INSURANCE Summit
Florida League of Cities

The Five Most Expensive Issues Local Governments Face

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Introduction

$20M

- **5 reoccurring losses**
- **These *aren't* random events**
- **These are predictable, repeatable exposures driven by behavior, environment, and decisions** *(Not bad luck!)*

Risk and Safety Management Team

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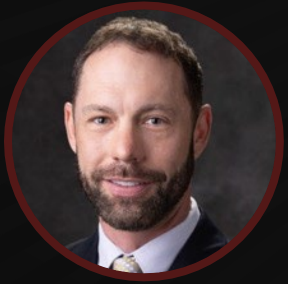

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What do you believe is your organization’s biggest reoccurring loss/cost driver?


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Issue 1

Exposures

What are Exposures?

Exposure-related claims include:

- Communicable diseases
- Bloodborne pathogen exposures
- Chemical exposures
- Heat exhaustion and heat stress
- Stress-related and cardiac-type events (Police and Fire)

Most are not catastrophic, but can be costly, and are easily preventable by task and environment.

Case Story

Claim Notes: *Employee became lightheaded and nauseous due to being exposed to the heat for an extended period. The employee was transported via ambulance to the hospital.*

- A utilities employee responded to a wastewater emergency
- PPE was used; heat conditions were known

Case Cost Summary

- **Medical treatment and monitoring: $6,091**
- **Lost time: $1,320**
- **Expenses: $750**

Total: $8,161

Why Does This Occur?

1. **PPE fatigue and inconsistency**
    - PPE is often used to prevent exposures, but it adds a burden and is not 100% effective
    - Workers develop risk normalization (“I’ve done this before without an issue”)
    - Policies are often generic and not tied to the actual exposure moment

2. **Heat stress underestimated operationally**
    - “We’ve always worked in the heat” mindset

3. **Confusing urgency with risk acceptance**

What's the MOST common failure point in exposure cases?

Why Does This Occur?

1. **Task-based exposure controls**
   (not generic rules)

2. **Heat illness prevention tied to real conditions**
   (Job scheduling, job rotation, monitoring, etc.)

3. **Simplified biological protocols**
   (BBP, Decontamination, etc.)

4. **Early health trend monitoring**
   (i.e., Life Scan provided for Emergency Responders)


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Issue 2

Slips & Falls

Why Does This Occur?

Slip, trip and fall events appear repeatedly in:

- **Field work** *(uneven terrain, wet surfaces, steps)*
- **Facilities** *(cords, clutter, drawers, stairs)*
- **Transitional movement** *(entering/exiting vehicles, equipment, buildings)*
- **Public sidewalks, parks and parking lots**

Many are low dollar individually, but collectively are significant.

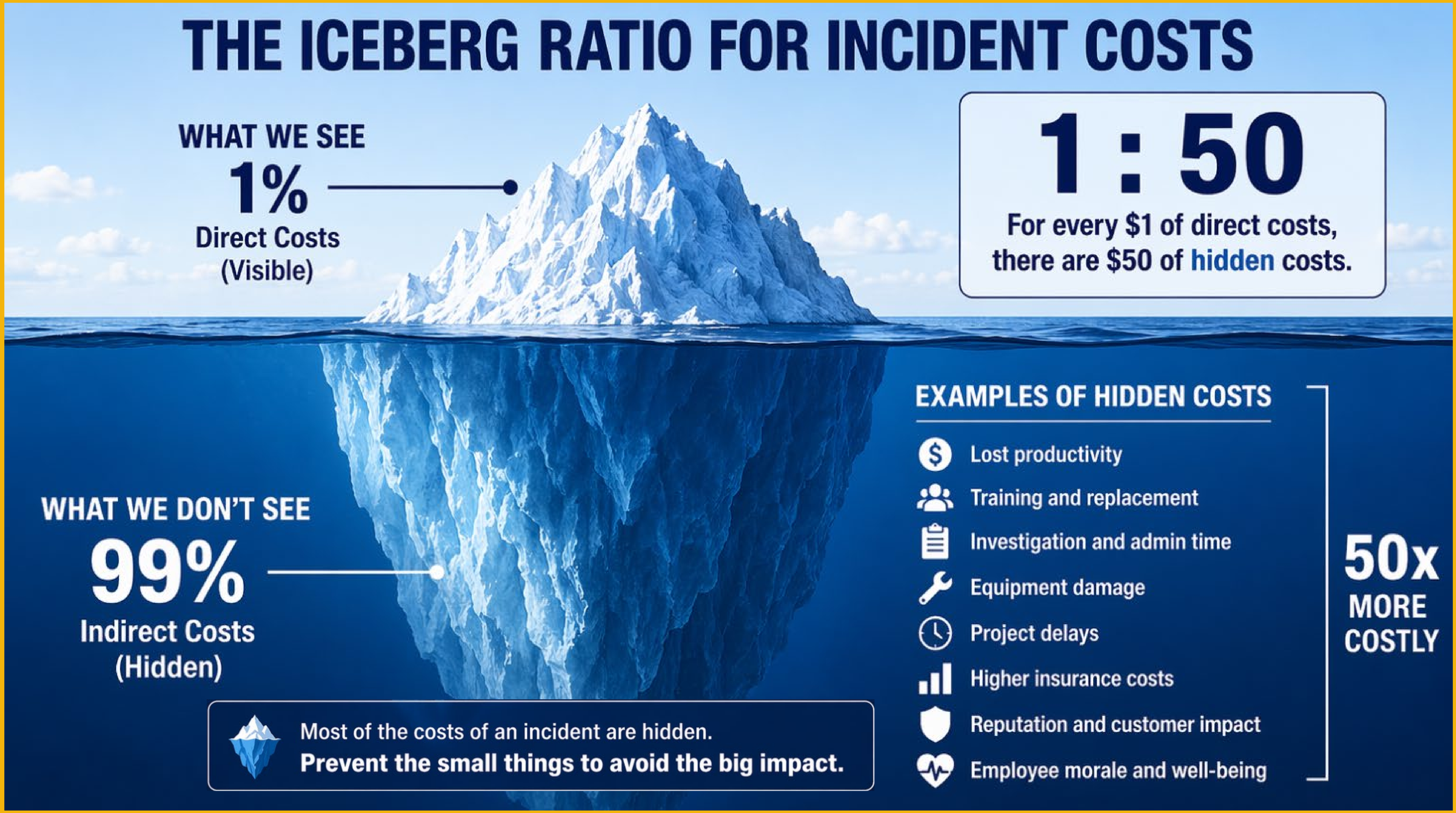
We often ignore everyday hazards because they're "normal"!

