

ALASKA ECONOMIC

TRENDS

FOURTH QUARTER 1996
NEW HIRES

OCCUPATIONAL FATALITY
COUNT DECLINES



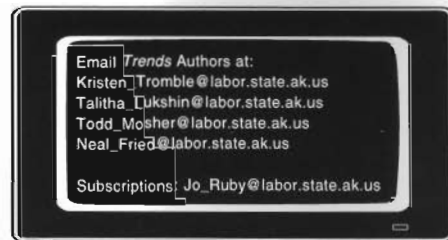
September 1997

A TRENDS PROFILE—

HAINES BOROUGH

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR • TONY KNOWLES, GOVERNOR

ALASKA ECONOMIC TRENDS



<http://www.state.ak.us/local/akpages/LABOR/research/research.htm>

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- 1 A Trends Profile—Haines Borough
- 10 Occupational Fatality Count Declines from 1995 to 1996
- 17 Health and Mechanical Occupations in Demand During Fourth Quarter 1996
- 24 Alaska's Employment Scene First Half of 1997—Unemployment Down; Employment Up, Slightly

Employment Scene Tables:

- 26 Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment—Alaska and Anchorage
- 26 Hours and Earnings for Selected Industries
- 27 Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment in Other Economic Regions
- 28 Unemployment Rates by Region and Census Area

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Haines Borough

by Kristen Tromble

Haines Borough's nearly 2,400 square miles of rainforest, lakes, rivers and mountains lie at the northern end of Lynn Canal in the northern extremities of the Southeast Alaska Panhandle. Roughly double the area of the state of Rhode Island, Haines Borough shares part of its border with Canada's British Columbia.

With access through the Coast Mountains, Haines bridges the waterways of Southeast and the interiors of Alaska and Canada. This strategic location has nurtured the development of transportation and trade as strong influences on the Haines economy. Throughout its history, these industries have combined with and complemented the use of the area's natural resources to sustain the population. The Tlingits, Alaska Natives who first settled the area, controlled the mountain passes and traded fish products with interior Indian tribes in exchange for animal skins. Caucasian settlers arrived around 1880 and established canneries. Near the turn of the century, Haines flourished as a supply point for gold miners—first, those rushing to the Klondike; and then, those working the nearby gold discovery of the Porcupine Mining District.

Haines' more recent history includes a sawmill that operated in the 1960s and '70s and sporadically in the '80s. The sawmill reopened in late 1987. Employment peaked in 1990 with 140 employees, 14.5% of Haines' total employment in that year. However, with the closure of the mill the following year, sawmill employment returned to zero.

Haines Borough includes the city of Haines and the communities of Covenant Life, Lutak, Mosquito Lake and Excursion Inlet. The Tlingit village of Klukwan, population 140, is surrounded by and economically attached to the Haines Borough but is not included in it. In 1996, the Borough's population approached 2,400, averaging out to a population density of about one person per square

mile. Of this total, however, 1,400 reside in the city of Haines. With the exception of a cannery in Excursion Inlet, the city of Haines is the center of most of the borough's economic activity.

Manufacturing shrinks; services and retail expand

Since 1984, wage and salary employment has fluctuated, reaching a high of 964 in 1987 and dropping to a low of 697 in 1992 following the sawmill closure. In 1996, employment climbed to 876, the third highest level in 17 years. (See Table 1 and Figure 7.) Haines' economy appears to be successfully transitioning through a significant shift in industry mix. Mirroring state and regional trends, contraction in the manufacturing sector has been

Kristen Tromble is a labor economist with the Research and Analysis Section, Administrative Services Division, Alaska Department of Labor. She is located in Juneau.

Haines bridges the waterways of Southeast and the interiors of Alaska and Canada

offset by gains in services and retail trade. In 1990, manufacturing firms provided over 25 percent of wage and salary employment in Haines. In 1996, manufacturing's share had dropped to under 12 percent. Almost all of the remaining manufacturing jobs were in seafood processing. (See Figure 1.)

Over the same period, the services and retail sectors combined added more jobs than manufacturing lost. Services expansion occurred in hotels, amusement and recreation, and membership organizations. Employment in health care, the next largest services employer, has also grown. In retail, food stores, eating and drinking places and miscellaneous retail outlets have added jobs. Many of the new retail and services jobs appear to be tourism related.

Transportation and tourism drive growth

With access by road, sea, and air, transportation links may be Haines' greatest economic asset.

Utilizing the area's strategic transportation routes and scenic setting, tourism has developed as a driving force behind the economy. Haines is one of only three Southeast Alaska communities with

road access to the outside. The Haines Highway runs north through British Columbia and the Yukon Territory, connecting to the Alaska Highway, and thereby allowing access to the Alaskan Interior, Canada and the contiguous United States.

As a port along the Alaska Marine Highway System, Haines is a jumping-off-point to the state's several-hundred-mile-long panhandle region. Southeast residents and tourists can ferry up to Haines, then take the road north or east. Likewise, Alaskans and tourists can drive to Haines, then catch the ferry to other Southeast Alaska communities. Despite general tourism growth, the number of ferry passengers disembarking in Haines was down 13.0% (to just under 39,500) in 1996 compared to its 1992 peak of over 45,000. Both northbound and southbound highway traffic peaked in 1993.

At the Haines airport, both passenger and freight traffic is increasing. An 8,800-square-foot addition is planned for the airport terminal, which recently shifted from local government to private ownership. Tourism accounts for some of the growth. Cruise ship passengers can tour the Inside Passage and fly home from Haines. Haines offers the closest access to Glacier Bay National Park, and flightseeing tours are also popular.

Figure • 1

Sawmill Closure Changes Industry Mix Haines Borough—Employment by Industry

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.

¹FIRE = Finance, Insurance and Real Estate.

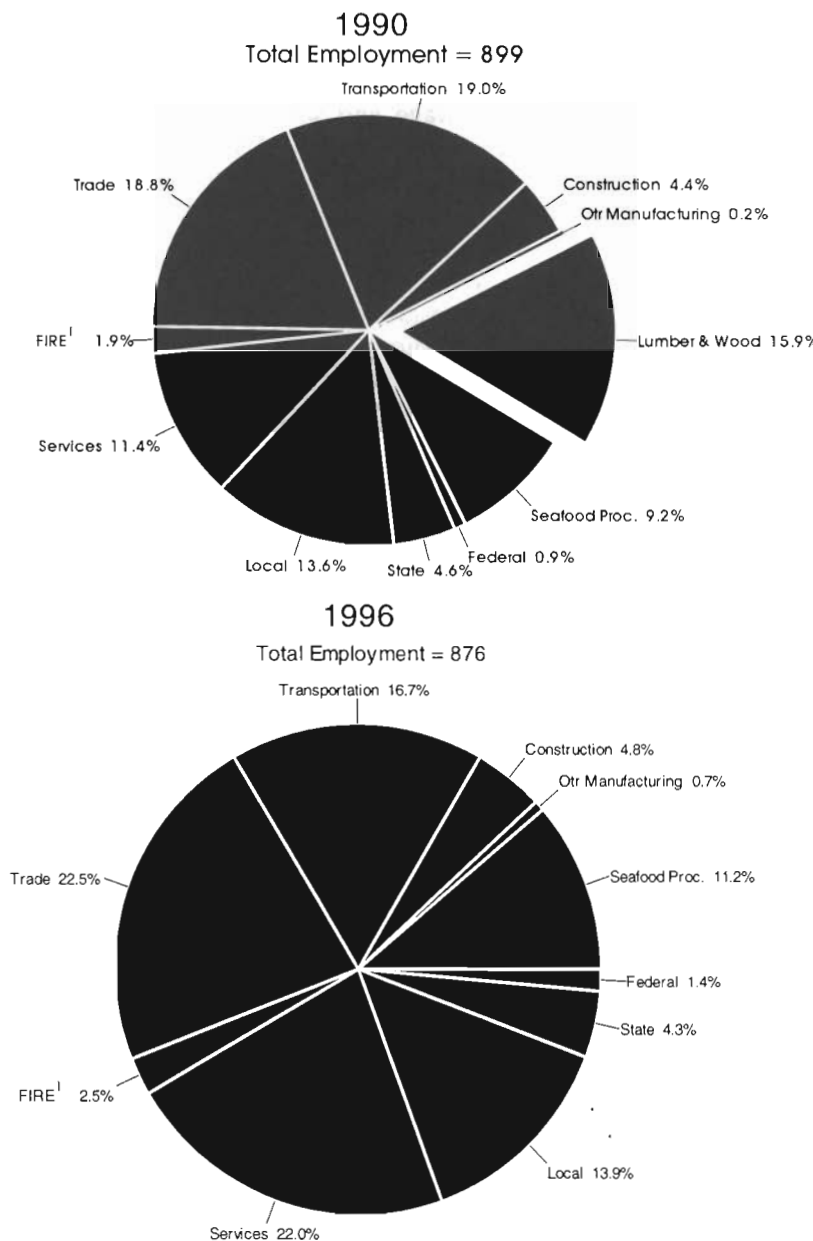


Figure • 2

Small cruise ships have brought an increasing number of tourists to Haines. A recent dock expansion which allows larger ships to dock is also boosting passenger counts. The number of cruise passengers has more than doubled from 1994 and is expected to exceed 105,000 in 1997. The upward trend is expected to continue through 1998. (See Figure 2.)

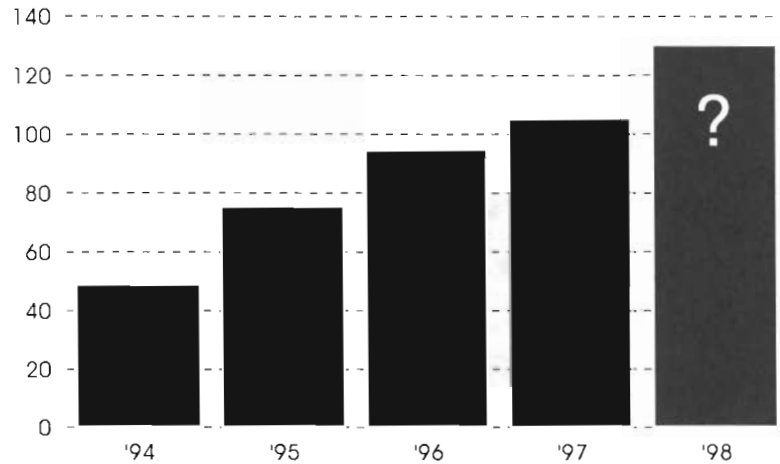
New private ferry services also have increased passenger traffic.

A venture between Klukwan, Inc., and Allen Marine of Sitka shuttles passengers between Skagway and Haines from May to October. However, employment in water transportation has dropped due to losses in marine cargo handling. This industry's health moved up and then down along with the sawmill's. Some pick-up in water transportation may be seen as private ferry service increases. Freight activity has also perked as strong demand in the Alaskan Interior has increased the volume of freight transitting Haines.

As a tourist destination, Haines has several attractions, besides its accessibility. Haines offers spectacular scenery and convenient access to three national parks, including Glacier Bay. It boasts abundant wildlife, both marine and land animals, including moose, bears, and mountain goats, and in the winter, the largest gathering of bald eagles in the world in the Alaska Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve. Wilderness activities include river rafting and kayaking. Haines is a full-service, working community, providing a vari-

More People Cruise into Haines

Thousands of passengers

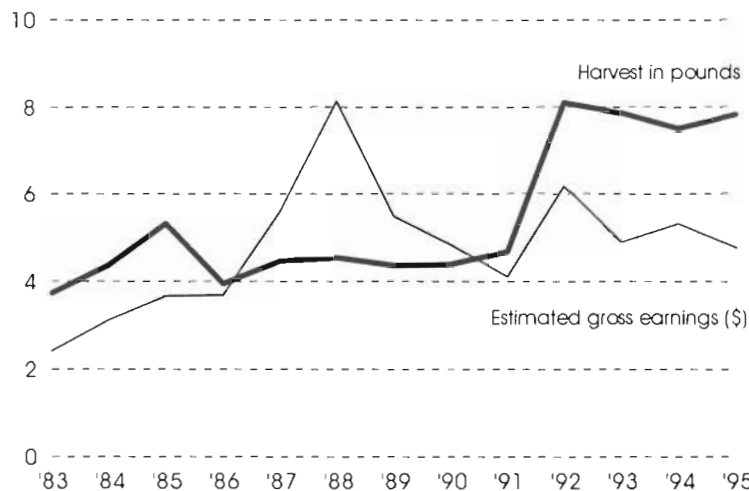


Source: Haines Visitor Center. 1998 projection based on additional data from Cruise Line Agencies of Alaska.

