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Bulletin No. 8  
May 11, 1999  
Occupational Fatalities in Alaska - 1998

For the years 1980 through 1989, Alaska averaged 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 U.S. rate declined to 4.4 per 100,000 in 1994.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, Alaska's average annual fatality rate decreased to 29.1 deaths per 100,000 workers during 1990 to 1994,<sup>2</sup> however, annual fatality rates for Alaska workers have consistently remained greater than the U.S. rates.<sup>3</sup>

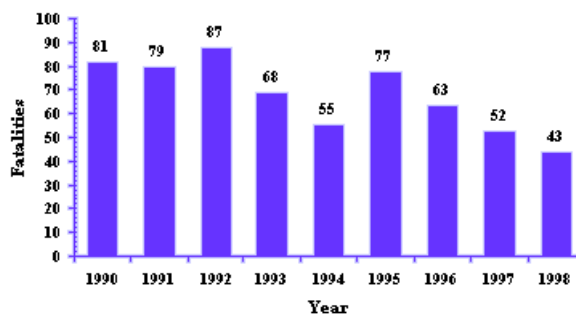
**Annual Occupation-related Fatality Rates  
in Alaska**  
(per 100,000 workers)

1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
31.1	30.1	22.5	18.2	25.4	20.3	16.7	14.4

Numerator Source: Alaska FACE Program and NIOSH  
Denominator Source: Current Population Survey (CPS), Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section, plus military population, Alaskan Command History

From 1990 through 1998, 605 workers died as a result of work-related injuries in Alaska. 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.

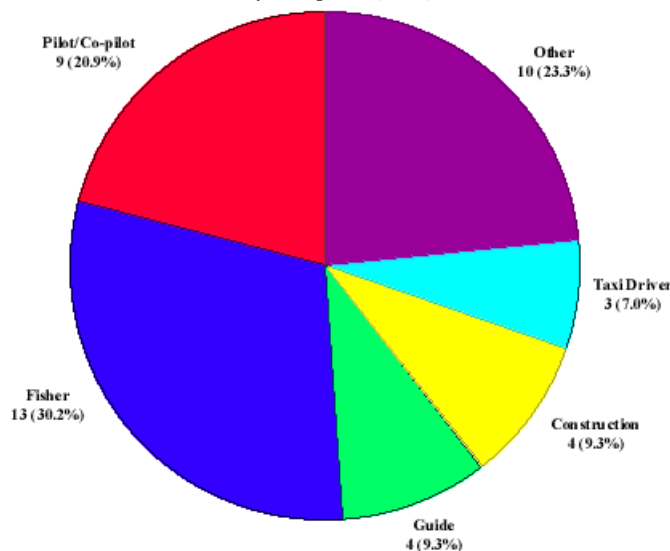
**Occupation-related Fatalities in Alaska**  
1990-1998



Source: Alaska FACE Program and NIOSH

Of the 43 workers who died on the job in Alaska during 1998, 13 were fishers, 9 were pilots or co-pilots, 4 were guides, and 4 were construction tradespersons. Commercial fishing (13 deaths) and transportation (10 deaths) led all Alaska industries in the number of work-related fatalities. There were also three work-related deaths in the taxi industry, an industry that has historically experienced periodic clusters of assault-related incidents from 1978 through 1998.

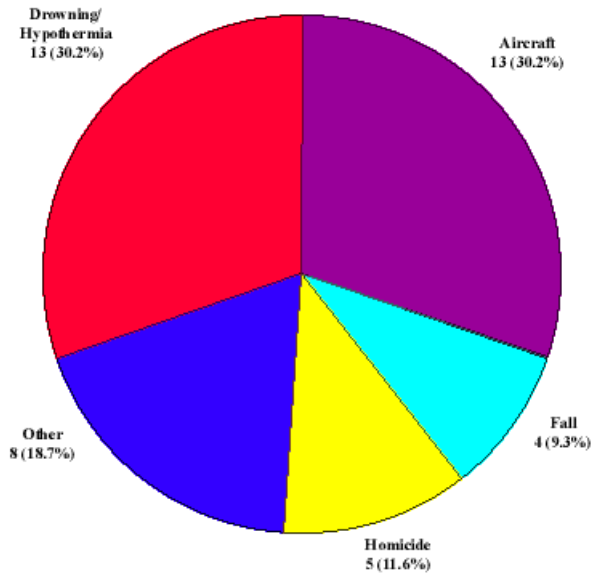
**Occupation-related Fatalities in Alaska, 1998**  
by Occupation (N=43)



Twenty-seven workers died during 1998 from injuries that were either watercraft- or aircraft-related. These incidents represented 63% of all occupational deaths and 54% (19/35) of fatal occupational incidents. Of the aircraft-related fatalities, 12 workers died as a result of crash injuries; one worker died after being struck-by a propeller. Thirteen workers died as a result of drowning or hypothermia, of which 12 were commercial fishers and one was a marine vessel captain. Five workers died as a result of assault injuries (homicides): three taxi drivers, a law enforcement officer, and a reporter. Four workers died from falls, of which two were mountaineering-related.

## Occupation-related Fatalities in Alaska, 1998

by Circumstance (N=43)



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.

### References:

1. CDC. Fatal occupational injuries - United States, 1980-1994. MMWR 1998, 47(15):297-302.
2. CDC. Work-related aviation fatalities - Alaska 1990-1994. MMWR 1997;46(22):496-498.
3. National Center for Health Statistics. Healthy People 2000 Review, 1997. Hyattsville, Maryland: Public Health Service. 1997.

(Submitted by Deborah Choromanski, Occupational Injury Prevention Program, Section of Epidemiology.)