

# Alaska's Largest Private Employers in 1992: The Trends 100

By Holly Stinson

For the second year in a row, the Carrs grocery chain leads the list of Alaska's largest employers, with over 3,000 jobs.<sup>1</sup> (See Table 1.) The second and third-largest firms are ARCO Alaska and Providence Hospital, the same line-up as last year. In fact, the ten largest employers in 1992 are the same group as last year except for Fred Meyer. Jobs at their new Fairbanks store helped boost them from 13th to 8th position.

But Fred Meyer wasn't the fastest growing of the Top 100 firms. Table 2 lists ten firms that moved up more than 10 rankings from last year. They include Costco and Pace, both retailers who also expanded in 1992.

As a group, the Trends 100 grew at a faster pace than the entire private sector at 2.7% compared to 1.7%. This continues an eight-year trend of the large employers growing faster than the private sector as a whole. When public sector jobs are added in, these large firms still outpaced Alaska's total employment growth rate in 1992 of 2%.

## Retail jobs sprout at fast pace

Retailers and wholesalers account for more employment in the Trends 100 than any other sector. This year their portion is 24%, an increase from 1991 (See Figure 1.) Only one wholesaler, Anchorage Cold Storage, is included in the group. The rest are all retailers.

Total employment with the Trends 100 trade companies increased 7.5% in 1992, although the number of trade businesses in the Trends 100 held steady at 24. In addition to the expanding operations of Fred Meyer, Costco and Pace mentioned above, other retailers also grew. Carr Gottstein Foods opened a new store in Kenai and remodeled existing stores. Sears Roebuck has a new store in Fairbanks and a new addition to their Anchorage store.

One-third of the Trends 100 retailers are eating places and food service businesses; all eight also appeared on last year's list. As a group they added jobs in 1992 at the robust rate of 14.5%; all employers in this same category only grew 2%.

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Note:  
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

