

Summer 1995 New Hires Send Mixed Signals

by Todd Mosher

The Alaska New Hires Quarterly Report identifies seasonal hiring patterns of Alaska employers by industries, regions, and occupation groups. The report assists employment services personnel and job-seekers as they anticipate entry opportunities for the upcoming quarter. Although new hires totals vary from year to year, when coupled with what is known about projected large business start-ups and closures and occupational trends, employment services personnel can make fairly accurate projections of entry opportunities for the upcoming season. A *new hire* is defined as an employee who was not working for the employer during any of the previous four quarters. A new hire represents either a new job or the turnover of an existing job, excluding seasonal rehires from the previous year.

In the summer of 1995, Alaskan employers welcomed 74,524 new hires to their payrolls, 1,334 more than in the previous quarter, and about the same as in the previous summer. (See Table 1.) However, when viewed from an industry perspective, the summer new hires picture was considerably different from 1994.

Manufacturing and small industry new hires were up from 1994, but services and retail floundered

Compared to the previous summer, 1995 summer new hires were substantially higher in mining (including oil and gas extraction), manufacturing, tourism-related transportation, and wholesale trade. Conversely, the larger retail and services sectors (other than hotels and lodging) had 3.7% and 2.9% fewer summer new hires, respectively. The finance, insurance and real estate industry also had significantly fewer new hires than the previous summer. The net effect was a wash, with 1995 summer new hires down by a total of 94,

or only 0.1%, from the summer of 1994. With Alaska Department of Labor economists projecting nearly 3.0 percent fewer seafood processing jobs and continued slower job growth in services and trade¹, new hires for this coming summer could fall somewhat below 1994 and 1995 levels.

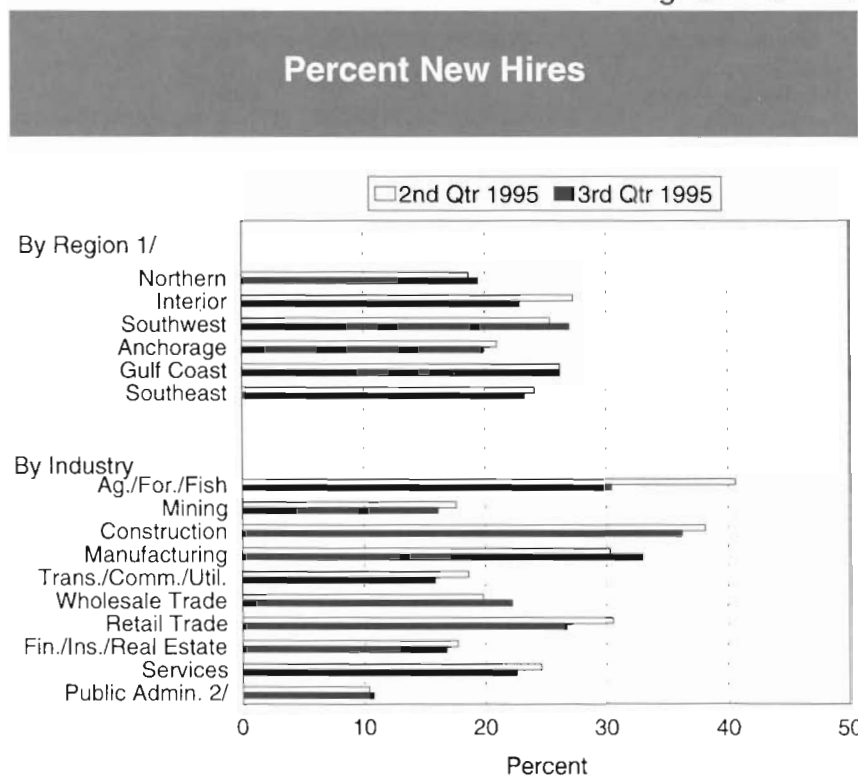
Construction, seafood processing new hires hit four-quarter peak

Construction and seafood processing new hires hit seasonal highs in third quarter 1995, accounting for 18,101, or 24.3%, of all summer new hires. (See Table 2.) Construction new hires were up by 1,144, or 14.5%, from spring levels; seafood processing new

¹ See May 1996 issue of *Alaska Economic Trends*.

