

Retail and Services Dominate Top Employers

by Todd Mosher

The Alaska New Hires Quarterly Report focuses on seasonal hiring patterns of employers by industry, region, and occupation. The report assists employment services agencies and job-seekers as they hone in on work opportunities for the coming quarter. A *new hire* is defined as an employee who was not working for the employer in any of the previous four quarters. Since new hires data include job turnover, readers are cautioned against making broad inferences about Alaska job growth trends based only on quarterly new hires data.

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

In the fall of 1995, 46,823 new hires were put on Alaska payrolls, 27,701 fewer than the peak summer season and about the same as the previous fall. (See Table 1.) Table 2 is a list of the top 100 ranks of employers with new hires for the fourth quarter of 1995. Including ties, 102 employers made the list—88 private employers and 14 public employers.

Who's who on the top employers for new hires list

Retailers and service providers accounted for 67 of the 88 private employers appearing on the list of top employers for new hires in the fourth quarter of 1995. The 36 retailers on the list accounted for 5,460 new employees, while the 31 service-providing firms accounted for 3,164. Together, these 67 businesses took in over 18 percent of the state's total new hires for the quarter. Of the six private employers in the top 10, five were retailers. Carr Gottstein led the retail group with 431 fourth-quarter new hires, followed by Fred Meyer, Wal-Mart/Sam's Club, Kmart, and Pizza Hut. The remaining private employer in the top 10 was Ogden Facility Management, a company that manages special events and hires many temporary workers for specific projects.

Four of the top 10 employers for new hires in fourth quarter 1995 were public employers: State of Alaska, Anchorage School District,

University of Alaska, and Fairbanks North Star Borough School District. Most of the new workers for these employers were administrative support workers, teachers, and teachers' aides.

A large number of workers does not always mean a large number of new hires for a given season. Of the 88 private employers appearing on the list of top employers for new hires in fourth quarter 1995, only half (44) were *Trends* 100 employers. (*Trends* 100 employers are shaded on Table 2.) About two-thirds of those 44 were retailers or service providers.

Why did some large employers make the list, while others did not?

Seasonality. Some major employers are missing from the fourth-quarter list of top employers for new hires because of seasonality. That is, they did much more hiring in the spring and summer than in the fall. This was true of most Alaska employers, but it was more pronounced for many seafood processors and tourist-dependent employers. Many retailers get a second boost from the holiday shopping season that seafood processors and tourist transportation firms do not.

Turnover. New hires data include employees brought on to fill openings for pre-existing positions, i.e., job turnover. Missing the list of top employers for new hires is not necessarily a negative. In some cases, it may mean that an employer is providing stable, higher-paying jobs that result in less turnover. On the other hand, some industries, such as retail, services, and seafood processing, tend to have higher rates of turnover that boost their new hires counts. *Trends* 100 employers in these industries are more likely to appear on the list of top firms for new hires. The positive side of a higher rate of turnover is that it provides many entry-level opportunities for less-experienced workers.

Start-up Businesses. Some of Alaska's larger employers had fewer fourth-quarter new hires than relatively smaller firms that first opened for business in the final quarter of 1995. An example of a business start-up is Computer City, a Tandy Corporation store, which opened in Anchorage late last year and ranked 29th among private employers with 113 fourth-quarter new hires. By definition, start-ups consist entirely of new hires. Moreover, in the early going, some start-ups will have a higher-than-average rate of turnover as they get their feet wet in a new market, further adding to their new hires counts. However, unless a start-up firm is very large or unless it expands rapidly, it will quickly drop off the list of top employers for new hires as its workforce stabilizes.

Top employers for new hires by occupational groups

Table 3 shows the top five employers for new hires in fourth quarter 1995 by major occupational groups. Some employers did not provide occupational data for their employees and are excluded from the table. Some of the *Trends* 100 employers, with relatively low rates of job turnover that kept them off the list of top employers for *total* new hires, did make at least one of the top five lists of top employers for new hires sorted by *occupational groups*. (See Table 3.) For example, ARCO Alaska and BP Exploration were not in the top 100 employers for fourth-quarter new hires, but both were in the top five for the occupational group that includes engineers and scientists. In addition, BP Exploration was fifth for newly hired mechanics and repairers in the final quarter of last year. Some hospitals and health care companies that missed the top 100 list for total new hires were still important employers of newly hired health occupation workers.

The holiday shopping season and the start of the school year meant seasonally strong hiring of teachers and other workers in education-related occupations, miscellaneous service workers, administrative support workers, and retail salespersons. (See Table 4.)

