

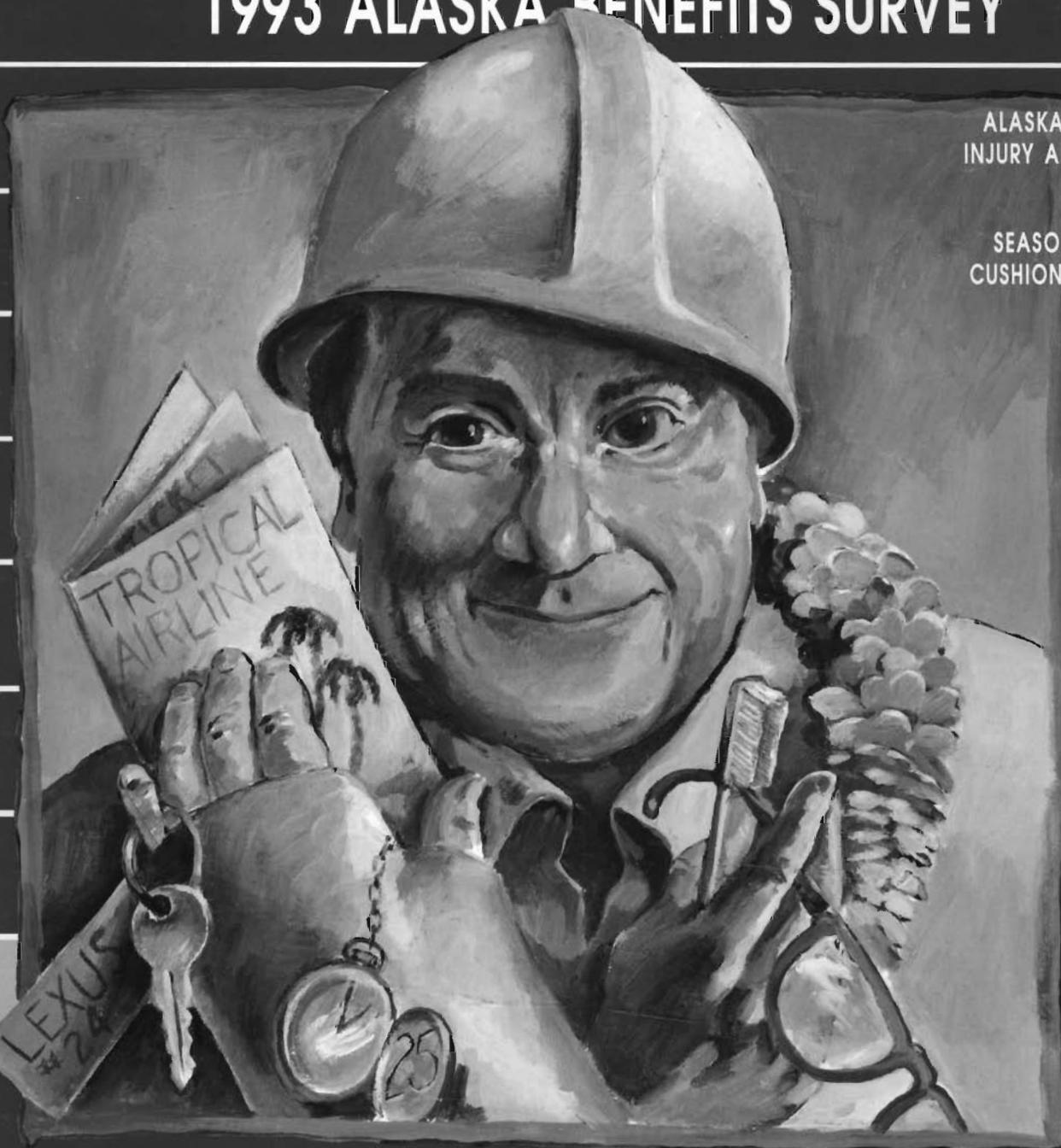
ALASKA ECONOMIC

TRENDS

1993 ALASKA BENEFITS SURVEY

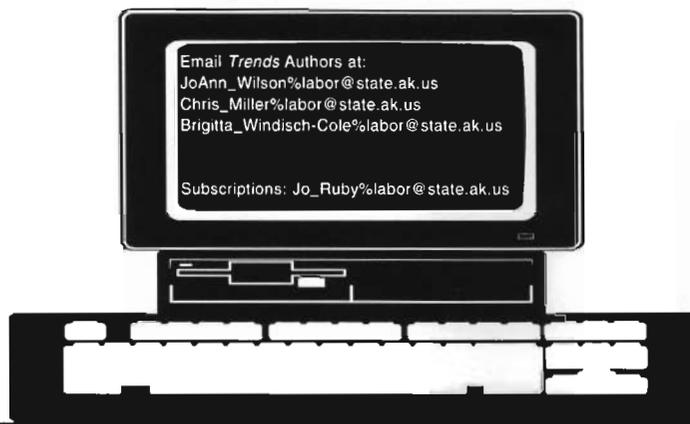
ALASKA OCCUPATIONAL
INJURY AND ILLNESS IN 1993

SEASONAL INDUSTRIES
CUSHION OTHER SETBACKS



October
1995

ALASKA ECONOMIC TRENDS



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1993 Alaska Benefits Survey

by JoAnn H. Wilson

The Alaska Department of Labor's Research and Analysis Section (AKDOL/R&A) periodically collects benefits data from Alaska private employers. During the summer of 1993, R&A mailed questionnaires to employers asking them to report the benefits they provide their employees. This benefits survey was conducted in conjunction with the annual Alaska wage rate survey.

A total of 1,359 private employers with businesses located in all of Alaska's six economic regions provided benefits data. The responding firms represented 93,425 employees, nearly one-third (30.9%) of Alaska's June 1993 wage and salary employment.

Firms were classified by the average number of workers they employed during 1993 into one of four categories: small (one to nine employees), medium (10-49 employees), large (50-249 employees), and very large (250 employees and higher). The average (mean) firm size was 69. The median firm size was 10. (The median is the midpoint—half of the firms had more employees and half had fewer.) Small firms are under-represented in the survey results relative to their share in the economy. While 47.5% of the firms responding to the survey employed one to nine workers, firms of this size employed 72.8% of Alaska's wage and salary workers in 1993.

Employers participating in the survey were asked a variety of questions about paid leave, insurance, and pension benefits offered to their full- and part-time employees. Although a large number of the participating firms provided these benefits, availability differed greatly depending on the workers' full- or part-time employment status, firm size, and industry.

Paid holidays for full-time workers were typically seven or more per year

Most employers responding to the survey (73.2%) reported that they provided paid holidays to their full-time employees. This

was not true for their part-time employees, however. Less than one-third of the firms (32.4%) offered paid holidays to their part-time workers.

While most responding firms provided paid holidays to their full-time employees, the actual number varied considerably. The most common response was six days per year but over half the firms reported seven or more days per year. (See Figure 1.)

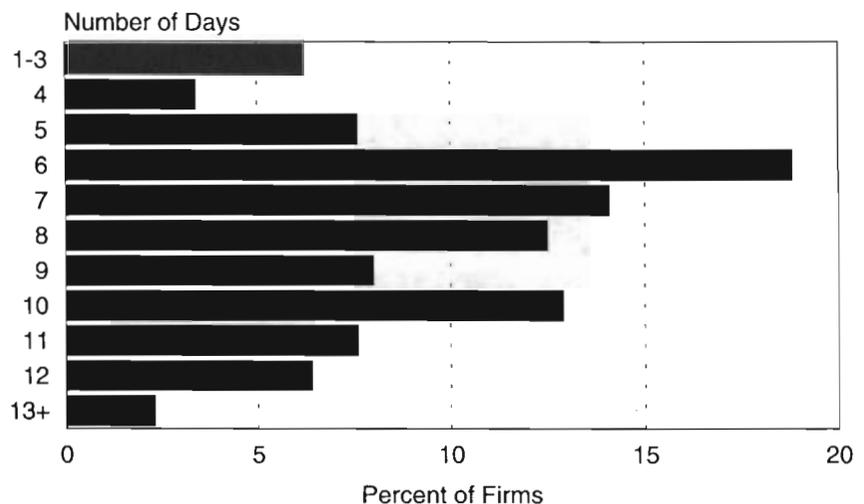
Firm size was closely linked with paid holiday benefits. While the majority of the small firms responding provided paid holidays to their full-time employees (62.1%), this proportion increased steadily with firm size. (See Table 1.) For part-time employees, just a quarter (25.1%) of the small firms responding provided this benefit. About one-third of medium and large firms provided the benefit, and 56.6% of very large firms did so.