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Figure • 1



1/ An employee's region is determined by his or her place of employment.
2/ Includes all employees of publicly-owned institutions.

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

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Alaska New Hires 3rd Quarter 1995

	3rd Qtr 95	Change from 2nd Qtr 95	Change from 3rd Qtr 94 1/
Total New Hires 2/	74,524	1,334	-94
By Region 3/			
Northern	4,296	367	-83
Interior	10,523	-1,273	349
Southwest	7,212	1,193	117
Anchorage	29,480	-676	-350
Gulf Coast	10,586	919	-7
Southeast	10,979	414	242
Offshore	825	274	47
Outside	520	130	-65
Unknown	103	-14	-344
By Industry			
Ag./Forestry/Fishing	777	-203	-81
Mining	2,073	-91	463
Oil & Gas Extraction	1,700	-57	415
All Other	373	-31	48
Construction	9,052	1,144	-33
Manufacturing	11,172	3,436	696
Seafood Processing	9,249	3,582	527
All Other	1,923	-146	169
Trans./Comm./Util.	4,802	-769	-63
Tourism Related	1,114	-711	93
All Other	3,688	-58	-156
Wholesale Trade	2,434	495	244
Retail Trade	17,517	-1,743	-678
Fin./Ins./Real Estate	2,230	-60	-404
Services	17,949	-963	-382
Hotels & Lodging	2,782	-1,192	66
All Other	15,167	229	-448
Public Admin. 4/	6,516	86	143

Notes: New hires figures include turnover and should not be used to assess job growth trends.

1/ Changes from previous summer reflect slight downward revisions in 3rd Quarter 1994 new hires totals.

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

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

4/ Includes all employees of publicly-owned institutions.

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

hires were up by 3,582, or 63.2%. Wholesale trade also peaked in the summer with 2,434 new hires, up 495 from spring. New hires in all other industries, with the exception of public administration, peaked in the spring, but maintained higher than fall and winter levels during the summer quarter.

Anchorage and Interior new hires slowed slightly from spring to summer

Anchorage and Interior region new hires were at their highest four-quarter level in the spring of 1995 (See Table 2.), whereas all other major regions peaked in the summer. Anchorage and the Interior are more heavily influenced by a broader range of seasonal tourist-related economic activity and agriculture than are other regions of the state. These industries tend to hire somewhat larger numbers of new employees during the preparatory spring months than they do in the summer.

Over 22 percent of employers' 1995 summer payrolls were newly hired workers

In the summer of 1995, 22.3% of all workers appearing at any time during the quarter on Alaskan employers' payrolls were newly hired. This was very close to the previous summer's rate of 22.6%. The percent new hires rate varied greatly by industry and region. (See Figure 1.) In third quarter 1995, the percent new hires rate was highest in the Southwest and Gulf Coast regions, primarily because of the high turnover rate and sharply seasonal nature of the seafood processing industry. Less than 20% of 1995 seafood processing summer new hires were recipients of a Permanent Fund Dividend in 1994 and/or 1995, implying that over 80% were nonresidents of Alaska or were relatively new to the state. (See Figure 2.) Only 1,622, or 18%, of third quarter 1995 seafood processing new hires had Alaska wage and salary employment during the previous summer; and only 855 of those worked for a seafood processing employer in the summer of 1994.

Top occupations for new hires differed by region

Table 3 displays the number of third quarter 1995 new hires by occupation group for each major region of Alaska. Shading indicates the occupation group was in the top 20 for new hires in the region. Several occupation groups appeared on the top 20 lists of all six major regions. However, the importance of these occupations, relative to the size of the regional economies, varied greatly. For example, the Anchorage region had 413 new hires in the fabricators, assemblers, and hand-working occupations group, good enough to put it near the middle of its top 20 list. However, these workers made up a smaller share of Anchorage's new hires than in the Southwest, Gulf Coast, or Southeast regions, where new hires in this category were five to seven times greater than in Anchorage.

Some occupation groups were a significant source of new hires in some regions, but not in others. For example, forestry and logging occupations new hires were the sixth highest category in Southeast Alaska, were near the bottom of the top 20 in the Gulf Coast region, and were insignificant in the rest of the state.

