

## OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT FORECAST 1976- 1985

Contrary to the rest of the nation where most employment openings will occur as replacement due to death or retirement, new jobs in Alaska will primarily be the result of economic expansion. The degree of future growth will be a determining factor in the amount of new employment created in the economy. It should be noted that Alaska's relatively small employment base is especially vulnerable to the impacts generated by large construction projects or other economic phenomena and employment in any specific year may fluctuate to accommodate future construction projects as they appear.

To facilitate the discussion of exactly what types of occupations will be in demand in the economy during the next ten years, the multitude of different occupations have been broken down into six broad categories. These categories are: professional and technical; managers and officers; sales; clerical; services; and crafts, operatives, and laborers.

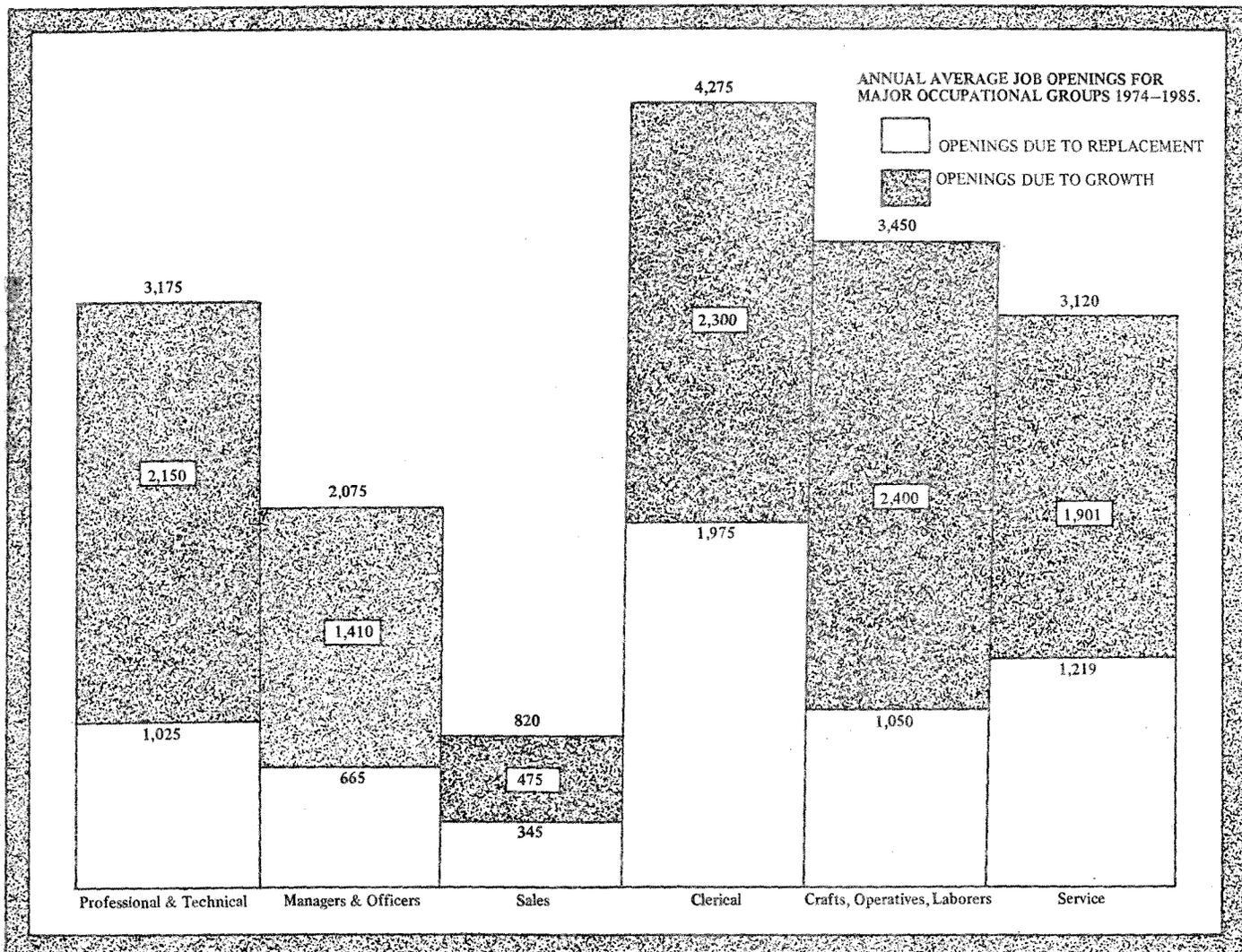
Generally speaking, job openings in the professional and technical fields are expected to average near 3,200 per year through 1985. This is a healthy increase in the rate of openings over the previous estimating period of 1970 to 1974 when an annual average increase of 1,100 openings were estimated. Approximately two thirds of the new openings in the next decade will be the result of growth while the remaining third will be replacement due to death or retirement in current positions. Compared to any single occupational group in the professional and technical category, openings in the engineering field will be most frequent. It is estimated that openings in the engineering field may average just under six hundred per year through 1985. It is estimated that about half of these positions will be for engineering and science technicians with approximately 280 positions opening per year for engineers. Openings in the engineering field will be followed closely by openings in health. It is estimated that openings in the health field may average just under 500 per year through 1985. It is believed that most of these openings will be for registered nurses. Other professional categories which may expect growth during the forecast period are those in accounting, which is predicted to have approximately 180 openings per year, and law, with 100 new openings per year.

Total employment for the professional and technical category as a whole is expected to increase an average of 2,150 individuals per year from 1976 through 1985.