Alaska New Hires¹ 4th Quarter 1995

	4th Qtr 95	Change from 3rd Qtr 95	Change from 4th Qtr 94
Total New Hires:	46,823	-27,701	406
By Region²			
Northern	2,560	-1,736	-35
Interior	6,065	-4,458	253
Southwest	3,493	-3,719	-768
Anchorage	23,286	-6,194	743
Gulf Coast	4,605	-5,981	-109
Southeast	6,127	-4,852	221
Offshore	163	-662	2
Outside	337	-183	80
Unknown	187	84	19
By Industry			
Ag./Forestry/Fishing	267	-510	-6
Mining	1,231	-842	411
Oil & Gas Extraction	1,008	-692	354
All Other	223	-150	57
Construction	4,688	-4,364	-92
Manufacturing	2,232	-8,940	-435
Seafood Processing	996	-8,253	-380
All Other	1,236	-687	-55
Trans./Comm./Util.	3,007	-1,795	-182
Tourism Related	610	-504	188
All Other	2,397	-1,291	-370
Wholesale Trade	1,370	-1,064	55
Retail Trade	13,722	-3,795	423
Fin./Ins./Real Estate	1,526	-704	-486
Services	13,302	-4,647	927
Hotels & Lodging	1,047	-1,735	55
All Other	12,255	-2,912	872
Public Admin. ³	5,478	-1,038	-209

Mining, retail, and services showed strong year-to-year growth

Comparing fall quarter 1995 with the fall of 1994, mining (including oil extraction and oil field services), retail, and services showed the strongest growth in new hires. (See Table 1.) Project work and contract services accounted for the bump in new hires in the oil field services sector, while retail and services appeared to benefit from a larger

¹ A "new hire" is defined as an employee that was hired by the firm in the report quarter and was not employed by the firm during any of the previous four quarters.

² An employee's region is determined by his or her actual place of employment.

³ Includes all employees of publicly-owned institutions.
Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.