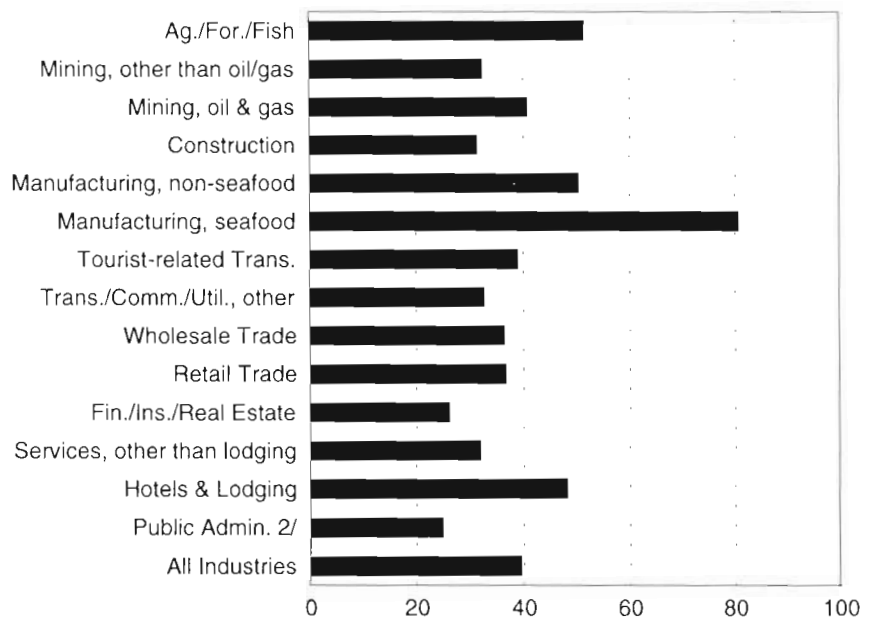
Peak hiring period was spring through summer for most occupations

Table 4 shows statewide new hires totals by occupation group for the four quarters ending with the summer of 1995. Shading indicates the period when entry opportunities were better than the rest of the year, and the boldface type indicates the single quarter with the highest number of new hires. For 39 of the 61 occupation groups, both spring and summer quarters were better times to seek work than in the fall and winter; of those 39 occupations, 25 had peak levels of new hires in the spring, and 14 had peak levels of new hires in the summer. In general, new hires for occupations influenced by tourism tended to peak in the spring rather than the summer. New hires for those occupations related to manufacturing and construction were more likely to peak in the summer.

Of the 22 occupation groups that had strong new hires totals in fall and/or winter, five peaked in the fall (teachers, except postsecondary; sales-related occupations; marketing and sales supervisors; editors, reporters, and public relations occupations; and public administration officials and administrators), and two peaked in the winter (computer, math and operations research occupations; and vocational and educational counselors). The other 15 had higher than average new hires levels in the fall and/or winter, but hit their one-quarter peak in either spring or summer.

Figure • 2

Alaska New Hires 3rd Quarter 1995 Percent Nonresidents 1/



1/ Did not receive an Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend in 1995 and did not receive a PFD in 1994. May include some individuals that have recently established or re-established residency.
2/ Includes all employees of publicly-owned institutions.

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

T a b l e • 2

Alaska New Hires for the Four Quarters Ending Third Quarter 1995

	4Q94 Fall 1/	1Q95 Winter	2Q95 Spring	3Q95 Summer	Four Qtr. Average
Totals	47,948	45,020	73,190	74,524	60,171
By Region 2/					
Northern	2,672	2,671	3,929	4,296	3,392
Interior	5,937	4,625	11,796	10,523	8,220
Southwest	4,304	5,167	6,019	7,212	5,676
Anchorage	23,394	19,771	30,156	29,480	25,700
Gulf Coast	4,956	5,578	9,667	10,586	7,697
Southeast	6,008	5,758	10,565	10,979	8,328
Offshore	161	981	551	825	630
Outside	347	358	390	520	404
Unknown	169	111	117	103	125
By Industry					
Ag/For/Fish	283	231	980	777	568
Mining	996	1,156	2,164	2,073	1,597
Construction	4,817	3,062	7,908	9,052	6,210
Manufacturing (incl. seafood)	2,713	6,902	7,736	11,172	7,131
Trans/Commun/Pub Util.	3,313	2,965	5,571	4,802	4,163
Wholesale Trade	1,361	1,523	1,939	2,434	1,814
Retail Trade	14,008	10,760	19,260	17,517	15,386
Finance-Ins. & R.E.	2,031	1,501	2,290	2,230	2,013
Services	12,719	12,300	18,912	17,949	15,470
Pub Admin 3/	5,707	4,620	6,430	6,516	5,818

Notes: Shading indicates peak quarter for new hires over the four-quarter period. New hires figures include turnover and should not be used to assess job growth trends.