Worker Injury Case Story

Claim Notes:
Employee slipped and fell when existing a loader, landing on her buttocks and striking her head and back on the steps

- Lost time: **$140,238**
- Medical: **$681,583**
- Expenses: **$33,441**

Total: $855,262


THE ICEBERG RATIO FOR INCIDENT COSTS
WHAT WE SEE
1%
Direct Costs
(Visible)
1 : 50
For every $1 of direct costs, there are $50 of hidden costs.
WHAT WE DON'T SEE
99%
Indirect Costs
(Hidden)
EXAMPLES OF HIDDEN COSTS
Lost productivity
Training and replacement
Investigation and admin time
Equipment damage
Project delays
Higher insurance costs
Reputation and customer impact
Employee morale and well-being
50x
MORE
COSTLY
Most of the costs of an incident are hidden.
Prevent the small things to avoid the big impact.

Public Liability Case Story

Claim Notes: *A minor claimant tripped on a section of sidewalk causing injury to his arm and shoulder. The sidewalk was allegedly marked as a hazard but had not yet been repaired.*

Total Cost:
$60,899

Why Does This Occur?

Hazards are normalized ("everyone knows that step")

- Lack of hazard reporting
- Lack of near-miss capture

No ownership of walking and working surfaces

- Facility inspections
- Park/Playground inspections
- Sidewalk inspections

Seasonal/weather-related complacency


Identify the hazards on the next slides


USDOT 123456
GVW 66,000

Solutions

Ownership of walking surfaces (who fixes what, how fast)

- Sidewalks, curbs, and right-of-way → Public Works/Streets
- Facility interiors (hallways, shops, offices) → Department leadership

Seasonal hazard plans (rain, algae, mud, debris)

- Pressure washing or blowing schedule (sidewalks, apparatus bays, pads)

Vehicle ingress/egress standards and training

- 3 points of contact

Hazard and near-miss reporting tied to corrective action (not discipline)

- Purpose of reporting is to identify AND correct hazards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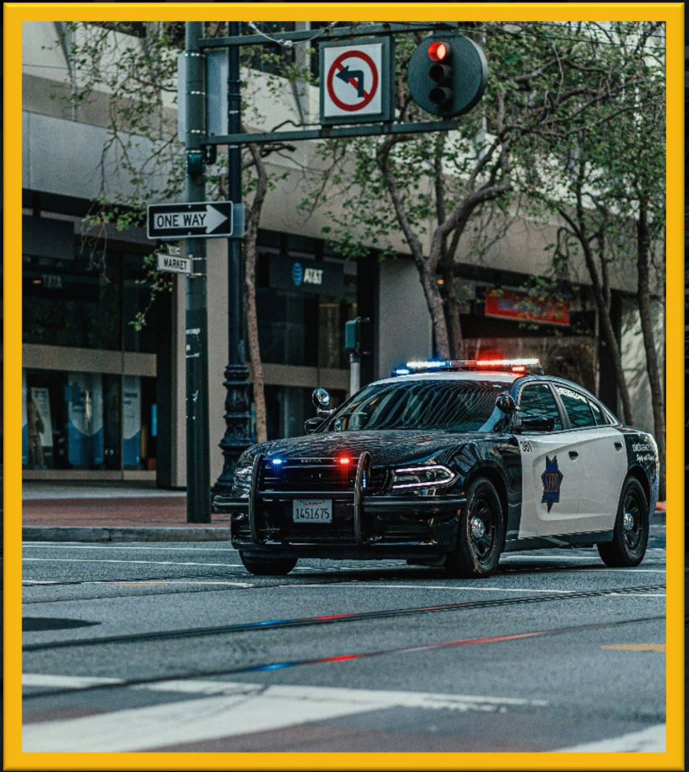
ISSUE 3