Top 100 Employers for New Hires 4th Quarter 1995

Rank Among Private Firms	Overall Rank	Employer	4Q95 New Hires	Areas with Most New Hires or Headquarters ¹	Business Activity
...	1	State of Alaska	579	Juneau Borough	State Government
...	2	Anchorage School District	543	Anchorage Borough	Public Schools
1	3	Carr Gottstein Foods	431	Anchorage Borough	Grocery
...	4	University of Alaska	409	Anchorage, Fairbanks NS Bor. (tied)	Public Universities
2	5	Fred Meyer	407	Anchorage Borough	Grocery/General Merchandise
3	6	Ogden Facility Management	380	Anchorage Borough	Facilities Management
4	7	Wal-Mart/Sam's Club	363	Anchorage Borough	General Merchandise
5	8	Kmart	360	Anchorage Borough	General Merchandise
6	9	Pizza Hut	313	Anchorage Borough	Eating Establishment
...	10	Fairbanks North Star Borough Schools	276	Fairbanks North Star Borough	Public Schools
7	11	Qwick Construction	260	Kenai Peninsula Borough	Oil Field Services
8	12	Burger King	232	Anchorage Borough	Eating Establishment
9	13	Alaska Commercial Company	230	Bethel Census Area	General Merchandise
10	14	Sears Roebuck	211	Anchorage Borough	General Merchandise
11	15	Kinn Enterprises, dba McDonald's	196	Anchorage Borough	Eating Establishment
...	16	Kenai Peninsula Borough Schools	181	Kenai Peninsula Borough	Public Schools
...	17	Lower Kuskokwim School District	176	Bethel Census Area	Public Schools
12	18	Salvation Army	174	Anchorage Borough	Social Services
13	19	Hanna Auto Wash	173	Anchorage Borough	Automobile Services
14	20	J C Penney	169	Anchorage Borough	General Merchandise
15	21	Lamonts	165	Anchorage Borough	Apparel
16	22	Alaska Petroleum Contractors	161	North Slope Borough	Oil Field Services
17	23	Kelly Services	160	Anchorage Borough	Personnel Services
18	24	United Parcel Service	152	Anchorage Borough	Courier Service
19	25	Tesoro Northstore Co. (7-11)	145	Anchorage Borough	Retail/Gas Station
20	26	Denali Foods/Taco Bell	141	Anchorage Borough	Eating Establishment
21	27	Adams & Associates	131	Anchorage Borough	Personnel Services
22	28	Safeway	128	Anchorage Borough	Grocery
...	28	Juneau Borough School District	128	Juneau Borough	Public Schools
...	28	Municipality of Anchorage	128	Anchorage Borough	Local Government
23	31	Southeast Stevedoring	125	Pr. of Wales, Outer Ketchikan C.A.	Water Transportation Svcs.
...	32	North Slope Borough	121	North Slope Borough	Local Government
...	33	City & Borough of Juneau	117	Juneau Borough	Local Government
24	34	Hooters	116	Anchorage Borough	Eating & Drinking Establishment
24	34	Golden Frontier Ent., dba McDonald's	116	Fairbanks Northstar Bor.	Eating Establishment
...	36	Mat-Su Borough Schools	115	Mat-Su Borough	Public Schools
26	36	Nordstrom	115	Anchorage Borough	Department Stores
26	36	Costco	115	Anchorage Borough	General Merchandise
26	36	Alyeska Resort	115	Anchorage Borough	Hotel/Resort
29	40	Computer City (Tandy)	113	Anchorage Borough	Computer Store
30	41	VECO	111	Fairbanks North Star Borough	Oil Field Services
31	42	Kentucky Fried Chicken	109	Anchorage Borough	Eating Establishment
32	43	Piping Design Services	107	Anchorage Borough	Engineering & Arch. Svcs.
33	44	Q1 Corp.	106	Anchorage Borough	Janitorial
33	44	Wendy's	106	Anchorage Borough	Eating Establishment
35	46	Anchorage Daily News	103	Anchorage Borough	Newspaper
35	46	Personnel Plus	103	Anchorage Borough	Personnel Services
37	48	Rural Alaska Community Action	102	Wade Hampton Census Area	Social Services
37	49	Chugach North Technical Services	100	Anchorage Borough	Personnel Services
37	49	Laidlaw Transit	100	Anchorage Borough	Bus Charter Services
37	49	Little Caesar's	100	Mat-Su Borough	Eating Establishment
41	52	Osborne Construction	99	Bristol Bay Borough	Construction
42	53	Northern Pacific Service (NPS)	97	Anchorage Borough	Janitorial
...	53	Bering Strait School District	97	Nome Census Area	Public Schools
43	55	Providence Hospital	96	Anchorage Borough	Hospital
43	55	McDonald's (Davidson Ent. Franchise)	96	Anchorage Borough	Eating Establishment
45	57	Fairbanks Memorial Hospital	95	Fairbanks North Star Borough	Hospital

