

Alaska's Largest Private Employers in 1991: The *Trends* 100

By Holly Stinson

For six years, ARCO Alaska led the list of the state's largest private employers.¹ In 1991, they were overtaken by Carr Gottstein Foods. This did not happen because ARCO had fewer jobs—they managed to add a few on an annual average basis in spite of cutting back late in the year. Instead, Carr's grocery chain overtook them by adding more than 100 new jobs in 1991. Carr's will likely remain in the number one spot in 1992. A new Kenai store and expansion of others, combined with a full year to take into account ARCO's smaller workforce, are the reasons for this position switch.

Trends 100 has durable seven

Table 1 lists the other ninety-eight large firms not mentioned above. To long-time readers of *Trends* many on this list are familiar. Seven of this year's ten largest businesses have been among the top ten for the seven years the Alaska Department of Labor has produced this analysis. Included in this group are Carr's, Providence Hospital and National Bank of Alaska. The two major producers at Prudhoe Bay—ARCO Alaska and BP Exploration—are among the durable seven, along with a related firm, Alyeska Pipeline. A fourth business with ties to the oil industry, VECO, rounds out the club (except for their 11th place rank in 1985).

The durable seven are not the only employers appearing on the list year after year. Seventeen of the twenty largest on the list have been among the top twenty firms for four years in a row. Eight new firms are among the *Trends* 100 for 1991; six of the eight are from the transportation, communications and utilities category.

One in five jobs with large firms

The 100 businesses that make up the *Trends* 100 employ just over one of every five workers in Alaska. (See Figure 1.) This includes all nonagricultural wage and salary workers in both the public and private sectors. More than 13,000 businesses account for the rest of private employment.

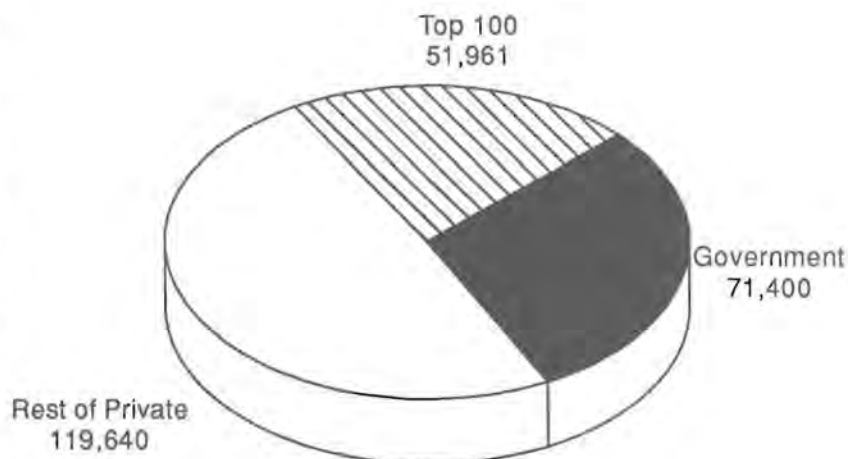
In keeping with tradition, Alaska's 100 largest private employers grew at a faster clip than the economy as a whole in 1991 (2.8% vs. 2.1%). For the seven years we have compiled a list of large firms, those firms on the list have grown at a faster pace than the whole private sector. They even managed to grow when the rest of the economy was losing ground. (See Figure 2.)

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¹ Some large firms are not included in the *Trends* 100 if, because of the company's structure, they file more than one unemployment insurance report.

Figure • 1

How Alaska's Employment Pie is Sliced 1991 Annual Average Employment



Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis

Trends 100 pay above average

Growth of the *Trends 100* payroll outpaced employment growth. A total payroll of \$1.85 billion in 1991 represents a 4.4% increase from 1990. This compares to a 2.0% growth rate in the payroll for the entire private sector, and a 2.8% increase for total payroll including government workers.

The average monthly wage of a *Trends 100* employee was \$2,963 in 1991, up from \$2,921 in 1990. The average monthly wage for all wage and salary earners was \$2,541 in 1991, \$422 less than the largest firms paid. One reason for this difference is the greater representation of the oil and gas industry in the *Trends 100* than in the economy as a whole. This industry pays the highest average monthly wage in the state. Another reason is the smaller proportion of trade and services firms in the *Trends 100*, both industries that have lower-than-average monthly wages and many part-time jobs.

