

STATEWIDE IN ALASKA

The Fishermen's Fund was established in 1951 to provide for the treatment and care of Alaska's licensed commercial fishermen who are either injured or become ill while engaged in commercial fishing activities on shore in Alaska or in the territorial waters of the State.

Sixty percent of the revenue collected from the sale of Alaska commercial fishing licenses is used to support the fund. It is administered by the Commissioner of Labor with the assistance of the Fishermen's Advisory and Appeals Council. The council is composed of the Commissioner of Labor or his designee, who acts as chairman, and four members appointed by the Governor to represent the following districts: (1) Wrangell and areas South; (2) Petersburg and North to include Yakutat; (3) West of Yakutat to the East Coast of the Alaska Peninsula including Prince William Sound, Cook Inlet and Kodiak; and (4) West of the Alaska Peninsula including Bristol Bay.

Fishermen's Fund benefits are available to commercially licensed fishermen who sustain an injury or disability as the result of an accident directly connected with their work. Benefits are also available to fishermen who suffer a disease which is considered to be occupational with respect to the commercial fishing profession.

Occupational diseases include hernias, heart attacks, varicose veins of the legs, bronchitis, pleurisy, pneumonia, rheumatism, arthritis and musculo-skeletal ailments such as bursitis, traumatic sciatica and tenosynovitis.

Excluded from the occupational disease category are the common cold, influenza, strep throat, tonsillitis, emotional disorders, peptic ulcers, epilepsy, diseases not common to both sexes, venereal diseases, and any condition arising from an attempt by a person to injure himself or another.

Eligible fishermen are entitled to emergency treatment, transportation to the nearest place where approved medical facilities are available, medical, surgical and nursing care and hospitalization. They are eligible for assistance during a period of

convalescence following discharge from a hospital and to all reasonable transportation charges incurred under approved hospitalization and/or treatment, including the cost of returning fishermen to their boat, home or another place that reasonably meets their convenience.

In providing care for persons entitled to benefits from the Fishermen's Fund, the Department of Labor will provide the type and quality of treatment which will restore fishermen to health and productivity, if possible.

There are three basic limits on the benefits that will be paid by the Fishermen's Fund. These limits are as follows:

1. No benefits will be paid for the care of any one person which involves a single injury of disability beyond a period of one year from the date of the injury.
2. No benefits will be paid for medical care or hospitalization rendered prior to the ascertainable time of an injury, or prior to authorization in the case of disability by an occupational disease.
3. The total allowance for any one injury or disablement shall not exceed \$2,500.

Exceptions to the above limits may be granted for compelling reasons by the Commissioner of Labor with the approval of the Fishermen's Fund Advisory and Appeals Council.

When a commercial fisherman sustains an injury or suffers an illness which he believes will entitle him to Fishermen's Fund benefits, he should inform the doctor who treats him, so claim forms may be completed. If the fisherman reports first to an emergency or out-patient section of a hospital, he should advise hospital personnel of the possibility of his eligibility for benefits from the Fishermen's Fund.

There are two Fishermen's Fund claim forms. One is the "Certificate of Eligibility" which the injured or ill fisherman completes and signs. The other is the "Physician's Report of Injury" which the doctor

completes (with the assistance of the fisherman) and signs. These forms are printed on opposite sides of the same sheet of paper for convenience. To avoid a delay in the processing of a claim it is essential that a claimant complete the forms as fully and promptly as possible.

Most doctors and hospitals in Alaska have forms which must be completed to establish a claim. If a fisherman is unable to obtain the proper forms in his area, he may write the Administrator of the Fishermen's Fund, P. O. Box 1149, Juneau, 99801.

All billings for expenses related to a claim should be sent to the Administrator of the Fishermen's Fund. If the claim is approved, benefits will be paid to the person, business, or institutions which submitted the bills. If a fisherman pays for any expenses involving his injury or illness, he should obtain proper receipts and submit them to the Fund's Administrator for reimbursements. If expenses are advanced to the claimant and charged against his fishing settlement, a copy of the settlement could be accepted in lieu of any other receipt. Some typical out-of-pocket expenses are transportation, prescriptions, and on occasion, hotel and meal costs.