Public Safety & Confrontation-Related Injuries

OFFICER MAKING AN ARREST



POLICE CAR GOING THROUGH AN INTERSECTION

FIRE TRUCK IN TRAFFIC

What are Public Safety & Confrontation-Related Injuries?

Law enforcement and fire claims consistently involve:

- **Combative subjects** (resulting in sprains, falls, etc.)
- **Training-related injuries**
- **Emergency driving collisions** (Worker injury and Public liability)
- **PTSD and mental stress claims** (low frequency, high impact)

These claims often escalate in severity and duration!

Police Auto Liability Case Story

Claim Notes:

- *Officer in emergency response*
- *Intersection crossing*
- *Third-party impact*

This was a pursuit that resulted in a fatality.

Total Claim Cost: $1,692,746

- **Low frequency but have potentially catastrophic outcomes**

Officer Involved Injury Case Story

Claim Notes:
Officer was attempting to take a suspect into custody when the suspect grabbed her around the neck. Another officer took the suspect down to the ground where the suspect fell on top of the injured officer. Acromioclavicular separation of right shoulder.

- Lost time: **$420,131**
- Medical: **$255,457**
- Other expenses: **$69,557**

Total: $745,146

Why Does this Occur?

- **Confusing URGENCY with RISK ACCEPTANCE**
- **Physical encounters are inherent to the job**
  - Physical readiness is vital (Fitness, flexibility, strength, endurance)
  - Training realism without injury mitigation
  - Training injuries are 100% preventable
- **Cumulative psychological exposure**
  - Stigma delaying early intervention (although this is getting better)

What causes most emergency driving losses?

Solutions

- **Transition to defensive tactics that reduce physical strain, not increase it**
  - **For example:** BJJ based tactics
- **Improved training processes including better planning, supervision, communication and injury review**
- **Early mental health reporting pathways**
  - **Post-incident follow-up before symptoms escalate** (Police and Fire are getting much better at this)
- **Clear pursuit thresholds and ongoing supervisor oversight** (Dashcam/Body Cam Reviews)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ISSUE 4

Routine Collisions

PUBLIC WORKS TRUCK BACKING INTO ANOTHER VEHICLE

POLICE CAR REAR ENDING ANOTHER VEHICLE

GARBAGE TRUCK HITTING A MAILBOX

What are Routine Collisions?

Common themes:

- Rear-end collisions
- Backing incidents
- Intersections

- **Auto Liability and Auto Physical Damage dominate paid losses**
- **Workers' compensation data also shows employee injuries tied to collisions** (High severity, even when frequency is moderate)

Case Story

Claim Notes:
City Vehicle backed into parked vehicle. No injuries.

- **Cost Summary: $10,520**
- **Collisions resulted in ~$5.5M in total losses**
- **They are extremely *(way too)* frequent!**

How many backing incidents happened within your organization last year?

Why Does This Occur?

- High mileage exposure
- Backing and low-speed maneuvers
- Distraction and fatigue
- Inconsistent enforcement of driving behavior

Solutions

- **Backing reduction strategies and technologies**
  - Traffic cone placements when parking “Get Out and Look”
  - Installation of back up and 360 cameras for higher risk vehicles
- **Intersection risk training using real claim scenarios and near misses**
- **Telematics feedback loops** (coaching, not punishment)

Auto losses are one of the few areas where behavioral controls directly reduce collisions** (and costs)**!


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ISSUE 5


Overexertion

What Are Overexertion Injuries?

Sprain and sprain–type injuries dominate claims volume and a significant portion of incurred cost, especially:

- Back injuries
- Shoulder injuries
- Knee injuries
- Repetitive-use/strain complaints

These injuries frequently transition from medical-only to lost time, driving costs often with a long-tail!

Who Is At Risk?

Sprain and strain injuries appear across almost all job classifications:

- Public works
- Utilities
- Parks
- Recreation
- Clerical/office roles
- Fire and law enforcement

Case Story

Claim Notes:
Injured employee was lifting a five-gallon bucket of gravel mixing concrete and pulled muscle in low back area.