Seven of ten oil and gas jobs are with large firms

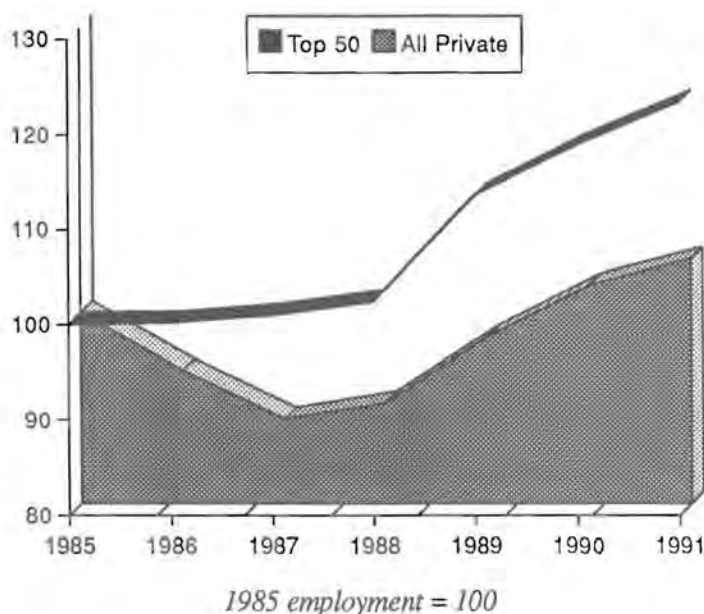
The oil and gas industry also dominates the *Trends 100* when you look at the percent of an industry's total employment that is with these large firms. Figure 3 shows that seven of every ten jobs in the oil and gas business are with top 100 firms. More than half of all jobs in air transportation, seafood processing, and wood products businesses are also with *Trends 100* companies. It takes a lot of capital to extract oil or operate an airline, so it's not surprising that some of Alaska's largest firms are in these businesses. Economies of scale are realized when processing raw products such as fish and timber, which explains why so many companies in these businesses are large.

Other *Trends 100* firms account for only a small proportion of the jobs in a particular industry. These are in sectors where an operation can be successfully run by a handful of people or even a sole proprietor. For example, eating and drinking establishments range from the large chains in the *Trends 100*—McDonald's and Burger King, Pizza Hut and Taco Bell—to a one-person hot dog cart. Four of every five jobs in this category are with these smaller employers.

Figure • 2

Largest Employers Grow Faster Than All Private Firms

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis



Another category well represented in the *Trends 100* but with a majority of jobs in smaller firms is health care. There are 11 hospitals and regional health corporations among the largest employers—more than from any other sector of the economy. The myriad of smaller medical offices and facilities, however, employ close to seven of every ten medical workers.

The 11 health care firms in the *Trends 100* join 14 other businesses in the services industry to give this category the largest number of firms in the list. (See Figure 4.) They are closely followed by 24 businesses in the trade category. These two categories—trade and services—also make up the bulk of all private sector firms.

Newcomers in transportation, communications, utilities

An industry that increased its portion of the Top 100 pie this year is transportation, communications and utilities. Two bus operators, an airline, a telephone company, a courier service and a radar station operator were among Alaska's largest firms in 1991. (See Table 2.) Demand from the local population and/or tourists is what generates business for the first five of these firms. The size of both groups expanded in 1991 and resulted in employment growth for these businesses.

One firm from this group, UPS, burst onto the list into 65th place—the fastest growth of all the *Trends 100* firms. This is because their international operations on a new route to Japan were in full swing in 1991. Another from this group, MarkAir Express, appears on the list for the first time in 72nd rank.

Others who moved up 20 or more places in the rankings were Golden Frontier Enterprises (the Fairbanks McDonald's franchise) and Northwest Design Services. More part-time jobs at McDonald's, often filled by students and seniors, accounts for much of their employment jump. Northwest Design Services offers contract services, a concept becoming more popular each year. Employment data for the *Trends 100* includes only jobs on a firm's payroll, not contract employees.