Figure • 3

Haines' Seafood Harvest

Millions



Source: Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission.

ety of services and conveniences not available in many other rural areas of the state.

This year and last, local residents noted that the number of independent tourists appears to have dropped, a change that could be reflected in less

Figure • 4

Haines' Average Monthly Wage is Lower

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.

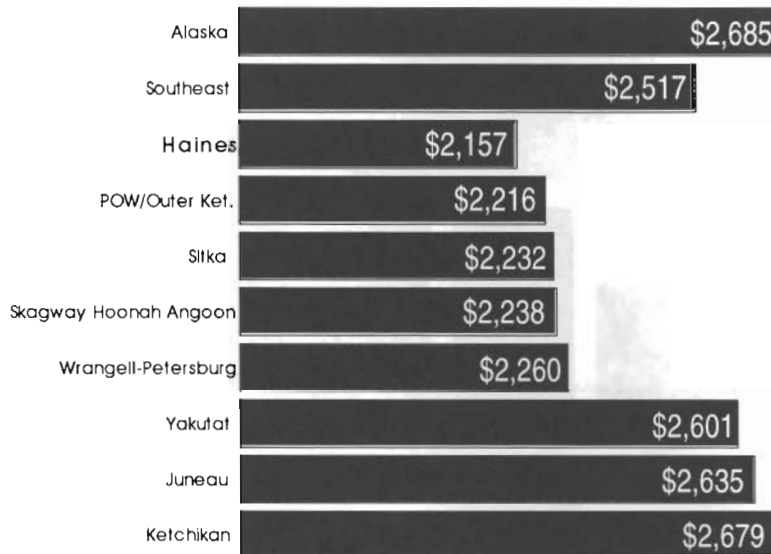


Table • 1

Haines Borough Employment by Industry¹

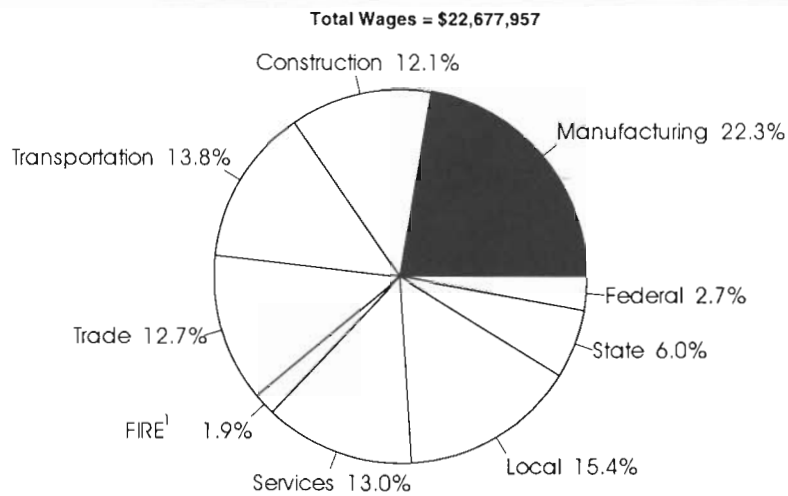
	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
<i>1988 and 1989, manufacturing and total employment adjusted for employment that was misreported in Haines.</i>									
Total	738	799	899	827	697	844	845	799	876
Construction	27	39	39	45	47	64	57	57	42
Manufacturing	178	191	225	152	80	166	144	104	104
Seafood Proc.	77	72	82	89	67	128	111	89	98
Lumber & Wood	96	118	141	60	9	33	28	10	2
Transportation	104	131	169	167	116	130	149	149	146
Trade	168	155	167	158	145	166	180	165	197
Wholesale	0	0	4	7	4	4	5	2	1
Retail	168	155	163	151	141	162	175	163	196
FIRE	30	16	17	15	16	17	16	16	22
Services	88	94	101	113	112	121	124	143	193
Nonclassified or Misc.	1	0	6	0	0	1	0	0	0
Government	139	168	170	173	175	174	171	160	172
Federal	9	9	8	9	9	9	10	11	12
State	37	43	41	39	38	37	38	34	38
Local	93	116	121	125	128	128	123	115	122
<i>1990-1993 government and total employment adjusted for miscounted non-covered local government workers.</i>									

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.

road and ferry passenger traffic. The Summer Olympics in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1996 and the spate of floods and other weather-related disasters across the country are cited as possible reasons for the decline. Another major concern is that cuts in the state's tourism marketing program have resulted in fewer independent visitors—a development that could portend a longer term downward trend.

In attempts to boost the number of independent tourists, the community is developing events that target specific groups. For instance, this summer, a major bicycle race attracted around 1,000 riders from across the nation, along with their support teams

Manufacturing Provides Most Private Sector Wages—Haines Borough 1996



¹FIRE = Finance, Insurance and Real Estate.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.

and families. Special activities, including a mountain run, have been organized around the July Fourth holiday. Other events include an annual home brew and craft beer festival and Actfest, a biannual gathering of drama troupes. Each August, Haines hosts the Southeast Alaska state fair. In winter, visitors are treated to a spectacular nature-viewing event when thousands of eagles gather at the bald eagle preserve along the Chilkat River flats near Klukwan from October through January.

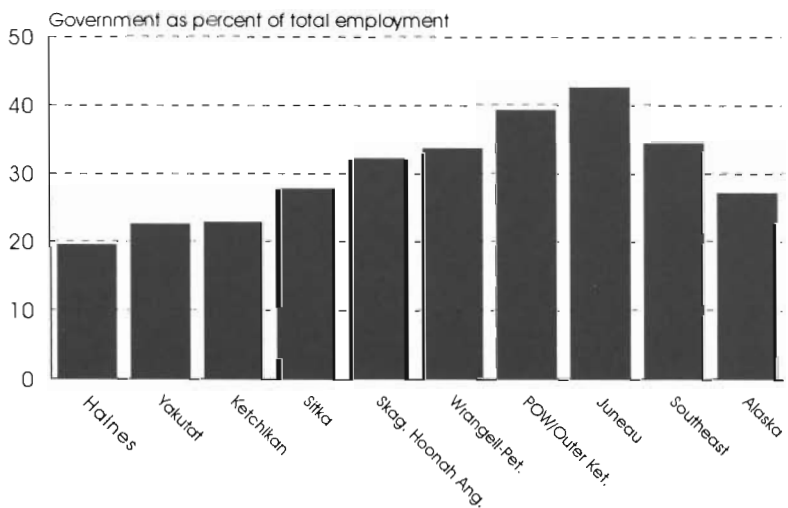
A proposed development on Wards Cove Packing land at Letnikof Cove would expand tourist-related infrastructure. This facility could include a small marina, cannery, maritime museum, salmon bake, convenience store and RV park. The complex may also include rental space for small businesses and artists. If this project moves forward, the salmon bake and construction of some facilities could begin next year.

The community is also working to expand another segment of its visitor industry—convention business. It has facilities to handle meetings of up to 300 people.

Seafood continues resource tradition

Currently, the seafood industry is the only traditional resource-based industry providing significant employment. In fact, Wards Cove Packing's plant in Excursion Inlet is the Borough's largest employer and wage provider. (See Table 2.) Typically for this industry, jobs are seasonal with most employment occurring in the third quarter. In

Haines has Smaller Government Sector



Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.

Table • 2

Haines' Top Employers

Rank	Industry	Employment
1	Wards Cove Packing Co. Inc.	Seafood processing 96
2	Haines Borough School Dist.	Local government 70
3	City of Haines	Local government 27
4	Northern Timber Corporation	Heavy construction 26
5	LAB Flying Service Inc.	Air transportation 25 ¹
6	Howsers Supermarket LTD	Food store 22
6	Williams Inc.	Food store 22
7	Hotel Halsingland Inc.	Hotel 21
8	Chilkat Guides LTD	Amusement & rec. 20
9	Haines Airway Inc.	Air transportation 19
9	Haines Borough	Local government 19
10	Port Chilkoot Potlatch Inc.	Eating places 18

¹Estimate based on information provided by employer.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.

1996, processing employment spiked from virtually none in the winter to over 500 jobs in July. As many seafood processing jobs are held by non-residents, the impact of these jobs and wages on the local economy is muted. However, the plant does offer job opportunities to interested Alaska residents and contributes tax revenue to local government.

Fish harvesting, particularly a local gillnet fleet, has been an important contributor to the Haines economy. In 1995, 117 Haines residents held commercial permits, earning an estimated \$4.8 million. Salmon made up over 88 percent of the pounds of fish they caught. As elsewhere in the state, though recent harvests have been strong, low salmon prices have held estimated earnings down. (See Figure 3.) This trend has likely continued since 1995, weakening this portion of Haines' economy. Reportedly, some fishers have found expenses running higher than gained income; some are leaving the industry. A decline in harvesters' disposable real income also impacts local providers of goods and services.

Figure • 7

Haines' Population Grows Despite Unsteady Employment

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.



Another resource-based industry, mining, could again offer some returns to Haines, if the proposed Kensington gold mine moves forward. Nearby in the Juneau Borough, the mine could offer job opportunities to local residents willing to commute. In recognition of this opportunity, Klukwan, Inc., has joined a consortium with mine owner Coeur Alaska that aims to provide training and jobs to qualified shareholders.

Construction weathers industry shift

The recent economic changes do not appear to have negatively impacted construction. Construction employment has run at higher levels throughout the 1990s when compared to the previous decade. The number of building permits issued was highest in the most recent four of the last 10 years. Residential construction is expected to slow this year because two new subdivisions were recently completed. However, this trend may be short lived as new subdivisions could open up by next year. Work on the tourism complex at Letnikof Cove could also boost construction employment.

Public construction spending this year includes \$2.5 million for trail work in the bald eagle preserve. Next year, there is a possibility that \$10 million in work on the Haines Highway may commence.

Wages lower than average, income higher

On face value, total wages appear to have held up well. Though wages dropped in 1992, by 1996 they reached their second highest level in at least nine years, within 1.5% of 1990's peak level. However, when inflation is considered, a real decline in purchasing power emerges. Inflation-adjusted wages (based on the Anchorage CPI-U) were 18.1% less in 1996 than in 1990.

Wages in Haines have run well below the regional average since at least 1988. In 1996, Haines'

A Snapshot of Haines Borough Current Statistics—1996 unless noted

	Alaska	Haines
Population	607,800	2,373
The population of Haines is older		
Median age	30.9	37.2
with fewer children, more seniors		
Percent under 20	34.1	29.7
Percent 20 to 64	61.0	60.6
Percent 65 years & over	4.9	9.7
and is more predominantly white		
Percent White	74.6	85.3
Percent Native American	16.5	14.2
Percent Black	4.5	0.2
Percent Asian & Pacific Islander	4.4	0.3
and slightly more female		
Percent female	47.8	49.1
Fewer people have degrees...		
Percent high school graduate or higher (1990) ¹	86.6	78.5
Percent bachelors degree or higher (1990) ¹	23.0	17.6
and more are looking for work.		
Percent of all 16 years+ in labor force	51.2	68.7
Percent unemployed	7.4	10.8
Wages are lower		
Annual average monthly earnings (1995)	\$2,691	\$2,296
but incomes, higher.		
Personal per capita income (1994) ²	\$23,437	\$26,226
Percent of total personal income (1994) from... ²		
Transfer payments	16.8	17.1
Dividends, interest and rent	10.6	15.5
Earnings ³	72.6	67.4
Percent of earnings (1994) from... ^{2, 4}		
Wages & salaries ⁴	77.5	63.0
Other labor income ⁴	8.6	9.1
Proprietor's income ⁴	13.8	27.8

¹Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

²Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis.

