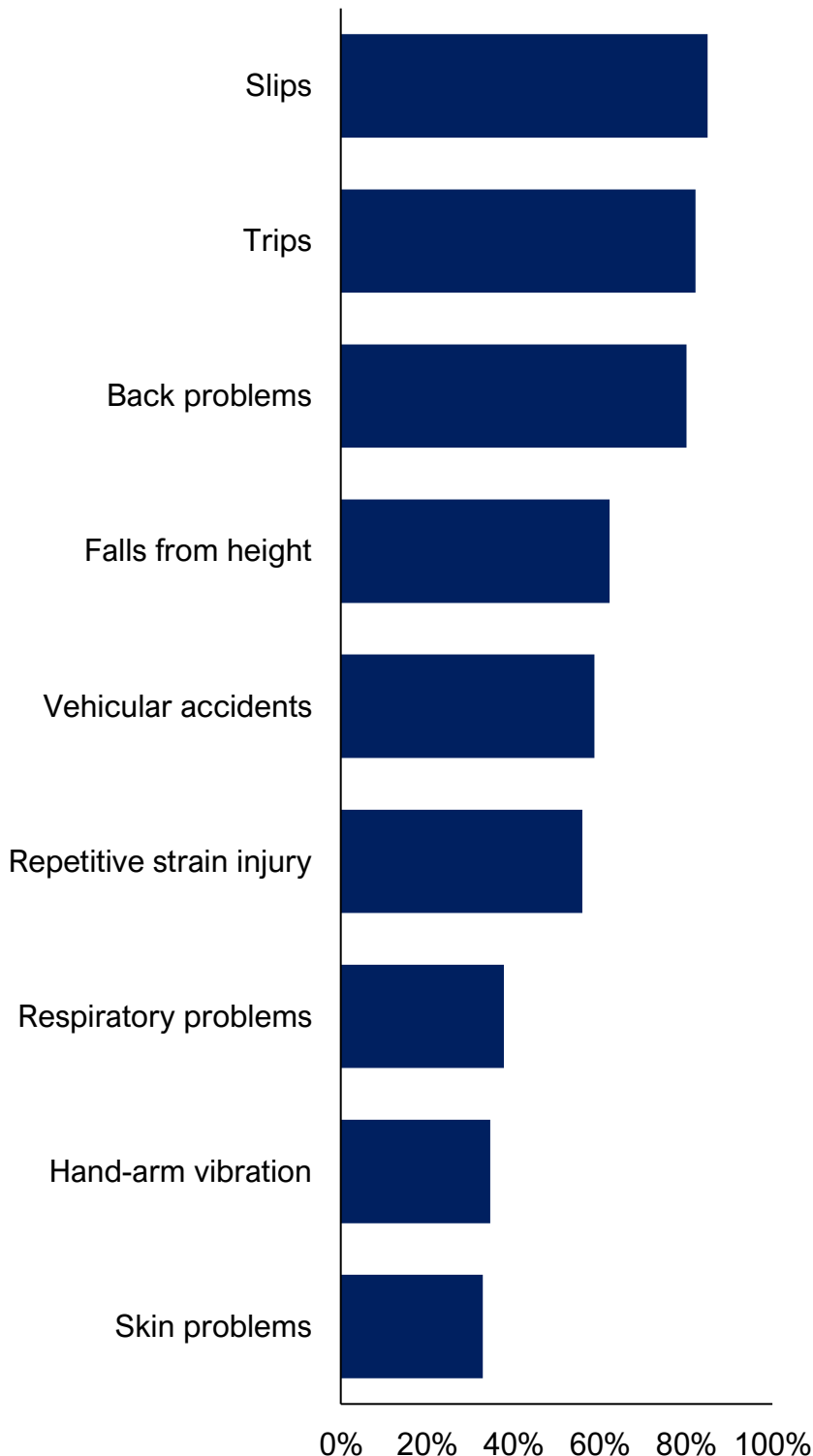


**Comments & insights:**

- As you might expect, respondents are most fearful of a severe incident. No one wants this to happen on their watch.
- Accident frequency is considered a very important concern, too. Whilst the accident triangle theory comes in for much criticism, our survey suggests that safety leaders are concerned for the high volume end of safety.
- Again, the financial costs of accidents are considered less important. Is there an opportunity for safety leaders to be more proactive at getting involved with and being responsible for the end-to-end investment-cost-ROI perspective of managing safety? This may make them more aligned to their business' goals?

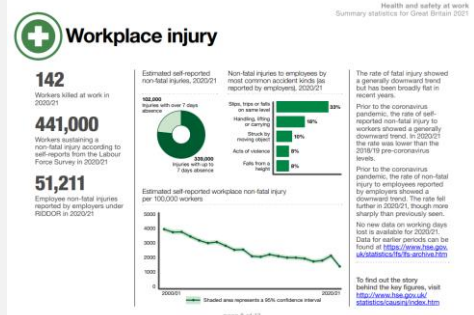
# Relevant risks

**Which of the following issues are potentially relevant to workers in, and/or customers of, your organisation?**



## Comments & insights:

- Slips and trips (separate for good reason in our questions – see the next page) are the largest areas of risk exposure to organisations, closely followed by back problems.
- HSE's workplace injury statistics echo that slips, trips and falls and manual handling related injuries are the largest causes of incidents:



# Slips vs trips vs falls



An important clarification: **Slips, trips and falls are not one and the same.**

If you suffer from a slip problem, looking out for trailing cables and telling staff to “do good housekeeping” isn’t going to do much for you. Equally, if you have a trip problem, getting floor slip resistance testing and reviewing your CHIMES won’t benefit you.



Trips are relatively “simple” to solve. Whereas slips are not. When we group these accident types together, people – incorrectly – assume that slips are also “simple”. In fact, there is a lot more to it than that. Slips is a scientific subject that requires a breadth and depth of action to solve.



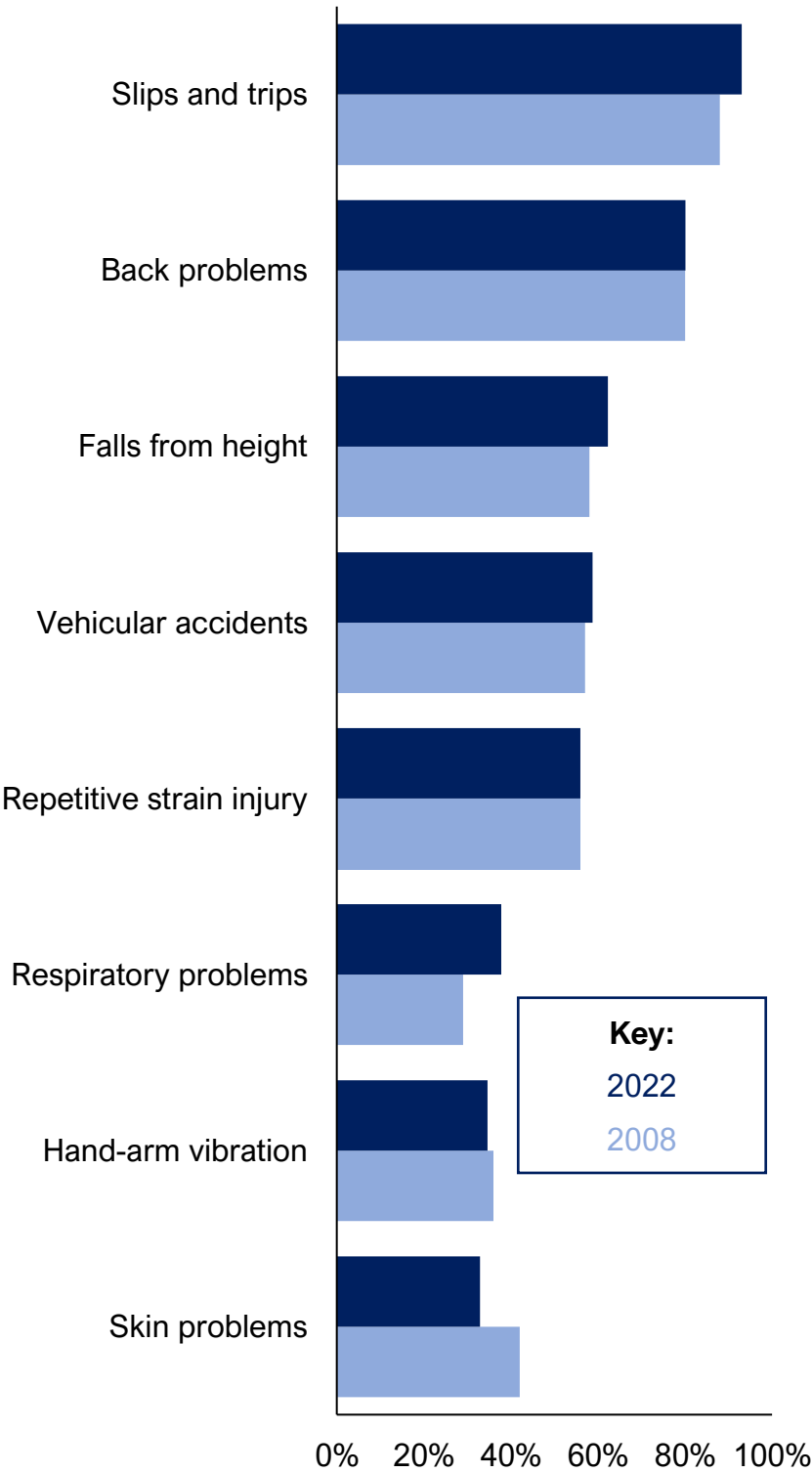
As well as being more complex, slips are also a much larger problem. AXA Insurance spends £80m a year on slip claims, £30m on manual handling, and doesn’t even publish the trips amount as it’s so much smaller.