1/ Fall 1994 totals are revised.

2/ Region is determined by the worker's place of employment.

3/ Includes all employees of publicly-owned institutions.

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.

Alaska New Hires by Occupation Group and Region 3rd Quarter 1995

Occupation Group 1/	Northern	Interior	Southwest	Anchorage	Gulf Coast	Southeast
Other Service	543	1,955	684	6,303	1,865	2,086
Handlers & Laborers	848	1,307	1,446	2,985	1,001	934
Fabricators, Assemblers, Hand Working	159	161	2,010	413	2,815	2,103
Admin. Support	430	987	520	3,546	705	1,018
Salespersons; Retail	178	860	264	3,232	526	1,060
Construction Trades	491	1,271	547	2,071	574	436
Transportation	113	325	309	677	447	435
Mechanics & Repairers	187	307	152	688	201	154
Material Moving	158	310	79	229	202	142
Helpers	152	139	54	363	183	157
Teachers, except Postsecondary	114	133	149	314	147	150
Protective Service	66	134	99	410	43	65
Officials & Administrators, Other	77	101	55	322	85	89
Forestry & Logging	0	8	2	1	98	553
Social, Recreation & Religious Wrkrs.	52	106	76	174	100	91
Management Related	65	62	41	311	51	64
Other Agricultural	2	104	26	263	98	95
Writers, Artists, Performers	9	55	1	259	21	25
Teachers: Postsecondary	3	69	7	135	51	65
Extractive	178	37	9	10	85	8
Engineers, Surveyors & Architects	44	46	13	164	13	29
Machine Operators & Tenders	4	97	8	136	25	34
Health Technologists & Technicians	13	36	3	200	22	29
Registered Nurses	16	26	22	129	28	47
Fishers, Hunters & Trappers	2	0	80	0	159	24
Precision Production	5	51	12	111	32	37
Engineering Technologists & Technicians	35	30	5	113	27	14
Technicians, NEC	1	33	9	133	13	27
Pharmacists, Therapists, Physician Asst.	1	13	8	83	32	27
Miscellaneous	7	50	10	47	25	21
Supervisors; Admin. Support	7	26	7	71	8	34
Salespersons; Non-Retail Commodities	3	5	3	116	5	12
Sales Related	9	23	0	92	6	9
Plant & System Operators	17	45	42	19	11	5
Insurance, Securities, Realty, Bus. Svcs. Sales	0	14	1	94	9	19
Supervisors; Marketing & Sales	2	26	10	57	14	16
Private Household	6	17	2	53	11	21
Editors, Reporters, Public Relations	6	3	5	50	17	20
Science Technologists & Technicians	20	23	4	21	19	3
Supervisors; Construction & Extractive	8	18	10	26	11	5
Natural Scientists	11	15	1	32	5	14
Physicians & Dentists	7	7	8	30	5	13
Librarians, Archivists, & Curators	4	18	8	20	9	8
Supervisors; Production	4	2	6	17	25	5
Lawyers & Judges	0	6	3	37	3	5
Athletes & Related	0	6	0	23	7	14
Computer, Math, and Opers. Research	4	8	0	24	4	4
Production Inspectors, Testers, etc.	0	0	6	7	21	8
Vocational & Educational Counselors	0	7	10	20	4	0
Farm Operators & Managers	2	22	1	11	1	1
Officials & Administrators, Public Admin.	2	2	10	8	6	9
Social Scientists & Urban Planners	0	4	2	14	6	11
Machine Setup Operators	0	1	0	19	8	7
Supervisors; Handlers, Helpers & Laborers	1	6	13	3	4	4
Other Health Diagnosing & Treating	1	0	1	21	0	1
Supervisors; Mechanics & Repairers	2	0	1	11	3	5
Veterinarians	0	5	0	6	2	0
Supervisors; Precision Production	0	0	10	0	0	1
Supervisors; Transportation & Material Moving	1	0	1	2	1	1
Invalid code or not reported	226	1,401	346	4,754	687	705

Notes: Shading indicates the top 20 occupations for new hires in each region; boldface type indicates top region for new hires for each occupation group. Region is determined by place of employment; if unreported, region is determined by the primary address of the employer. Occupation groups are based on two-digit Standard Occupational Codes, 1980 Standard Occupational Classification Manual.
1/ Sorted by statewide totals.

