

# DoD Ergonomics Working Group NEWS



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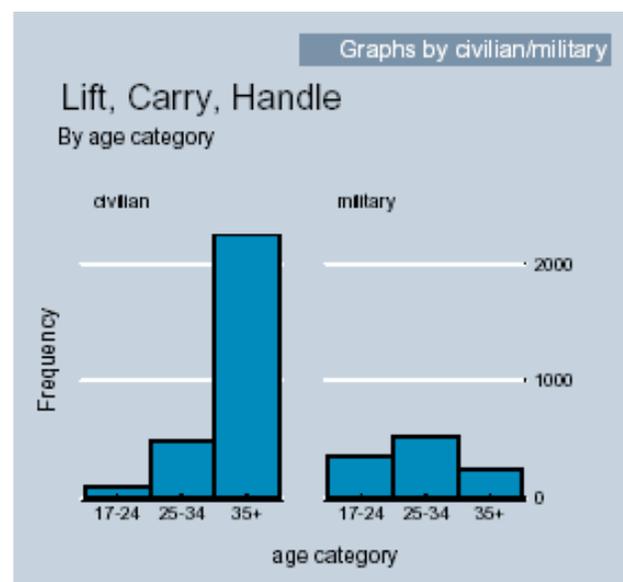
## The Air Force Zeroes in on the Top Causes of Lost Workday Injuries

Up to this point, military medical data has provided us with a picture of the magnitude of the injury problem and the types of workday injuries, but we haven't had good information on the causes of these injuries. The Air Force report, Descriptive Epidemiology of USAF Lost Workday Injuries, FY93-FY02, fills that void. **This is the best effort thus far at identifying injury causes—a detailed effort that can guide us in creating prevention programs and meeting Secretary Rumsfeld's 50% reduction challenge.**

The overall picture shown by Part I of the study, General Trends and Analysis, is one of low rates of injury, which are steadily decreasing in most areas. However, this picture has changed in the past 2 years with military mishaps increasing, as civilian mishaps continue to decline. These changes are due in part to a change in active duty demographics, in particular, older more experienced troops being replaced by younger risk takers. The 17-24 year-old age group increased nearly 20% from FY98 to FY02 while the 25-and-older population decreased by that proportion.

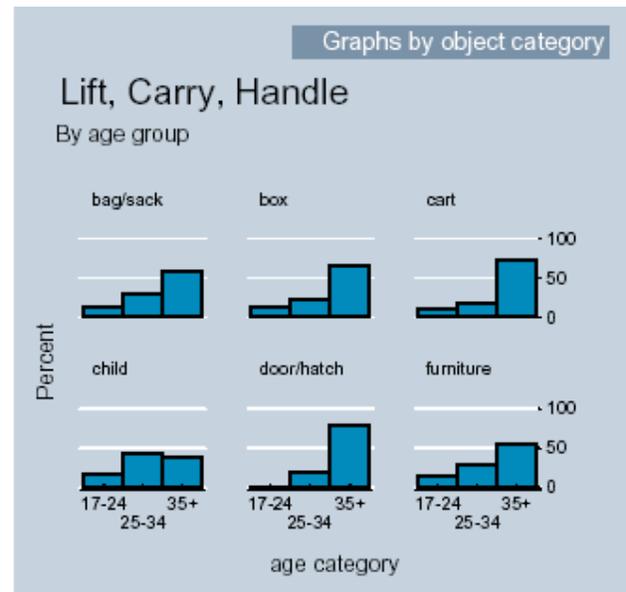
Part II, the more detailed analysis for injury prevention, contains the following findings and conclusions:

- Two-thirds of the lost workdays are accounted for by a younger military group (vs. older civilians), the majority being off-duty private motor vehicle mishaps.
- The remaining one-third of the lost workdays are accounted for by civilians in the industrial setting (on-duty).
- The top three functional areas for *overall* (combined military and civilian) lost workdays:
  1. Aircraft maintenance
  2. Civil engineering
  3. Services
- The top three activities for *overall* lost workdays:
  1. Operating a motor vehicle
  2. Slips trips and falls (not on a ladder or stairs)
  3. **Lifting and carrying objects**



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- The top three activities for *military* lost workdays:
  1. Operating a vehicle
  2. Slips, trips and falls (not on a ladder or stairs)
  3. Riding in/on a motor vehicle
- The top three activities for *civilian* lost workdays:
  1. Slips, trips and falls (not on a ladder or stairs)
  2. **Lifting and carrying objects**
  3. Slips/trips/falls while climbing or descending stairs or ladders
- The lost workday problem is complicated and diverse, and therefore cannot be solved by a single, easy solution.
- Strategies to prevent running injuries must be immediately implemented to avoid increases in the mishap rate due to the addition of running to annual fitness testing.



The full Air Force report is available at:

**Part I (May 2003)**

**Descriptive Epidemiology of USAF Lost Workday Injuries, FY93-FY02**

[http://afsafety.af.mil/AFSC/Files/USAF\\_Lost\\_Workday\\_Injury\\_Report\\_-\\_Part\\_I.pdf](http://afsafety.af.mil/AFSC/Files/USAF_Lost_Workday_Injury_Report_-_Part_I.pdf)

**Part II Detailed Analysis for Mishap Prevention (November 2003)**

**Descriptive Epidemiology of USAF Lost Workday Injuries, FY93-FY02**

<http://afsafety.af.mil/AFSC/files/LWD%20injuries%20part%202-FINAL-27May04.pdf>