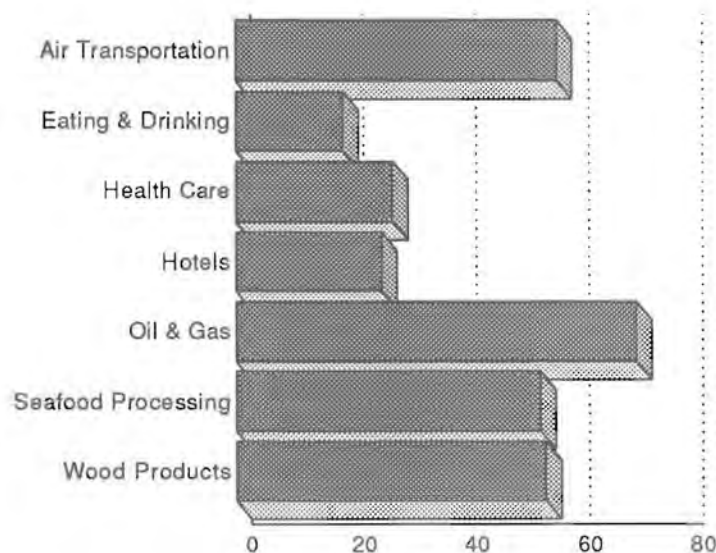
A company in the mining industry, Cominco, moved up almost 20 rankings in 1991. This movement was not because jobs at their Red Dog mine increased, but rather because it was their first full year of operation.

Cominco is the only representative from Northwestern Alaska on the *Trends 100* list. Most large firms—65%—cite Anchorage as their headquarters or largest work location. Many of the Anchorage firms, though, have operations throughout the state. Eight *Trends 100*

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Figure • 3

Most Oil & Gas Jobs Are With Top 100 Firms
Percent Of All Jobs In Selected Industries
With Top 100 Firms



Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis

We would like to thank the 100 employers in this article for their cooperation, without which this article would not have been possible.

T a b l e 1

Alaska's Top 100 Employers/^a

Rank	Firm Name	Employment	Largest Work Site	Business Activity
1	Carr Gottstein Foods	2,952	Anchorage	Retail-grocery
2	ARCO Alaska	2,914	Anchorage	Oil & Gas Production
3	Providence Hospital	1,825	Anchorage	Hospital
4	BP Exploration (Alaska)	1,502	Anchorage	Oil & Gas Production
5	VECO	1,441	Anchorage	Oil Field Services
6	Alyeska Pipeline Service Co.	1,269	Anchorage	Pipeline
7	National Bank of Alaska	1,202	Anchorage	Banking
8	Trident Seafoods	1,109	Akutan	Seafood Processing
9	Alaska Airlines	947	Anchorage	Air Carrier
10	Ketchikan Pulp Company	946	Ketchikan	Pulp & Lumber Products
11	MarkAir	931	Anchorage	Air Carrier
12	UniSea	926	Unalaska	Seafood Processing
13	Fred Meyer	898	Anchorage	Retail-general merchandise
14	Safeway Stores	895	Anchorage	Retail-grocery
15	Icicle Seafoods	869	Petersburg	Seafood Processing
16	All Alaskan Seafoods	801	Kodiak	Seafood Processing
17	Alaska Petroleum Contractors	800	Anchorage	Oil Field Services
18	First National Bank of Anchorage	786	Anchorage	Banking
19	Alascom	747	Anchorage	Telephone Communications
20	Westmark Hotels	740	Anchorage	Hotel
21	Fairbanks Memorial Hospital	727	Fairbanks	Hospital
22	Alaska Pulp Corp.	687	Sitka	Pulp & Lumber Products
23	Humana Hospital-Alaska	669	Anchorage	Hospital
24	Union Oil Co. of California	568	Anchorage	Oil & Gas Production
25	Sears Roebuck & Co.	559	Anchorage	Retail-general merchandise
26	ERA Aviation	550	Anchorage	Air Carrier
27	Pay'n Save Drug Stores	537	Anchorage	Retail-general merchandise
28	Alaska USA Federal Credit Union	511	Anchorage	Credit Union
29	JC Penney	476	Anchorage	Retail-general merchandise
30	Anchorage Daily News	476	Anchorage	Newspaper
31	Anchorage Times Publishing Co.	471	Anchorage	Newspaper
32	Alaska Commercial Co.	468	Anchorage	Retail-general merchandise
33	Peter Pan Seafoods	458	King Cove	Manufacturing
34	Tanana Chiefs Conference	454	Fairbanks	Social Services
35	Key Bank of Alaska	453	Anchorage	Banking