The number of days was also linked to firm size. For firms with fewer than 50 employ-

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Figure • 1

Paid Annual Holidays Offered by Private Firms to Full-time Employees



Source: 1993 Alaska Benefits Survey. Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.

ees, the median was seven days. However, the median number of paid holidays rose to eight days for large firms and to 10 days for very large firms. These figures applied to both full- and part-time employees.

Industry is another factor associated with paid holiday benefits. Construction was the only industry in which fewer than half the responding firms (38.6%) provided paid holidays to their full-time employees. Almost all the firms in the finance, insurance, and real estate sector (96.5%) reported providing this benefit. For part-time employees, firms in finance, insurance, and real estate were also the most likely to offer paid holidays (57.5%). This was the only industry sector in which more than half of the firms offered this benefit to their part-time employees.

Firms in the retail trade sector tended to offer the fewest paid holidays to their full-time employees—the median number was six. The highest median number of paid holidays was 10. Responding firms in three industries offered 10 annual holidays: mining; transportation, communications, and utilities; and finance, insurance, and real estate.

Paid vacation leave the most frequently reported employee benefit

Most of the firms (77.7%) reported offering vacation leave to their full-time employees. For part-time employees, this was true for only one-fourth of the firms. The most frequently reported vacation leave period for full-time workers was two weeks (43.3% of firms). Equal proportions of the firms (about one-fourth) reported granting either one week or less or more than two weeks. (See Figure 2.)

As was the case with paid holidays, vacation leave varied by firm size and industry. The proportion of firms reporting that they granted vacation leave to their full-time employees ranged from 57.5% of small firms to 89.2% of very large firms. In no firm-size category did a majority of the firms grant vacation leave to their part-time employees. Very large firms most frequently reported offering this benefit (45.8%).

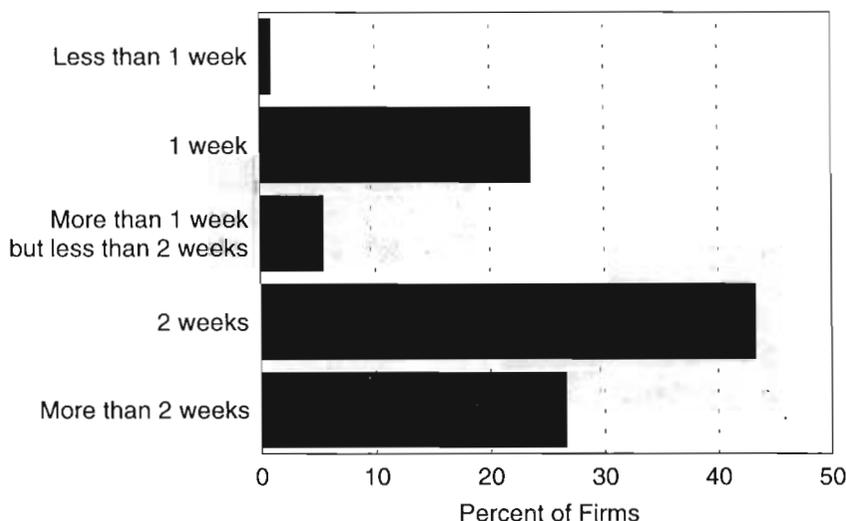
The length of vacation leave granted was quite consistent regardless of firm size. About two-thirds of the small, medium, and large firms reported that they granted two or more weeks of vacation leave to their full-time employees. For very large firms, this proportion rose to over 90 percent. It should be noted that while vacation leave time may vary within a firm depending upon the length of service of the employee, respondents were not asked to supply this information.

Construction was the only industry in which fewer than half the responding firms reported offering vacation leave to their full-time employees (41.9%). Availability of vacation leave in the other industries ranged from 66.7% of firms in manufacturing to 91.5% of firms in finance, insurance, and real estate. For part-time employees, vacation leave was offered by a minority of firms regardless of industry. However, the proportion ranged widely from 2.9% of construction firms to 47.0% of firms in finance, insurance, and real estate.

For those firms which reported offering annual vacation leave, the duration was typically two or more weeks regardless of industry (full-time employees). Half the firms in construction which offered paid vacations

Figure • 2

Paid Annual Vacation Leave Provided by Private Firms to Full-time Employees



Source: 1993 Alaska Benefits Survey, Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.

allowed leave of this length with the proportion rising to nearly 90 percent of the firms in finance, insurance, and real estate.

Sick leave benefits reported by majority of firms responding except those with fewer than 10 employees

Sick leave for full-time employees was offered by more than half (56.5%) of the responding firms. The median number of annual sick leave days reported was seven. Only one of five surveyed firms offered sick leave to their part-time employees.

As with holidays and vacation leave, the availability and extent of paid sick leave were associated with firm size and industry. Less than half the small firms reported offering sick leave to their full-time employees. A majority of firms in the other size categories reported offering this benefit, rising to nearly 85 percent of very large firms. The extent of paid sick leave most common among the small firms was one to five days. For very large firms, it was eight to 12 days. However, the proportion of very large firms offering 13 or more days of annual sick leave was smaller than for any other firm size category (12.8%).

Responding firms in the construction industry were the least likely to offer sick leave to their full-time employees (24.4%). Other industries in which fewer than half the firms offered this benefit were manufacturing and retail trade. On the other end of the spectrum, two-thirds or more of the firms in mining; transportation, communications and public utilities; and finance, insurance and real estate provided paid sick leave.

Major medical insurance offered by about half the firms reporting

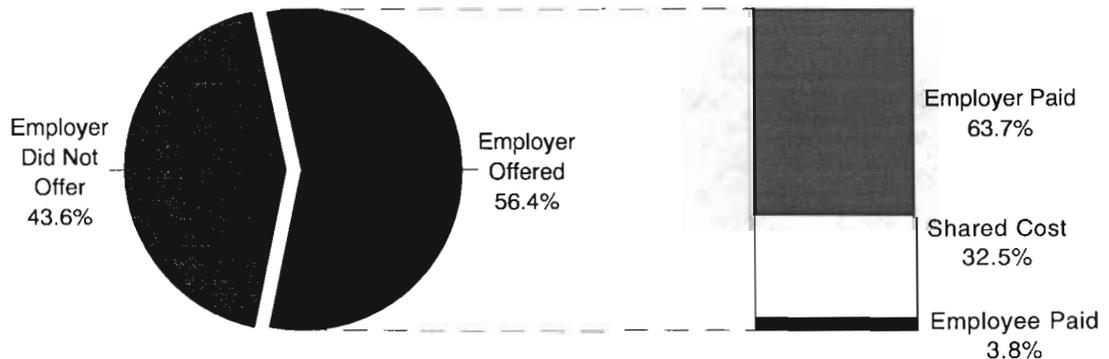
The availability of major medical insurance has become an important issue, both to employers trying to contain rising health care costs and to public policy makers. Results of this survey show that over half the firms (56.4%) provided major medical insurance that covered their full-time employees while just under half (46.8%) provided medical insurance that included family coverage. The proportion of firms offering either type of coverage to their part-time employees was the same, about 12 percent.

The availability of major medical insurance was strongly associated with firm size. Firms with fewer than 10 employees were much less likely than larger firms to offer major medical insurance regardless of extent of coverage. This was true whether the benefits were for full- or part-time employees.

How major medical insurance benefits were paid for depended upon coverage and firm size. For employee coverage, nearly two-thirds of the employers offering this benefit reported that they paid the full cost and about one-third shared the cost with the employee. A very small proportion required employees to pay the cost themselves. (See Figure 3.) When the coverage was for the family, some or all of the costs were often

Figure • 3

Major Medical Insurance for Full-time Employees of Private Firms—Employee Coverage



Source: 1993 Alaska Benefits Survey. Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.

borne by the employee. Only one-fourth of the firms paid the entire cost of major medical insurance for families of their full-time employees. Sharing the cost was the most common pattern (44.0% of the firms) and in nearly one-third of the firms, employees themselves bore the full cost of this benefit. (See Figure 4.)