We must stop bundling all three distinct incident types; it’s simply not helpful.



# Risks over time, 1

**Risk relevance to staff and/or customers – 2022 State of Safety data compared to 2008 IOSH survey data**

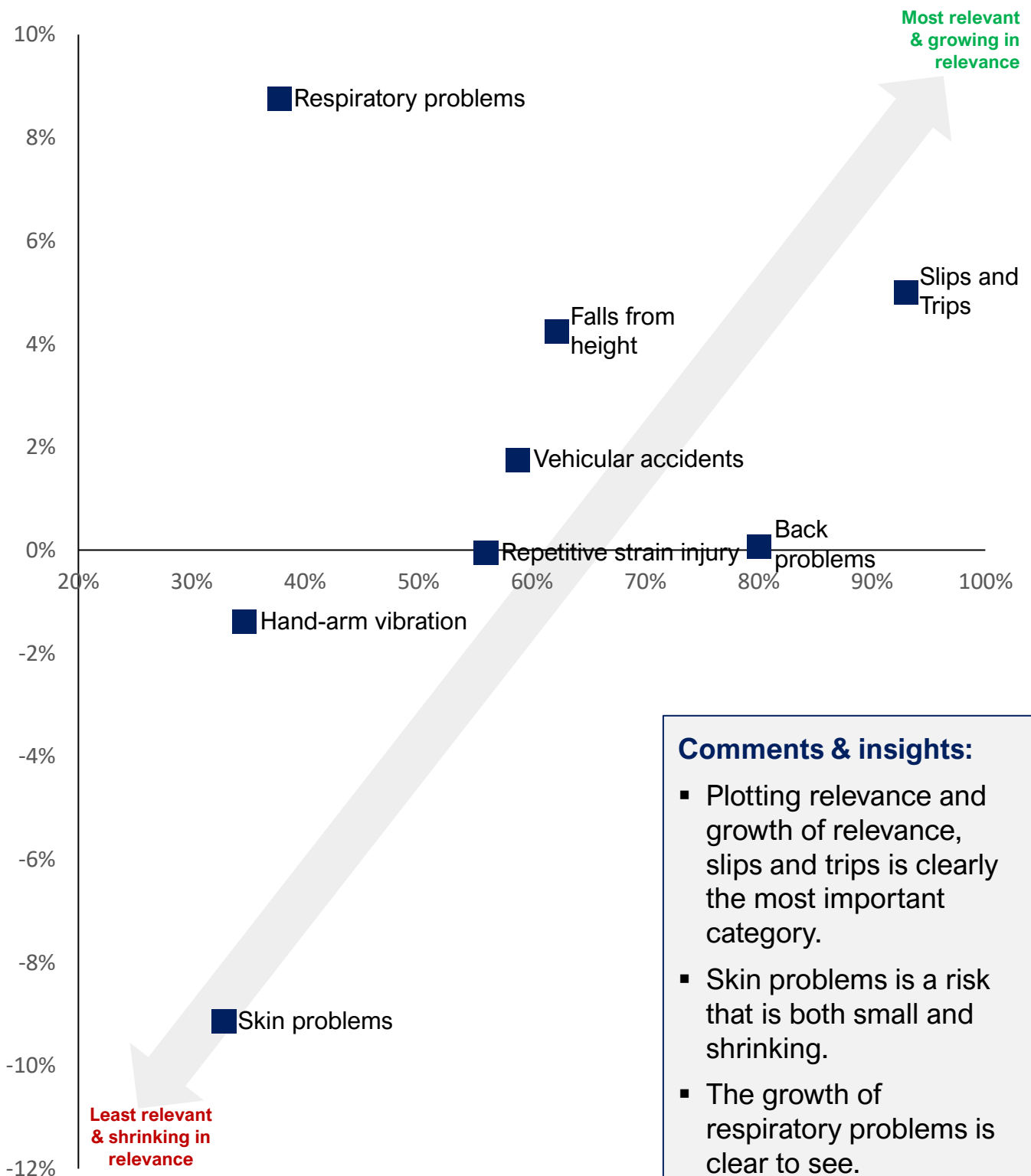


**Comments & insights:**

- We decided to pose some of the exact same question as IOSH and HSE did in 2008 (in a survey of IOSH members), in order to draw comparisons. For that reason, we have bundled “slips and trips” here.
- Here we can see that most areas of risk remain just as relevant in 2022 as in 2008.
- Slips and trips has increased in relevance slightly, as have falls from height.
- The largest growth is in respiratory problems – no doubt driven by the pandemic. Whether this is a permanent change remains to be seen.

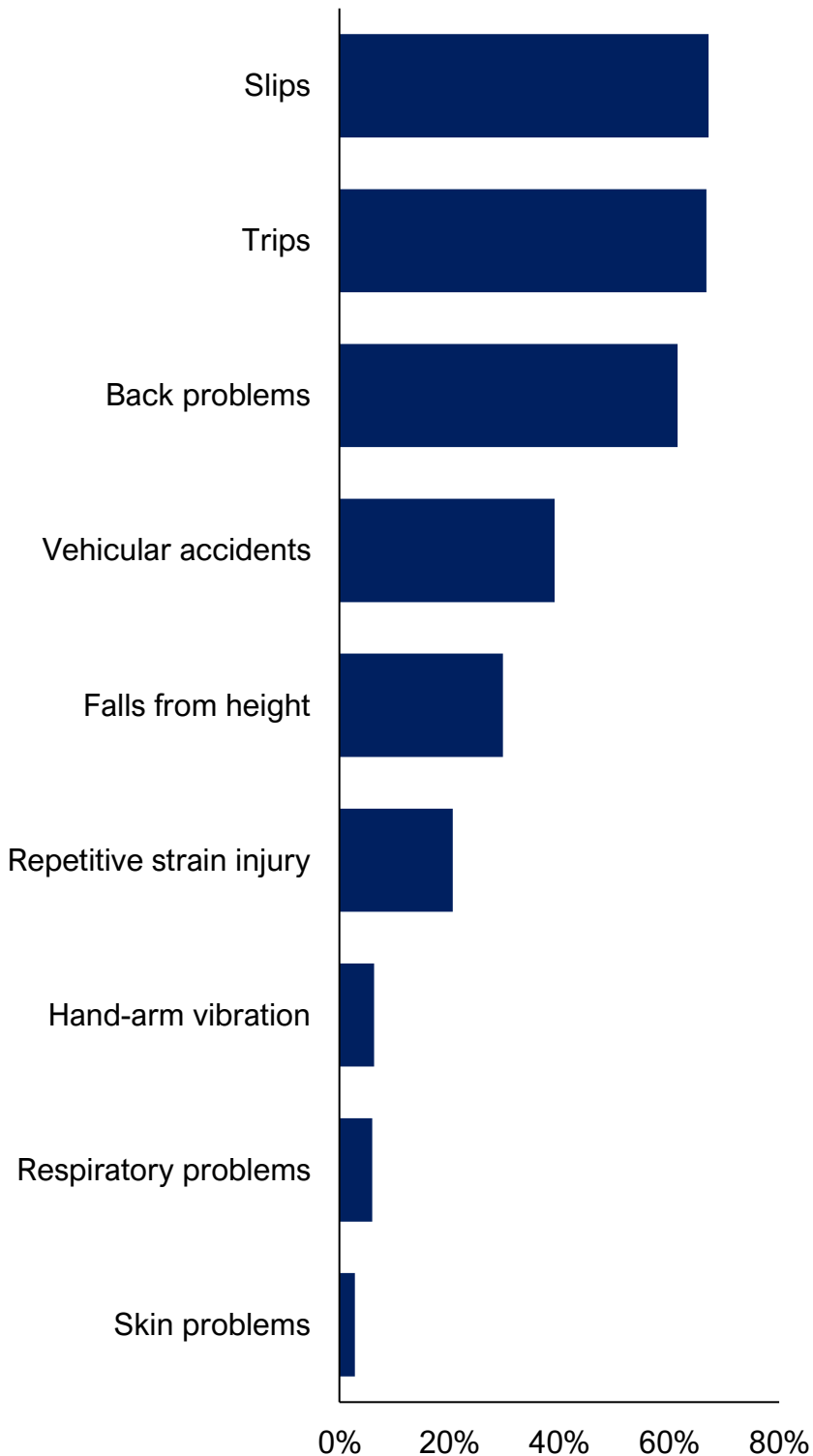
# Risks over time, 2

## Risk relevance to staff and/or customers – 2022 State of Safety data compared to 2008 IOSH survey data – changes over time



# Causes of incidents & costs

What are your biggest causes of incidents and costs?