Alaska's Top 100 Employers/^a

Rank	Firm Name	Employment	Largest Work Site	Business Activity
36	Federal Express	453	Anchorage	Air Courier Services
37	McDonalds	440	Anchorage	Retail-eating establishment
38	Spenard Builders Supply	433	Anchorage	Trade-lumber products
39	Ogden Facility Management of Alaska	429	Anchorage	Facilities Management
40	Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corp.	425	Bethel	Health Care
41	Chugach Electric Association	406	Anchorage	Electric Utility
42	Pizza Hut	402	Anchorage	Retail-eating establishment
43	HC Price	393	Anchorage	Construction
44	Lamonts	389	Anchorage	Retail-apparel
45	Nordstrom	378	Anchorage	Retail-general merchandise
46	Hotel Captain Cook	377	Anchorage	Hotel
47	Wards Cove Packing Co.	370	Naknek	Manufacturing
48	Southeast Alaska Regional Health Corp.	368	Juneau	Health Care
49	Sea-Land Freight Service	367	Anchorage	Shipping & Warehousing
50	NANA/Marriott Joint Venture	366	Anchorage	Retail-caterer
51	Anchorage Hilton Hotel	350	Anchorage	Hotel
52	Norton Sound Health Corp.	348	Nome	Health Care
53	Peak Oilfield Service Co.	337	Prudhoe Bay	Oil Field Services
54	Reeve Aleutian Airways	329	Anchorage	Air Carrier
55	Cominco Alaska	328	Red Dog	Mining
56	Our Lady of Compassion Care Center	326	Anchorage	Health Care
57	Burger King	323	Anchorage	Retail-eating establishments
58	Alaska Sales & Service	313	Anchorage	Motor Vehicle Dealer
59	Maniilaq Association	312	Kotzebue	Social Services
60	North Pacific Processors	307	Cordova	Seafood Processing
61	Northstore Ventures/7-11	299	Anchorage	Retail-grocery
62	Northwest Technical Services	297	Anchorage	Engineering Services
63	Alyeska Seafoods	293	Unalaska	Seafood Processing
64	Inlet Fisheries	292	Kenai	Seafood Processing
65	United Parcel Service	282	Anchorage	Courier Services
66	Hope Cottages	282	Anchorage	Residential Care
67	Matanuska Telephone Association	278	Palmer	Communications
68	Golden Frontier Enterprises/McDonalds	276	Fairbanks	Retail-eating establishments
69	Klukwan Forest Products	276	Juneau	Logging
70	ARA Leisure Services	276	Fairbanks	Retail-caterer

Table 1 (cont.)

Alaska's Top 100 Employers/^a

Rank	Firm Name	Employment	Largest Work Site	Business Activity
71	Mayflower Contract Services	273	Anchorage	Bus Charter Services
72	MarkAir Express	272	Anchorage	Air Carrier
73	Greens Creek Mining Co.	270	Juneau	Mining
74	American Guard & Alert	269	Anchorage	Guard Services
75	Costco Wholesale	267	Anchorage	Retail-general merchandise
76	Sheraton Anchorage Hotel	265	Anchorage	Hotel
77	Valley Hospital	262	Palmer	Hospital
78	Market Basket/SuperValu Foods	258	Fairbanks	Retail-grocery
79	Delta Air Lines	253	Anchorage	Air Carrier
80	Denali Foods/Taco Bell	250	Anchorage	Retail-eating establishments
81	Dynair Service	249	Anchorage	Transportation
82	Ketchikan General Hospital	245	Ketchikan	Hospital
83	Caterair International	244	Anchorage	Retail-caterer
84	E & S Diversified Services	244	Anchorage	Maintenance Services
85	Felec Services	241	Fairbanks	Radar Station Operator
86	Nabors Alaska Drilling	241	Prudhoe Bay	Oil Field Services
87	Bristol Bay Area Health Corp.	240	Dillingham	Health care
88	AK Specialized Ed.&Training Ctr. (ASETS)	239	Anchorage	Sheltered Workshop/Voc.Rehab
89	Tundra Tours	238	Fairbanks	Bus Charter Services
90	King Crab	236	Kodiak	Seafood Processing
91	Anchorage Cold Storage	230	Anchorage	Wholesale-grocery
92	Cook Inlet Processing	230	Nikiski	Seafood Processing
93	Enstar Natural Gas	223	Anchorage	Natural Gas Distribution
94	Laidlaw Transit	222	Anchorage	Bus Charter Services
95	Central Peninsula General Hospital	220	Soldotna	Hospital
96	GE Government Services	220	Anchorage	Communications Services
97	Earth Movers of Fairbanks	220	Fairbanks	Construction
98	Pace Membership Warehouse	219	Anchorage	Retail-general merchandise
99	Telephone Utilities of the Northland	219	Anchorage	Telephone Communications
100	GCI Communications	218	Anchorage	Telephone Communications