While less than a third of the small firms which responded offered major medical insurance to their full-time employees, those that did tended to pay the full cost rather than sharing it with the employee or requiring the employee to pay it entirely. Among the firms offering employee coverage, 77.1% of the small firms paid the cost of major medical benefits versus 46.8% of the very large firms. For family coverage, the proportions were 43.9% and 15.3%. Sharing the cost of major medical insurance was the most common method of pay among very large firms. Whether the coverage was employee or family, the majority of very large firms which responded required their employees to share the cost of major medical insurance. For employee coverage, the proportion was 53.2%. For family coverage, the proportion rose to 69.4%.

The industry pattern for major medical insurance was quite similar for both types of coverage, employee and family. About 21 percent of the small firms in construction

and retail trade reported providing employee coverage. For family coverage, it dropped to 17.0% of small firms in construction and 14.0% in retail trade. The majority of large and very large firms offered both types of major medical insurance, employee and family, regardless of the industry.

Dental insurance availability and method of pay similar to those of major medical insurance

Dental insurance for full-time employees was offered by 55.6% of the firms which responded to this survey, about the same proportion as offered major medical insurance for employees. Also similar are the patterns of firm size and availability and method of pay. Small firms were much less likely to offer dental insurance than medium-size and larger firms. And while nearly all (92.8%) of the very large firms offered this benefit, they were also likely to require their full-time employees to share the cost (58.4%). For part-time employees, dental insurance was offered by 10.7% of the firms responding.

Industry patterns observed for other benefits also apply to dental insurance. Construction firms were the least likely to report offering this benefit to their full-time employees (30.7%), followed by retail trade (36.5%) and services (38.9%). Firms in finance, insurance, and real estate were the most likely (74.0%).

Figure • 4

Major Medical Insurance for Full-time Employees of Private Firms—Family Coverage



Vision insurance not usually offered

Vision insurance was the least available of the health-related benefits among the surveyed firms. Only 22.1% of them reported offering vision insurance to their full-time employees. This proportion dropped to 7.1% for part-time employees. With ma-

Source: 1993 Alaska Benefits Survey. Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.

Percent of Alaska Private Firms Offering Selected Benefits to Their Full-time Employees—1993

Firm Size	Total # of Firms	Percent								
		Paid Holidays	Paid Vacation Leave	Paid Sick Leave	Major Medical Insurance/ Employee Coverage	Major Medical Insurance/ Family Coverage	Dental Insurance	Vision Insurance	Life Insurance	Pension Plan
Small	645	62.1	57.5	43.0	31.8	21.6	19.5	3.4	19.7	16.6
Medium	424	76.5	73.1	59.3	69.3	57.3	54.7	5.7	59.4	29.5
Large	207	88.1	85.0	76.6	92.3	87.9	81.2	9.7	81.2	45.4
Very Large	83	95.1	89.2	84.6	92.8	86.7	92.8	37.3	92.8	65.1

Source: 1993 Alaska Benefits Survey. Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.

major medical and dental insurance, over half the medium-size and larger firms offered coverage to their full-time employees. For vision insurance, however, only very large firms commonly offered the benefit (68.7%).

As with the other types of insurance coverage, small firms which did offer the benefit were more likely to pay the full cost and as firm size increased, so did the proportion of firms requiring employees to share the cost. With vision insurance, however, it was more common to see employees required to pay the entire cost of the benefit.

Finance, insurance, and real estate was the only industry in which half the firms reported offering vision insurance to their full-time employees (50.0%). Industries with the lowest proportion of firms offering the benefit were retail trade and construction, both at about 16 percent.

Life insurance availability follows pattern for most other benefits studied

Nearly half (45.9%) of the firms responding to the survey indicated that they provided

life insurance to their full-time employees. As with the other types of benefits, availability of life insurance was associated with firm size. Only one-fifth of the small firms offered this benefit while nearly all of the very large firms did so (92.8%). By industry, availability was highest among firms in wholesale trade (71.6%) and lowest among construction firms (22.2%). Only a small proportion of firms reported offering this benefit to part-time employees (9.9%).

Pension plans not available in most of the private firms which responded

Pension plans were not commonly available among the private firms which responded to this survey. Only 28.0% of them reported that they offered this benefit to their full-time employees. By firm size, pension plans were unavailable in all but 16.6% of the small firms while 65.1% of the very large firms offered them. By industry, pension plans were offered by 55.6% of the firms in mining. Retail trade firms were the least likely to offer this benefit (15.5%). Few of the firms reported providing this benefit to their part-time employees (8.0%).

Summary

The majority of private firms responding to the 1993 Alaska Benefits Survey provided benefits to their workers in addition to paying wages and salaries. Benefits varied, however, depending on the workers' employment status (full- or part-time), firm size, and industry.

Medium-size and larger firms generally provided more sick leave and medical benefits than small firms employing fewer than 10 workers. Very large firms with 250 or more employees reported offering these benefits the most consistently. Paid holidays and vacations were the only benefits offered by the majority of small firms. (See Table 1.)

Firms uniformly reported providing more generous leave and insurance benefits to their full-time employees than to their part-time employees. For example, paid holidays and paid vacation leave were provided by over 70 percent of the participating firms to their full-time employees in 1993. On the

other hand, fewer than one-third of the firms provided paid holidays and only one-fourth provided paid vacation leave to part-time workers.

Industry was also a factor in whether or not benefits were offered.¹ Construction firms were the least likely to report offering benefits to their full-time employees. Fewer than half of them reported offering any of the benefits discussed here. Retail trade was another industry where benefits appeared to be limited. Holidays and vacation leave were the only benefits commonly reported as available by firms in retail trade. Overall, the most generous benefit policies were reported by firms in finance, insurance, and real estate. All of the benefits discussed here (except pension plans) were offered by half or more of the firms which responded from this industry. Firms in mining; transportation, communications, and public utilities; and wholesale trade also reported benefit policies that were more generous than those observed in the other industries.

¹The relationship between industry and availability of benefits was statistically significant at a 99% confidence interval. When the data were reanalyzed to control for firm size, industry continued to be very important in understanding the availability of benefits among small and medium-size firms. However, for large and very large firms, the association between industry and availability of benefits was not statistically significant for all benefit types.

Alaska Occupational Injury and Illness in 1993

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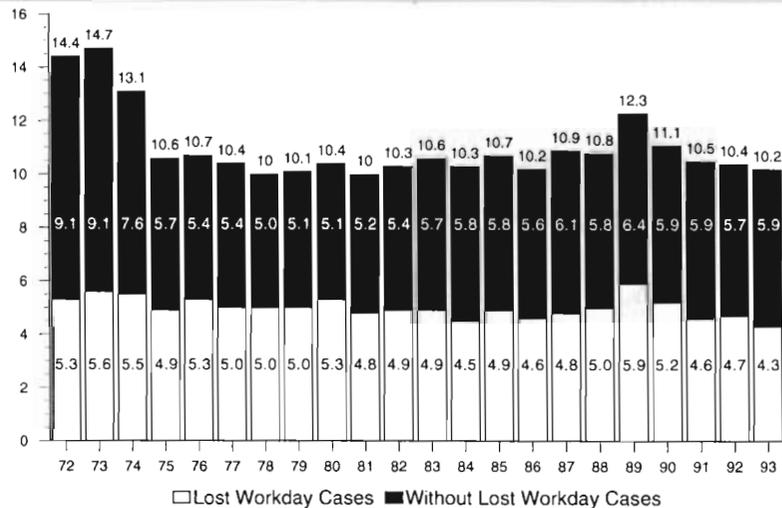
by Chris Miller

Figure • 1

A major focus of the U.S. and Alaska Departments of Labor is the promotion of safety in the workplace. The Alaska Department of Labor's Research and Analysis Section, in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, annually conducts a survey of Alaska employers to develop an estimate of the number of work-related injuries and illnesses. In 1993 there were an estimated 15,137 work-related injuries and illnesses in Alaska. (See Table 1.) Incidence rates are computed as the number of injuries and/or illnesses, or lost workdays, per 100 full-time workers.

At 10.2 for 1993, Alaska's total private sector incidence rate did not experience a statistically significant change from 1992.¹ (See Figure 1.) Except for the cleanup of the Exxon

Alaska's Private Sector Occupational Injury/Illness Rate 1972-1993



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

¹All tests of statistical significance reported in this article are at a 95% confidence interval.