**“We are an organisation with 20 million customers a week - the risk of slip and fall is a very real challenge to us.”**

**State Of Safety 2022 respondent  
#StateOfSafety**

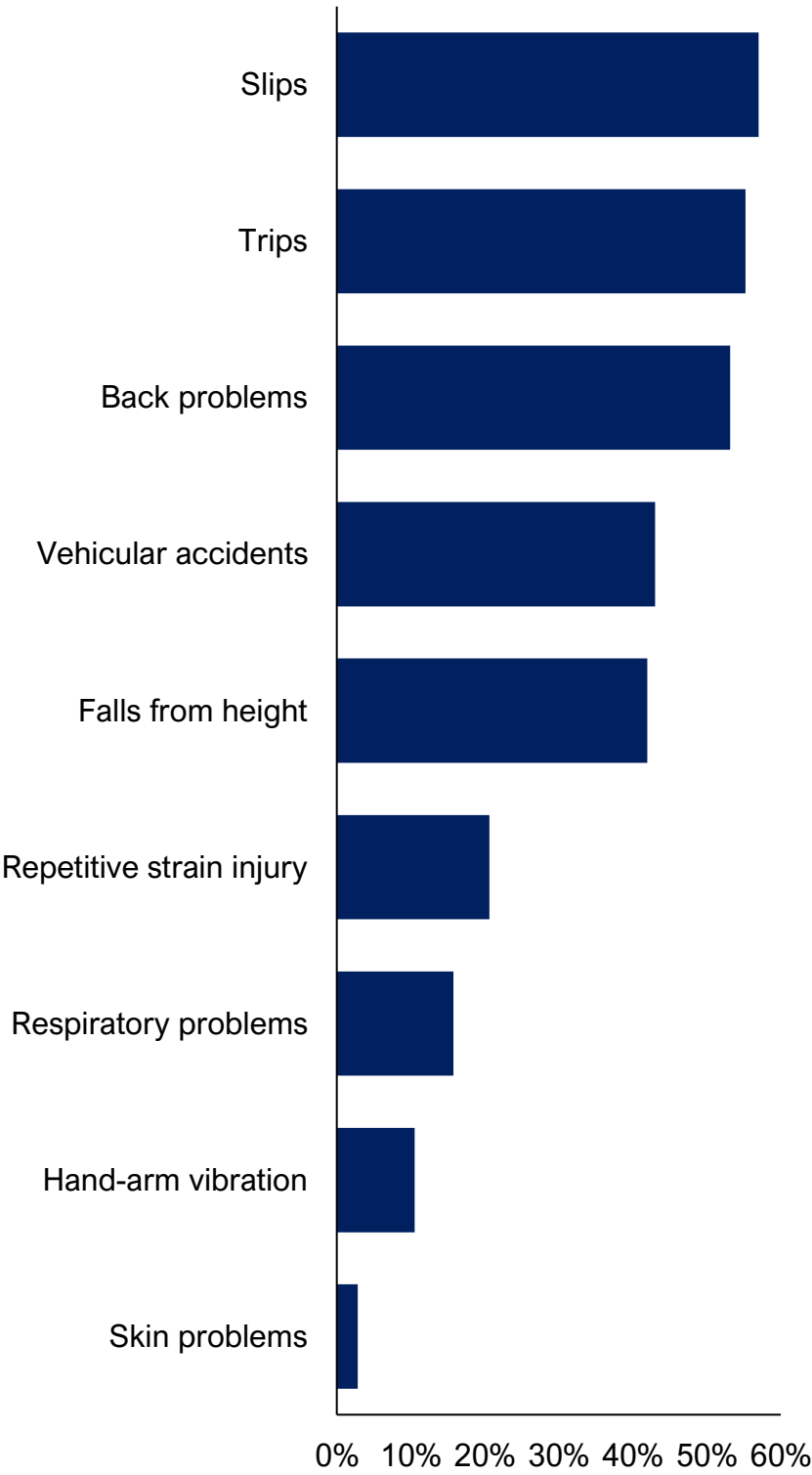
## Comments & insights:

- In-line with exposure, slips and trips, followed by back problems, are the largest causes of incidents and costs.



# Priorities

What are your highest priorities?



**“**  
***If a business is open to the public then slips should be a high priority for them.***  
**”**

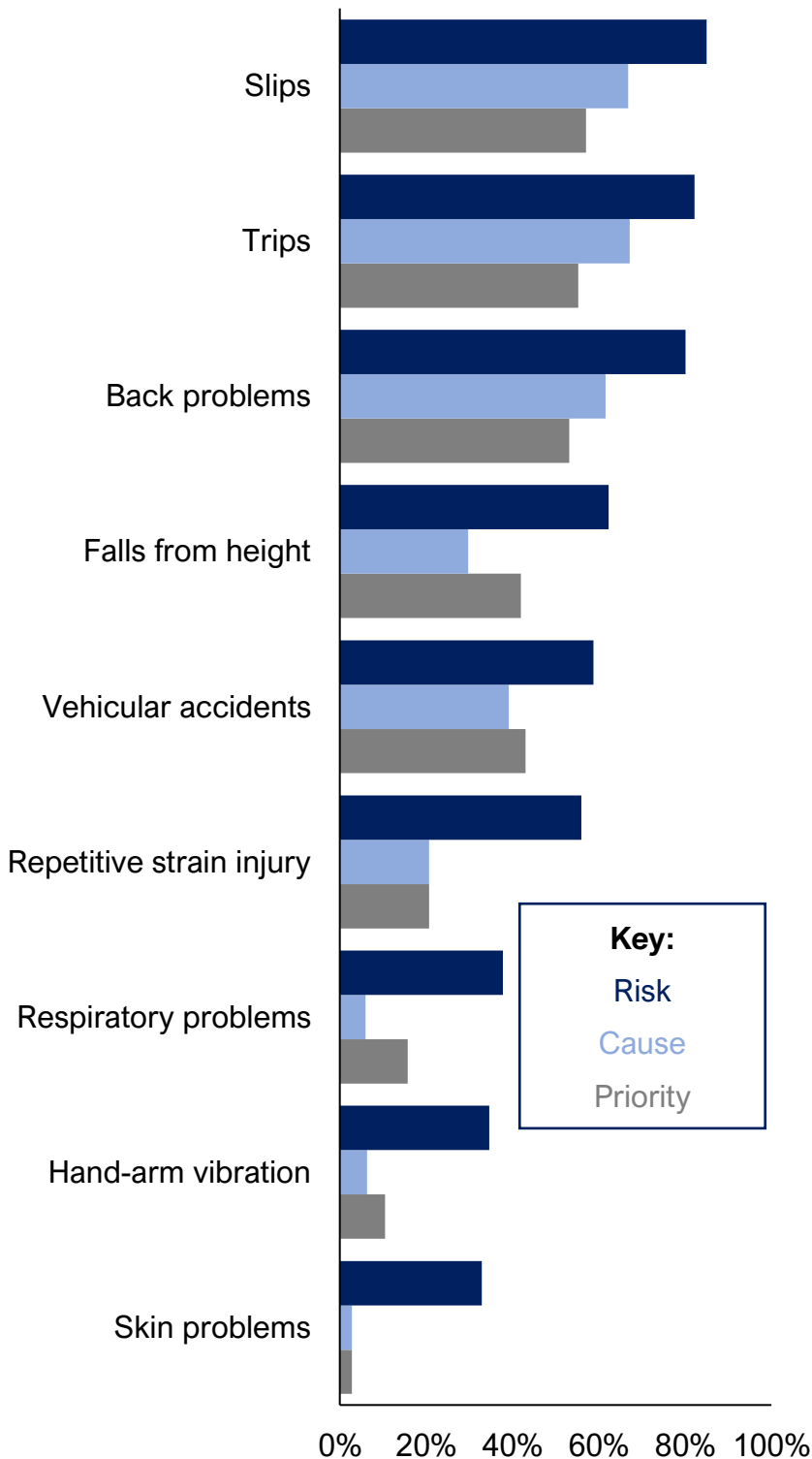
**State Of Safety 2022 respondent**  
**#StateOfSafety**

**Comments & insights:**

- These three make up, logically, the largest areas of priority, too.