## Trade Has the Largest Share of Trends 100 Jobs

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis

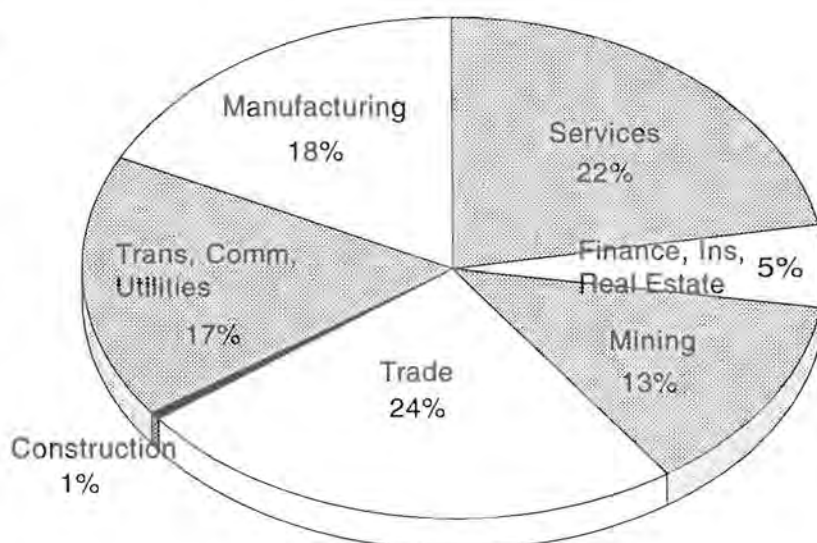


Table 1

# Alaska's 100 Largest Private Employers—1992<sup>a/</sup>

Rank	Firm Name	Employment	Headquarters or Largest Work Site	Business Activity
1	Carr Gottstein Foods	3,146	Anchorage	Retail-grocery
2	ARCO Alaska	2,691	Anchorage	Oil & gas production
3	Providence Hospital	1,959	Anchorage	Hospital
4	Trident Seafoods	1,415	Akutan	Seafood processing
5	BP Exploration (Alaska)	1,388	Anchorage	Oil & gas production
6	Alyeska Pipeline Service Co.	1,325	Anchorage	Pipeline
7	National Bank of Alaska	1,153	Anchorage	Banking
8	Fred Meyer	1,108	Anchorage	Retail-general merchandise
9	VECO	1,038	Anchorage	Oil field services
10	Alaska Airlines	996	Anchorage	Air carrier
11	All Alaskan Seafoods	954	Kodiak	Seafood processing
12	Mark Air	948	Anchorage	Air carrier
13	Ketchikan Pulp Co.	917	Ketchikan	Pulp & lumber products
14	Safeway Stores	904	Anchorage	Retail-grocery
15	UniSea	904	Unalaska	Seafood processing
16	Icicle Seafoods	807	Petersburg	Seafood processing
17	First National Bank of Anchorage	789	Anchorage	Banking
18	Alascom	752	Anchorage	Telephone communications
19	Westmark Hotels	743	Anchorage	Hotel
20	Fairbanks Memorial Hospital	737	Fairbanks	Hospital
21	Alaska Pulp Corp.	704	Sitka	Pulp & lumber products
22	Alaska Regional Hospital (formerly Humana)	609	Anchorage	Hospital
23	Sears Roebuck & Co.	588	Anchorage	Retail-general merchandise
24	Union Oil of California	581	Anchorage	Oil & gas production
25	Federal Express	568	Anchorage	Air courier services
26	Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corp.	568	Bethel	Health care
27	Alaska Petroleum Contractors	553	Anchorage	Oil field services
28	JC Penney	549	Anchorage	Retail-general merchandise
29	Payless Drug Stores	531	Anchorage	Retail-general merchandise
30	ERA Aviation	522	Anchorage	Air carrier
31	Tanana Chiefs Conference	518	Fairbanks	Social services
32	McDonalds	502	Anchorage	Retail-eating establishment
33	Alaska USA Federal Credit Union	494	Anchorage	Credit union
34	Anchorage Daily News	494	Anchorage	Newspaper
35	Spenard Builders Supply	473	Anchorage	Trade-lumber products

Rank	Firm Name	Employment	Headquarters or Largest Work Site	Business Activity
36	Pizza Hut	467	Anchorage	Retail-eating establishment
37	Alaska Commercial Co.	465	Anchorage	Retail-general merchandise
38	Peter Pan Seafoods	453	King Cove	Manufacturing
39	Ogden Facility Management of Alaska	444	Anchorage	Facilities management
40	Key Bank of Alaska	406	Anchorage	Banking
41	Chugach Electric Association	400	Anchorage	Electric utility
42	Southeast Alaska Regional Health Corp.	397	Juneau	Health care
43	Caterair International	396	Anchorage	Retail-caterer
44	Salvation Army	391	Anchorage	Social services
45	NANA/Marriott Joint Venture	385	Anchorage	Retail-caterer
46	Piquniq Management	380	Amchitka	Facilities support
47	United Parcel Service	370	Anchorage	Courier services
48	Cook Inlet Processing	367	Nikiski	Seafood processing
49	Anchorage Hilton Hotel	365	Anchorage	Hotel
50	Hotel Captain Cook	365	Anchorage	Hotel
51	Nordstrom	364	Anchorage	Retail-general merchandise
52	Sea-Land Freight Service	362	Anchorage	Shipping & warehousing
53	Maniilaq Association	360	Kotzebue	Social services
54	Norquest Seafoods	359	Ketchikan	Seafood processing
55	Peak Oilfield Service Co.	353	Prudhoe Bay	Oil field services
56	Tesoro Northstore (7-11)	351	Anchorage	Retail-grocery
57	Mark Air Express	349	Anchorage	Air carrier
58	Costco	346	Anchorage	Retail-general merchandise
59	Fishing Co. of Alaska	346	Seward	seafood processing
60	Northwest Technical Services	345	Anchorage	Engineering services
61	Lamonts	345	Anchorage	Retail-apparel
62	Wards Cove Packing Co.	341	Naknek	Manufacturing
63	Mayflower Contract Services	341	Anchorage	Bus charter services
64	Burger King	337	Anchorage	Retail-eating establishment
65	Reeve Aleutian Airways	335	Anchorage	Air carrier
66	Cominco Alaska	332	Red Dog	Mining
67	Our Lady of Compassion Care Center	332	Anchorage	Health care
68	Norton Sound Health Corp.	328	Nome	Health care
69	North Pacific Processors	327	Cordova	Seafood processing
70	Hope Cottages	324	Anchorage	Residential care