Table • 1

Number of Nonfatal Occupational Injuries & Illnesses
Select Industries, 1992 - 1993

Industry	1992			1993		
	Total	LWD	W/O LWD	Total	LWD	W/O LWD
Private Sector	15,455	6,972	8,482	15,137	6,363	8,774
Mining	504	221	283	552	202	350
Construction	1,269	545	724	1,592	614	978
Manufacturing	4,178	2,060	2,118	3,569	1,771	1,797
Food & Kindred Products	3,255	1,539	1,716	2,527	1,240	1,286
Lumber & Wood Products	581	391	190	721	404	317
Transportation & Public Utilities	2,196	1,202	993	2,397	1,039	1,358
Trucking & Warehousing	438	224	214	432	207	225
Water Transportation	207	74	133	205	84	121
Air Transportation	961	617	343	994	465	530
Communications	179	86	93	195	58	137
Wholesale & Retail Trade	3,891	1,526	2,365	3,370	1,337	2,032
Wholesale Trade	556	281	275	568	257	310
Retail Trade	3,335	1,245	2,090	2,802	1,080	1,722
General Merchandise Store	327	146	181	293	117	176
Food Stores	1,049	283	766	642	259	383
Apparel & Accessory Stores	*	*	*	28	13	15
Eating & Drinking Places	1,147	448	698	873	344	529
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate Services	196	81	115	496	193	304
Hotels & Other Lodging Places	3,133	1,300	1,833	3,000	1,141	1,859
Health Services	371	166	206	421	171	250
	1,105	498	606	893	282	611

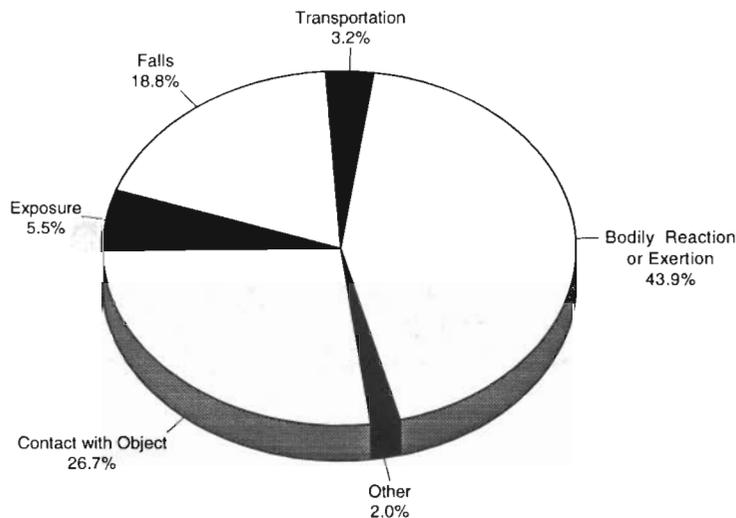
* = Not Publishable.

Note: Because of rounding and exclusions of unpublished data, components may not add to totals.

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

Figure • 2

**Days Away from Work Cases
by Event—1993**



Note: Because of rounding, percentages may not add to 100.
Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.

Valdez oil spill in 1989, the private sector total injury rate has remained relatively constant since 1975 at about 10 cases per 100. This is a marked improvement from the early 1970s. In 1973, the first full year after passage of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) of 1972, the total private sector injury and illness rate was 14.7 workers per 100.

The total injury/illness rate can be broken down into two general categories. One category includes those cases with severe injuries/illnesses that require days away from work or “lost workday” (LWD) injuries/illnesses. Alaska had 6,363 LWD cases in 1993. The second category includes only minor injuries/illnesses not requiring days away from work or “without lost workday” (W/O LWD) injuries/illnesses. There were 8,744 W/O LWD cases in 1993. This article will focus on the more serious LWD injuries/illnesses occurring in Alaska.

Table • 2

**Nonfatal Occupational Injury & Illness Incidence Rates
Select Industries, 1992-1993**

Industry	1992			1993		
	Total	LWD	W/O LWD	Total	LWD	W/O LWD
Private Sector	10.4	4.7	5.7	10.2	4.3	5.9
Mining	5.4	2.4	3.1	5.1	1.9	3.2
Construction	13.3	5.7	7.6	14.6	5.6	9.0
Manufacturing	19.7	9.7	10.0	19.9	9.9	10.0
Food & Kindred Products	22.7	10.7	12.0	21.0	10.3	10.7
Lumber & Wood Products	20.2	13.6	6.6	29.1	16.3	12.8
Transportation & Public Utilities	10.7	5.8	4.8	11.8	5.1	6.7
Trucking & Warehousing	15.8	8.1	7.7	17.1	8.2	8.9
Water Transportation	14.6	5.2	9.4	16.4	6.7	9.7
Air Transportation	14.6	9.4	5.2	14.7	6.9	7.8
Communications	5.6	2.7	2.9	7.0	2.1	4.9
Trade	10.3	4.0	6.3	9.1	3.6	5.5
Wholesale Trade	7.3	3.7	3.6	7.6	3.4	4.2
Retail Trade	11.1	4.1	6.9	9.5	3.7	5.8
General Merchandise Stores	10.1	4.5	5.6	9.4	3.8	5.6
Food Stores	18.6	5.0	13.6	13.3	5.4	7.9
Apparel & Accessory Stores	*	*	*	3.0	1.4	*
Eating & Drinking Places	12.6	4.9	7.7	8.7	3.4	5.3
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	2.4	1.0	1.4	5.8	2.3	3.6
Services	7.6	3.2	4.5	7.1	2.7	4.4
Hotels & Other Lodging Places	9.0	4.0	5.0	9.7	3.9	5.8
Health Services	11.8	5.3	6.5	9.8	3.1	6.7

* = Not Publishable.

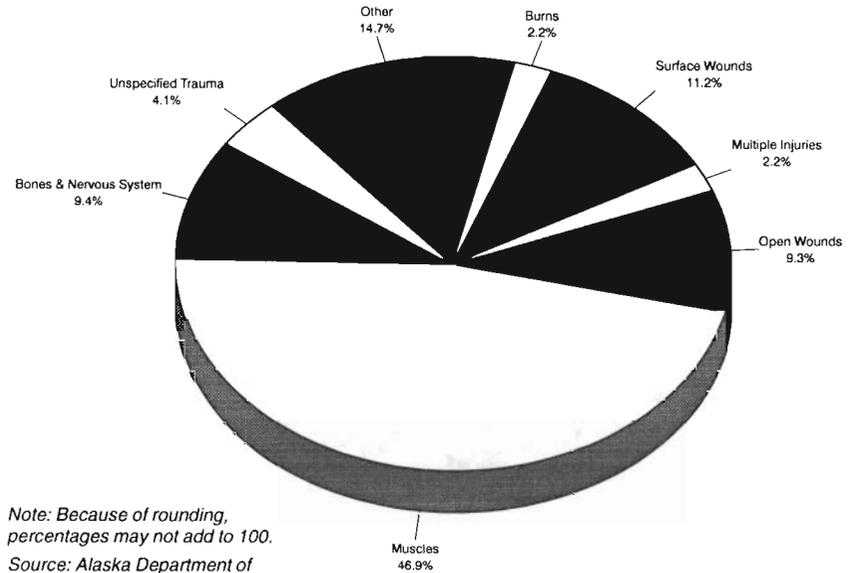
Note: Because of rounding and exclusions of unpublshable data, components may not add to totals.
Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.

In contrast to the total private sector incidence rate, the private sector LWD rate has shown a gradual decline. In 1993 the private sector LWD rate reached 4.3, an all-time low. However, not all industries saw improvements between 1992 and 1993. (See Table 2.) The only industries with statistically significant drops in their LWD rates for 1993 were mining and transportation. Most industries had essentially no change in their LWD rate. Only finance, insurance, and real estate (FIRE) experienced a statistically significant increase in its LWD rate.

The LWD rate in the mining industry dropped from 2.4 in 1992 to 1.9 in 1993. This was the lowest LWD rate of any major industry in Alaska. The comparable national rate for this industry was 3.9. (See Table 3.)

In the transportation and public utilities industry, the LWD rate dropped from 5.8 in 1992 to 5.1 in 1993. This improvement was

Days Away from Work Cases by Nature of Trauma—1993



Note: Because of rounding, percentages may not add to 100.
Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.