The second occupational category of managers and officers is expected to have over 2,000 job vacancies per year during the projection period. This rate is a continuation of the rate experienced during 1970 through 1974. Positions opening for buyers, sales, and loan managers will be approximately 360 per year during the forecast period, increasing moderately over the rate of the previous five years. Openings for administrators and public inspectors will also outpace their previous rate and are expected to have 370 job openings per year during the next ten years. Health administrators, while increasing in total employment, will experience fewer job openings during the projected years than existed during the 1970-74 period. This drop in the number of job openings during 1976 through 1985 is largely due to the leveling off of employment in this occupation during the projected years from the dramatic increase in demand for all types of health administrators during the previous period.

Though the rate of job vacancies for managers and officers is expected to remain at the same level as in the past, the rate of increase in total employment is anticipated to be somewhat less during the coming forecast period. Total employment in this category is expected to expand at an average rate of over 1,400 per year.

Of the six categories, sales is anticipated to have the smallest number of new openings per year during the forecast period. It is anticipated that just over 800 new openings per year will be available in the sales category. However, this does represent nearly a 50 percent increase from that estimated during the previous period. Just over 80 percent of the new openings in sales will be for general sales workers, with most of the remaining openings to be for stock and bond brokers and real estate agents. The balance of vacancies will be allocated among many various different types of sales workers. Vacancies created through transfers to other occupations or movements within the industry are not included in these estimates and may represent a significant portion of this occupational category's job openings.



Total employment in sales is expected to increase at an average annual rate of over 475 workers through 1985. During the five year period 1970-74, employment in this group increased an average of 340 individuals each year, some 40 percent less than is foreseen in the future.

Openings in the clerical category are anticipated to be the most plentiful of all six major occupational groups. The number of job openings for clerical workers may average as many as 4,000 per year through 1985, up from the yearly average of 2,500 during the 1970-74 period. Approximately 1,600 of these positions, or nearly two thirds of the total new openings in this category, will be for stenographers, typists, and secretaries. Other occupations which will be in demand during the coming forecast period will be bookkeepers and cashiers. It is important to note that slightly more than half of the new openings in this field will be

the result of job transfers and replacements rather than actual growth. This high degree of worker mobility is characteristic of this occupational category.

Total employment in the clerical category is expected to expand at an average rate of over 2,300 per year through 1985. Stenographers, typists, and secretaries will dominate employment growth by increasing in employment over 800 each year. The rate of growth in employment for bookkeepers during the coming forecast period should remain unchanged from previous growth rates and should grow approximately 200 each year. Cashiers should experience an annual employment increase averaging around 130.

When compared to the previous period, services occupations are expected to experience the greatest percentage increase in opening of any of the other occupational categories. An average of well over

3,000 job openings will appear each year for service occupations in Alaska. This represents an 84 percent increase over the previous forecast period, illustrating the growth of Alaska's swelling service industry. Openings in the food service field will be approximately one third of the total new job openings. Workers in the health service occupations can expect over 450 openings per year in their field, mostly for practical nurses and aides. Openings for personal service workers such as child care workers and housekeepers may be around 240 per year for the next ten years. However, openings for private household workers will be limited and directed almost exclusively to child care workers. Employment in the protective services such as firefighting and police may see an average of approximately 300 openings per year.

Growth in total employment in the service category is expected to increase approximately 1,100 workers per year through 1985, up 88 percent from the average annual rate of increase estimated during the previous five years. A rapid increase in the employment of service related occupations can be expected as the general population in Alaska continues to expand.

The average number of job openings available for craftsmen, operatives, and laborers is projected to reach an estimated 3,450 each year from 1976 through 1985. However, the actual number of new openings may vary widely depending upon the timing of major construction projects. This fact is even more apparent when one considers that almost three fourths of the new openings will be due to growth in the economy rather than the replacement of existing positions. In general, construction craft workers, particularly carpenters and excavating and grading machine operators will enjoy openings along with auto, aircraft, and heavy equipment mechanics.

Total employment for craftsmen, operatives, and laborers is projected to increase approximately 2,400 workers through 1985. There are several potential construction projects within view of Alaska's future which may drastically affect the absolute level of employment in this job category.

## ALASKA LABOR MARKET IN MAY

**Employment—Unemployment:** Total unemployment during May rose one percentage point above the April unemployment rate of 9.6. The slight rise in

unemployment was primarily due to persons entering the labor market in search of summer employment. This slight upturn in unemployment is normal for this time of year as students and others not normally in the labor force begin to seek work.

**Mining:** The mining industry saw no change in the level of employment from April to May. This was the result of two counteracting seasonal trends. Employment increases in quarrying and mineral mining were negated by almost similar declines in employment in the oil and gas extraction industry.

**Construction:** Employment in the construction industry rose 3 percent during the month of May. Much of this increase was in the area of heavy construction. With the exception of the oil pipeline, which has its employment stretched across the state, most of the increases in employment in the construction industry have occurred in the Anchorage area.

**Manufacturing:** Lead by a 23 percent gain in employment in the food processing industry, employment in manufacturing rose 15 percent from April to May. This is a normal seasonal trend as canneries increase their employment in anticipation of the summer fishing season.

The lumber and wood products industry also experienced employment gains during the month of May. Employment in this industry rose approximately 12 percent which is normal for this time of year.

**Transportation, Communication and Utilities:** This industry experienced a 3 percent gain in employment in May over April. Most of the employment gains in May were the result of increased activity in the communications and utility industries. Employment in the transportation industry was somewhat mixed with moderate gains in air transportation being offset slightly by the continuing decline of employment in trucking.

**Trade:** The trade industry experienced moderate gains in employment from April to May, increasing by approximately 2 percent. Employment gains were generally in food stores, and eating and drinking establishments. However, this trend was dampened somewhat by a slight decline in employment by stores providing home furnishings and building materials.

**Finance, Insurance and Real Estate:** This industry