Top 100 Employers for New Hires 4th Quarter 1995

Rank Among Private Firms	Overall Rank	Employer	4Q95 New Hires	Areas with Most New Hires or Headquarters ¹	Business Activity
45	57	Cusack Development	95	Anchorage Borough	Hotel & Drinking Establishment
47	59	Kiewit Pacific	94	Fairbanks North Star Borough	Construction
47	59	Pinette's Show Club	94	Anchorage Borough	Eating & Drinking Establishment
49	61	Godfather's Pizza	93	Anchorage Borough	Eating Establishment
50	62	Toys R Us	91	Anchorage Borough	Specialty Store
51	63	Qualified Contractors	90	Ketchikan Gateway Borough	Repair Shop
52	64	Piquiniq Management Corporation	88	North Slope Borough	Facilities Management
53	65	Burlington Coat Factory	86	Anchorage Borough	Apparel
...	66	North Slope Borough School District	83	North Slope Borough	Public Schools
54	66	Flying Nurses	83	Anchorage Borough	Personnel Services
55	68	Alaska Executive Search	80	Anchorage Borough	Personnel Services
56	69	Mapco Express	78	Anchorage Borough	Retail/Gas Station
57	70	Ketchikan Pulp Mill	77	Ketchikan Gateway Borough	Pulp & Lumber Products
57	70	National Bank of Alaska	77	Anchorage Borough	Banking
57	70	Norton Sound Health Corporation	77	Nome Census Area	Health Care
60	73	Alpine Glass of Alaska	76	Anchorage Borough	Auto Glass Repair
61	74	Roasters of Alaska (dba Kenny Rogers)	75	Anchorage Borough	Eating Establishment
61	74	Subway of Alaska	75	Anchorage Borough	Eating Establishment
63	76	Westmark Hotels	74	Anchorage Borough	Hotel
64	77	Denny's of Alaska	73	Anchorage Borough	Eating Establishment
64	77	Ocean Trawl	73	Aleutians West Census Area	Seafood Processing
64	77	Eastgate Theatre	73	Anchorage Borough	Motion Picture Theaters
64	77	Guardian Security Systems	73	Anchorage Borough	Security Services
68	81	Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation	71	Bethel Census Area	Health Care
69	82	Dynair Services	70	Anchorage Borough	Airport Services
70	83	Williams, Inc. (Alaskan and Proud)	68	Juneau Borough	Grocery
71	84	Alaska USA Federal Credit Union	67	Anchorage Borough	Credit Union
72	85	Omni Enterprises	66	Bethel Census Area	Grocery
72	85	Tanana Chiefs Conference	66	Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	Social Services/Health Care
74	87	American Building Maintenance (ABM) Co. of the West	65	Anchorage Borough	Janitorial
74	87	West Coast Stevedoring	65	Valdez-Cordova C.A.	Water Transportation Svcs.
74	87	OfficeMax	65	Anchorage Borough	Office Supplies/Furniture
...	87	Northwest Arctic Borough Schools	65	NW Arctic Borough	Public Schools
74	87	Lone Star Steakhouse & Saloon	65	Anchorage Borough	Eating & Drinking Establishment
74	87	Alaska Fresh Seafood	65	Kodiak Island Borough	Seafood Processing
79	93	The Andrews Group (TAG)	64	Fairbanks North Star Borough	Facilities Management
79	93	Tyson Seafood Company	64	Kodiak Island Borough	Seafood Processing
79	93	Camp Fire Alaska Council	64	Anchorage Borough	Civic & Social Associations
82	96	Gourmet Ventures	63	Anchorage Borough	Catering
83	97	Manpower International	62	Anchorage Borough	Personnel Services
84	98	Doyon Drilling	60	North Slope Borough	Oil Field Services
85	99	IBEW #1547	59	Anchorage Borough	Labor Organization
86	100	NANA/Marriott Joint Venture	58	Anchorage Borough	Catering
86	100	Pinkertons	58	Anchorage Borough	Security Services
86	100	Mayflower Contract Services ²	58	Mat-Su Borough	Bus Charter Services

Shading indicates the employer is on the Trends 100 list.

New hires totals include turnover.

Areas are based on 2-digit Census Area code reported on the Occupational Data Base.

¹ If worker's area is not reported, the primary work site of the employer is used.

² Subsequently acquired by Laidlaw Transit.

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

Top Employers for New Hires by Selected Occupational Groups 4th Qtr 1995

Occupational Group/Employer	New Hires	Occupational Group/Employer	New Hires
Engineers, Architects, Scientists		Agricultural, Forestry & Fishing Occupations	
State of Alaska	30	Gildersleeve	56
Alaska Anvil	26	Phoenix Logging	20
ARCO Alaska	11	Interpac Forest	19
BP Exploration Alaska	9	Silver Bay Logging	18
Municipality of Anchorage	9	Ketchikan Pulp Mill	17
VECO	9	Byron Brothers Cutting	17
Teachers, Librarians, Counselors		Mechanics & Repairers	
Anchorage School District	177	Qwick Construction	19
University of Alaska	168	Legacy Fishing	18
Kenai Peninsula Borough Schools	167	Carlile Enterprises	16
Fairbanks North Star Borough Schools	92	Wal-Mart/Sam's Club	16
Juneau Borough School District	74	BP Exploration Alaska	15
Health Occupations		Construction & Extractive Occupations	
Providence Hospital	35	Qwick Construction	109
Valley Hospital	24	Alaska Petroleum Contractors	81
Southeast Alaska Regional Health	24	VECO	60
Ketchikan General Hospital	19	Nabors Alaska Drilling	48
Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corp.	16	Osborne Construction	46
North Care Partners	16	Nevada Goldfields	46
Technologists & Technicians, Except Health		Production Occupations	
State of Alaska	26	Alaska Fresh Seafood	64
University of Alaska	23	Tyson Seafood Company	63
Piquiniq Management	19	Icicle Seafoods	49
Computer Task Group	19	Norquest Seafood Company	42
Lounsbury & Associates	13	UniSea	41
Marketing & Sales Occupations		Transportation & Material Moving Occupations	
Carr Gottstein Foods	279	Ocean Trawl	73
Wal-Mart/Sams Club	256	Alaska Interstate Construction	25
Sears Roebuck	165	Peak Oilfield Service	22
Lamonts	141	Hawk Inlet Services	19
Alaska Commercial Company	136	Silver Bay Logging	18
Administrative Support Occupations		Handlers, Helpers, Laborers & Misc. Occupations	
Anchorage School District	247	Qwick Construction	129
State of Alaska	177	Southeast Stevedoring	125
Kelly Services	160	Safeway	83
Fairbanks North Star Borough Schools	138	Dynair Services	62
Piping Design Services	107	West Coast Stevedoring	60
Service Occupations			
Pizza Hut	290		
Burger King	223		
Kinn Enterprises, dba McDonald's	195		
Denali Foods/Taco Bell	141		
State of Alaska	132		