# Risks vs causes vs priorities, 1

## Relevant risks to our staff and/or customers vs our biggest causes of incidents and costs vs our highest priorities



### Comments & insights:

- Comparing relevance to causation and priority, some interesting conclusions can be drawn.
- All areas see a drop-off between relevance and causation of incidents, suggesting that some effective control measures must be in place.
- Only four categories show a higher priority to causation. These four are all areas in which the “average” incident is likely to be more serious, suggesting a focus – in-line with other comments – on preventing more serious incidents.

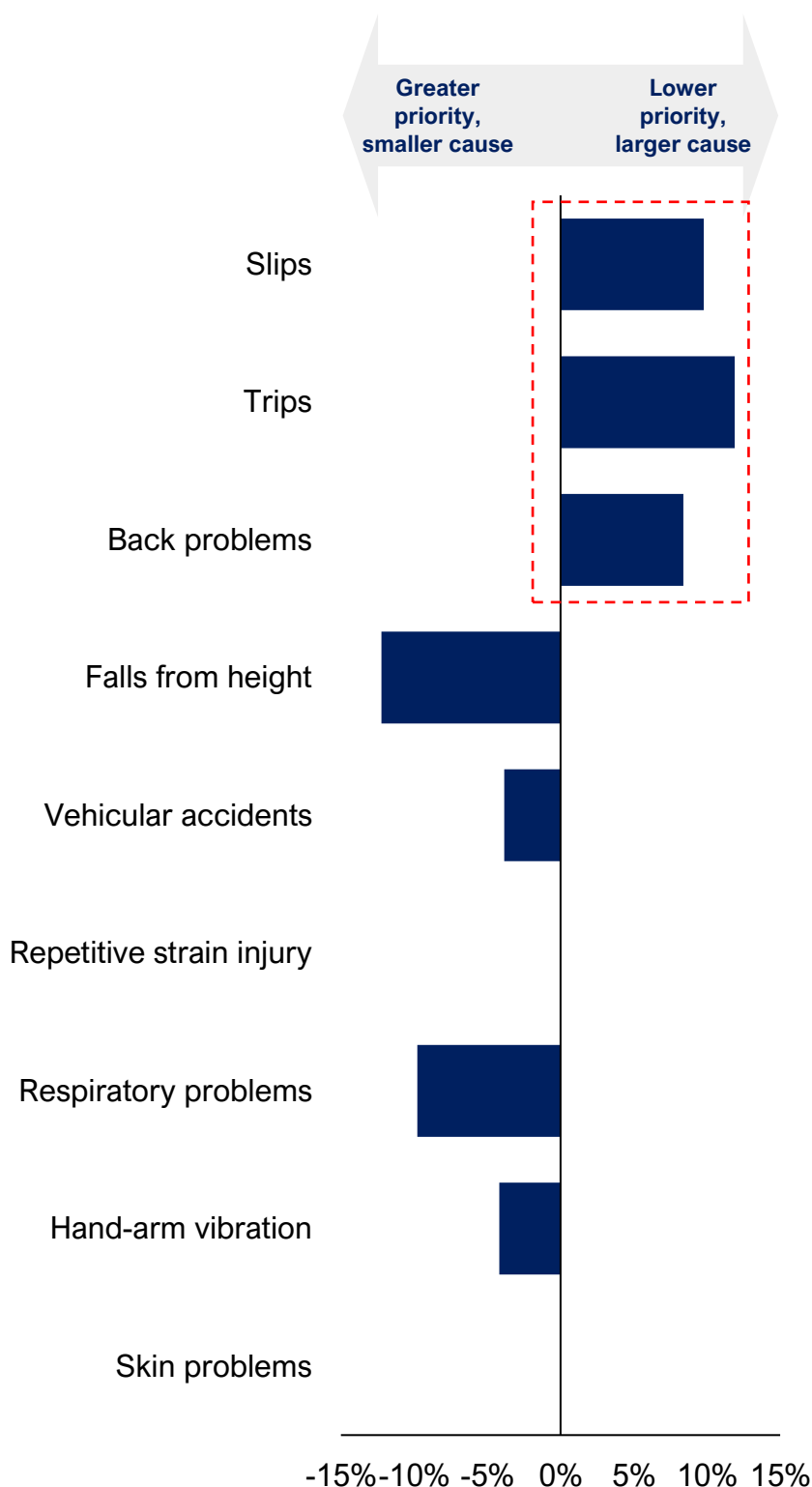
# Risks vs causes vs priorities, 2

Relevant risks to our staff and/or customers vs our biggest causes of incidents and costs vs our highest priorities

Risk	Relevance rank	Cause rank	Priority rank
Slips	1	1	1
Trips	2	2	2
Back problems	3	3	3
Falls from height	4	5	5
Vehicular accidents	5	4	4
Repetitive strain injury	6	6	6
Respiratory problems	7	7	7
Hand-arm vibration	8	8	8
Skin problems	9	9	9

# The cause vs priority gap

## Our biggest causes of incidents and costs vs our highest priorities comparable



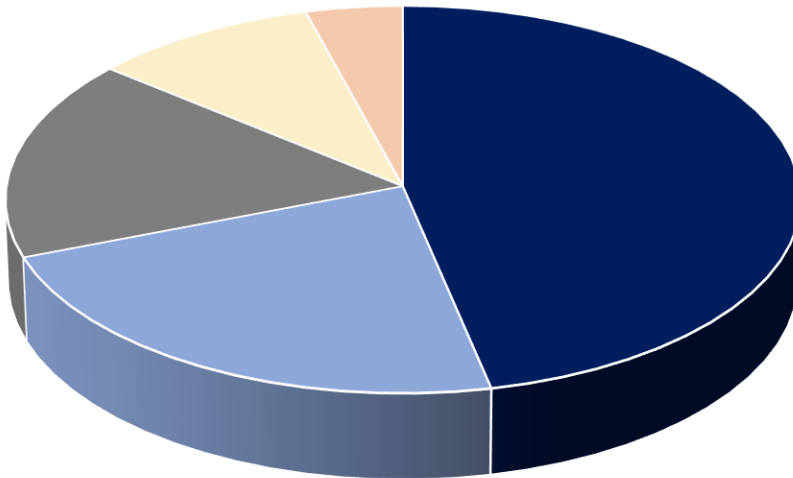
### Comments & insights:

- There is a clear gap between causes of incidents and costs and where we prioritise our focus.
- Comparing causation and costs with priority, slips and trips are the areas which have the greatest gap: we have more of these incidents causing us problems, yet we prioritise them comparatively lower.
- Falls from height is the opposite: we do not suffer them as much, but we place comparatively much more focus on this area as a priority.
- Respiratory problems have an understandable current focus, given Covid.



# Preferred learning platforms

Are you most interested in learning about safety and risk topics through:



- Webinars
- Articles
- Real-world seminars
- Podcasts
- Books

## Comments & insights:

- The web-based learning driven by the pandemic appears here to stay: almost half of respondents would prefer to learn about safety-related topics through webinars.
- Real-world seminars only received 17% of votes.

# If you're interested in safety



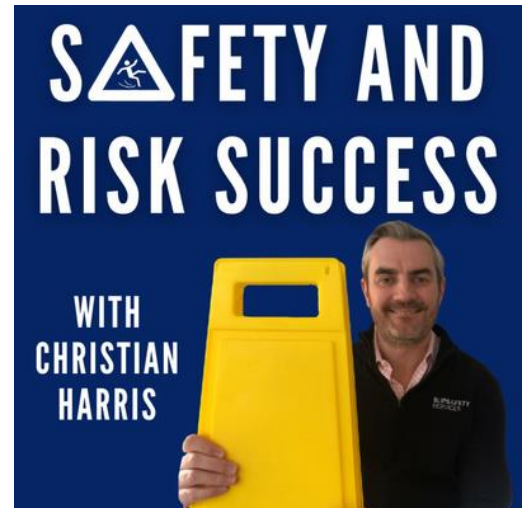
The **Safety Roundtable** is a weekly Zoom meeting, typically with 30+ attendees, discussing a different topic each week. The concept is to:

- ✓ Connect
- ✓ Collaborate
- ✓ Cultivate

Visit [www.SafetyRoundtable.co.uk](http://www.SafetyRoundtable.co.uk) to register for the free sessions at Wednesday, 9am.

Each Saturday, a new episode of the **Safety And Risk Success Podcast** is released. Spotify's #1 UK safety podcast has now reached almost 100 episodes. Typically the episodes see Christian Harris interviewing an expert in the field.

Find the podcast at [www.SafetyRiskSuccess.com](http://www.SafetyRiskSuccess.com)



Connect With Me  
**LinkedIn**

If you've an interest in safety, do connect with Christian Harris on **LinkedIn**. He shares daily insights and news on the topics of safety and risk management.