*Continued*

Table 1

## Alaska's 100 Largest Private Employers (continued)

Rank	Firm Name	Employment	Headquarters or Largest Work Site	Business Activity
71	ARA Leisure Services	309	Fairbanks	Retail-caterer
72	E & S Diversified Services	307	Anchorage	Maintenance services
73	Alyeska Seafoods	305	Unalaska	Seafood processing
74	Valley Hospital	292	Palmer	Hospital
75	Westward Seafood	286	Unalaska	Seafood processing
76	Matanuska Telephone Association	282	Palmer	Communications
77	Anchorage Cold Storage	274	Anchorage	Wholesale-grocery
78	Alaska Sales & Service	270	Anchorage	Motor vehicle dealer
79	HC Price Co.	270	Anchorage	Construction
80	Greens Creek Mining Co.	266	Juneau	Mining
81	Denali Foods/Taco Bell	265	Anchorage	Retail-eating establishment
82	Bristol Bay Area Health Corp.	254	Dillingham	Health care
83	Ketchikan General Hospital	253	Ketchikan	Hospital
84	Sheraton Anchorage Hotel	252	Anchorage	Hotel
85	Delta Air Lines	249	Anchorage	Air carrier
86	Central Peninsula General Hospital	249	Soldotna	Hospital
87	PACE	247	Anchorage	Retail-general merchandise
88	GCI Communications	244	Anchorage	Telephone communications
89	Ak. Specialized Education&Training Svcs. (ASETS)	234	Anchorage	Sheltered workshop/voc.rehab
90	Northwest Airlines	229	Anchorage	Air carrier
91	Federal Services Corp.	228	Fairbanks	Radar station operator
92	Peninsula Airways	223	Anchorage	Air carrier
93	Enstar Natural Gas	223	Anchorage	Natural gas distribution
94	Market Basket/SuperValu Foods	221	Fairbanks	Retail-grocery
95	Telephone Utilities of the Northland	215	Anchorage	Telephone communications
96	Golden Frontier Ent./McDonalds Fairbanks	214	Fairbanks	Retail-eating establishment
97	Dynair Service	211	Anchorage	Transportation
98	Inlet Fisheries	210	Kenai	Seafood processing
99	American Guard & Alert	206	Anchorage	Guard services
100	International Seafoods	206	Kodiak	Seafood processing
TOTAL TRENDS 100 EMPLOYMENT		53,350		

/a Based on 1992 average employment. Firms with identical employment ranked by unrounded employment.

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



## Oil employment shrinks, wages remain high

Unlike trade, mining's share of *Trends* 100 employment shrank from 16% to 13% in 1992. This is not surprising considering the well-publicized downsizing of Alaska's oil and gas sector. Oil and gas businesses statewide lost 1,300 jobs in 1992. Even with new developments in Cook Inlet and on the North Slope, the oil industry is shrinking as production from the giant Prudhoe Bay oil field shrinks. Only one of the oil businesses in the *Trends* 100 list -- Union Oil -- added jobs in 1992. The other four -- ARCO, BP Exploration, Alaska Petroleum Contractors and VECO -- all reduced staff although they remain in the top third of the list.

Employment with the two hard-rock mining operations in the *Trends* 100, Cominco and Greens Creek, remained steady in 1992. Greens Creek ceased operations, however, in April 1993 because of low silver and zinc prices. Cominco, which operates the Red Dog lead and zinc mine in Northwest Alaska, continues to keep a watchful eye on declining zinc prices.

Even though the oil and gas sector is a smaller share of the *Trends* 100 this year, their wages are still at the top of any list. This sector pays the highest average monthly wage of any industry in the state, and they account for a disproportionately large share of the *Trends* 100 payroll. Oil and gas firms have 11.7% of the *Trends* 100 jobs but pay 26.3% of *Trends* 100 wages.

When taking all *Trends* 100 firms into account, the wages paid by these large firms are higher than the private sector average. In 1992 the *Trends* 100 average monthly wage was \$3,054 compared to \$2,470 for all private employment. These 100 firms paid out close to \$2 billion in wages last year.