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

Alaska New Hires by Occupation Group 4th Quarter 1994 Through 3rd Quarter 1995

Occupation Group 1/	4Q94 Fall	1Q95 Winter	2Q95 Spring	3Q95 Summer	Four Qtr. Average
Other Service	9,534	8,230	15,167	13,448	11,595
Admin. Support	6,246	5,293	8,319	7,215	6,768
Handlers & Laborers	4,903	3,970	7,883	8,525	6,345
Salespersons; Retail	4,762	3,278	6,707	6,142	5,222
Fabricators, Assemblers, & Hand Working 2/	1,213	4,851	4,687	8,338	4,772
Construction Trades	3,099	1,588	4,189	5,397	3,568
Transportation	1,626	1,392	2,914	2,399	2,083
Mechanics & Repairers	1,183	1,144	2,139	1,696	1,541
Teachers, except Postsecondary	1,144	755	690	1,009	900
Material Moving	543	384	1,321	1,121	842
Helpers	543	472	976	1,048	760
Protective Service	702	591	832	818	736
Officials & Administrators, Other	544	677	836	733	698
Management Related	453	511	622	606	548
Social, Recreation & Religious Workers	431	450	551	599	508
Other Agricultural	169	166	1,055	590	495
Forestry & Logging	301	253	610	662	457
Health Technologists & Technicians	229	210	332	303	269
Writers, Artists, Performers	172	219	303	370	266
Engineers, Surveyors & Architects	212	212	306	313	261
Precision Production	221	141	359	251	243
Teachers: Postsecondary	184	325	112	330	238
Registered Nurses	224	170	281	268	236
Machine Operators & Tenders	144	183	282	307	229
Extractive	154	128	286	344	228
Technicians, NEC	206	166	205	216	198
Engineering Technologists & Technicians	131	118	276	224	187
Fishers, Hunters & Trappers	67	72	152	323	154
Sales Related	175	51	148	145	130
Miscellaneous	82	87	182	181	128
Pharmacists, Therapists, Physician Assistants	120	114	111	165	128
Salespersons; Non-Retail Commodities	114	91	157	148	127
Supervisors; Marketing & Sales	151	97	133	125	127
Supervisors; Admin. Support	83	83	170	153	122
Insurance, Securities, Realty, Business Svcs. Sales	106	104	139	138	122
Plant & System Operators	81	95	145	139	115
Editors, Reporters, Public Relations	104	84	88	101	94
Athletes & Related	111	71	145	50	94
Private Household	85	73	106	110	94
Officials & Administrators, Public Administration	189	38	105	38	93
Science Technologists & Technicians	70	93	102	90	89
Supervisors; Construction & Extractive	39	42	125	90	74
Natural Scientists	43	47	100	79	67
Physicians & Dentists	56	47	59	70	58
Lawyers & Judges	33	44	54	54	46
Computer, Math, and Operations Research	30	63	44	45	46
Librarians, Archivists, & Curators	37	24	44	67	43
Vocational & Educational Counselors	39	44	40	41	41
Supervisors; Production	26	25	33	60	36
Farm Operators & Managers	12	29	60	38	35
Supervisors; Mechanics & Repairers	32	23	42	22	30
Machine Setup Operators	11	23	43	35	28
Production Inspectors, Testers, etc.	8	20	36	47	28
Supervisors; Handlers, Helpers & Laborers	16	16	39	31	26
Social Scientists & Urban Planners	15	20	15	37	22
Other Health Diagnosing & Treating	10	14	7	24	14
Veterinarians	4	6	10	13	8
Supervisors; Transportation & Material Moving	7	6	14	6	8
Supervisors; Precision Production	3	0	5	11	5
Invalid Code or Not Reported	4,934	4,766	8,298	8,497	6,624

Notes: Shading indicates peak period for new hires, with the highest quarter in bold typeface.

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.