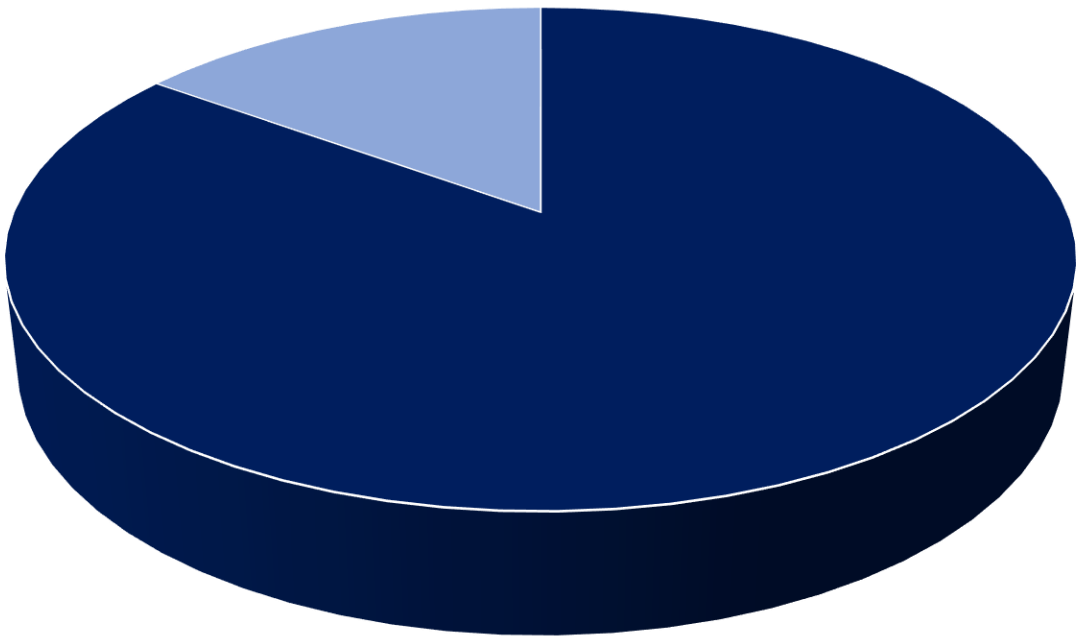
Here is the link:  
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/christian-harris-slip-safety/>



# SLIPerspectives

# Relevance of slips

Are slips a risk potentially relevant to workers in, and/or customers of, your organisation?



■ Yes ■ No

**“As an airport that has 9 million passengers a year, slips and trips are our main cause of passenger accidents.”**

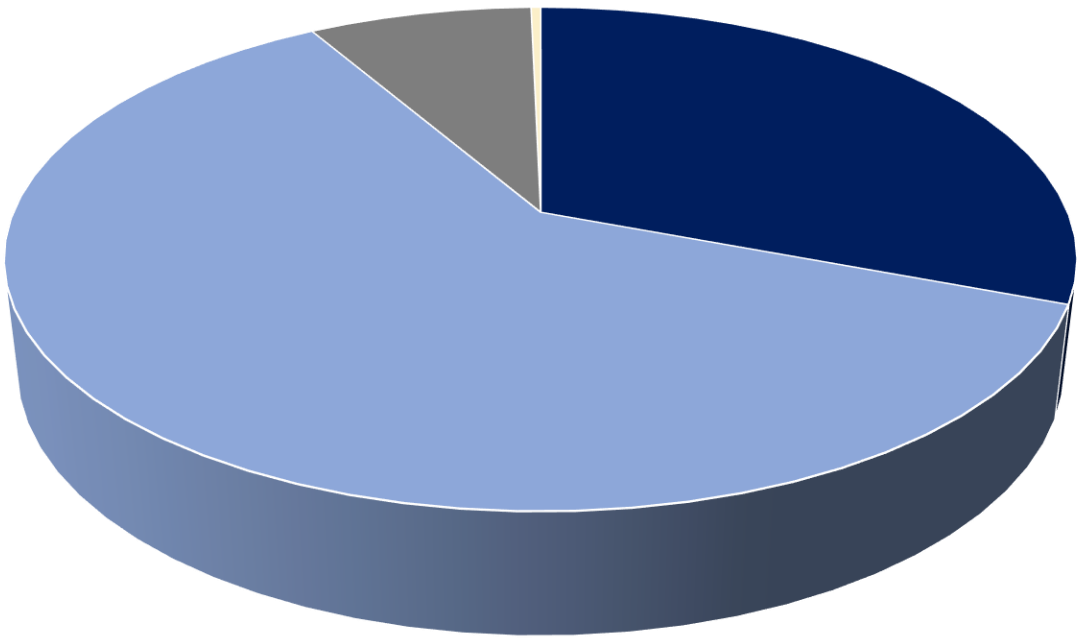
**State Of Safety 2022 respondent**  
**#StateOfSafety**

## Comments & insights:

- 85% of those surveyed said that slips was a relevant risk to their staff and / or customers.

# Feelings towards slips, 1

Which of these best describes your personal feeling about slips?



■ Business critical ■ Important ■ Somewhat important ■ Unimportant

**“A slip happens in the blink of an eye but can have ever-lasting consequences.”**

**State Of Safety 2022 respondent**  
**#StateOfSafety**

## Comments & insights:

- When it comes to slips, 31% believe this issue to be “business critical”, 61% to be “important”, with only 8% citing it as “somewhat important”.

# Feelings towards slips, 2

**“One slip and that could mean life changing injuries for an employee”**

State Of Safety 2022 respondent  
#StateOfSafety

**“Slips is our number 1 accident type - if I can reduce this, the usual improvements can be seen: cost reduced, people safer and happier at work.”**

State Of Safety 2022 respondent  
#StateOfSafety

**“It's business critical in our restaurants that we maintain a safe working area for both the team and guests alike ensuring we continually maintain a slip free area when operating.”**

State Of Safety 2022 respondent  
#StateOfSafety

**“Slip accidents occur more than most, and probably are under-reported”**

State Of Safety 2022 respondent  
#StateOfSafety

**“Slips are a recurrent and dynamic hazard that can appear anywhere during work. Standard actions tend to be reactive and not address root causes.”**

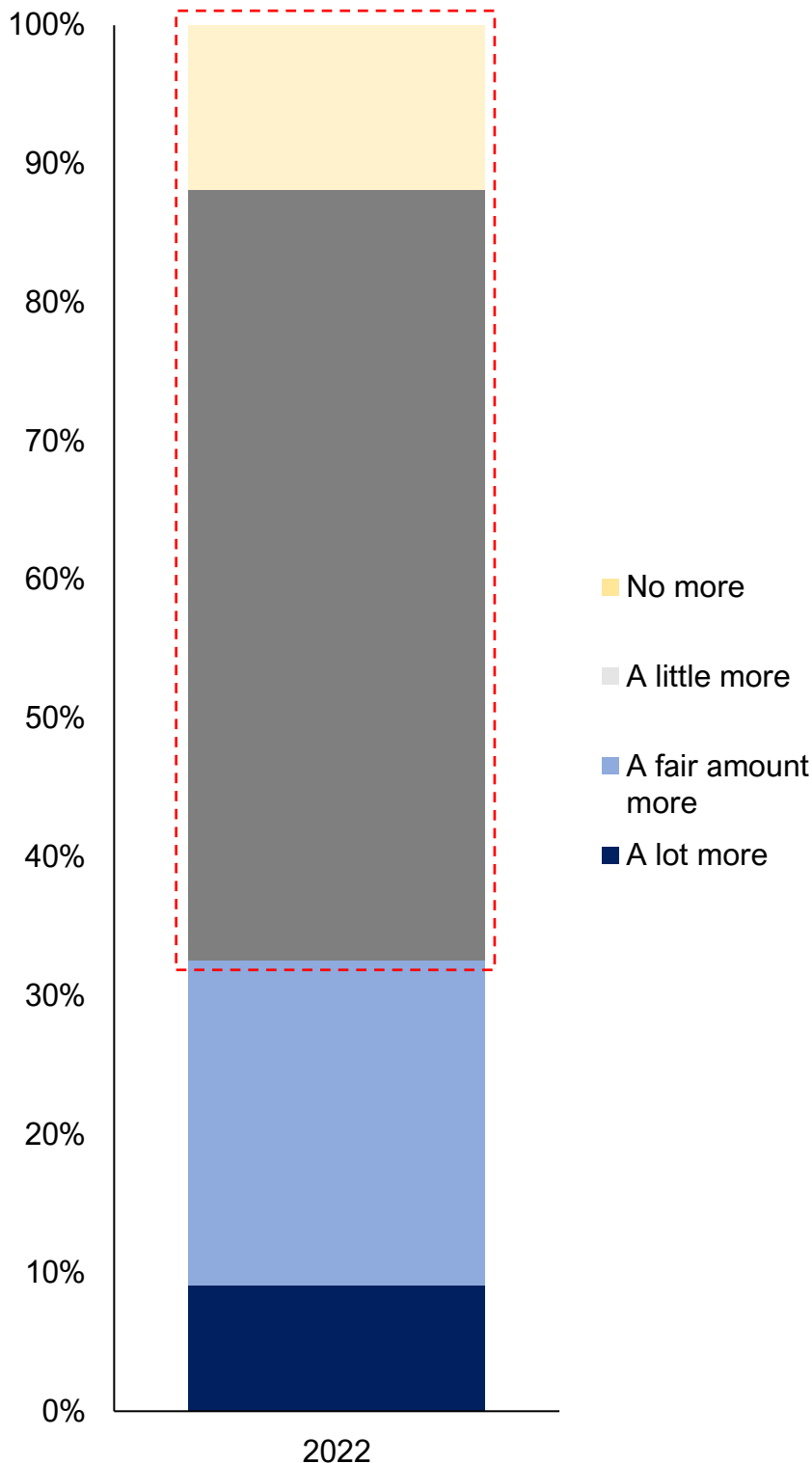
State Of Safety 2022 respondent  
#StateOfSafety

