



Bulletin No. 10

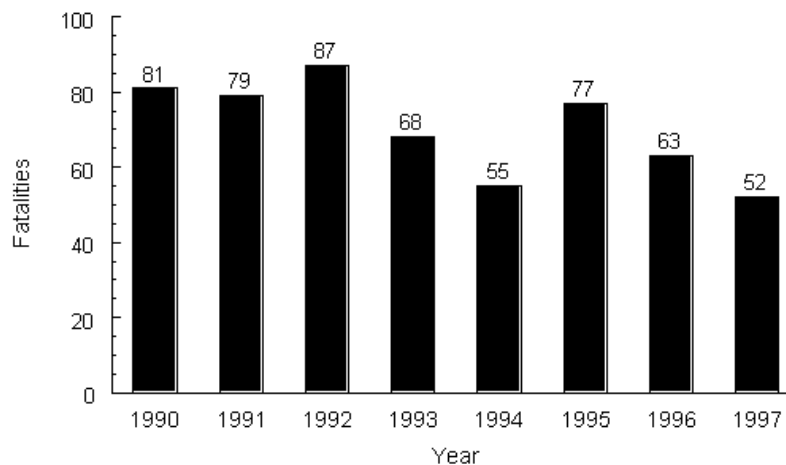
July 2, 1998

## Occupation-related Fatalities in Alaska - 1997

The Occupational Injury Prevention Program of the Section of Epidemiology and the Alaska Field Station of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) worked cooperatively to collect and analyze occupational fatality data for 1997.

For the years 1980 through 1989, Alaska experienced 34.8 worker deaths annually for every 100,000 workers, a rate approximately five times the national rate of 7.0 deaths per 100,000 workers. The State and NIOSH are investigating worker deaths in Alaska to identify preventive measures that may be implemented to reduce the death toll in Alaska and in other states and countries where workers face similar risks.

### Occupation-related Fatalities in Alaska 1990 - 1997



Sources: Alaska FACE Program and NIOSH, 1990 - 1997

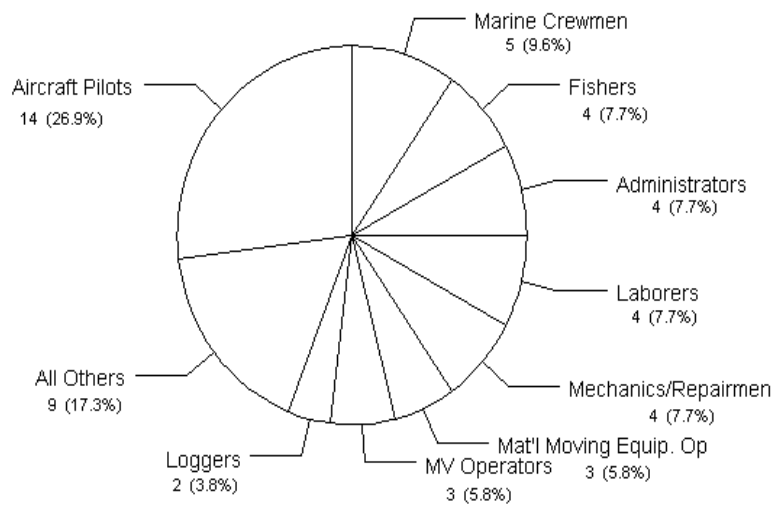
Of 52 workers who died on the job in Alaska in 1997, 14 were aircraft pilots, five were marine crewmen, four were commercial fishers, four were administrators, four were laborers (of which two were fish processors), four were mechanics or repairmen (of which three were marine repairmen), three were material moving equipment operators, three were motor vehicle operators, and two were loggers (cutters). The four commercial fishing deaths in 1997 represent the fewest in any year during this decade and an 83% decrease compared to the previous year. Overall, there were 10 deaths in either the fishing or fish processing industries: four fishers, two aircraft pilots, two fish spotters, and two fish processors.

Nineteen workers died as a result of aircraft crashes, representing 37% of all occupational deaths and 27% (13/48) of fatal incidents. Of these 19 workers, 13 were airplane pilots and one was a helicopter pilot. Aviation passenger deaths included three administrators and two fish spotters. Five workers, of which two were commercial truck drivers, died as a result of motor vehicle crashes. The nine workers who died as a result of drowning or hypothermia included three commercial fishermen. There were five occupation-related homicides: a law enforcement officer, an administrator, a fish processor, a mechanic, and a taxi driver.

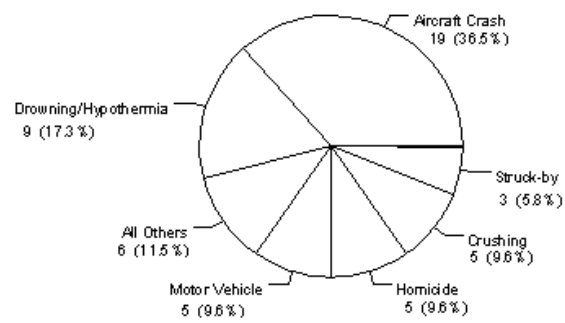
NIOSH established a research field station in Anchorage in 1991 after identifying Alaska as the state with the highest traumatic worker fatality rate in the US. In 1992 the Section of Epidemiology established the Occupational Injury Prevention Program (OIPP) to administer the Alaska Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) program under a cooperative agreement with NIOSH. The Occupational Injury Prevention Program focuses on preventing workplace fatalities and injuries, especially in construction, skilled trades, logging, and other industrial settings. In addition to these target areas of investigation, OIPP will be examining occupation-related motor vehicle, logging, and construction injury deaths in Alaska.

Due to the frequency of deaths related to commercial fishing and aviation, NIOSH is focusing research efforts on these industries. The NIOSH Alaska Field Station will sponsor the Third Fishing Industry Safety and Health (FISH III) Workshop in Seattle, Washington, November 23-24, 1999, with international speakers and attendees from government, industry, and academia.

### Occupation of Occupation-related Fatalities, Alaska, 1997 (N = 52)



**Circumstances of Occupation-related Fatalities, Alaska, 1997 (N = 52)**



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