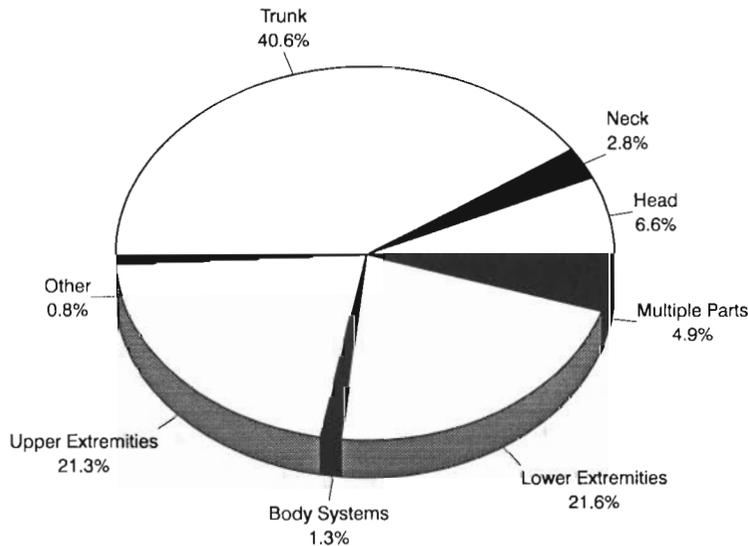
U.S. Occupational Injury & Illness Incidence Rates Selected industries, 1992-1993

Industry	1992			1993		
	Total	LWD	W/O LWD	Total	LWD	W/O LWD
Private Sector	8.9	3.9	5.0	8.5	3.8	4.8
Mining	7.3	4.1	3.3	6.8	3.9	2.9
Construction	13.1	5.8	7.3	12.2	5.5	6.7
Manufacturing	12.5	5.4	7.1	12.1	5.3	6.8
Food & Kindred Products	18.8	9.5	9.3	17.6	8.9	8.8
Lumber & Wood Products	16.3	7.6	8.7	15.9	7.6	8.3
Transportation & Public Utilities	9.1	5.1	4.0	9.5	5.4	4.1
Trucking & Warehousing	13.4	7.9	5.5	13.8	8.3	5.5
Water Transportation	11.5	5.5	6.0	10.4	5.6	4.8
Air Transportation	13.8	7.6	6.3	15.1	8.4	6.7
Communications	3.4	1.8	1.5	3.9	2.1	1.8
Wholesale & Retail Trade	8.4	3.5	4.9	8.1	3.4	4.7
Wholesale Trade	7.6	3.6	3.9	7.8	3.7	4.1
Retail Trade	8.7	3.4	5.3	8.2	3.3	4.9
General Merchandise Stores	10.4	4.8	5.6	10.5	5.0	5.5
Food Stores	11.9	4.8	7.2	10.6	4.4	6.2
Apparel & Accessory Stores	4.3	1.6	2.7	4.1	1.7	2.4
Eating & Drinking Places	9.1	3.1	6.0	8.5	3.0	5.5
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate Services	2.9	1.2	1.7	2.9	1.2	1.7
Hotels & Other Lodging Places	7.1	3.0	4.2	6.7	2.8	3.9
Health Services	11.2	4.9	6.3	10.7	4.8	5.9
	10.2	4.1	6.1	9.6	3.9	5.7

Note: Because of rounding and exclusions of unpublished data, components may not add to totals.
Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.

Figure • 4

Days Away from Work Cases by Part of Body Injured—1993



Note: Because of rounding, percentages may not add to 100.
Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.

centered in the air transportation and communications segments of the industry. The 1993 LWD rate for air transportation was 6.9, down from 9.4 in 1992, primarily due to improvements among scheduled airlines. The LWD rate in communications dropped from 2.7 to 2.1, chiefly because of improvements in the telephone industry.

The LWD rate for FIRE increased from 1.0 in 1992 to 2.3 in 1993. This was well above the corresponding national rate of 1.2. Behind this increase was a dramatic rise in the LWD rate for holding companies. The LWD rate for holding companies has typically been around 1.0, but in 1993 it jumped to 6.7. This change was due to some Alaska Native corporations, which are classified as holding companies, moving from holding stock to actively managing subsidiary companies under one corporate umbrella.

Although LWD injuries and illness may be painful and unfortunate to those involved, an analysis of the characteristics of these injuries shows many are mundane in nature and possibly preventable. In 1993 almost

Table • 4

Number of Days Away from Work Cases by Event - 1993

Event	Cases by Number of Days Away from Work								
	Total Cases	1 day	2 days	3-5 days	6-10 days	11-20 days	21-30 days	30+ days	Median days
Private Sector	5,745	869	723	1,400	797	686	339	883	5
Contact with Objects	1,535	266	218	415	198	170	88	180	4
Falls	1,077	155	121	240	135	128	90	208	6
Bodily Reaction or Exertion	2,522	341	319	613	400	329	132	389	5
Exposure to Harmful Substances	315	58	70	65	37	29	18	39	3
Transportation Accidents	182	37	30	42	10	17	3	43	4
Fires & Explosions	23	4	0	7	0	6	2	3	14
Assaults & Violent Acts	36	9	3	11	7	1	0	5	4
Other	57	1	13	7	10	6	6	15	10

Note: Because of rounding and exclusions of unpublshable data, components may not add to totals.
Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.

half (43.9%) of all cases resulting in days away from work were caused by some form of bodily reaction or exertion. (See Figure 2.) A median of five days away from work resulted from this type of injury. (See Table 4.) These injuries involved such actions as slipping, bending, lifting, pushing, or repetitive motion. This was further reflected in the nature of the injuries that occurred. Trauma to the muscles and their connective tissue accounted for 46.9% of all injuries involving days away from work in 1993. (See Figure 3.)

The second most frequent event leading to injury in 1993 was coming in contact with some object (26.7%). These events can range from striking or being struck by an object, to being caught in equipment or collapsing material.

Statistics on the part of the body injured are consistent with the finding that overexertion is the most frequent cause of injuries requiring days away from work. Nearly 41 percent of all LWD injuries requiring days away from work are in the trunk area of the body. (See Figure 4.) Over 60 percent of these trunk injuries involve muscles in the back.

The second and third most frequently injured parts of the body while at work are the upper and lower extremities. Injuries to arms, wrists, and hands account for 21.6% of total injuries while injuries to legs, ankles, and feet make up 21.3%. Striking or being struck by an object was the most frequent event leading to injury of these body parts, followed by bodily reaction/overexertion. The upper extremities were more likely to be injured by repetitive motion. The most common event leading to injury of the lower extremities was overexertion.

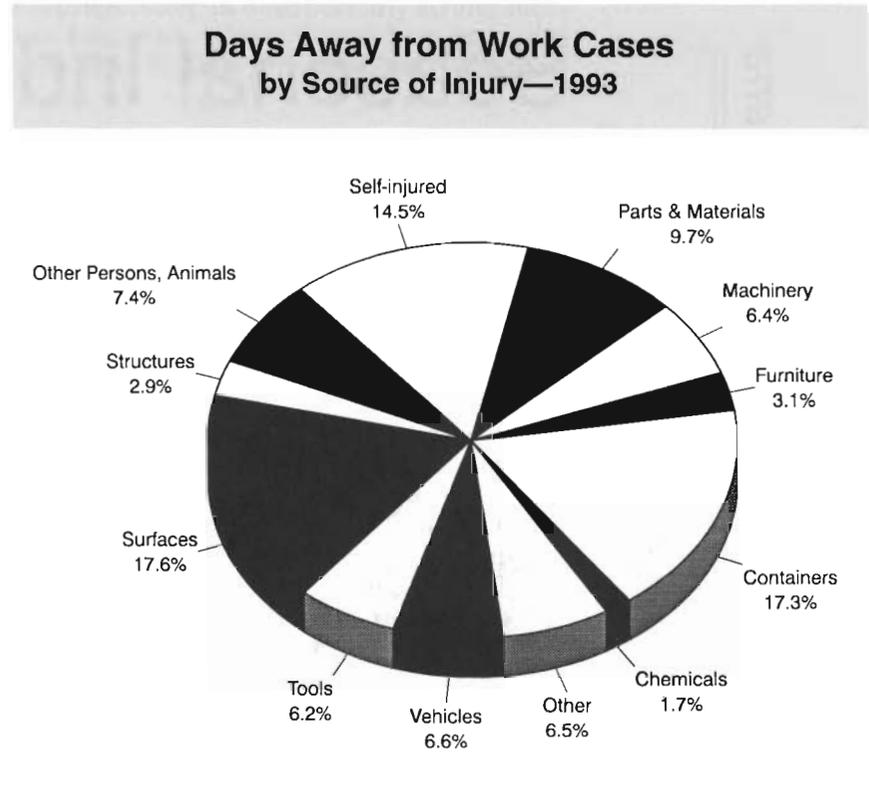
The Bureau of Labor Statistics refers to the source of an injury or illness as the person or thing directly contributing to the injury. For example, when a worker falls off a roof, the worker is not injured by falling through the air but when the worker hits the ground or some other object. The most frequent source of injury to workers was surfaces (17.6%), which include the ground, floors, steps, and streets. (See Figure 5.) Falls either from a higher level or the same level were involved in over 75 percent of all injuries caused by surfaces.