**“Slips is an industry wide issue that needs proper resolution.”**

State Of Safety 2022 respondent  
#StateOfSafety

# Actions to reduce slip risk

How much more could your organisation do to reduce the risk of slips?



**“Slips and trips is one of the biggest issues in health and safety yet it is commonly overlooked.”**

**State Of Safety 2022 respondent  
#StateOfSafety**

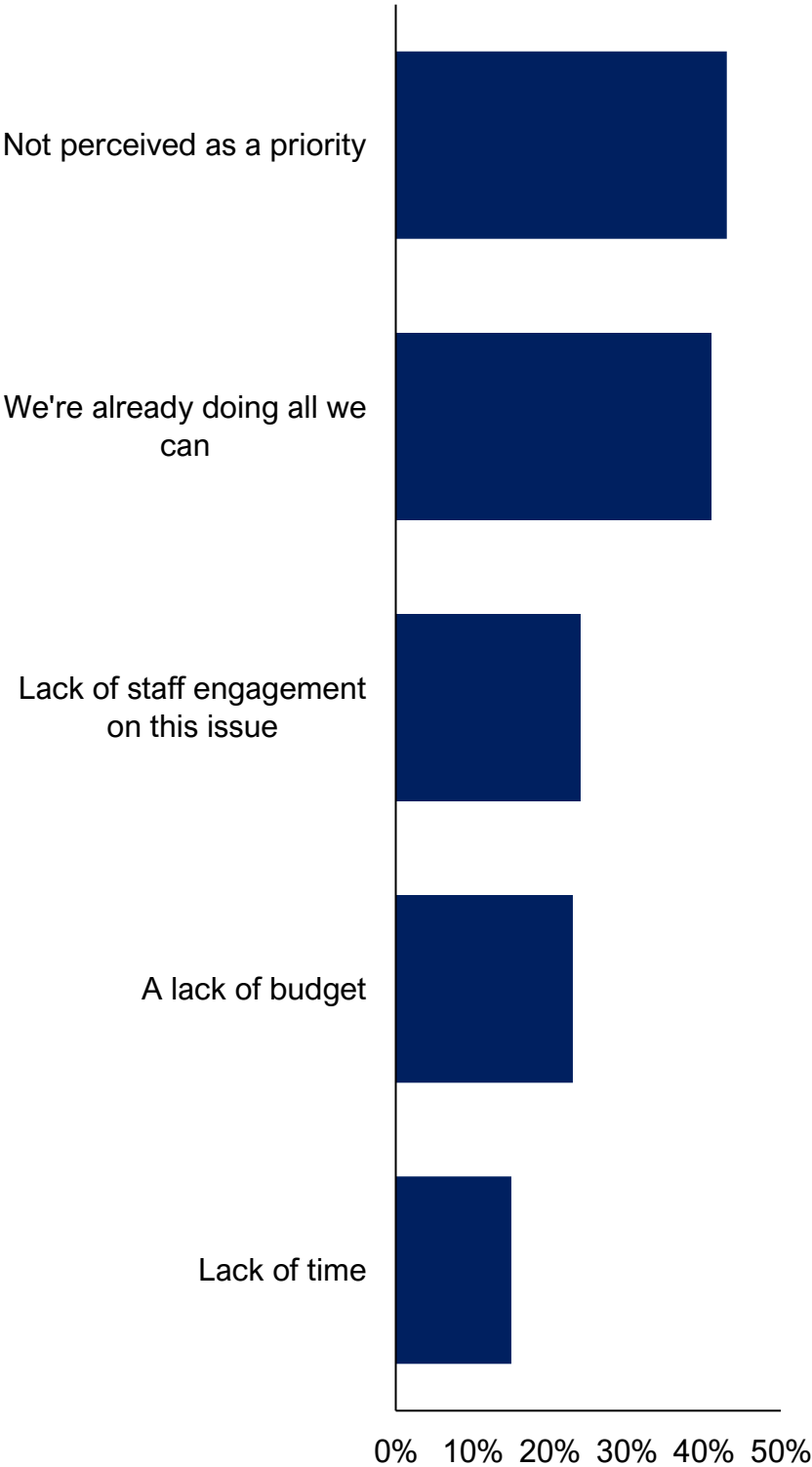
## Comments & insights:

- A full two thirds of respondents believe their organisation has “no more” or only “a little more” to do to reduce the risk of slips.



# Blockers to slip safety

What stops you doing more to reduce the risk of slips in your organisation?



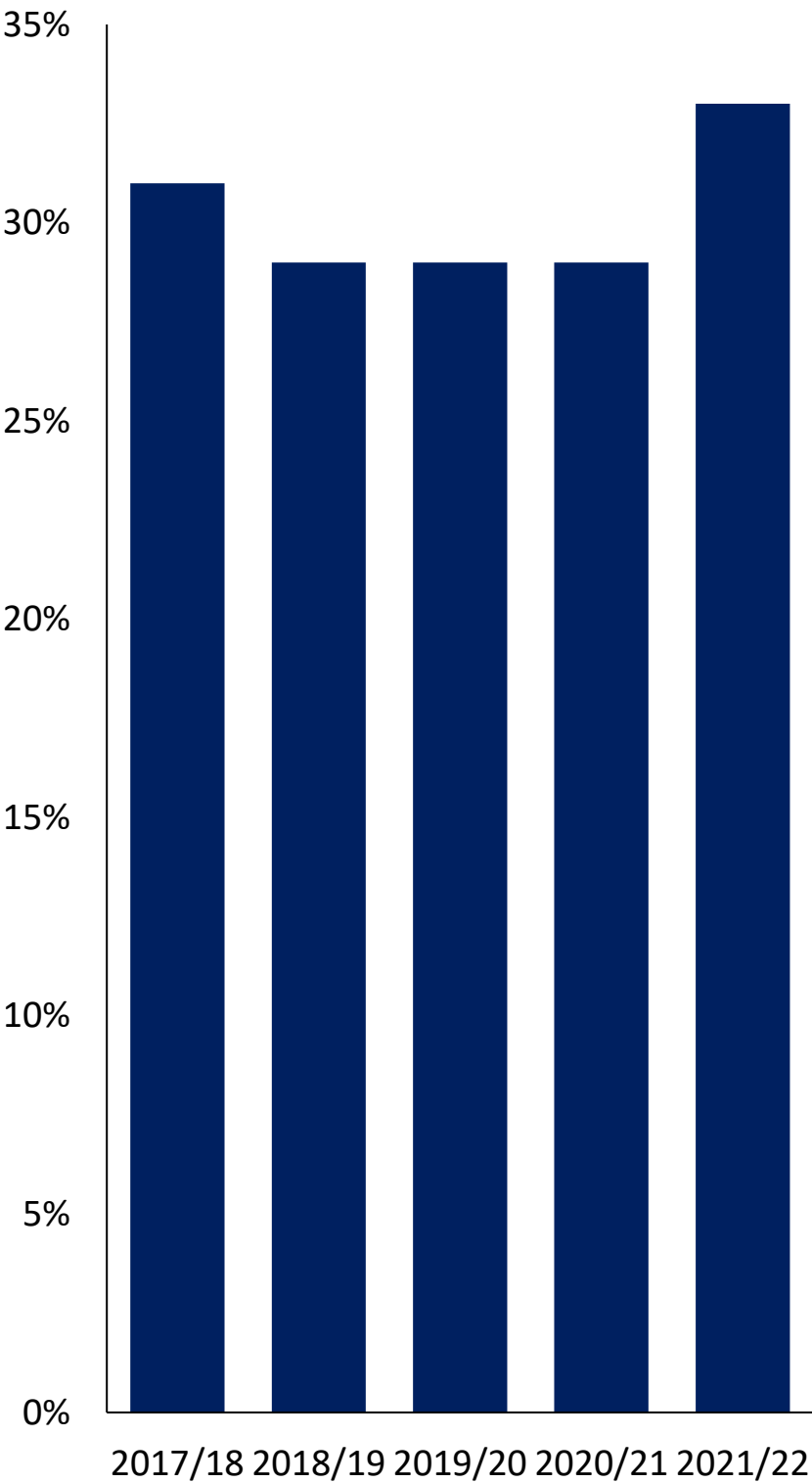
**Comments & insights:**

- As to why additional action is not taken on slip prevention, the biggest driver was this subject not being seen as a priority.
- Though 41% of respondents believe they are already doing all they can do prevent slips in their buildings.