³Earnings based on place of residence.

⁴Earnings based on place of work.

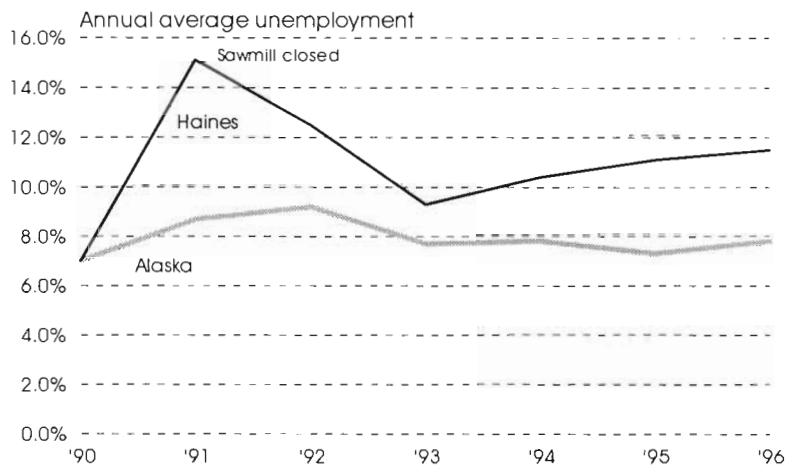
Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.

annual average monthly wage was the lowest in the region, falling \$528 below the statewide average. (See Figure 4.) One factor is the predominance of seafood processing, which comprises most manufacturing in the Borough and is its

Figure • 8

Unemployment Above Statewide Average

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.



largest wage-paying industry. (See Figure 5.) Jobs in this industry pay a lower average wage. These jobs have increased their share of the wage pie, with the loss of generally higher paying timber jobs.

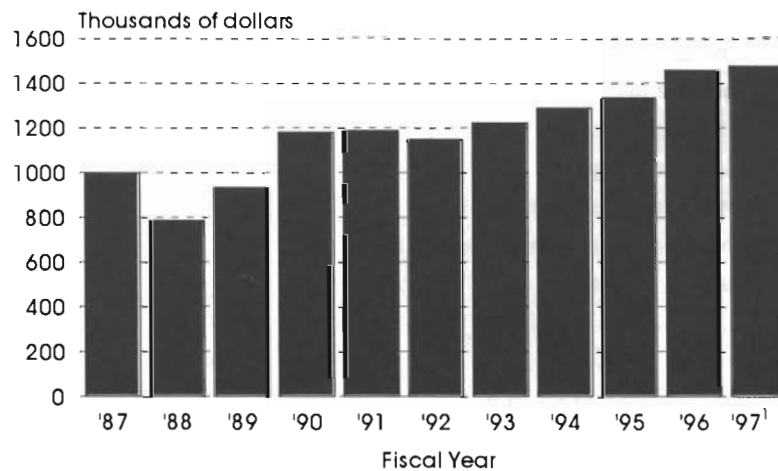
Another industry with higher average pay is notably smaller in Haines. Haines is less dependent on the government sector than any other comparable area in the region. (See Figure 6.) In 1996, the combined government sector provided less than a fifth of employment and less than a quarter of wages. Statewide, federal, state and local governments contributed over 27 percent of employment and over 31 percent of wages. Local government accounted for the bulk of the government jobs in Haines. Over 70 percent of the local government jobs were education related.

Figure • 9

Sales Tax Collections Rise Combined City and Borough of Haines

Source: Haines Borough.

¹Includes an increase of 0.5 percentage point in the Borough tax rate, effective Jan. 1, 1997.



Despite the lower average wages, in 1994, per capita income was higher in Haines than statewide. Compared to all Alaskans, Haines residents received a significantly higher proportion of income from dividends, interest and rent, and proprietor's income (which includes most income from fish harvesting) and a much lower proportion from wages and salaries. (See Table 3.)

Haines attracts retirees

After tourism, Haines' growing status as a retirement community may be its most important economic asset. Local perception is that the number of

retirees moving into Haines has been on a definite gradual upward trend, with many coming from out of state. The retirees bring income into the community that helps offset the declining wage base and may partly explain the greater proportion of income from dividends, interest and rent. They also have helped support the local property market. Since the late 1980s, population has trended upwards despite the economy's unsteady employment performance. (See Figure 7.)

Age data do not belie the perception of new retirees. The age profile of Haines does differ significantly from the state's. The Haines population has been older than that of both the state and the southeast region. This trend continued in 1996 when the median age of Haines residents was 37.2, compared to that of Southeast, 34.5, and statewide, 30.9. However, since 1990, the region's median age increased 10.0%, somewhat faster than the Haines increase of 9.0%. The statewide increase, at 5.8%, was much slower.

Other economic indicators mixed

Since 1990, unemployment in Haines has run above the statewide average. The rate, which peaked in 1991 following the sawmill closure, has been gradually increasing since 1993. (See Figure 8.) However, other signs follow more positive trends. The amount of sales tax collected has trended upward. (See Figure 9.) Property assessments also have risen.

Summary

Transportation remains an important industry in the Haines Borough. The impacts of tourism and retirees also boost its economy. However, the influence of natural-resource-based industries on Haines' economy has diminished. Timber industry employment will likely be limited to some smaller scale logging. Seafood processing and harvesting still play important roles, though low salmon prices have hurt harvesters.

Occupational Fatality Count Declines from 1995 to 1996

by Talitha Lukshin

This Bureau of Labor Statistics program collects data in all 50 states and in Alaska is conducted cooperatively with the Alaska Department of Labor. The census records workplace fatalities of the self-employed, civilian and military government employees, as well as all private sector wage and hour employees.

Occupational fatalities in Alaska increased from 1994 to 1995, but dropped again in 1996, according to the latest results of the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI). (See Figure 1.)

Of 78 occupational deaths in 1995, 24 occurred in the crash of a military AWACS jet. Without this incident, occupational deaths would have declined in 1995. In 1996, there were 63 occupational fatalities, almost half of which were related to water vehicle accidents.

Alaska CFOI fatalities differ greatly from national CFOI trends

As shown in Table 1, Alaska CFOI water vehicle and aircraft accidents accounted for nearly 65 percent of the 358 Alaska fatality cases from 1992 to 1996. Nationally, however, the majority of the cases are classified in "other transportation" and "violent acts" categories.

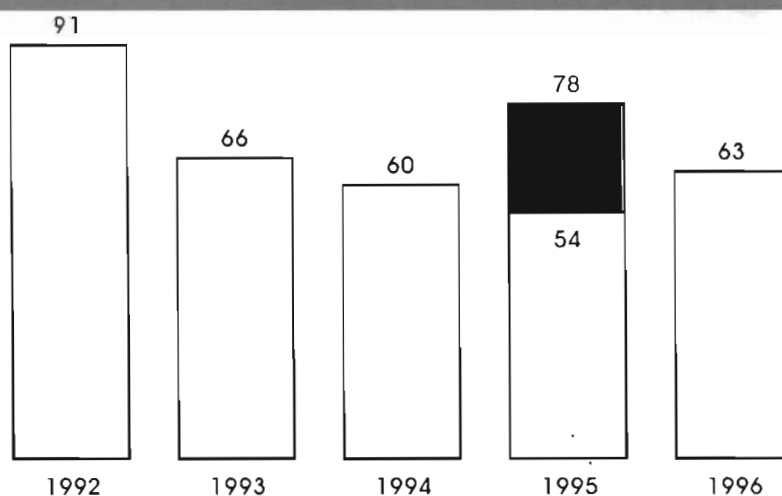
An incident rate calculated using a five-year average indicates that Alaska's rate of occupational fatality is four times the national rate. (See Table 2.) From a high of 31 to a low of 19, the fatality incidence rate for five years averaged 22 per 100,000 workers. Air and water transportation accidents contribute greatly to the difference. Overall low state employment relative to the high number of occupational fatalities in a few industries, such as commercial fishing and air transportation, results in a much higher rate for Alaska.

Water vehicle accidents account for 46% of deaths in 1996

In 1992, the first year of the census, fatalities related to water vehicle accidents peaked at 38, dropping to a low of 14 in 1994. However, this accident group increased to 22 in 1995 and again in 1996 to 29. In all, 11 workers died in vessels that sank or capsized in 1995, increasing to 13 in 1996. (See Tables 3 and 4.)

Figure • 1

Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, Number of Deaths, Alaska, 1992-1996



Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.

Note: 24 deaths in 1995 were related to a single military air crash.

These counts were greatly influenced by the loss of a crabbing vessel's entire crew in each of the past two years. In 1995, the *F/V Northwest Mariner* capsized resulting in six fatalities. Two of the six crew were found without survival suits in a life raft, dead of hypothermia. The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) investigation indicated that the capsizing was most likely related to environmental factors including high winds, heavy seas, and icing. In 1996, the crabbing vessel *F/V Pacesetter* went down with seven crewmembers aboard. The USCG investigators suspect "free surface effect," or the effect of water in the hold moving freely

Major Event Groupings¹, CFOI, Alaska and U.S., 1992 to 1996

	Alaska							U.S.					
	'92	'93	'94	'95	'96	Total	Percent	'92	'93	'94	'95	Total ²	Percent
Total	91	66	60	78	63	358		6,217	6,331	6,588	6,210	25,346	
Water Vehicle	38	21	14	22	29	124	34.6	109	120	92	84	405	1.6
Aircraft	26	22	10	34	16	108	30.2	353	282	424	278	1,337	5.3
Other Transportation	4	4	6	11	6	31	8.7	2,022	2,099	2,224	2,198	8,543	33.7
Contact with object	10	4	9	4	4	31	8.7	1,004	1,045	1,015	915	3,979	15.7
Violent Acts	4	12	6	3	6	31	8.7	1,281	1,329	1,308	1,262	5,180	20.4
Falls	-	-	-	1	0	7	2.0	600	618	661	643	2,522	10.0
Fires & Explosions	0	1	3	0	1	5	1.4	167	204	202	208	781	3.1
Exposure	6	0	10	2	1	19	5.3	605	592	638	598	2,433	9.6
Other	-	-	-	1	0	2	0.6	76	43	24	24	167	0.7

¹The event grouping is coded using the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Injury and Illness Classification Structure (OIIICS).
²U.S. data for 1996 will not be available in time for release in this article.
 - = not publishable as presented.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section and the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

from side to side. Traveling to the fishing grounds, the vessel had its deck fully loaded with crab pots which added to its roll, compromising stability.

Other factors in the 1996 increase were six cases reported in the cruise ship industry and three diving accidents aboard fishing vessels. Five crewmembers were lost in a fire aboard the *M/V Universe Explorer*. In another cruise ship incident, a deckhand was struck by a snapped line during a wind storm. Two fishermen died while scuba diving to clear line or net material from the vessel's propeller. Another fisherman died while diving to gather sea cucumbers. Faulty diving gear or entanglement caused these diving accidents.