Containers were the second most common source of injury to workers in 1993 (17.3%). When a container was involved in an injury, almost 75 percent of the time the workers were overexerting themselves. Most of the remaining container-related injuries were caused by being struck by the container in some way.

In some instances, the injured worker was the source of the injury (14.5%). In over 70 percent of these cases, the worker was involved in a single bodily motion (i.e., reaching, twisting, walking, slipping) which resulted in injury. The remainder of the self-injury cases involved repetitive motion. Carpal tunnel syndrome is an example of this type of injury. In the case of carpal tunnel syndrome injuries, a median of 17 days away from work resulted per injury.

In 1993 approximately 42.2% of all injuries and illnesses requiring days away from work occurred to operators and laborers. (See Figure 6.) Almost half (43.2%) of these operator

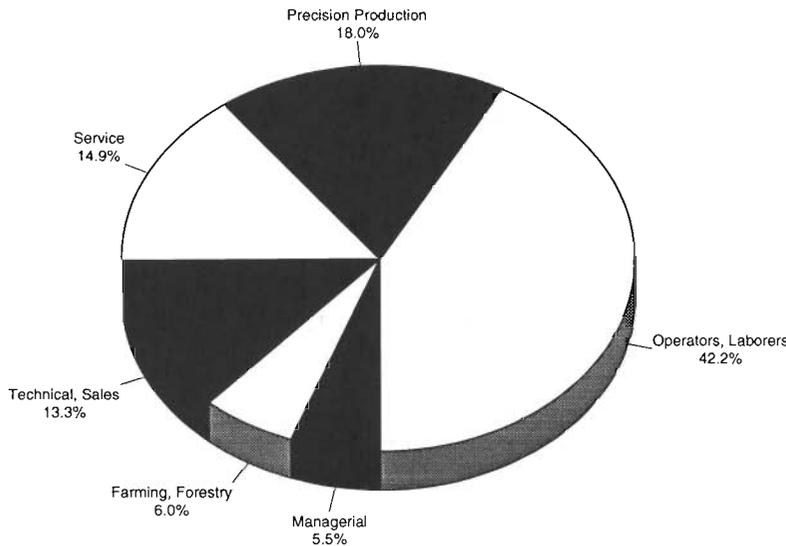
Figure 5



Note: Because of rounding, percentages may not add to 100.
Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.

Figure • 6

Days Away from Work Cases by Occupation of Injured—1993



Note: Because of rounding, percentages may not add to 100.
Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.

injuries were the result of bodily motion or overexertion. Another 26.3% were due to contact with an object. Except for production workers, the other occupational groups had similar patterns of events leading to injury. Production workers had an almost equal number of injuries caused by bodily motion (37.9%) or contact with objects (34.6%), followed by falls (19.1%).

For readers interested in further information about the incidence rate and characteristics of injuries and illnesses in their specific industry or occupation, additional detail can be provided upon request.

Seasonal Industries Cushion Other Setbacks

by Brigitta Windisch-Cole

The broad economic picture in Alaska remained positive in July, although there were hints of a slowdown in job growth. The number of unemployed Alaskans continued to fall, dropping to about 17,900. This is only the fifth time since 1990 that the number of jobless workers has fallen below 18,000. Wage and salary employment increased by 6,500 over the month, reaching a new high, but the annual rate of growth slowed to a mere 0.6%.

Alaska's statewide unemployment rate fell almost a percentage point in July to 5.7%. This compares favorably to last year's July

rate of 6.6%. Tourism was a big contributor of jobs, in spite of two cruise ship mishaps. Construction activities around the state and fish processing jobs in the coastal regions also boosted growth of wage and salary employment.

Alaskans generally enjoyed a good chance of finding employment during this year's high employment season. Of the 27 boroughs and census areas, 16 had lower unemployment rates than last year. Double-digit unemployment rates occurred in only four areas within the state. (See Table 4.)

July's employment balance sheet

While July's employment rose to a new high, the slow pace of growth revealed an arduous climb. Strong employment gains in the seasonally energized visitor, construction, and seafood processing industries were offset somewhat by losses in oil-related and public sector employment. While modest, the annual gain of 1,600 jobs pushed up the state's wage and salary employment level to a record 280,000. (See Figure 1.)

Throughout the year, industry downsizing and a realignment of the public sector kept job growth in check. July marked the one-year anniversary of the announcement of the ARCO layoffs. Since that time, a total of 900 jobs have been lost in the oil patch. The public sector, mainly federal government, has also kept overall employment growth slow by dropping 1,000 jobs since last year. (See Table 1.)

The federal work force continues to shrink

Alaska lost 800 federal jobs in just a year. Employment at those agencies supporting the armed forces lost the most ground, about 600 jobs. Also showing a sizable cut was the Federal Aviation Administration which reduced its work force by 100. Some federal agencies with a smaller presence in the state are planning regional consolidations and will shut down their Alaska offices. Further reductions in federal employment, both military-related and other, can be expected.

Construction on the move in rural areas

During July, a large portion of Alaska's construction crews were deployed on the big job sites around Fairbanks and Anchorage. Most of the industry's 3.3% employment growth can be attributed to these large dollar projects which include the Fort Knox Mine, the Elmen-dorf and Alaska Native hospitals, school construction in the Anchorage School District, and Healy's Clean Coal project. Construction activities were also strong in the Gulf region where some of the larger projects

were just about to start. Some of the bigger rural projects which barely started in July were the Coast Guard's housing project in Kodiak, Seward's SeaLife Center, and Homer's elementary school. Workers continued on the hospital expansion in Kodiak and a senior housing project in Homer where construction has been the strongest in a decade, according to local experts. Housing projects in Bethel, Stebbins, St. Michael, and Sitka, as well as re-building Fort Yukon's destroyed school, all helped add employment to this very busy industry sector.

Fish on!

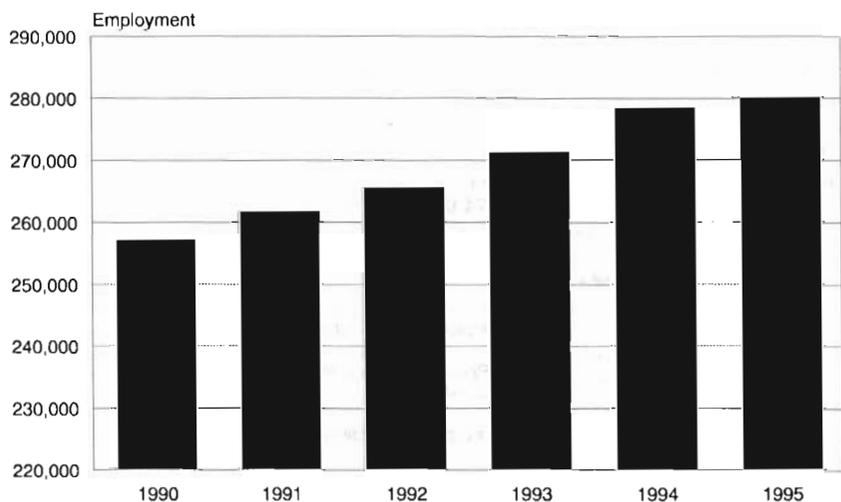
Another record Bristol Bay sockeye catch at the end of July topped last year's bumper harvest. (See Figure 2.) All told, harvest volume had surpassed last year's catch by about 19 percent with the July count. About 1,900 Bristol Bay boats competed for the resource and, along the shores, 1,022 setnet site permit holders fished the tides.