# Slip RIDDOR stats

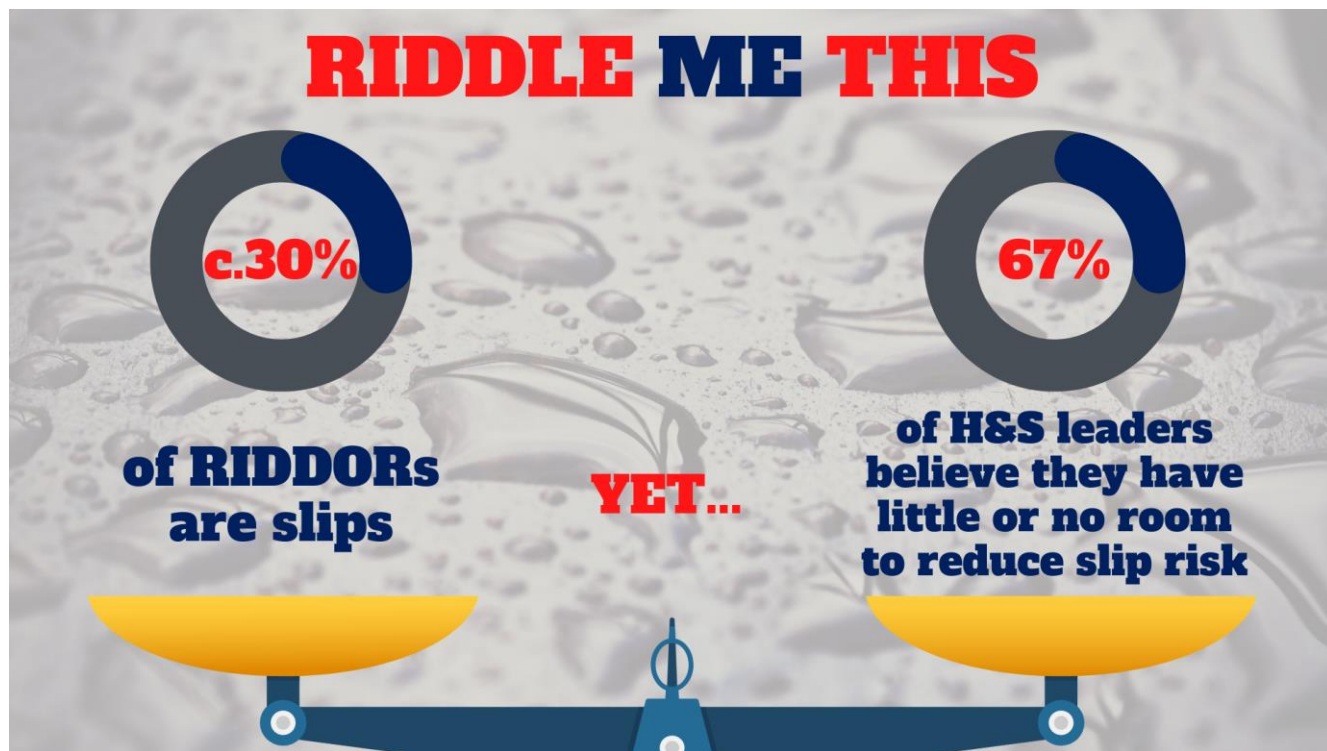
Slips, trips and falls as a % of all RIDDORs over the last 5 years  
(Source: HSE)



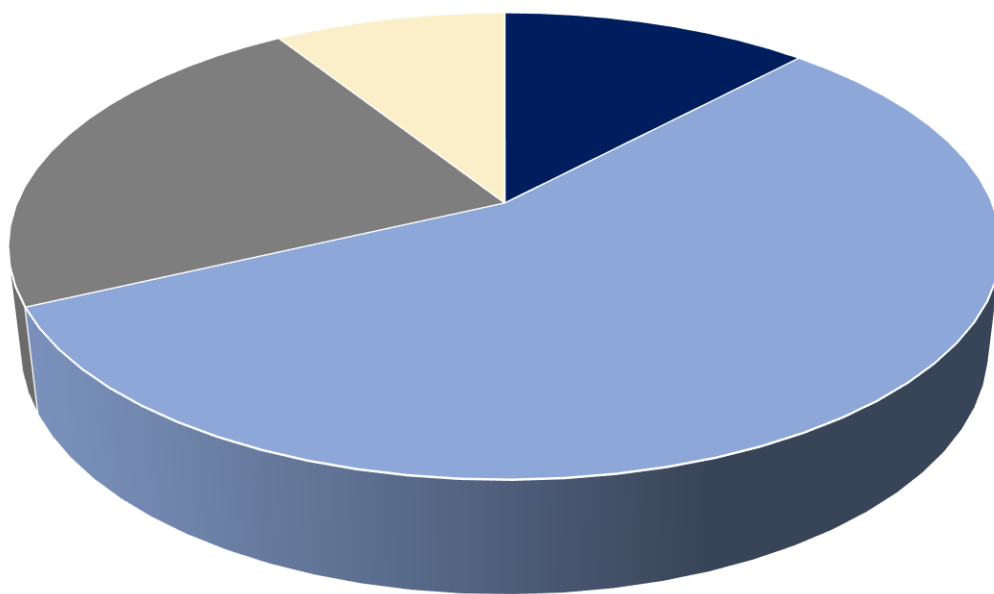
**Comments & insights:**

- However, if we review the HSE data on RIDDORs, slips, trips and falls accounts for 30% year after year
- Why, then, is there a belief that a good proportion of organisations have little or nothing further that can be done to reduce the risk of slips?

# Can more be done on slips?



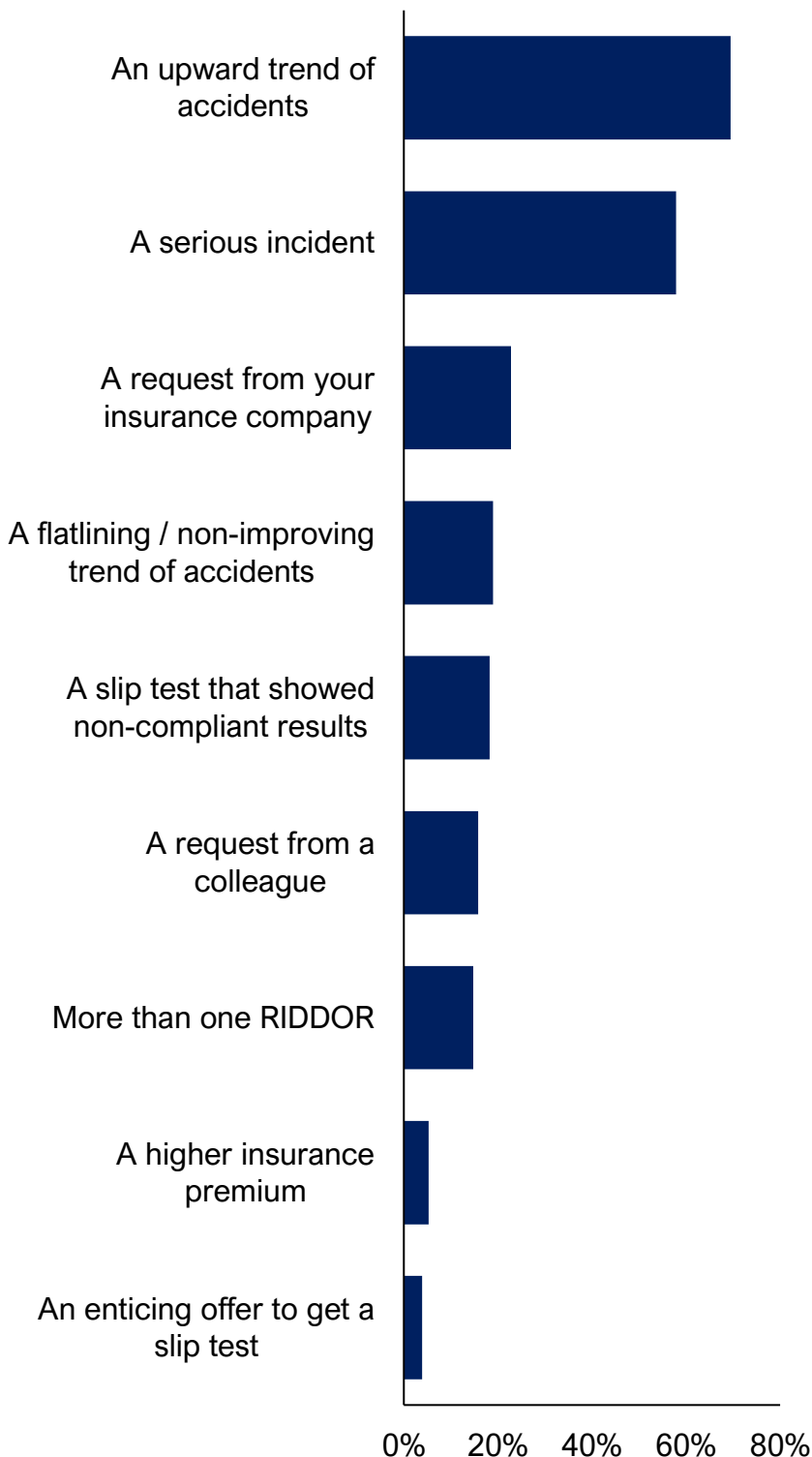
"How much more could your organisation do to reduce the risk of slips?"