Importance of survival suits/smoke alarms evident in 1995 and 1996

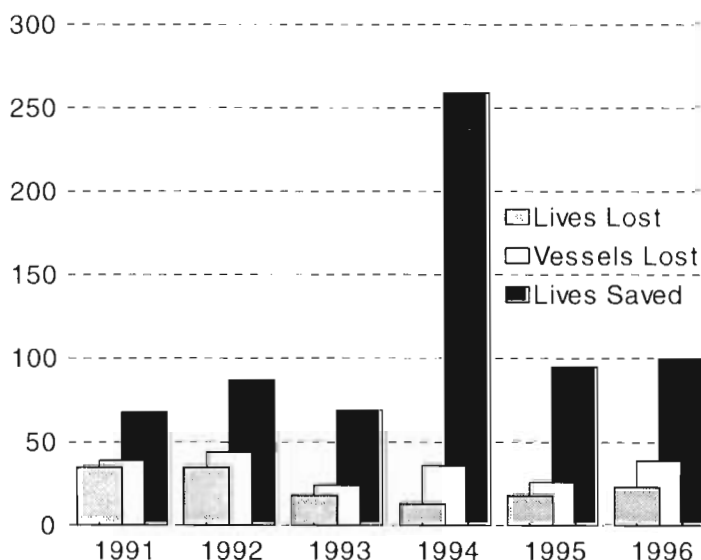
The importance of properly fitted survival suits was evident again in 1995 and 1996. Workers died after abandoning ship without having the hoods of their suits on and/or the zippers se-

cure. In some cases, there was not enough time to get the suit on at all. In prior hypothermic drowning cases, the person entering the water without the hood secure became hypothermic within 20 minutes.

Six lives were lost in two vessel fires during 1995 and 1996. Surprisingly, no smoke alarms were installed in the area of the fire for either the fishing

Figure • 2

Fishing Industry Losses, Alaska, 1991-1996



Note: In 1994, 132 crew were saved in a single rescue.

Source: United States Coast Guard, 17th District, Fishing Vessel Safety Office.

Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) Incidence Rates¹, Alaska and U.S., 1992-1996

Year	AK CFOI ²	Alaska CPS Employment ³	Alaska Rate per 100,000	U.S. Rate per 100,000
1992	82	261,155	31	5
1993	64	274,788	23	5
1994	54	281,417	19	5
1995	51	281,502	19	5
1996	61	291,246	21	NA
Average	62	278,022	22	5

¹An incidence rate is calculated as $(N/W) \times 100,000$ where N is the number of occupational fatal injuries and W is the number of workers employed, multiplied by a base number of workers. In this case, 100,000 workers is used.

²These CFOI counts shown here exclude military personnel, volunteer workers and workers under 16 years of age.

³Current Population Survey (CPS) employment for the civilian labor force 16 and older are estimates based on a monthly survey of Alaska households.

NA = Not Available (The U.S. 1996 incidence rates using the CPS will not be available until later this year.)

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.

according to the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), Alaska Field Station. The field station identified vessel design enhancements and careful attention to both loading and environmental factors as solutions to stability.* Personal flotation device use by fishermen was identified as an appropriate intervention for MOB drownings, other than line entanglements.

vessel or the cruise ship. Instead, heat-activated alarms were in place, delaying the response time.

Man-overboard hazards during crabbing or long-lining remain unchanged

Fishermen crabbing or long-lining were also at risk of being pulled overboard by lines attaching strings of crab pots or long lines of baited hooks. Since 1992, seven such cases have occurred with three recorded in 1996. The details are tragically similar. While the lines are going out, the crewmember becomes entangled, for example, while throwing out the anchor or freeing tangled pots, and is immediately pulled overboard with the gear.

In all, pulled over accounted for 21% of the man-overboard (MOB) cases from 1992 to 1996. Loss of footing or hold on a vessel, other than a skiff, accounted for nearly half of the MOB cases but the circumstances were varied and in some cases unknown. Alcohol was a factor in at least seven cases. There were five falls from skiffs and four workers were swept over by large waves in the five-year period from 1992-1996. Together, these two groupings accounted for 27% of the MOB cases. Except for one case, personal flotation devices were not used in any of the MOB cases documented.

NIOSH forwards primary prevention proposals for fishing industry

Primary prevention efforts are needed to address compromised vessel stability and falls overboard

Since the enactment of the Commercial Fishing Industry Vessel Safety Act in 1988, the USCG is now requiring survival suits, Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons (EPIRB), and life rafts to be carried onboard. Also, there must be one safety certified crewmember on each vessel to instruct others and conduct drills.

With these changes have come dramatic increases in the number of lives saved. (See Figure 2.) Fishing fatalities related to vessel sinkings are trending down. Fishermen are now able to stay alive longer and are located sooner after a vessel loss. However, the number of fishing fatalities is still high. Emphasis must now switch to prevention by addressing vessel stability and work hazards before the accident.

The number of air transportation deaths increases in 1996

Less the 24 deaths from a single military crash, 10 workers died in aircraft accidents in 1995. Of these, nine were pilots, with six specifically employed in the air transportation industry. In 1996, the number of pilots killed in air transportation accidents rose to 10, excluding self-employed.

An average of six pilots have been lost each year since 1992. Using employment data from the Alaska Department of Labor (AKDOL), Occupational Database, the fatality risk of pilots operating in unscheduled air transportation was 563 per 100,000 pilots from 1992 to 1996. (See Table 5.) In comparison, the 1995 national occupation-specific incidence rate for pilots was 97.

Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, Alaska, 1995

Event Grouping ¹	Cause	Total Cases	Occupation	Industry ²
Water Vehicle				
	Sinkings or capsized	10	Fishers	Commercial Fishing
		1	Ship Captain	Transportation, Water
	Fell overboard	3	Fishers	Commercial Fishing
		1	Technician	Manufacturing, Seafood
	Unknown	2	Trappers	Hunting, Trapping
	Onboard fire	1	Fisher	Commercial Fishing
	Fall from ladder	1	Stevedore	Transportation, Water
	Diving, clearing line or net from propeller	1	Fisher/Diver	Commercial Fishing
	Caught in winch	1	Fisher	Commercial Fishing
	Rescuing man-over-board	1	Fisher	Commercial Fishing
Aircraft				
		24	Military	Government, Armed Forces
		6	Pilots	Transportation, Air
		1	NR	NR
		2	Pilots	Commercial Fishing
		1	Pilot	Services, Recreational Camps
Other Transportation				
Highway	Military roadway accident	2	Military	Government, Armed Forces
	Brake failure	1	Laborer	Manufacturing, Wood Products
	Lost control on sharp curve	1	Truck Driver	Transportation, Trucking
	Defective brakes	1	Truck Driver	Manufacturing, Logging
	Mechanical failure	1	Truck Driver	Manufacturing, Logging
Nonhighway	Fell from/struck by front-end loader	1	Construction Trades	Government, Local
	Overtured crane	1	NR	Transportation, Water
	Overtured boom truck	1	Operator	Commercial Fishing
	Overtured tractor	1	Operator	Manufacturing, Wood Products
	Overtured water truck	1	Truck Driver	Construction, Highway
Exposure				
	Swept down river-drowning	1	Pilot	Transportation, Air
	Equipment contact with overhead powerlines	1	Helper	Construction, Miscellaneous
Contact with objects				
	Wind swept shipping containers over	1	Deckhand	Transportation, Water
	Beached boat roll over-blocked for repair	1	Fisher	Commercial Fishing
	Struck by falling derrick	1	Mining Occupations	Mining, Oil & Gas Field Svcs.
Falls				
	Fell from ladder replacing light bulbs	1	Electrician	Construction, Building
Violent Acts				
	Convenience store robbery	1	Clerk	Retail, Miscellaneous Sales
	Other	3	NR	NR
Unknown				
		1	Processor	Manufacturing, Seafood

¹Event grouping is coded using the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Injury and Illness Classification Structure (OIIICS).

²Industry is classified using the Standard Industrial Classifications Manual, 1987 Edition.

NR = not releaseable as presented. Data obtained from other than public information sources such as newspapers, OSHA, U.S. Coast Guard, or Workers' Compensation reports cannot be released.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.

Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, Alaska, 1996

¹Event grouping is coded using the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Injury and Illness Classification Structure (OIIICS).

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NR = not releaseable as presented. Data obtained from other than public information sources such as newspapers, OSHA, U.S. Coast Guard, or Workers' Compensation reports cannot be released.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.

Event Grouping ¹	Cause	Total Cases	Occupations	Industry ²
Water Vehicle				
	Sinking or capsized	13	Fishers	Commercial Fishing
	Onboard fire	5	Crewmen	Transportation, Water
	Fell overboard	4	Fishers	Commercial Fishing
	Pulled over by crab or longline gear	3	Fishers	Commercial Fishing
	Diving, clearing line or net from propeller	2	Fishers/Divers	Commercial Fishing
	Diving, harvesting sea cucumber	1	Fisher/Diver	Commercial Fishing
	Hit by snapped line	1	Deckhand	Transportation, Water
Aircraft				
		11	Pilots	Transportation, Air
		1	Biologist	Government, State
		1	Marine Pilot	Transportation, Water
		1	Pilot	Manufacturing, Logging
		1	Manager/Pilot	Manufacturing, Meat Products
		1	Pilot	Services, Religious Organizations
Other Transportation				
	Pedestrian backed over by mobile equipment	1	Ski Patrol	Services, Recreation
	Snowmachine through ice	1	Clergy	Services, Religious Organizations
	Snowmachine collision	1	Carpenter	Construction, Building
	Lost in storm	1	Doctor	Services, Health Care
	Auto accidents	1	Vessel Owner	Commercial Fishing
		1	NR	Retail, Auto Sales
Contact with Objects				
	Struck by falling tree	1	Timber Faller	Construction, Highway
	Struck by dislodged flying object	1	Fisher	Commercial Fishing
	Struck against stationary object	1	Clerk	Retail, Sales
	Compressed by equipment	1	Garbageman	Transportation, Local
Exposure				
	Equipment contact with overhead powerlines	1	Logger	Manufacturing, Logging
Fire				
	Plant fire	1	NR	Manufacturing, Meat Products
Violent Acts				
	Post office robbery	1	Postal Worker	Government, Postal Service
	Shot by co-worker	1	Cook	Services, Hotel
	Shot by assailant	1	Police	Government, Local
	Suicides at-work	3	NR	NR

Experimental Comparison of CFOI Data to Available Occupational Employment for Pilots in Air Transportation, 1992-1996

Air Transportation, Unscheduled (SIC 4522) ¹				Air Transportation, All (SIC 45)		
Year	CFOI	Employment ²	Incidence Rate per 100,000	CFOI	Employment	Incidence Rate per 100,000
1992	5	650	769	6	1,461	411
1993	3	672	446	5	1,537	325
1994	4	721	555	5	1,515	330
1995	4	726	551	5	1,510	331
1996	4	786	509	10	1,413	708
Average	4	711	563	6	1,487	404

¹Industry is classified using the Standard Industrial Classification Manual, 1987 Edition.

²Employment data were obtained from the Occupational Database, maintained by the Alaska Department of Labor (AKDOL), Research and Analysis Section.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.

The high number of Alaska fatalities is not a new trend. Data gathered from the AKDOL Workers' Compensation Division show an average of seven pilots died each year in air transportation crashes from 1985 to 1991.

Government and industry working to improve aviation safety

The NIOSH field station has recently released a study of Alaska work-related aviation fatalities from 1990 to 1994. Based on reports provided by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), the primary cause of fatal occupational crashes was most often related to controlled flight into terrain during limited visibility. Visibility transitioned from visual meteorological conditions (VMC) with visibility of more than a mile to instrument meteorological conditions (IMC) with visibility of less than a mile during the flight. For all crashes examined in the NIOSH study, crashes in IMC weather were five times more likely than in VMC**.

The study reaffirms earlier recommendations of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for Aeronautical Decision Making (ADM) training certification for pilots in the United States, but calls for Alaska-specific ADM rules to reduce the number of aircraft-related occupational fatalities. Also forwarded were earlier NTSB recommendations for increased protective equipment use by pilots. As part of the Alaska Interagency Working Group,** an aviation working group has formed with repre-

sentatives of the industry and the NTSB, FAA, and other government agencies to coordinate outreach for safety improvement in the industry.