TOTAL TRENDS 100 EMPLOYMENT 51,961

^a/Based on 1991 average employment. Firms with identical employment ranked by unrounded employment.
Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.

Trends 100 Employers by Industry

	1991 RANK	1990 RANK		1991 RANK	1990 RANK
MINING			TRANS., COMM., & UTIL. cont.		
Alaska Petroleum Contractors	17	13	Enstar Natural Gas	93	95
ARCO Alaska	2	1	ERA Aviation	26	26
BP Exploration (Alaska)	4	5	Federal Express	36	40
Cominco Alaska	55	74	GCI Communications	100	new
Greens Creek Mining Co.	73	66	GE Government Services	96	new
Nabors Alaska Drilling	86	89	Laidlaw Transit	94	new
Union Oil Co. of California	24	30	MarkAir	11	12
VECO	5	4	MarkAir Express	72	new
CONSTRUCTION			Matanuska Telephone Association	67	82
Earth Movers of Fairbanks	97	79	Mayflower Contract Services	71	78
HC Price	43	29	Reeve Aleutian Airways	54	60
MANUFACTURING			Sea-Land Freight Service	49	58
Alaska Pulp Corp.	22	22	Telephone Utilities of the Northland	99	97
All Alaskan Seafoods	16	17	Tundra Tours	89	new
Alyeska Seafoods	63	67	United Parcel Service	65	new
Anchorage Daily News	30	34	TRADE		
Anchorage Times Publishing Co.	31	32	Alaska Commercial Co.	32	28
Cook Inlet Processing	92	new	Alaska Sales & Service	58	56
Icicle Seafoods	15	15	Anchorage Cold Storage	91	70
Inlet Fisheries	64	83	ARA Leisure Services	70	72
Ketchikan Pulp Company	10	10	Burger King	57	48
King Crab	90	94	Carr Gottstein Foods	1	2
Klukwan Forest Products	69	47	Caterair International	83	65
North Pacific Processors	60	45	Costco Wholesale	75	80
Peter Pan Seafoods	33	41	Denali Foods/Taco Bell	80	88
Trident Seafoods	8	8	Fred Meyer	13	20
UniSea	12	23	Golden Frontier/McDonalds	68	93
Wards Cove Packing Co.	47	42	JC Penney	29	31
TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATION & UTILITIES			Lamonts	44	38
Alascom	19	16	Market Basket/SuperValu Foods	78	76
Alaska Airlines	9	11	McDonalds	37	39
Alyeska Pipeline Service Co.	6	7	NANA/Marriott Joint Venture	50	49
Chugach Electric Association	41	43	Nordstrom	45	37
Delta Air Lines	79	75	Northstore Adventures/7-11	61	61
Dynair Service	81	55	Pace Membership Warehouse	98	92
			Pay'n Save Drug Stores	27	24
			Pizza Hut	42	57
			Safeway Stores	14	9
			Sears Roebuck & Co.	25	25
			Spensard Builders Supply	38	46

Table 2(cont.)