Shading indicates 1995 Trends 100 employers. Excludes employers that did not provide timely and valid occupational codes on their quarterly wage reports. Occupational groups are based on major occupational headings in the 1980 Standard Occupational Classification Manual. Some major groups have been combined or re-grouped to simplify the analysis. Food-service and driver-sales workers for eating and drinking places are treated as service occupations. New hires totals include turnover.

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

job base from recent start-ups of large stores and eating and drinking establishments and increased demand for business and health services.

Fall seafood new hires floundered; finance cut costs

Seafood processing new hires are typically at their lowest in the fourth quarter, but in 1995 they fell well below fall 1994 levels. There were 380 fewer seafood processing new hires in the final quarter of 1995 than in 1994. (See Table 1.) The finance sector also fared poorly for job opportunities; it had 486 fewer new hires in the fall of 1995 than in

the previous fall. There was some small-scale downsizing in the industry in 1995, and technology and outsourcing were holding down demand for new workers.

Interior, Anchorage, and Southeast showed steady growth

Compared with the previous fall quarter, the Interior, Anchorage, and Southeast regions had three to four percent growth in new hires in 1995. (See Table 1.) The Southwest and Gulf Coast regions lost ground compared to the fourth quarter of 1994, while the Northern region was basically flat.

T a b l e • 4

Top 20 Occupations for New Hires 1st Quarter 1995 through 4th Quarter 1995

Occupational Group ¹	1Q95 Winter	2Q95 Spring	3Q95 Summer	4Q95 Fall	Four Qtr. Average
Other Service	8,230	15,167	13,448	9,759	11,651
Admin. Support	5,293	8,319	7,215	6,062	6,722
Salespersons; Retail	3,278	6,707	6,142	4,833	5,240
Handlers & Laborers	3,970	7,883	8,625	4,276	6,189
Construction Trades	1,588	4,189	5,397	2,952	3,532
Transportation	1,392	2,914	2,399	1,400	2,026
Mechanics & Repairers	1,144	2,139	1,696	1,270	1,562
Teachers, except Postsecondary	755	690	1,009	1,112	892
Fabricators, Assemblers, & Hand Working ²	4,851	4,687	8,338	1,015	4,723
Protective Service	591	832	818	736	744
Helpers	472	976	1,048	655	788
Officials & Administrators, Other	677	836	733	654	725
Material Moving	384	1,321	1,121	488	829
Management Related Occupations	511	622	606	478	554
Social, Recreation & Religious	450	551	599	358	490
Forestry & Logging	253	610	662	313	460
Writers, Artists, Performers	219	303	370	287	295
Health Technologists & Technicians	210	332	303	242	272
Engineers, Surveyors & Architects	212	306	313	197	257
Other Agricultural	166	1,055	590	146	489

Shading indicates peak period for new hires, with the highest quarter in bold typeface. Sorted by 4th quarter totals.

¹ Based on two-digit Standard Occupational Code, 1980 Standard Occupational Classification Manual.

² Includes seafood processing hand-working occupations.

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

Methodology

The new hires series is produced by matching Occupational Data Base files, Alaska Department of Labor wage files, and Permanent Fund Dividend files keyed on employer numbers and employee social security numbers. This match is made for the report quarter and the four previous quarters. Each employer's full listing of employees is considered for the report quarter. If an employee worked for the employer in any of the previous four quarters, he or she is considered continuously employed or a seasonal rehire and is excluded from the new hires subset; otherwise, the employee is defined as a new hire for that employer.

A worker can be counted as a new hire for more than one employer during the report quarter, but not more than once for the same employer. This method purposely treats the turnover of an existing job as a new hire. The new hires series is designed to measure job opportunities provided by the combined effect of turnover and job growth.

An employee's region is set by his or her actual place of employment, unless that information is not provided by the employer. Historically, employers do not report place of employment information for about 10 percent of all employees. In that case, the employee's region is determined by the location of the employer.