## Air transportation expands

Another sector that pays above-average wages is the transportation, communications, and utilities category. There are 20 firms from this group in the *Trends* 100. One of the reasons their wages are high is that, as with the oil and gas industry, this group tends to have more full-time jobs than the retail or services sectors.

Two more airlines joined the *Trends* 100 this year, bringing to ten the number of air transportation businesses among Alaska's largest

employers. (See Figure 2.) One of these, Mark Air Express, appears in Table 2 as one of the ten fastest-growing firms in 1992 as they began flying new routes within the state. United Parcel Service also appears in Table 2. Most of their additional growth is related to their air rather than ground delivery services. Federal Express moved up ten rankings as they added more than 100 jobs on an annual average basis.

## New seafood processors in *Trends* 100

Half of the firms new to the *Trends* 100 are seafood processors. (See Table 3.) They added jobs for a number of reasons. Norquest Seafoods in Ketchikan was formed by combining Silver Lining's Southeast operations with canneries in Cordova. Westward Seafood added employment because of a new plant in Unalaska.

Most of the processors who have been in the *Trends* 100 in previous years also grew in 1992, and seafood processing's share of the *Trends* 100 employment pie is larger this year. Last year seafood jobs made up 11% of the *Trends* 100 employment; this year they make up 14% of the total. Two of the processors have steadily moved up in the *Trends* 100 ranking over the years. From number 70 in 1988, All Alaskan Seafoods has climbed higher on the list each year. This year they are the 11th-largest private employer in the state. Trident Seafoods, number 48 on the 1986 list, jumped from the 8th-largest firm in 1991 to the fourth-largest in 1992.

Table 2

### The *Trends* 100 Top Ten Movers

Firms who moved up more than 10 rankings from 1991	Rank		Positions Moved Up
	1992	1991	
Cook Inlet Processing	48	92	44
Caterair International	43	83	40
United Parcel Service	47	65	18
Costco	58	75	17
Mark Air Express	57	72	15
Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corp.	26	40	14
Anchorage Cold Storage	77	91	14
GCI	88	100	12
E&S Diversified Svcs	72	84	12
Pace	87	98	11

Figure 2

# Building Blocks of Alaska's Economy

## Communications & Utilities

Alascom  
 Chugach Electric  
 Matanuska Telephone  
 GCI  
 Enstar  
 Telephone Utilities of  
 Northland

## Other Manufacturing

Anchorage Daily News

## Grocery Stores

Carr Gottstein  
 Safeway  
 Tesoro North Store (7-11)  
 Market Basket

## Seafood Processors

Trident Seafoods  
 All Alaskan Seafoods  
 UniSea  
 Icicle Seafoods  
 Peter Pan Seafoods  
 Cook Inlet Processors  
 Norquest Seafoods  
 Wards Cove Packing Co.  
 North Pacific Processors  
 Fishing Co. of Alaska  
 Alyeska Seafoods  
 Westward Seafoods  
 Inlet Fisheries

## Construction

HC Price

## Hotels

Westmark Hotels  
 Hotel Captain Cook  
 Anchorage Hilton  
 Sheraton Anchorage

## Eating Places

McDonalds  
 Pizza Hut  
 NANA/Marriot JV  
 Caterair International  
 Burger King  
 ARA Leisure Services  
 Denali Foods  
 Golden Frontier  
 (McDonalds Fairbanks)

## Other Services

Maniilaq  
 Peak Oilfield Services  
 E&S Diversified Services  
 Employment & Training Center  
 Hope Cottages  
 Tanana Chiefs  
 Salvation Army  
 NW Technical Services  
 Ogden Facility Management  
 Piquini Management  
 Federal Services  
 American Guard & Alert

## Finance

NBA  
 1st National  
 Alaska USA  
 Key Bank

Other manufacturers did not fare as well as seafood processors last year. The Anchorage Times shut down mid-way through the year, eliminating close to 500 jobs. The two *Trends* 100 firms from the wood products sector, Alaska Pulp and Ketchikan Pulp, kept employment levels similar to 1991.