State OSH jurisdiction covers five percent of the 1995 and 1996 CFOI fatalities

Of the occupational fatalities counted by CFOI, three in 1995 and four in 1996 were investigated by the AKDOL, Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Unit. This is a significant drop from 1994 when OSH-investigated cases comprised 15% of the census. The drop was due to a decline in logging fatalities and the absence of oil field industry deaths.

Over the past two years, deaths investigated by Alaska's OSH unit crossed five different industry groups. (See Table 6.) However, there is some commonality among the cases. Six of the seven deaths were vehicle related. Workers operating or working around heavy equipment or moving vehicles are at risk, regardless of industry. Vehicle-related deaths among OSH-investigated fatalities were also high in 1994 when five of nine deaths were in this group. In that year, three workers were struck by the vehicle they were working around, one was killed in the vehicle under operation, and another was struck by a vehicle's falling load. The inexperience of the operator or worker moving around the equipment, or both, was a factor in some of these cases.

Talitha Lukshin is a labor economist with the Research and Analysis Section, Administrative Services Division, Alaska Department of Labor. She is located in Juneau.

1995 and 1996 Alaska OSH-Investigated Fatality Reports

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Labor Standards and Safety Division.

Construction

A worker fell from a six-foot ladder and impacted his head on the floor. He was replacing light bulbs at the time.

Local Government

The worker was backing up a front-end loader while leaning out the door to get a better view. He fell from the cab to the ground after hitting a bump and was struck by the loader bucket.

Logging

The worker was extinguishing a fire that started when the boom of the truck came in contact with overhead power lines. The victim inadvertently touched the vehicle's frame and was electrocuted.

A Sky Crane helicopter had lifted off with a bundle of logs and was approximately 260 feet above the ground. Suddenly, the helicopter went out of control and crashed into the hillside.

Transportation

A dumpster was being lowered from a garbage truck when the worker was crushed between the hydraulic-operated dumpster lifting bar and the tailgate riding step of the truck.

Recreation

The worker was riding in the passenger compartment of a Snow Cat during snow grooming operations. He exited the equipment during a pause in grooming without signaling and was backed over.

Another was the lack of communication between the decedent and the operator of the vehicle.

In 1995, vehicle accidents on the highway contributed to a sharp increase in transportation deaths. Previously ranging between four and six, other transportation cases rose sharply to 11 in 1995. (See Table 3.) This rather broad category includes all highway and nonhighway motor-vehicle-related accidents. Six of the 11 cases were roadway vehicle accidents. For the first time since the start of the census, three deaths among independent trucking contractors occurred in various industries. Tragically, defective brakes, mechanical failure was cited as the cause of the crash in two of the three cases.

Summary

Both federal and state government agencies are working with industry to address the occupational safety needs of the state. As in the past, this partnership should work effectively for needed change.

FOOTNOTES FOR PAGES 12 & 15:

- * Public Health Reports, Volume 110, November/December, 1995.
- ** Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Vol. 43/No. 22, June 6, 1997.
- *** The Alaska Interagency Working Group for the Prevention of Occupational Injuries is comprised of representatives from the NTSB, FAA, NIOSH, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), U.S.C.G., and the Alaska Departments of Health and Social Services and Labor.

Health and Mechanical Occupations in Demand During Fourth Quarter 1996

by Todd Mosher

New hires slow as summer gives way to fall

Fall quarter is generally a time of slower hiring for most industries, particularly the highly seasonal construction, seafood processing, and tourism industries. Fall hiring pales in comparison to the peak summer season, when up to 75,000 new hires have been recorded in recent years. (See Figure 1.) Still, there were over 45,000 new hires in the final quarter of 1996, a number somewhat below that of the previous fall quarter. (See Table 1.)

Health, hard-rock mining, and business services hiring grows

In the final quarter of 1996, health, social, and business services and hard-rock mining continued to show same quarter year-to-year gains in new hires. New hires of health technologists and technicians, registered nurses, and pharmacists, therapists and physician assistants, as a group, were up by about 15 percent compared to the previous fall. (See Table 2.) Most of the gains in this sector occurred in Anchorage, where average health services employment grew by 400 jobs in 1996. New hires of mechanics and repairers, machine operators and tenders, and construction and extractive occupation supervisors were up by 130 from the previous fall quarter. This was mostly due to the re-opening of the Greens Creek mine and oth-

er mining expansions, as well as continued growth in firms providing these types of contract services. Hiring of teachers, other than postsecondary, was also strong in the fourth quarter of 1996, outpacing 1995 by 85 new hires, or 7.4%. Perhaps the best news is that many of the occupations showing strong year-to-year increases in new hires are relatively high-paying occupations.

Timber and other industries' hiring drops

On the other hand, most other industries hired fewer new workers last fall compared to 1995, with the greatest declines occurring in timber, oil and gas, retail, and services other than health,

Todd Mosher is a labor economist with the Research and Analysis Section, Administrative Services Division, Alaska Department of Labor. He is located in Juneau.

Figure • 1



A "new hire" is defined as an employee who was hired by the firm in the report quarter and has not been employed by the firm during any of the previous four quarters. New hires figures include turnover and should not be used to assess job growth trends.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.

Alaska New Hires 4th Quarter 1996

¹Includes all employees of publicly-owned institutions.

New hires include job turnover and should not be used to assess job growth trends.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.

	4th Qtr 96	Change from 3rd Qtr 96	Change from 4th Qtr 95
Total New Hires:	45,356	-25,476	-1,467
By Region			
Northern	2,508	-1,327	-52
Interior	5,766	-3,858	-299
Southwest	3,573	-2,906	80
Anchorage	23,641	-5,548	355
Gulf Coast	3,953	-6,243	-652
Southeast	5,194	-4,897	-933
Offshore	344	-609	181
Outside	237	-169	-100
Unknown	140	81	-47
By Industry			
Ag./Forestry/Fishing	299	-429	32
Mining	705	-957	-526
Oil & Gas Extraction	457	-685	-551
All Other	248	-272	25
Construction	4,528	-3,614	-160
Manufacturing	1,692	-8,701	-540
Seafood Processing	923	-8,166	-73
All Other	769	-535	-467
Trans./Comm./Util.	3,185	-998	178
Tourism Related	522	-706	-88
All Other	2,663	-292	266
Wholesale Trade	1,331	-734	-39
Retail Trade	13,198	-3,801	-524
Fin./Ins./Real Estate	1,626	-598	100
Services	13,330	-4,860	28
Hotels & Lodging	960	-1,771	-87
All Other	12,370	-3,089	115
Public Administration ¹	5,462	-784	-16

social and business. (See Table 3.) New hires of forestry and logging workers plummeted by 56.9% compared to the previous fall, mirroring job losses in the lumber and wood products industry. During the last three months of 1996, timber manufacturing employment was running about 500 workers below the same period in 1995—and this was prior to the closure of the Ketchikan pulp mill, which occurred in March of this year. The drop

in oil and gas new hires was partially offset by gains in the business services sector. Oil producers have in recent years turned to subcontractors to perform work traditionally performed in-house, thereby reducing hires in the oil and gas industry while boosting hires in business services. While smaller retail firms continued to show employment gains in 1996, fourth quarter hiring last year was slower for some of the larger retailers and chains. This was not unexpected, however, given the rapid expansions that have occurred in this industry in recent years. Compared to 1995, fourth quarter new hires of fast food, cleaning, and personal service workers were down 5.1%, and newly hired retail salespersons were down 6.4%.

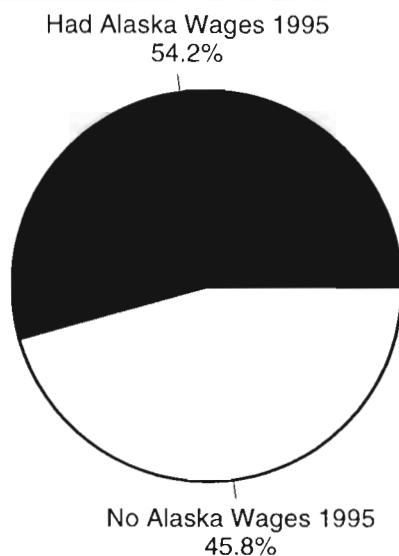
Year-end review of 1996 new hires

In 1996, hiring paused from the brisk pace of recent years. (See Figure 1.) All told, new hires in 1996 were down 4.6% compared to 1995. Declining employment in the manufacturing sector has diminished the strong bump up in summer hires experienced in the years prior to 1995. Notice in Figure 1 how the spring to summer transition remained relatively flat in 1995 and 1996 compared to the previous three years. Nevertheless, the influence of Alaska's highly seasonal tourism, construction, and seafood processing industries continued to exert its influence on the hiring cycle, with peak hiring taking place during the spring and summer months.

Health, business services, and hard-rock mining provide opportunity

While the manufacturing sector of the economy suffered severe setbacks and retail was moderating from its recent expansion, demand for workers in other sectors of the economy picked up last year. Health and social services, business services, and hard-rock mining hiring was very strong in 1996, with many of the jobs in these sectors relatively high paying. This trend may bode well for job seekers in the coming years, especially if the manufacturing industry can at least partially recover from its recent employment losses.

1996 New Hires by Prior Year Employment Status



Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.

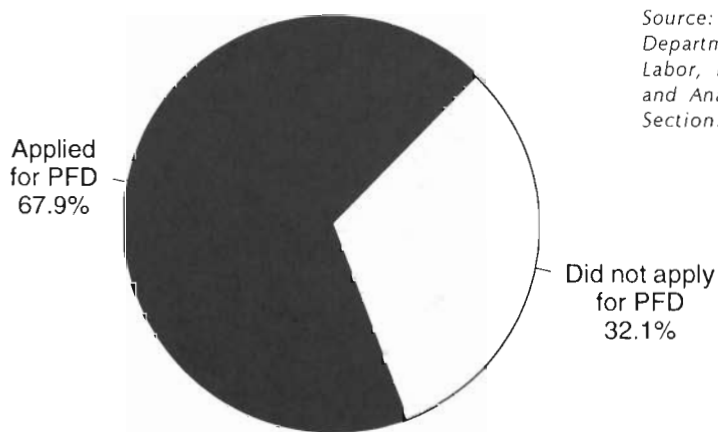
Who were these new hires, anyway?

Throughout all of 1996, there were 225,850 new hires in Alaska. However, it is important to remember that new hires include job turnover and workers are counted as new hires each time they are hired by an employer that they did not work for in any of the four previous quarters. Looking at the new hires picture from the point of view of the individual worker, there were 162,133 workers who were newly hired by one or more employers out of a total of 347,737 individuals who had wage and salary employment at any time during the year.

These newly hired workers can be categorized as follows:

- workers earning wages in Alaska for the first time

Percent of 1996 New Hires Applying for an Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend in 1996 or 1997



Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.

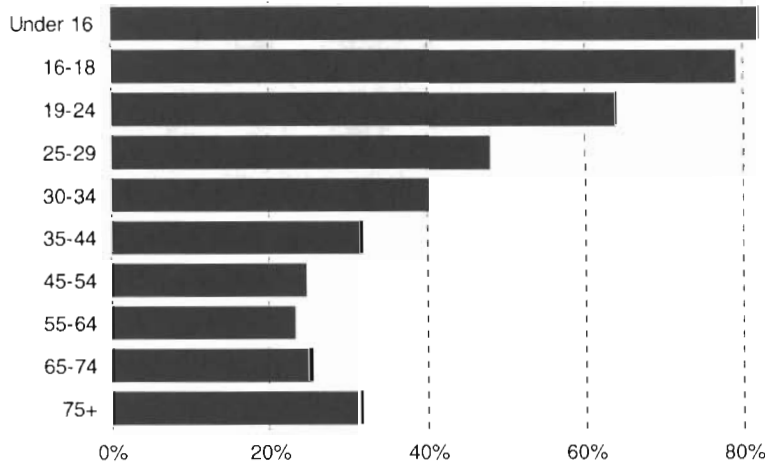
- workers returning to the same job or a new job after leaving the Alaska wage and salary job market for a year or longer
- workers with Alaska wage and salary employment in any of the previous four quarters who changed employers or added a job with another employer in 1996.