Trends 100 Employers by Industry

FINANCE, INSURANCE & REAL ESTATE	1991 RANK	1990 RANK
Alaska USA Federal Credit Union	28	27
First National Bank of Anchorage	18	14
Key Bank of Alaska	35	33
National Bank of Alaska	7	6
SERVICES		
AK Specialized Ed. & Training Center (ASETS)	88	98
American Guard & Alert	74	62
Anchorage Hilton Hotel	51	51
Bristol Bay Area Health Corp.	87	91
Central Peninsula General Hospital	95	96
E & S Diversified Services	84	new
Fairbanks Memorial Hospital	21	19
Felec Services	85	52
Hope Cottages	66	81
Hotel Captain Cook	46	35
Humana Hospital-Alaska	23	21
Ketchikan General Hospital	82	86
Maniilaq Association	59	68
Northwest Technical Services	62	84
Norton Sound Health Corp.	52	69
Ogden Facility Management of Alaska	39	50
Our Lady of Compassion Care Center	56	59
Peak Oilfield Service Co.	53	71
Providence Hospital	3	3
Sheraton Anchorage Hotel	76	63
Southeast Regional Health Corp.	48	44
Tanana Chiefs Conference	34	36
Valley Hospital	77	77
Westmark Hotels	20	18
Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corp.	40	53

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

DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATIONS

Employment data were obtained from the unemployment insurance reports which every employer in the state with one or more employees must file. Employment figures reported are the total number of people working during the payroll period which includes the 12th of each month (regardless of how many hours they worked).

Annual average employment is calculated by summing the 12 monthly figures reported to the Alaska Department of Labor on the Employer's Quarterly Report and dividing the total by 12.

Total employment of a parent company will not be captured, and therefore not appear in the Trends 100, if subsidiaries file unemployment insurance reports under separate account numbers.

Confidentiality laws protect employment information. Therefore, it was necessary to receive written permission from each employer to publish employment data. This year, three employers refused to grant permission. The actual Trends 100 would have included two additional services firms and one air transportation firm. The last three firms in the Trends 100 list would have been omitted.

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businesses are located in Fairbanks, seven in Southeast Alaska, and the rest scattered throughout the state from Akutan to Prudhoe Bay.

Summary

The Carr's grocery chain was Alaska's largest private employer in 1991. They overtook ARCO Alaska, a firm that held the number one spot for the past six years.

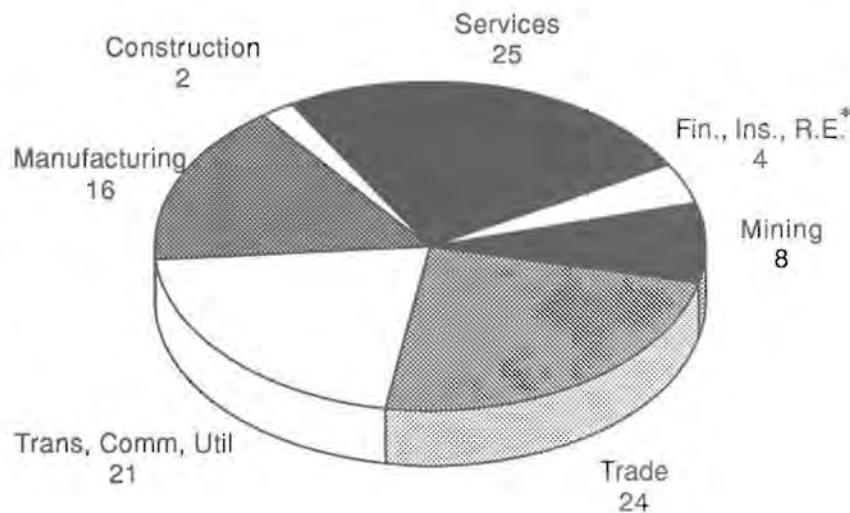
The *Trends 100* added employment at a faster pace than the economy as a whole, as they have done each of the past seven years. Their payroll grew 4.4% from 1990, and their average monthly wage of \$2,963 was \$422 higher than the average for all wage and salary earners.

Six of the eight new additions to the 1991 list are from the transportation, communications and utilities sector. Firms from the trade and services industries dominate the *Trends 100* list, although in a smaller proportion than in the economy as a whole. A large share of oil and gas employment is with *Trends 100* firms. Seven of every 10 jobs in this field are with large companies. This contrasts with some categories such as eating and drinking estab-

lishments where only one in five jobs are with *Trends 100* firms.

The 100 largest firms employ one in five workers in the state, and close to one in three in the private sector. They are the building blocks of Alaska's economy, although there are more than 13,000 other firms in the private sector whose importance cannot be ignored.

1 in 4 Top 100 Firms are in Services Number of firms by Industry



Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis

*Finance, Insurance and Real Estate