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on Measurement of the Quality of Employment
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**Measuring workplace safety and health:
General considerations and the US case**

Invited paper submitted by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics¹

Summary

This paper considers general issues regarding the measurement of workplace safety and health and reviews how the US statistical system has chosen to address these issues. The paper briefly discusses advantages and weaknesses of both the administrative data sources used in most countries and the separate statistical program of the US. Criteria for capturing injury and illness cases are reviewed, including the concept of work-relatedness and how severe a case should be before it is measured. Distinctions are drawn between occupational injuries and illnesses and between prevalence and incidence measures. The construction and uses of various measures are discussed, including counts, incidence rates, and severity measures. The paper raises some of the difficulties with counting occupational illness and in measuring the duration of severe injury and illness cases. The types of data elements that should be collected, including the characteristics of workers, firms, and injury and illness cases, are briefly summarized, along with how the data might be tabulated. Finally, some results from the US statistical program for calendar year 2000 are presented

¹ Paper written by John W. Ruser.