Figure • 4

Percent of Alaska Resident Workers¹ Newly Hired
 Percent of age group newly hired in 1996

¹Had Alaska wages in 1996 and was Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend applicant in 1996 and/or 1997.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.



Almost 46 percent of the 162,133 workers newly hired by one or more employers in 1996 did not work in any Alaska wage and salary jobs in 1995. (See Figure 2.) These new hires fit into one of the first two categories above. The remaining 54 percent of workers fit into the last category.

Over two-thirds of 1996 new hires were Alaska residents

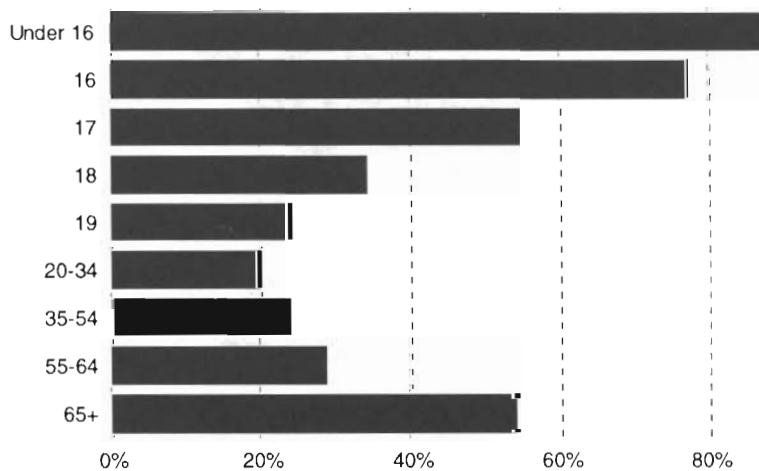
A little over two-thirds of all 1996 new hires were Alaska residents who applied for an Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) in 1996 or 1997. (See Figure 3.) The proportion of new hires who are Alaska residents drops to its lowest point in the summer months, when there is a larger demand for temporary seasonal workers. In the summer of 1995, about 60 percent of new hires received an Alaska PFD in 1995 and/or 1996. In the summer of 1996, the percentage of Alaska resident new hires, based on applicants for an Alaska PFD in 1996 or 1997, grew to slightly more than 62 percent.

Figure • 5

Alaska Resident New Hires¹ Without Alaska Wages in Previous Year
 Percent of age group that did not earn Alaska wages in 1995

¹Was newly hired by one or more employers in 1996 and was Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend applicant in 1996 and/or 1997.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.



Alaska resident new hires tend to be young

By matching the wage records to the Alaska PFD records, age information was obtained for those workers who applied for a dividend in 1996 and/or 1997.* Alaska resident new hires tend to be younger than other Alaska resident workers. Nearly half of all Alaska resident new hires in 1996 were under the age of 30. By comparison, of those resident Alaska workers in 1996 who were

FOOTNOTE:

* Age information is not available for those workers who did not apply for an Alaska PFD in 1996 and/or 1997.

not new hires, only about one-sixth were under the age of 30.

Four-fifths of teen workers were new hires

A very high percentage of Alaska resident workers under age 25 were newly hired by at least one employer during 1996. (See Figure 4.) About four out of every five workers 18 years or under were newly hired by one or more employer at some time during 1996, and nearly two-thirds of those ages 19 to 24 were new hires at least once during the year. Many of these younger workers landed a job for the first time in 1996. Others added a second job during the peak spring and summer months and/or switched primary employers at least once during the year.

Most younger workers had no wage history in 1995

Of those resident new hires under the age of 16, nearly nine out of 10 had no Alaska wages during 1995, implying that many of them took their first job ever in 1996. (See Figure 5.) Predictably, this percentage falls off quickly with the increasing age of the new hire. More than three-quarters of 16-year-old resident new hires did not earn Alaska wages in 1995, compared to 55 percent of 17-year-olds, about 35 percent of 18-year-olds, and only 25 percent of 19-year-olds. Of those

Occupations with Largest Year-to-Year Increase in 4th Quarter New Hires

Occupation	4Q95	4Q96	Yr.-Yr. Change	% Change
Administrative Support Occupations	6,530	6,630	100	1.5
Teachers, Except Postsecondary ¹	1,151	1,236	85	7.4
Mechanics and Repairers	1,378	1,446	68	4.9
Machine Operators and Tenders	133	195	62	46.6
Social, Recreation and Religious Workers	401	443	42	10.5
Health Technologists and Technicians	253	294	41	16.2
Protective Service Occupations	761	796	35	4.6
Registered Nurses	239	271	32	13.4
Salespersons, Non-Retail Commodities	141	170	29	20.6
Computer, Math, and Operations Research Occupations	31	50	19	61.3
Plant and System Operators	87	104	17	19.5
Supervisors, Construction and Extractive Occupations	41	56	15	36.6
Pharmacists, Therapists, Physician Assistants	132	146	14	10.6
Supervisors, Production Occupations	16	26	10	62.5
Farm Operators and Managers	13	21	8	61.5
Other Agricultural Occupations	168	176	8	4.8
Officials and Administrators, Public Administration	88	96	8	9.1
Supervisors, Mechanics and Repairers	23	31	8	34.8
Insurance, Securities, Realty, Business Svcs. Sales	115	122	7	6.1
Supervisors, Administrative Support	104	111	7	6.7

¹Includes preschool and adult vocational and community class instructors, as well as elementary, secondary, and special education teachers.

Occupations are based on the 2-digit Standard Occupation Code, Standard Occupational Classification Manual, 1980.

Typically, 5 to 10 percent of all workers' occupations are unreported by employers.

New hires include job turnover and should not be used to assess job growth trends.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.

The Alaska New Hires Quarterly Report measures the number of job opportunities created by business expansions, business start-ups, and job turnover. The report assists employment security personnel and the job-seekers they serve as they develop strategies for job placement in the Alaska economy. A new hire is defined as an employee who was not working for the employer in any of the four previous quarters. New hires data include job turnover; readers, therefore, are cautioned against drawing broad conclusions about job growth trends based solely on quarterly new hires data.

Occupations with Largest Year-to-Year Decline in 4th Quarter New Hires

Also referred to as "All Other Service Occupations."

Includes seafood processors.

Occupations are based on the 2-digit Standard Occupation Code, Standard Occupational Classification Manual, 1980.

Typically, 5 to 10 percent of all workers' occupations are unreported by employers.

New hires include job turnover and should not be used to assess job growth trends.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.

Occupation	4Q95	4Q96	Yr.-Yr. Change	% Change
Food, Cleaning, and Personal Service Occupations ¹	10,084	9,568	-516	-5.1
Construction Trades	3,147	2,697	-450	-14.3
Handlers and Laborers	4,837	4,472	-365	-7.5
Salespersons, Retail	4,808	4,502	-306	-6.4
Forestry and Logging Occupations	332	143	-189	-56.9
Helpers	712	578	-134	-18.8
Officials and Administrators, Other	737	632	-105	-14.2
Extractive Occupations	205	116	-89	-43.4
Precision Production Occupations	236	154	-82	-34.7
Management Related Occupations	523	465	-58	-11.1
Transportation Occupations	1,576	1,519	-57	-3.6
Material Moving Occupations	551	500	-51	-9.3
Fabricators, Assemblers, and Hand Working Occupations ²	1,094	1,045	-49	-4.5
Athletes and Related Occupations	115	67	-48	-41.7
Supervisors, Marketing and Sales	144	97	-47	-32.6
Writers, Artists, Performers	294	252	-42	-14.3
Other Technicians	185	153	-32	-17.3
Engineers, Surveyors and Architects	217	193	-24	-11.1
Private Household Occupations	121	99	-22	-18.2
Editors, Reporters, Public Relations Occupations	111	94	-17	-15.3
Fishers, Hunters and Trappers	83	68	-15	-18.1
Supervisors, Precision Production Occupations	13	1	-12	-92.3
Social Scientists and Urban Planners	22	13	-9	-40.9
Engineering Technologists and Technicians	133	126	-7	-5.3
Sales Related Occupations	158	151	-7	-4.4

resident new hires ages 20 to 34, only about one in five did not earn wages in Alaska in 1995. Between the ages of 35 and 54, the fraction of resident new hires without Alaska wages in 1995 rebounds to about one out of every four, possibly the result of those re-entering the wage and salary job market after raising children or attending post-graduate schools. Well over half of all newly hired seniors (ages 65 and up) did

not earn Alaska wages in the prior year. Some retirees, after some extended leisure time, find they need the challenge and stimulation that a job can provide; others return to the job market out of the need to supplement their pensions.

Important notes about the new hires data

The new hires series is designed to measure job opportunities provided by both employee turnover and new job creation. Every firm with employees working in Alaska is required to report social security numbers, occupation, work site location and wages earned for each of their employees to the Department of Labor on a quarterly basis. To be considered a new hire, a person must receive wages from a firm that they have not worked for in any of the four previous quarters. There is no differentiation between new hires who replace a departing worker and new hires entering newly created jobs. A worker can be counted as a new hire for more than one employer during a quarter.

New Hires by Occupation and Quarter, 1996

Occupation	New Hires				Total 1996	% of Total	
	1Q96	2Q96	3Q96	4Q96			
Food, Cleaning, and Personal Service Occupations ¹	7,832	15,462	14,086	9,568	46,948	20.8	¹ Also referred to as "All Other Service Occupations."
Administrative Support Occupations	5,981	8,009	7,457	6,630	28,077	12.5	
Handlers and Laborers	3,577	7,779	7,552	4,472	23,380	10.4	² Includes seafood processors.
Salespersons, Retail	2,924	6,094	5,263	4,502	18,783	8.3	
Fabricators, Assemblers, and Hand Working Occupations ²	3,993	3,800	7,955	1,045	16,793	7.4	³ Includes preschool, adult vocational, community class instructors, elementary, secondary, and special education teachers.
Construction Trades	1,657	4,055	4,869	2,697	13,278	5.9	
Transportation Occupations	1,198	2,708	2,216	1,519	7,641	3.4	
Mechanics and Repairers	1,182	2,070	1,651	1,446	6,349	2.8	
Teachers, Except Postsecondary ³	822	709	1,051	1,236	3,818	1.7	
Protective Service Occupations	673	838	796	796	3,103	1.4	Occupations are based on the 2-digit Standard Occupation Code, Standard Occupational Classification Manual, 1980.
Officials and Administrators, Other Helpers	679	895	835	632	3,041	1.3	
Material Moving Occupations	496	886	1,028	578	2,988	1.3	Typically, 5 to 10 percent of all workers' occupations are unreported by employers.
Management Related Occupations	401	968	890	500	2,759	1.2	
Social, Recreation and Religious Workers	531	650	701	465	2,347	1.0	New hires include job turnover and should not be used to assess job growth trends
Other Agricultural Occupations	379	592	545	443	1,959	0.9	
Registered Nurses	166	1,089	524	176	1,955	0.9	Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.
Writers, Artists, Performers	221	358	333	271	1,183	0.5	
Health Technologists and Technicians	254	327	335	252	1,168	0.5	
Teachers, Postsecondary	221	275	339	294	1,129	0.5	
Forestry and Logging Occupations	336	150	371	210	1,067	0.5	
Engineers, Surveyors and Architects	143	459	318	143	1,063	0.5	
Machine Operators and Tenders	227	323	297	193	1,040	0.5	
Precision Production Occupations	139	271	279	195	884	0.4	
Sales Related Occupations	122	314	232	154	822	0.4	
Other Technicians	212	234	181	151	778	0.3	
Extractive Occupations	167	186	224	153	730	0.3	
Engineering Technologists and Technicians	146	146	317	116	725	0.3	
Pharmacists, Therapists, Physician Assistants	131	228	177	126	662	0.3	
Salespersons, Non-Retail Commodities	121	182	189	146	638	0.3	
Miscellaneous Occupations	113	187	147	170	617	0.3	
Private Household Occupations	132	188	209	81	610	0.3	
Insurance, Securities, Realty, Business Svcs. Sales	88	159	138	99	484	0.2	
Plant and System Operators	131	126	103	122	482	0.2	
Supervisors, Marketing and Sales	65	149	156	104	474	0.2	
Fishers, Hunters and Trappers	88	139	132	97	456	0.2	
Supervisors, Administrative Support	36	123	208	68	435	0.2	
Editors, Reporters, Public Relations Occupations	102	117	87	111	417	0.2	
Natural Scientists	99	99	123	94	415	0.2	
Science Technologists and Technicians	57	133	111	54	355	0.2	
Supervisors, Construction and Extractive Occupations	44	154	82	62	342	0.2	
Athletes and Related Occupations	52	136	94	56	338	0.1	
Officials and Administrators, Public Administration	70	103	63	67	303	0.1	
Physicians and Dentists	66	69	46	96	277	0.1	
Computer, Math, and Operations Research Occups.	41	55	94	56	246	0.1	
Lawyers and Judges	48	38	57	50	193	0.1	
Supervisors, Production Occupations	45	38	41	35	159	0.1	
Librarians, Archivists, and Curators	27	46	46	26	145	0.1	
Farm Operators and Managers	19	55	35	34	143	0.1	
Machine Setup Operators	14	66	40	21	141	0.1	
Supervisors, Mechanics and Repairers	40	42	38	19	139	0.1	
Vocational and Educational Counselors	24	40	33	31	128	0.1	
All Other Occupations and Unreported Occupations	31	29	45	23	128	0.1	
	3,398	7,613	7,287	4,671	22,969	10.2	