Outside of Bristol Bay, the abundant harvests around Kodiak caught processors by surprise. After an unexpectedly strong sockeye run, pink salmon showed up in record numbers. Kodiak processors advised their

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Figure • 1

Alaska's Employment Reaches New High July 1990 - July 1995



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

T a b l e • 1

Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment by Place of Work

Alaska	p/	r/	Changes from			Municipality of Anchorage	p/	r/	Changes from		
	7/95	6/95	7/94	6/95	7/94		7/95	6/95	7/94	6/95	7/94
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	280,000	273,500	278,400	6,500	1,600	Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	125,500	125,100	124,400	400	1,100
Goods-producing	51,600	43,100	51,800	8,500	-200	Goods-producing	13,600	12,700	13,700	900	-100
Mining	9,900	9,800	10,900	100	-1,000	Mining	3,000	2,900	3,200	100	-200
Construction	15,500	14,400	15,000	1,100	500	Construction	8,000	7,500	8,000	500	0
Manufacturing	26,200	18,900	25,900	7,300	300	Manufacturing	2,600	2,300	2,500	300	100
Durable Goods	3,500	3,500	3,700	0	-200	Service-producing	111,900	112,400	110,700	-500	1,200
Lumber & Wood Products	2,400	2,400	2,700	0	-300	Transportation	13,300	13,000	13,600	300	-300
Nondurable Goods	22,700	15,400	22,200	7,300	500	Air Transportation	4,800	4,500	5,000	300	-200
Seafood Processing	19,300	12,000	18,900	7,300	400	Communications	2,400	2,400	2,500	0	-100
Pulp Mills	500	500	500	0	0	Trade	30,000	29,800	29,400	200	600
Service-producing	228,400	230,400	226,600	-2,000	1,800	Wholesale Trade	6,200	6,200	6,300	0	-100
Transportation	25,300	24,900	25,600	400	-300	Retail Trade	23,800	23,600	23,100	200	700
Trucking & Warehousing	3,500	3,400	3,300	100	200	Gen. Merch. & Apparel	4,900	4,800	4,500	100	400
Water Transportation	2,400	2,300	2,300	100	100	Food Stores	3,500	3,300	3,400	200	100
Air Transportation	8,000	7,700	8,200	300	-200	Eating & Drinking Places	8,100	8,100	7,900	0	200
Communications	4,000	3,900	4,000	100	0	Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	7,700	7,700	7,500	0	200
Trade	58,100	57,300	56,700	800	1,400	Services & Misc.	33,400	33,300	32,400	100	1,000
Wholesale Trade	8,900	8,600	8,900	300	0	Hotels & Lodging Places	3,000	2,900	2,900	100	100
Retail Trade	49,200	48,700	47,800	500	1,400	Health Services	6,700	6,700	6,400	0	300
Gen. Merch. & Apparel	9,800	9,700	9,200	100	600	Government	27,500	28,600	27,800	-1,100	-300
Food Stores	7,700	7,600	7,500	100	200	Federal	11,000	11,100	11,400	-100	-400
Eating & Drinking Places	16,800	16,600	16,500	200	300	State	7,300	7,600	7,400	-300	-100
Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	12,600	12,500	12,400	100	200	Local	9,200	9,900	9,000	-700	200
Services & Misc.	63,400	63,000	61,900	400	1,500						
Hotels & Lodging Places	8,700	8,200	8,500	500	200						
Health Services	13,400	13,400	12,600	0	800						
Government	69,000	72,700	70,000	-3,700	-1,000						
Federal	18,800	18,800	19,600	0	-800						
State	19,900	20,600	20,200	-700	-300						
Local	30,300	33,300	30,200	-3,000	100						

T a b l e • 2

Alaska Hours and Earnings for Selected Industries

	Average Weekly Earnings			Average Weekly Hours			Average Hourly Earnings		
	p/	r/		p/	r/		p/	r/	
	7/95	6/95	7/94	7/95	6/95	7/94	7/95	6/95	7/94
Mining	\$1,258.92	\$1,254.91	\$1,206.86	52.0	51.2	52.2	\$24.21	\$24.51	\$23.12
Construction	1,249.02	1,241.09	1,174.35	47.6	47.9	45.5	26.24	25.91	25.81
Manufacturing	555.49	491.23	614.22	54.3	40.8	60.1	10.23	12.04	10.22
Seafood Processing	505.45	359.05	579.39	57.7	39.5	65.1	8.76	9.09	8.90
Trans., Comm. & Utilities	691.06	652.42	688.20	36.7	35.4	37.0	18.83	18.43	18.60
Trade	429.24	410.02	396.00	36.5	35.5	35.2	11.76	11.55	11.25
Wholesale	698.50	647.34	622.52	40.8	39.4	39.4	17.12	16.43	15.80
Retail	380.92	369.94	354.66	35.7	34.9	34.5	10.67	10.60	10.28
Finance-Ins. & R.E.	474.94	467.31	432.61	36.2	35.7	35.2	13.12	13.09	12.29

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 1994

Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment by Place of Work

Southeast Region	p/		Changes from:		
	7/95	6/95	7/94	6/95	7/94
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	39,250	37,250	39,200	2,000	50
Goods-producing	7,900	6,150	8,150	1,750	-250
Mining	200	150	150	50	50
Construction	1,950	1,850	1,800	100	150
Manufacturing	5,750	4,150	6,200	1,600	-450
Durable Goods	1,800	1,800	2,150	0	-350
Lumber & Woods Products	1,700	1,700	2,050	0	-350
Nondurable Goods	3,950	2,350	4,050	1,600	-100
Seafood Processing	3,200	1,600	3,300	1,600	-100
Pulp Mills	550	500	500	50	50
Service-producing	31,350	31,100	31,050	250	300
Transportation	3,400	3,450	3,400	-50	0
Trade	7,700	7,450	7,500	250	200
Wholesale Trade	600	550	600	50	0
Retail Trade	7,100	6,900	6,900	200	200
Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	1,550	1,550	1,600	0	-50
Services & Misc.	7,100	6,900	6,800	200	300
Government	11,600	11,750	11,750	-150	-150
Federal	2,100	2,050	2,150	50	-50
State	5,200	5,250	5,250	-50	-50
Local	4,300	4,450	4,350	-150	-50

Anchorage/Mat-Su Region

Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	135,600	135,100	134,200	500	1,400
Goods-producing	14,500	13,550	14,600	950	-100
Mining	3,050	3,050	3,350	0	-300
Construction	8,700	8,100	8,650	600	50
Manufacturing	2,750	2,400	2,600	350	150
Service-producing	121,100	121,550	119,600	-450	1,500
Transportation	14,100	13,900	14,400	200	-300
Trade	32,900	32,500	32,100	400	800
Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	8,050	8,050	7,900	0	150
Services & Misc.	35,600	35,500	34,800	100	800
Government	30,450	31,600	30,400	-1,150	50
Federal	11,150	11,150	11,500	0	-350
State	8,150	8,450	8,200	-300	-50
Local	11,150	12,000	10,700	-850	450

Gulf Coast Region

Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	32,100	29,750	31,850	2,350	250
Goods-producing	11,000	8,500	10,700	2,500	300
Mining	1,000	1,000	1,000	0	0
Construction	1,450	1,300	1,450	150	0
Manufacturing	8,550	6,200	8,250	2,350	300
Seafood Processing	7,150	4,800	7,000	2,350	150
Service-producing	21,100	21,250	21,150	-150	-50
Transportation	2,400	2,350	2,450	50	-50
Trade	5,850	5,600	5,850	250	0
Wholesale Trade	800	700	800	100	0
Retail Trade	5,050	4,900	5,050	150	0
Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	700	650	700	50	0
Services & Misc.	6,200	6,100	6,150	100	50
Government	5,950	6,550	6,000	-600	-50
Federal	700	700	750	0	-50
State	1,650	1,700	1,700	-50	-50
Local	3,600	4,150	3,550	-550	50

Interior Region	p/		Changes from:		
	7/95	6/95	7/94	6/95	7/94
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	37,900	37,950	37,600	-50	300
Goods-producing	3,950	3,750	3,950	200	0
Mining	850	850	1,100	0	-250
Construction	2,400	2,200	2,150	200	250
Manufacturing	700	700	700	0	0
Service-producing	33,950	34,200	33,650	-250	300
Transportation	3,400	3,350	3,300	50	100
Trade	8,650	8,500	8,450	150	200
Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	1,200	1,200	1,150	0	50
Services & Misc.	9,000	8,850	8,800	150	200
Government	11,700	12,300	11,950	-600	-250
Federal	3,900	3,900	4,000	0	-100
State	4,050	4,350	4,250	-300	-200
Local	3,750	4,050	3,700	-300	50

