

Allianz 



Unschedule the Burnout

A practical guide for the construction sector



Industry overview

Burnout is not only a white-collar issue. It is also prevalent in blue-collar industries, in particular construction.

A quarter of surveyed construction workers (25 per cent) reported often making mistakes at work due to feeling burnt out¹. Construction combines physical risk, long hours and project uncertainty.

Many workers describe this as a 'cycle' of fatigue: taking stress home, poor sleep, and returning more depleted the next day. In an environment where resilience and toughness are often valued, conversations about mental health can feel difficult to start. This makes it even more important for organisations to create a culture where seeking support is normal and practical help is easy to access.

"People find themselves in a cycle... they don't sleep because of the 'head noise', then get up fatigued and go to work. We need to de-pathologise the language and make supervisors approachable."



Kurt Everard
Counsellor, TIACS

A snapshot of burnout in construction



Mental stress and/or work pressure accounted for over 26 per cent of all FY25 psychological claims in the construction industry.²



The average cost of a psychological claim in the construction industry in FY25 was over 50 per cent more than a physical claim.³



Almost half (45 per cent) of surveyed employees in the construction sector report feeling negatively about their jobs.⁴



39 per cent of construction industry workers do not feel they receive sufficient financial rewards, creating pressure in and outside of the workplace.⁵



69 per cent of surveyed construction workers do not believe that their employer implements strategies to enforce good workplace habits and boundaries to reduce burnout.⁶



Tips for the construction sector

For workers in the construction industry, long working hours, uncontrollable job delays and the expectations to be available for overtime and additional work are causing exhaustion.

Using Allianz's research-informed **Beyond Burnout framework**, we collaborated with construction industry advocate Kurt Everard to share practical tips and strategies to help mitigate the experience of burnout and promote employee wellbeing and productivity.

Kurt Everard is a Counsellor for TIACS, a free phone and text counselling service offering mental health support to Australia's blue-collar community. Kurt takes a strong interest in burnout, seeing it as a frequent theme in the support he provides to tradies going through tough situations.

"I think it (burnout) may arise and manifest differently in the blue-collar industry, but because of a range of different factors. I still feel like it has a huge, huge impact on our tradies and our blue-collar workers out there."

Kurt Everard



Nearly one in four (24 per cent) surveyed construction workers say their own mental health challenges make it difficult to perform at their best and enjoy their work.⁷



Almost two thirds (65 per cent) of the surveyed construction workers have taken time off work due to mental distress caused by workload demands.⁸



42 per cent of surveyed construction workers feel they often have to work beyond their scheduled hours to complete all of their work.⁹



Creating a just workplace

A fair and equitable workplace fosters a sense of value and respect among employees and reduces feelings of injustice.

Tip: When your team has gone above and beyond – whether working long hours to meet a deadline or taking on additional responsibilities – take the time to recognise it. Showing recognition with a proactive gesture, such as an early knock-off or a shared lunch, signals that wellbeing matters. These actions help workers feel valued and supported in tangible ways.

Tip: When reflecting on the success of a job and whether you have met strict deadlines, clearly acknowledge when there are factors beyond your employees' control, such as weather or supply chain issues. This ensures that employees feel respected for their efforts despite external challenges.



Managing workload and work pressure

Ensuring manageable workloads and reasonable time pressure prevents employees from becoming overwhelmed and exhausted.

Tip: When pricing a job, ensure you set realistic project timelines that account for unforeseen challenges and potential delays, such as weather conditions or supply chain disruptions. Setting overly aggressive deadlines can lead to excessive pressure and burnout.

Tip: Promote regular breaks and rest periods during the workday to allow employees to recharge. Encourage employees to take their entitled leave and avoid excessive overtime, emphasising the importance of rest and recovery for long-term productivity and health.



Effective workplace communication and support

Clear and open communication builds trust and collaboration, reducing misunderstandings and conflicts that can increase stress levels.

A supportive workplace culture and environment provides resources and emotional support, reducing feelings of isolation and promoting resilience.

Tip: Equip supervisors with training to host real conversations: provide training that helps leaders and peers recognise early warning signs – such as noticeable fatigue, changes in mood, withdrawal from team interactions, or a drop in performance – and respond appropriately.

Tip: Involve employees in decision-making processes related to planning and execution through early project engagement and daily site meetings. By seeking input and considering diverse perspectives, employers can build trust and ensure that decisions are well-informed and supported by the team.



Promoting autonomy

Empowering employees with autonomy promotes a sense of control and ownership, thus reducing frustration and disengagement that can lead to burnout.

Tip: Allow employees to take ownership of specific tasks or projects, giving them the authority to make decisions related to their work. Clearly define the scope and objectives but provide flexibility in how they achieve these goals. Empowering employees to manage their tasks fosters a sense of responsibility and engagement.

Tip: Where feasible, offer employees the ability to self-schedule their work hours or shifts. Providing flexibility in scheduling allows employees to manage their time effectively, balancing work and personal commitments and building routines around recovery activities like being involved in a local sports club.

Further information is available in our [Beyond Burnout – a holistic guide to workplace wellbeing in the workplace](#). This is a comprehensive evidence-informed guide for employers and employees to support the prevention, and necessary intervention, of burnout in the workplace.

About the research

The research was commissioned by Allianz and conducted by YouGov in accordance with the Australian Polling Council standard. The 2025 survey comprises a nationally representative sample of 1,642 employees (middle managers and below) and 506 managers (senior managers and above) aged 18+ across Australia.

Fieldwork was conducted online between 28 July and 7 August 2025. Following interviewing, data were weighted by age, gender and region to reflect the latest ABS population estimates. Professional services, construction, education and healthcare cohorts were upweighted for analysis.

Allianz Workers' Compensation claims data for Financial Years 2021 to 2025 and across all Allianz portfolios including, Allianz Australia's Underwritten Workers' Compensation, NSW Managed Fund (for both private and public sector employees) and Victorian Managed Fund Portfolios.

¹ 25% of surveyed employees in the construction sector agreed that they often make mistakes at work due to feeling exhausted or burnt out.

² According to Allianz Workers' Compensation data, in FY25 Mental Stress and/or Work Pressure accounted for 26% of all Allianz Primary Active Psychological claims in the construction industry.

³ According to Allianz Workers' Compensation data, the average cost of a Primary Active Psych Claim in the Construction industry was 53.3% more than a Physical Claim.

⁴ 45% of surveyed employees in the construction sector reported feeling negatively, when asked how they feel about their job.

⁵ 39% of surveyed employees in the construction sector identified insufficient financial rewards as a contributing factor to feeling negatively about their job.

⁶ 31% of surveyed employees in the construction sector agree with the statement that their organisation enforces good workplace habits and boundaries to reduce burnout.

⁷ 24% of surveyed employees in the construction sector agree with the statement that their own mental health challenges make it difficult to perform at their best and enjoy their work.

⁸ 65% of surveyed employees in the construction sector have taken time off work due to mental distress (e.g. anxiety, burnout, emotional exhaustion) caused by workplace demands.

⁹ 42% of surveyed employees in the construction sector agree that they often have to work beyond their scheduled hours to complete all of their work.