## Perennials bloom in finance and services

The steadiest of the *Trends* 100 firms are found in the finance sector. Two of Alaska's largest banks -- NBA and First National -- along with the credit union Alaska USA have appeared in the *Trends* 100 each year since it was first compiled in 1986. A fourth financial institution, Key Bank, has appeared each year since it was formed in late 1987.

Other perennials in the *Trends* 100 are from the services sector. This sector contains a variety of firms that cater to residents, tourists, and businesses. It is the second-largest group in the *Trends* 100 and its share of the *Trends* 100 employment has increased each of the last four years.

Most of the hotels and health care operators appearing in this year's list have been among Alaska's largest employers in prior years. For example, Providence Hospital has ranked as Alaska's third-largest private employer for seven of the past eight years. The necessity of staffing these operations, at least minimally, around the clock is one reason why hotels and hospitals tend to be large employers.

Native regional corporations and other social service providers, along with enterprises offering personnel, management or other business services, round out the roster of services firms in the *Trends* 100.

### Two-thirds of the *Trends* 100 are in Anchorage area

Alaska's large employers are located throughout the state, from Ketchikan in Southeast to Amchitka near the end of the Aleutian chain. Two-thirds of them list the Anchorage/MatSu area as their headquarters or largest work site, but many have operations in other areas of the state. Perhaps the *Trends* 100 employer with the widest geographic presence is National Bank of Alaska, which has offices in 36 Alaskan communities.

### Summary: Large employers grow fast, pay well

Both the payrolls and employment rosters of Alaska's 100 largest private employers grew faster than the private sector as a whole in 1992. This trend is not new; the *Trends* 100 employment has grown faster than Alaska's entire private sector for the last eight years. Their average monthly wage of \$3,054 was

#### Wood Products

Ketchikan Pulp Co.  
Alaska Pulp Corporation  
Silver Bay Logging

#### Other Trade

Payless Drug  
Spenard Builders  
Lamonts  
Alaska Sales & Services  
Anchorage Cold Storage

#### Oil & Gas

ARCO  
BP Exploration  
VECO  
Alaska Petroleum  
Union Oil

#### Air Transportation

Alaska Airlines  
Mark Air  
Federal Express  
ERA Aviation  
Mark Air Express  
Reeve Aleutian Airways  
Delta Air Lines  
Peninsula Airways  
Northwest Airlines  
Dynair Service

#### Mining

Cominco  
Greens Creek

#### Health Care

Providence Hospital  
Fairbanks Memorial Hospital  
Alaska Regional Hospital  
Yukon Kuskokwim Health  
Southeast Alaska Regional Health  
Norton Sound Health  
Our Lady of Compassion  
Valley Hospital  
Ketchikan General Hospital  
Bristol Bay Area Health  
Central Peninsula General

#### Other Transportation

Alyeska Pipeline  
Sea Land Freight  
United Parcel Service  
Mayflower

Table 3

### The Trends 100 Newcomers

#### Rank

58	Fishing Co. of Alaska
54	Norquest Seafoods
91	Northwest Airlines
94	Peninsula Airways
46	Piquniq Management
93	Silver Bay Logging
75	Westward Seafood

less than 12% of the total but their wages accounted for more than 26% of the Trends 100 payroll.

\$584 a month higher than all private firms paid.

Carr Gottstein Foods, with more than 3,000 jobs, was the largest private employer for the second year. They were followed by ARCO Alaska and Providence Hospital. Among the fastest-growing firms were many retailers who expanded operations in 1992. The trade sector has 24% of the Trends 100 jobs. The number of oil jobs in the Trends 100 shrank last year to

Among the newcomers to this year's list of large employers are two airlines and four seafood processors. The same large firms in the finance and services sectors have appeared in the Trends 100 each year. Banks, hotels and health care providers are the most stable of the Trends 100 firms. While two-thirds of the large firms are headquartered in Anchorage, these big players in Alaska's economy can be found throughout the state.

### 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 that includes the 12th of each month (regardless of how many hours they worked).

*Annual average employment* is calculated by adding 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 employer 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 one additional firm in each of the following categories: communications, services, and wood products. The last three firms appearing in the Trends 100 list would have been omitted.

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

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