Fairbanks North Star Borough

Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	32,550	32,650	32,600	-100	-50
Goods-producing	3,550	3,350	3,600	200	-50
Mining	700	700	950	0	-250
Construction	2,200	2,050	2,000	150	200
Manufacturing	650	600	650	50	0
Service-producing	29,000	29,300	29,000	-300	0
Transportation	2,600	2,550	2,550	50	50
Trucking & Warehousing	650	650	550	0	100
Air Transportation	600	600	650	0	-50
Communications	250	250	250	0	0
Trade	7,850	7,800	7,750	50	100
Wholesale Trade	800	800	800	0	0
Retail Trade	7,050	7,000	6,950	50	100
Gen. Merch. & Apparel	1,300	1,300	1,250	0	50
Food Stores	800	800	750	0	50
Eating & Drinking Places	3,000	2,900	3,000	100	0
Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	1,100	1,100	1,100	0	0
Services & Misc.	8,000	8,000	7,850	0	150
Government	9,450	9,850	9,750	-400	-300
Federal	3,150	3,150	3,300	0	-150
State	3,750	4,050	3,900	-300	-150
Local	2,550	2,650	2,550	-100	0

Southwest Region

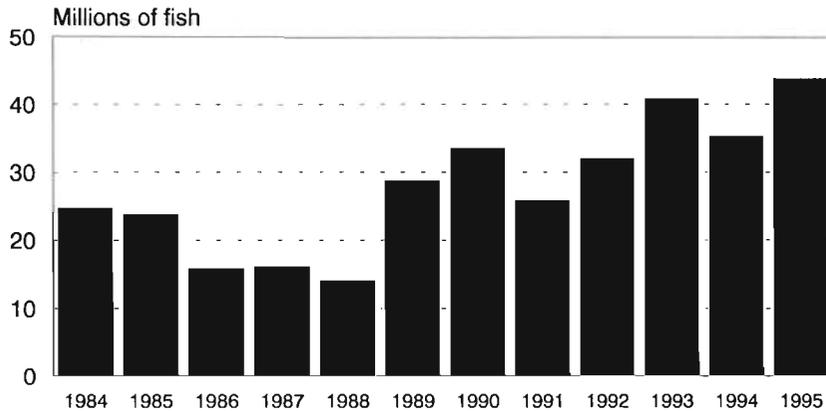
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	20,400	17,350	20,200	3,050	200
Goods-producing	8,800	5,600	8,600	3,200	200
Seafood Processing	8,400	5,250	8,050	3,150	350
Service-producing	11,600	11,750	11,600	-150	0
Government	5,000	5,450	5,050	-450	-50
Federal	850	850	900	0	-50
State	550	550	500	0	50
Local	3,600	4,050	3,650	-450	-50

Northern Region

Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	15,150	15,350	15,800	-200	-650
Goods-producing	5,450	5,300	6,100	150	-650
Mining	4,750	4,650	5,300	100	-550
Service-producing	9,700	10,050	9,700	-350	0
Government	4,500	5,000	4,550	-500	-50
Federal	250	250	250	0	0
State	300	300	350	0	-50
Local	3,950	4,450	3,950	-500	0

Figure • 2

**Another Record Catch in Bristol Bay
Red Salmon Harvests 1984-1995***



*Fish harvest as of July 31, 1995.
Source: Alaska Department of Fish & Game.

fishers to deliver a limited catch per day to avoid overloading plant capacities.

Not unexpectedly, other fishing areas did not fare as well in this year's salmon harvest. The biggest disappointment in the 1995 salmon season was the slow start of the Prince William Sound pink salmon fishery.

Visitors keep a few industries kicking up their heels

While the experts in Alaska's visitor industry agreed that July's visitor numbers had grown over last year, counts were not available at mid-season.

The precise impact of the visitor industry is hard if not impossible to measure. Employment growth in the visitor-accommodating industries is a weak measure because changes that occur within these industries may not relate to visitors. So neither seasonal nor annual growth in retail, service, and transportation industry employment necessarily reveals the visitor industry's true impact.

This past year, retail—which also includes employment at eating and drinking establishments—grew by 2.9%. Statewide, the hotel and lodging industry expanded staffing levels by 2.4%. Transportation employment contracted this year by 1.2% because of MarkAir's departure and downsizing within Alyeska Pipeline Company. What this confirms is that employment changes in an industry component may not suffice when judg-

Table • 4

Unemployment Rates by Region & Census Area

	Percent Unemployed		
	p/ 7/95	r/ 6/95	7/94
Not Seasonally Adjusted			
United States	5.9	5.8	6.2
Alaska Statewide	5.7	6.5	6.6
Anchorage/Mat-Su Region	5.0	5.5	6.1
Municipality of Anchorage	4.3	4.8	5.5
MatSu Borough	8.5	9.3	9.7
Gulf Coast Region	7.4	9.5	8.0
Kenai Peninsula Borough	8.9	9.5	9.5
Kodiak Island Borough	4.1	11.2	4.3
Valdez-Cordova	6.4	7.0	6.9
Interior Region	6.2	6.9	7.3
Denali Borough	3.0	3.8	3.7
Fairbanks North Star Bor.	5.7	6.4	6.9
Southeast Fairbanks	7.9	8.5	9.3
Yukon-Koyukuk	14.4	16.2	14.0
Northern Region	10.3	10.9	10.1
Nome	12.5	12.3	11.9
North Slope Borough	3.4	3.9	4.3
Northwest Arctic Borough	16.5	18.1	15.4
Southeast Region	5.2	5.9	6.1
Haines Borough	6.8	7.8	5.9
Juneau Borough	4.9	4.8	5.1
Ketchikan Gateway Bor.	4.4	5.3	6.2
Pr. of Wales-Outer Ketch.	6.6	8.8	8.2
Sitka Borough	5.2	5.6	9.3
Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon	4.7	6.3	4.7
Wrangell-Petersburg	6.7	9.5	4.5
Yakutat Borough	4.3	9.2	11.7
Southwest Region	5.7	6.8	5.3
Aleutians East Borough	2.2	1.4	1.5
Aleutians West	1.3	1.9	1.7
Bethel	8.2	9.9	7.6
Bristol Bay Borough	3.3	5.6	1.0
Dillingham	4.2	5.8	5.8
Lake & Peninsula Borough	7.3	8.9	5.0
Wade Hampton	14.2	14.7	11.6
Seasonally Adjusted			
United States	5.7	5.6	6.1
Alaska Statewide	6.9	6.7	8.1

p/ denotes preliminary estimates r/ denotes revised estimates
Benchmark: March 1994

- **Comparisons between different time periods are not as meaningful as other time series published by the Alaska Department of Labor.**
- **The official definition of unemployment currently in place excludes anyone who has made no attempt to find work in the four-week period up to and including the week that includes the 12th of each month. Most Alaska economists believe that Alaska's rural localities have proportionately more of these discouraged workers.**

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

ing the performance of the visitor industry. But travelers who took air trips, went on tour boats, or traveled in sightseeing buses within the state helped to mitigate the effect on transportation employment caused by MarkAir's departure.

Alaska Employment Service

Anchorage: Phone 269-4800

Glennallen: Phone 822-3350

Homer: Phone 235-7791

Bethel: Phone 543-2210

Kotzebue: Phone 442-3280

Kodiak: Phone 486-3105

Dillingham: Phone 842-5579

Nome: Phone 443-2626/2460

Seward: Phone 224-5276

Eagle River: Phone 694-6904/07

Tok: Phone 883-5629

Juneau: Phone 465-4562

Mat-Su: Phone 376-2407/08

Valdez: Phone 835-4910

Petersburg: Phone 772-3791

Fairbanks: Phone 451-2871

Kenai: Phone 283-4304/4377/4319

Sitka: Phone 747-3347/3423/6921

Ketchikan: Phone 225-3181/82/83



Alaska Economic Regions

The mission of the Alaska Employment Service is to promote employment and economic stability by responding to the needs of employers and job seekers.