First Half Of 1997— Unemployment Down; Employment Up, Slightly

For the first half of 1997, unemployment rates ran below last year's while employment continued its slow growth. June's unemployment rate of 6.7% was the lowest June rate in seven years. During the past decade, only the 1989 and 1990 jobless rates were lower. The fewer number of unemployed and the lower rates are, to some extent, reflected in the job market. As the summer season kicked in, a growing number of employers and others were reporting that the applicant pool for jobs had gotten smaller. Some areas were reporting spot labor shortages. However, this tight labor market is concentrated in the lower paying \$6-8/hour job range.

Near record low unemployment in the rest of the nation helps explain Alaska's low unemployment.

Fewer job seekers are coming to Alaska to find jobs. Net migration is negative, and the number of interstate unemployment insurance claims has dropped by 10 percent. (These claims are filed by workers outside of the state on wages earned in Alaska.) Moreover, many Alaska Employment Service Offices report fewer out-of-state clients. So, although Alaska's economy is not a part of the present high flying national economy, its labor market indirectly benefits.

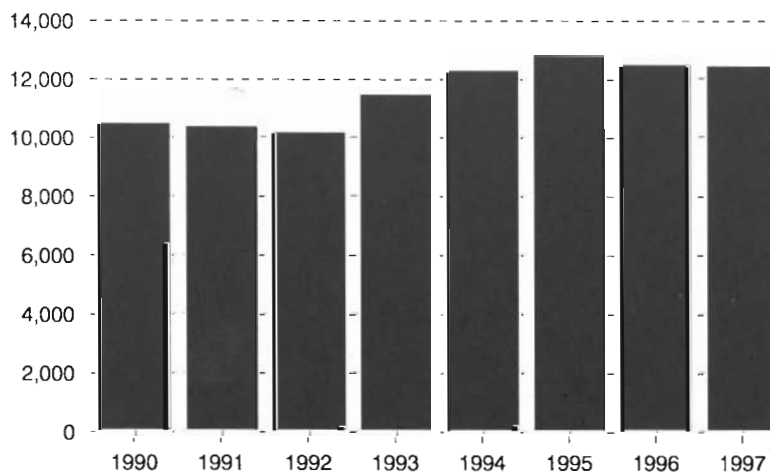
It is important to remember that in many parts of the state, particularly in rural Alaska, joblessness remains very high. Five rural areas of the state had double digit unemployment rates in June. Also, Alaska's economy remains quite seasonal, which means that once the frenzied summer season ends, more Alaskans will join the ranks of the unemployed.

Figure • 1

Construction Employment Remains Stable

¹First six-month trend used to estimate full year.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.



Razor-thin growth reflects less firefighting than last year

In June, wage and salary employment held on to razor-thin, over-the-year growth. Employment came in 0.1% above year-ago levels, the slowest rate in 1997. Last year's Miller Reach fire in the Matanuska Susitna Borough goes a long way to explaining June's exceptionally weak numbers. In June of last year, more than 950 workers

were fighting fires, compared to 170 this year. After discounting for these numbers, June's employment growth rate would have been 0.3%. Employment was up in as many of the state's major industry categories as it was down.

The negatives remain familiar

Oil industry employment remains weak, but should improve as nearly half a dozen new oil prospects move into the development stage. Timber losses keep manufacturing numbers negative. Seafood processing employment ran close to last year's level in June but, by July, could turn negative because of the harvest bust in Bristol Bay. Even employment in the state's public sector was down two percent compared to last year's level. Fewer firefighters explain most of state government's losses but, even after isolating this effect, there were still fewer state workers than last June. Local government also employed fewer workers than they did a year ago. Federal government was the exception. After three years of large losses, federal employment appears to be stabilizing.

And so do the positives

Services remains the biggest plus in Alaska's economy. Health care, up by over 500 new jobs from year-ago levels, remains one of the strongest services sectors. Engineering and management services is also contributing to growth. A healthy backlog of construction projects and a positive outlook for the oil patch are keeping its numbers up.

Some visitor-related industries continue to grow

Despite this season's mixed reviews, the visitor industry continues to spur services' growth. On the plus side, hotel and lodging employment in June rolled in 200 higher than year-ago levels. The opening of the new Princess McKinley View in Denali State Park, with approximately 140 employees, along with the new NANA/Marriot Courtyard in Anchorage, which opened in June,

helped boost this number. In Anchorage alone, construction of five medium-sized and smaller hotels is starting. One of these projects is with NANA/Marriot, who began construction on their second hotel property, the Fairfield Inn, last month. The company plans to build a third property within the year. If this kind of investment is an indicator, these new players believe the visitor industry still has room to grow.

It is too early to judge the performance of this year's visitor season, but early indicators have been positive. June's traffic counts entering Alaska via the Alaska Highway were up 28 percent compared to June of 1996. Air passenger traffic is up through June, and the number of cruise ship passengers is still growing. Some visitor-related businesses may be experiencing a lackluster season because of growing competition among tourist-related enterprises, whose numbers are possibly increasing faster than the number of visitors. Statistics that will help evaluate this year's visitor season will be available in early winter.

Retail employment continues to move up moderately. A healthy residential construction season is boosting building supply retail employment. Job growth in eating and drinking establishments also continues unabated. The expanded Fred Meyer store in Fairbanks reopened in June, with 100 additional workers.

Most other retail is still attempting to digest the spectacular growth from previous years. F.W. Woolworth, on the other hand, recently decided to close all of its stores. Alaska will lose one store in Fairbanks and another in Anchorage sometime this fall. Open since the early 1960s, these two stores employ approximately 50.

Construction—nine years of stability

For almost a decade Alaska's construction industry has operated in an unusually stable environment. Since 1989, employment in this industry showed little variation from year to year, and 1997 again is no exception. (See Figure 1.)

Table • 1

Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment by Place of Work

Alaska	p/	r/	Changes from:			Municipality of Anchorage	p/	r/	Changes from:		
	6/97	5/97	6/96	5/97	6/96		6/97	5/97	6/96	5/97	6/96
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	277,100	267,900	277,000	9,200	100	Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	125,300	121,600	123,600	3,700	1,700
Goods-producing	42,100	37,800	43,200	4,300	(1,100)	Goods-producing	11,600	10,600	11,700	1,000	(100)
Service-producing	235,000	230,100	233,800	4,900	1,200	Service-producing	113,700	111,000	111,900	2,700	1,800
Mining	9,600	9,200	10,100	400	(500)	Mining	2,400	2,300	2,500	100	(100)
Construction	14,400	12,600	14,500	1,800	(100)	Construction	7,100	6,300	7,200	800	(100)
Manufacturing	18,100	16,000	18,600	2,100	(500)	Manufacturing	2,100	2,000	2,000	100	100
Durable Goods	3,400	3,300	3,600	100	(200)	Transportation	12,700	12,300	12,400	400	300
Lumber & Wood Products	2,200	2,100	2,300	100	(100)	Air Transportation	5,200	4,900	4,900	300	300
Nondurable Goods	14,700	12,700	15,000	2,000	(300)	Communications	2,400	2,400	2,200	0	200
Seafood Processing	11,800	10,000	11,900	1,800	(100)	Trade	30,300	29,700	30,200	600	100
Pulp Mills	200	200	600	0	(400)	Wholesale Trade	6,800	6,700	6,700	100	100
Transportation	25,000	24,200	24,700	800	300	Retail Trade	23,500	23,000	23,500	500	0
Trucking & Warehousing	3,100	3,000	3,000	100	100	Gen. Merch. & Apparel	4,400	4,300	4,500	100	(100)
Water Transportation	2,200	2,100	2,200	100	0	Food Stores	2,800	2,800	2,900	0	(100)
Air Transportation	8,500	8,000	8,300	500	200	Eating & Drinking Places	8,400	8,200	8,200	200	200
Communications	4,000	3,900	3,800	100	200	Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	7,300	7,100	7,200	200	100
Trade	58,400	55,600	58,000	2,800	400	Services & Misc.	35,400	34,300	34,300	1,100	1,100
Wholesale Trade	9,200	8,900	9,100	300	100	Hotels & Lodging Places	2,800	2,700	2,800	100	0
Retail Trade	49,200	46,700	48,900	2,500	300	Business Services	6,300	6,000	6,000	300	300
Gen. Merch. & Apparel	9,100	8,500	9,100	600	0	Health Services	7,500	7,400	7,200	100	300
Food Stores	7,200	7,000	7,300	200	(100)	Engineering & Mngmt. Serv.	5,200	5,000	5,000	200	200
Eating & Drinking Places	17,000	16,100	16,900	900	100	Government	28,000	27,600	27,800	400	200
Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	12,100	11,700	12,000	400	100	Federal	10,200	10,100	10,200	100	0
Services & Misc.	67,700	65,100	66,100	2,600	1,600	State	7,800	7,500	7,700	300	100
Hotels & Lodging Places	8,500	6,900	8,300	1,600	200	Local	10,000	10,000	9,900	0	100
Business Services	8,500	8,200	8,400	300	100						
Health Services	14,400	14,300	13,900	100	500						
Engineering & Mngmt. Serv.	7,800	7,500	7,300	300	500						
Government	71,800	73,500	73,000	(1,700)	(1,200)						
Federal	18,000	17,600	18,000	400	0						
State	20,600	20,200	21,600	400	(1,000)						
Local	33,200	35,700	33,400	(2,500)	(200)						

Table • 2

Alaska Hours and Earnings for Selected Industries

	Average Weekly Earnings			Average Weekly Hours			Average Hourly Earnings		
	p/	r/	6/96	p/	r/	6/96	p/	r/	6/96
	6/97	5/97	6/96	6/97	5/97	6/96	6/97	5/97	6/96
Mining	\$1,459.55	\$1,246.27	\$1,249.75	54.4	48.1	51.6	\$26.83	\$25.91	\$24.22
Construction	1,152.70	1,083.32	1,175.11	44.8	42.4	45.6	25.73	25.55	25.77
Manufacturing	506.74	507.51	478.78	41.4	42.9	39.7	12.24	11.83	12.06
Seafood Processing	374.39	373.68	345.20	40.3	43.2	38.7	9.29	8.65	8.92
Trans., Comm. & Utilities	692.29	629.05	693.45	37.3	35.3	35.8	18.56	17.82	19.37
Trade	424.03	416.40	440.20	34.7	33.5	35.5	12.22	12.43	12.40
Wholesale	661.73	631.50	683.57	40.3	38.6	40.4	16.42	16.36	16.92
Retail	379.01	374.73	395.48	33.6	32.5	34.6	11.28	11.53	11.43
Finance-Ins. & R.E.	517.64	505.16	485.01	36.3	35.4	35.9	14.26	14.27	13.51

Notes to Tables 1-3:

Tables 1&2- Prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Table 3- Prepared in part with funding from the Employment Security Division.

p/ denotes preliminary estimates.

r/ denotes revised estimates.