This is the single largest cost driver:
~$6.25M (High frequency and high severity)

- Lost time: **$8,702**
- Medical: **$85,618**
- Other expenses: **$8,363**

Total: **$102,683**

Why Does This Occur?

- **Manual handling is still relied on instead of engineering controls**
- **Informal lifting practices**
  (“one last lift,” “helping real quick”)
- **Fitness/training injuries not treated as work exposures**
  (Very common in Police and Fire)
- **Aging workforce and cumulative trauma**

What best prevents most lifting injuries?

Solutions

- **You CANNOT train your way out of physics**
(In other words lifting training does not work!)
- **Need a job-specific ergonomic risk identification**
- **Use mechanical aids for common lifts or material handling**
- **Conduct pre-task planning for non-routine lifts**
- **Implement readiness programs including strength, endurance and flexibility** (Pre-shift warmups)


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SUMMARY

Rank	Loss Driver	Line	5-Year Cost
1	Manual Material Handling / Overexertion	WC	$6.25M
2	Routine Vehicle Collisions	WC + PL	$5.5M
3	Public Safety and Confrontation - Related Injuries	WC + PL	$4.0M
4	Slips, Trips & Falls	WC + PL	$2.25M
5	Exposures	WC	$1.5M
	Top 5 Total	WC + PL	~ $19.5M

Workers' Compensation Heat Map

Cause	Frequency	Severity	Overall Risk
Manual Material Handling / Overexertion	Very High	High	
Slips, Trips & Falls	High	Moderate	
Law Enforcement / Physical Encounters	Moderate	High	
Training & Fitness Injuries	Moderate	Moderate	
Repetitive Motion / Ergonomic Stress	Moderate	High (creep)	
Vehicle-Related Employee Injuries (MVA)	Low–Moderate	High	
Environmental / Biological Exposure	Moderate	Moderate	
Heat Stress / Environmental Conditions	Low–Moderate	High	
Struck-By / Caught-Between	Moderate	Moderate	
Psychological Stress / PTSD	Low	Very High	

Low
Minimal risk; continue monitoring and controls

Moderate
Manage with standard controls and training

High
Require additional controls and close monitoring

Very High
Immediate action required; prioritize risk reduction

Property and Liability Heat Map

Cause	Frequency	Severity	Overall Risk
Vehicle Rear-End Collisions	High	High	
Vehicle Backing / Low-Speed Maneuvers	Very High	Moderate	
Intersection / Failure-to-Yield	Moderate	Very High	
Emergency Response / Pursuit Driving	Low	Very High	
Fixed Object / Property Strikes	High	Low to Mod	
Multi-Vehicle Chain Collisions	Low	Very High	
Passenger / Third-Party Falls (Transit)	Moderate	High	
Flying Debris / Load Securement	Low to Mod	Moderate	
Weather / Environmental Damage	Low	Moderate	
Vandalism / Comprehensive Losses	Moderate	Low	

Low
Minimal risk; continue monitoring and controls

Moderate
Manage with standard controls and training

High
Require additional controls and close monitoring

Very High
Immediate action required; prioritize risk reduction

Combined Heat Map

Risk Theme	WC Impact	PL Impact	Enterprise Risk
Human Movement (lifting, walking, climbing)	Very High	Low	Very High
Driving Behavior (routine)	High	Very High	Very High
Driving Behavior (emergency/pursuit)	Moderate	Very High	Very High
Training Practices	High	Low	High
Environmental Conditions	High	Moderate	High
Public Interaction / Confrontation	High	High	High
Mental Health Exposure	Very High	Low	High

80%

Low
Minimal risk; continue monitoring and controls

Moderate
Manage with standard controls and training

High
Require additional controls and close monitoring

Very High
Immediate action required; prioritize risk reduction


1
FOCUS ON HIGH-REPEAT, LOW-DRAMA INJURIES
RIP
Not fatalities.
Not rare events.
Daily work injuries are your biggest controllable loss driver.
2
TREAT TRAINING, FITNESS, AND DRIVING AS WORK EXPOSURES
TRAINING
FITNESS
WORK EXPOSURES
DRIVING
The data does not distinguish between “training injury” and “work injury”, neither should your controls.
3
MOVE FROM “POLICY COMPLIANCE” TO EXPOSURE OWNERSHIP
Every recurring loss type has:
A LOCATION
A TASK
A DECISION POINT
AN OWNER
Assign ownership.
Drive accountability.
Reduce repeat injuries.
FOCUS. TREAT EXPOSURES. TAKE OWNERSHIP. REDUCE REPEAT LOSSES.

Final Challenge

If you leave today and treat this like "training," **nothing** changes!

If you leave today and **take responsibility** for risk management and assign ownership to exposures everything changes!

Leverage the **FMIT Risk and Safety Team** and the many resources we provide!

Questions?

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