In the event a claim is denied, all parties are notified in writing with a statement giving the reason for the denial. The denied claim is then scheduled for review at the next meeting of the Advisory and Appeals Council. The claimant is then notified of the time and place of the Council's meeting in sufficient time to submit additional information supporting his claim in writing or to arrange to personally appear before the council.

In summary, the Fishermen's Fund is a form of financial aid available to Alaska's licensed commercial fishermen should they suffer an occupational accidental injury or illness.

ALASKA'S ECONOMY IN MARCH

Employment – Unemployment: Alaska's economy showed an improvement in March as total estimated employment rose by approximately 2,600 in a wide variety of industries. Some 6,300 more persons were employed this March in comparison to March 1972, on the strength of large gains in government, trade, and manufacturing industries. Although total employment rose during March, so did the number

of unemployed persons, by an estimated 900. The increase in unemployment was due to an increase in immigration at a faster rate than there were new job openings.

Mining: The month of March saw a small improvement of 100 in employment, as mild spring weather begin to stimulate the industry. Over-the-year employment is down by 500 persons.

INDUSTRY	(Thousands)			Changes From:	
	3-73	2-73	3-72	2-73	3-72
CIVILIAN WORKFORCE.....	128,400	124,900	121,800	3,500	6,600
INVOLVED IN WORK STOPPAGES.....	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL UNEMPLOYMENT.....	15,700	14,800	15,400	900	300
Percent of Workforce.....	12.2	11.8	12.6	-	-
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT ^{2/}	112,700	110,100	106,400	2,600	6,300
Nonagricultural Wage & Salary ^{3/}	100,300	98,500	93,700	1,800	6,600
Mining.....	1,900	1,800	2,400	100	- 500
Construction.....	5,600	5,300	5,100	300	500
Manufacturing.....	6,700	6,100	5,200	600	1,500
Durable Goods.....	2,600	2,200	1,500	400	1,100
Lumber, Wood Products.....	2,100	1,700	1,100	400	1,000
Other Durable Goods.....	500	500	400	0	100
Non Durable Goods.....	4,100	3,900	3,700	200	400
Food Processing.....	2,200	2,000	1,900	200	300
Other Non Durable Goods.....	1,900	1,900	1,800	0	100
Transp.-Comm. & Utilities.....	9,500	9,500	8,900	0	600
Trucking & Warehousing.....	1,400	1,300	1,200	100	200
Water Transportation.....	500	500	500	0	0
Air Transportation.....	2,800	2,800	2,600	0	200
Other Transp.-Comm. & Utilities..	4,800	4,900	4,600	- 100	200
Trade.....	17,400	17,300	15,800	100	1,600
Wholesale Trade.....	3,200	3,200	3,100	0	100
Retail Trade.....	14,200	14,100	12,700	100	1,500
General Merchandise & Appar....	3,600	3,500	3,200	100	400
Food Stores.....	2,400	2,300	1,800	100	600
Eating & Drinking Places.....	3,100	3,100	3,000	0	100
Other Retail Trade.....	5,100	5,200	4,700	- 100	400
Finance-Insurance & Real Estate...	3,800	3,700	3,400	100	400
Service & Miscellaneous.....	14,200	13,800	13,500	400	700
Government ^{4/}	41,200	41,000	39,400	200	1,800
Federal.....	17,600	17,000	16,800	0	200
State.....	13,600	13,500	12,600	100	1,000
Local.....	10,600	10,500	10,000	100	600

^{1/} Estimated in accordance with techniques recommended by U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

^{2/} Includes domestics, nonagricultural self employed and unpaid family workers, and agricultural workers.

^{3/} Prepared in cooperation with the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

^{4/} Includes teachers in primary and secondary schools, and personnel employed by the University of Alaska.

Manufacturing: A light snowpack in Southeastern this year allowed the logging industry to pick up during March, up 400 positions. A comparison to last year shows employment in manufacturing up by 1,500 due mostly to an increase in logging which was the result of a mild winter and early spring.