■ No more   ■ A little more   ■ A fair amount more   ■ A lot more

# Prompts to action on slips

## What might prompt you to act to do more on slip safety (top 3 reasons cited)



### Comments & insights:

- An upward trend of slip accidents was considered the most likely driver to prompt respondents to act more on slip safety. However, with nearly a third of RIDDORs already being this type of accident (shown on the previous slide), is there much more room for incident numbers to rise?
- A flatlining, or non-improving trend was only cited by 19% as reason to do more. This, logically, given the bigger picture, would seem to make sense as the best test of whether more should be done in an organisation.

# Slip misperceptions



**51% of business decision makers think that STF are inevitable in the workplace**

In recent ROSPA research, 51% of business decision makers believed that Slips, Trips and Falls are inevitable in the workplace.

There is clearly a mismatch between general perception and the reality of the significant reductions in slips and falls that can be achieved – as evidenced by our clients over the years.

**“**

*The results show that a significant proportion of business decision makers don't see STF as important. The very fact that inevitability, inaction and blame was prevalent in this report suggests that STF are essentially a hidden issue for many employers.*

**”**

**Nathan Davies, Executive Head of Policy and Portfolio at RoSPA**

**“**

*We need to move from a 'it's human nature', 'it can't be managed', 'it's unpreventable', type attitude to more of a 'we recognise the cost and importance of preventing STF's and we are taking preventative measures to eliminate this risk from our business.'*

**”**

**Andy Jones, Risk Consulting Director at RSA Insurance**

# The SLIP Problem



The biggest blocker we consistently come across to slip accidents, injuries and claims being significantly reduced is four common misperceptions. We call this **The SLIP Problem**.

Many feel slips are:

“**S**imple”

“**L**ow-cost”

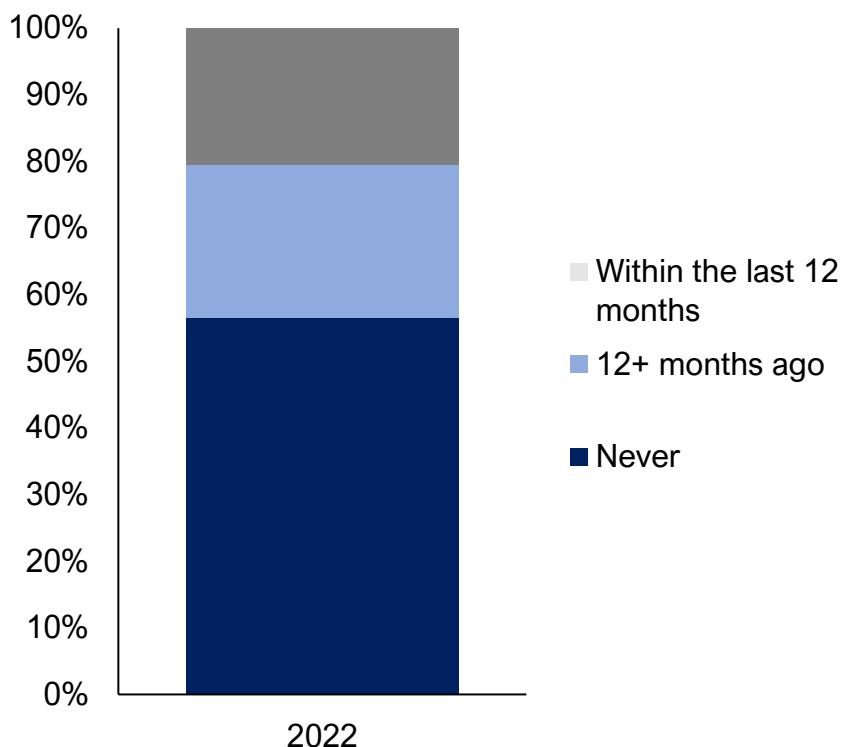
“Impossible to prevent”

“**P**altry”

In reality: slips are more **complex**, more **costly** & more **serious** than most think. And, trust us, **you can stop slips!**

# Slip testing

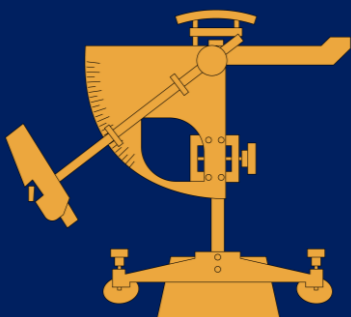
## When was the last time you had a slip test undertaken?



### Comments & insights:

- Given the large risk exposure and costs mentioned earlier, it's somewhat surprising that only 20% of organisations have had a slip test within 12 months
- If you have this pendulum slip test data, and it is current (within 12 months), it can help you to defend claims

## The Pendulum Slip Test



- HSE-and court-approved slip test
- Scientifically measures how slippery floors are when dry and wet
- Reduce risk and defend claims using data



# Slipology & its results

There is a proven science to slip prevention. We call this Slipology.

You can find various webinars, Safety Roundtables, and podcasts where I discuss this.



But here's the gist: taking a scientific approach to slip safety typically sees our clients achieve at least a 57% reduction in accidents, injuries and claims. This saves them £10,000s a year, by making their existing floors safe and ensuring they succeed on all 6 CHIMES

Here are some examples:



# Are you heading for a fall?

Given the size and scope of slip risk identified in the State Of Safety 2022, you may feel it makes sense to check how you're doing at mitigating slip safety risks in your building.



**TAKE THE SLIP SAFETY SCORECARD**

- Score yourself vs best practice
- Get instant feedback and tips
- Receive £1,000+ of free resources

SLIPSAFETY SERVICES



That's where our Slip Safety Scorecard comes in. A free-to-use, digital self-assessment diagnostic quiz, it takes only 4 minutes to complete.

You will receive scores for each of the CHIMES plus an overall score, so you can see where you're doing best, and where you have room for improvement.

Check out what some fellow safety leaders say about the Scorecard:

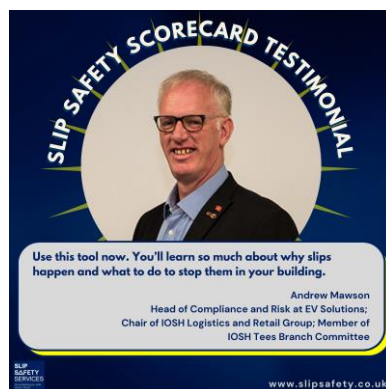


**SLIP SAFETY SCORECARD TESTIMONIAL**

A useful tool. Many businesses could learn a lot from using the Scorecard. Quick to use and the questions make you think about this risk a bit more deeply than you may have done before.

Louisa Mead  
Safety Implementation and Support Manager at John Lewis Partnership

www.slipsafety.co.uk



**SLIP SAFETY SCORECARD TESTIMONIAL**

Use this tool now. You'll learn so much about why slips happen and what to do to stop them in your building.

Andrew Mawson  
Head of Compliance and Risk at EV Solutions;  
Chair of IOSH Logistics and Retail Group; Member of IOSH Tees Branch Committee

www.slipsafety.co.uk



**SLIP SAFETY SCORECARD TESTIMONIAL**

Simple, straightforward and easy to complete. In the report, I like the overall score rating and then the breakdown for each area as well as ways to help improve risk.

Michelle Pitkin  
Health, Safety, Environment Adviser at Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue; IOSH Council Member

www.slipsafety.co.uk

[Scorecard.SlipSafety.co.uk](https://www.slipsafety.co.uk)

**Thanks for  
reading.  
Please discuss  
on social using  
#StateOfSafety**

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