Government includes employees of public school systems and the University of Alaska.

Average hours and earnings estimates are based on data for full- and part-time production workers (manufacturing) and nonsupervisory workers (nonmanufacturing). Averages are for gross earnings and hours paid, including overtime pay and hours.

Benchmark: March 1996

Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment by Place of Work

Southeast Region	p/		Changes from:		
	6/97	5/97	6/96	5/97	6/96
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	37,850	36,800	38,050	1,050	(200)
Goods-producing	5,950	5,450	6,250	500	(300)
Service-producing	31,900	31,350	31,800	550	100
Mining	350	350	250	0	100
Construction	2,000	1,950	2,050	50	(50)
Manufacturing	3,600	3,150	3,950	450	(350)
Durable Goods	1,750	1,650	1,800	100	(50)
Lumber & Wood Products	1,550	1,450	1,600	100	(50)
Nondurable Goods	1,850	1,500	2,150	350	(300)
Seafood Processing	1,400	1,100	1,300	300	100
Pulp Mills	150	150	550	0	(400)
Transportation	3,400	3,100	3,450	300	(50)
Trade	7,450	6,850	7,450	600	0
Wholesale Trade	550	500	550	50	0
Retail Trade	6,900	6,350	6,900	550	0
Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	1,500	1,500	1,500	0	0
Services & Misc.	7,550	7,250	7,450	300	100
Government	12,000	12,650	11,950	(650)	50
Federal	2,100	2,050	2,100	50	0
State	5,250	5,250	5,300	0	(50)
Local	4,650	5,350	4,550	(700)	100

Interior Region	p/		Changes from:		
	6/97	5/97	6/96	5/97	6/96
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	40,350	38,500	40,250	1,850	100
Goods-producing	4,400	3,900	4,650	500	(250)
Service-producing	35,950	34,600	35,600	1,350	350
Mining	1,250	1,150	1,300	100	(50)
Construction	2,500	2,200	2,700	300	(200)
Manufacturing	650	550	650	100	0
Transportation	3,550	3,350	3,350	200	200
Trade	8,850	8,250	8,600	600	250
Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	1,100	1,050	1,100	50	0
Services & Misc.	9,850	8,950	9,600	900	250
Government	12,600	13,000	12,950	(400)	(350)
Federal	4,050	3,950	4,100	100	(50)
State	4,300	4,350	4,650	(50)	(350)
Local	4,250	4,700	4,200	(450)	50

Fairbanks North Star Borough	p/		Changes from:		
	6/97	5/97	6/96	5/97	6/96
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	34,650	33,200	34,000	1,450	650
Goods-producing	3,900	3,500	3,800	400	100
Service-producing	30,750	29,700	30,200	1,050	550
Mining	1,100	1,000	1,100	100	0
Construction	2,200	1,950	2,150	250	50
Manufacturing	600	550	550	50	50
Transportation	2,800	2,550	2,650	250	150
Trucking & Warehousing	700	650	650	50	50
Air Transportation	650	650	650	0	0
Communications	300	300	250	0	50
Trade	8,000	7,600	7,750	400	250
Wholesale Trade	850	800	800	50	50
Retail Trade	7,150	6,800	6,950	350	200
Gen. Merch. & Apparel	1,350	1,300	1,200	50	150
Food Stores	800	750	750	50	50
Eating & Drinking Places	3,000	2,750	3,000	250	0
Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	1,050	1,000	1,050	50	0
Services & Misc.	8,700	8,050	8,450	650	250
Government	10,200	10,500	10,300	(300)	(100)
Federal	3,350	3,300	3,400	50	(50)
State	4,000	4,050	4,200	(50)	(200)
Local	2,850	3,150	2,700	(300)	150

Anchorage/MatSu Region	p/		Changes from:		
	6/97	5/97	6/96	5/97	6/96
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	136,400	132,500	134,950	3,900	1,450
Goods-producing	12,600	11,350	12,500	1,250	100
Service-producing	123,800	121,150	122,450	2,650	1,350
Mining	2,400	2,350	2,500	50	(100)
Construction	8,000	6,950	7,850	1,050	150
Manufacturing	2,200	2,050	2,150	150	50
Transportation	13,550	13,250	13,250	300	300
Trade	33,250	32,550	33,100	700	150
Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	7,750	7,550	7,650	200	100
Services & Misc.	38,450	37,150	37,150	1,300	1,300
Government	30,800	30,650	31,300	150	(500)
Federal	10,300	10,250	10,300	50	0
State	8,650	8,350	9,000	300	(350)
Local	11,850	12,050	12,000	(200)	(150)

Gulf Coast Region	p/		Changes from:		
	6/97	5/97	6/96	5/97	6/96
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	29,700	27,050	30,150	2,650	(450)
Goods-producing	7,900	6,250	8,150	1,650	(250)
Service-producing	21,800	20,800	22,000	1,000	(200)
Mining	1,050	1,000	1,050	50	0
Construction	1,200	1,150	1,300	50	(100)
Manufacturing	5,650	4,100	5,800	1,550	(150)
Seafood Processing	4,250	2,800	4,400	1,450	(150)
Transportation	2,400	2,300	2,400	100	0
Trade	5,750	5,200	5,800	550	(50)
Wholesale Trade	600	550	650	50	(50)
Retail Trade	5,150	4,650	5,150	500	0
Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	700	700	700	0	0
Services & Misc.	6,150	5,750	6,150	400	0
Government	6,800	6,850	6,950	(50)	(150)
Federal	800	700	800	100	0
State	1,600	1,550	1,700	50	(100)
Local	4,400	4,600	4,450	(200)	(50)

Southwest Region	p/		Changes from:		
	6/97	5/97	6/96	5/97	6/96
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	18,200	18,600	18,250	(400)	(50)
Goods-producing	6,250	6,200	6,200	50	50
Service-producing	11,950	12,400	12,050	(450)	(100)
Seafood Processing	6,000	6,000	5,900	0	100
Government	5,100	5,800	5,250	(700)	(150)
Federal	450	450	500	0	(50)
State	500	500	600	0	(100)
Local	4,150	4,850	4,150	(700)	0

Northern Region	p/		Changes from:		
	6/97	5/97	6/96	5/97	6/96
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	14,850	14,500	15,300	350	(450)
Goods-producing	5,050	4,750	5,550	300	(500)
Service-producing	9,800	9,750	9,750	50	50
Mining	4,600	4,350	5,050	250	(450)
Government	4,550	4,700	4,550	(150)	0
Federal	200	200	200	0	0
State	300	300	300	0	0
Local	4,050	4,200	4,050	(150)	0

Table • 4

Unemployment Rates by Region & Census Area

	Percent Unemployed			
	Not Seasonally Adjusted	p/ 6/97	r/ 5/97	6/96
<i>p/ denotes preliminary estimates</i>	United States	5.2	4.7	5.5
<i>r/ denotes revised estimates</i>	Alaska Statewide:	6.7	7.0	7.6
<i>Benchmark: March 1996</i>	Anch.-MatSu Region	5.8	5.9	6.4
	Municipality of Anchorage	5.1	5.1	5.5
	MatSu Borough	9.7	9.8	10.7
<i>Comparisons between different time periods are not as meaningful as other time series produced by Research and Analysis.</i>	Gulf Coast Region	9.1	11.0	12.1
	Kenai Peninsula Borough	10.0	10.9	11.8
	Kodiak Island Borough	7.7	13.3	15.0
	Valdez-Cordova	7.7	8.0	8.8
	Interior Region	6.8	7.3	7.5
	Denali Borough	5.8	7.2	4.2
	Fairbanks North Star Borough	6.5	6.8	6.9
	Southeast Fairbanks	8.7	9.8	9.3
	Yukon-Koyukuk	13.3	14.2	19.8
	Northern Region	11.6	11.4	14.4
	Nome	13.7	13.4	17.0
	North Slope Borough	5.4	5.4	6.6
<i>The official definition of unemployment currently in place excludes anyone who has not made an active attempt to find work in the four-week period up to and including the week that includes the 12th of the reference month. Due to the scarcity of employment opportunities in rural Alaskan locations, many individuals do not meet the official definition of unemployed because they have not conducted an active job search. These individuals are considered not in the labor force.</i>	Northwest Arctic Borough	17.3	17.2	21.3
	Southeast Region	6.3	6.3	6.7
	Haines Borough	6.9	7.6	6.2
	Juneau Borough	4.6	4.7	5.5
	Ketchikan Gateway Borough	7.7	7.8	7.0
	Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan	13.2	13.1	12.7
	Sitka Borough	4.9	4.9	5.8
	Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon	4.5	6.2	5.1
	Wrangell-Petersburg	6.8	5.4	8.0
	Yakutat Borough	8.8	9.4	5.7
	Southwest Region	7.6	6.9	8.9
	Aleutians East Borough	2.9	2.8	3.8
	Aleutians West	5.1	4.7	4.3
	Bethel	9.0	7.8	10.6
	Bristol Bay Borough	5.9	5.4	10.6
	Dillingham	6.2	6.0	7.9
	Lake & Peninsula Borough	6.4	6.0	11.4
	Wade Hampton	12.5	12.0	13.8
	Seasonally Adjusted			
	United States	5.0	4.8	5.3
	Alaska Statewide	6.9	6.9	7.8

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.

Thus far this year, construction employment has come in slightly below year-ago levels, but this trend could reverse later in the year. Statewide, contract awards for the first half of the year were up seven percent according to a recent issue of *Pacific Builder & Engineer*. Unlike during past decades, no single project or type of construction dominates. Healthy levels of commercial, residential and public construction are sustaining employment and the steadfastness of this industry. For example, construction valuation in Anchorage was up 20 percent this year, with much of the strength coming from residential building. However, in Fairbanks, commercial construction is double last year's value, while residential is running even. Although the large Healy Clean Coal Project is about to wind down, the new \$135 million Red Dog expansion in the Northwest Arctic Borough is about to get underway. Even Ketchikan, the site of the pulp mill closure, is presently experiencing a small boom in construction. It appears this relative stability in the construction industry will continue for a number of years in the future.

Summary—economy on even keel

Like much of the nation, Alaska is presently enjoying a period of relatively low unemployment. Unlike the rest of the country's economy, employment is growing more slowly. A mixture of both losses and gains explains this environment of slow growth. Offsetting losses in the oil patch, timber and the public sector are gains in services, retail and transportation.

Alaska Employment Service

Anchorage: Phone 269-4800

Bethel: Phone 543-2210

Dillingham: Phone 842-5579

Eagle River: Phone 694-6904/07

Mat-Su: Phone 352-2500

Fairbanks: Phone 451-5967

Glennallen: Phone 822-3350

Kotzebue: Phone 442-3280

Nome: Phone 443-2626/2460

Tok: Phone 883-5629

Valdez: Phone 835-4910

Kenai: Phone 283-2927

Homer: Phone 235-7791

Kodiak: Phone 486-3105

Seward: Phone 224-5276

Juneau: Phone 465-4562

Petersburg: Phone 772-3791

Sitka: Phone 747-3347/3423/6921

Ketchikan: Phone 225-3181/82/83



The Alaska Department of Labor shall foster and promote the welfare of the wage earners of the state and improve their working conditions and advance their opportunities for profitable employment.