



Report #52-17-2007
September 13, 2007



Commercial Fishing Fatalities in Washington State, 1998-2006

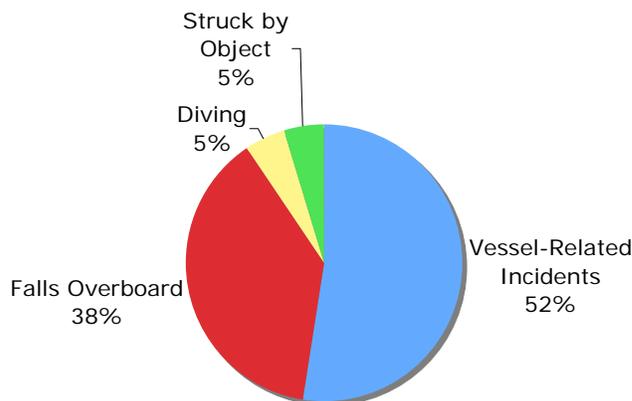
OVERVIEW

Commercial fishing is one of the highest-risk industries for work-related fatalities. The Washington State Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program documented and reviewed all reported incidents in the industry from 1998 through 2006. There were 21 reported fatalities, and out of these 19 were drownings. Two of the incidents were due to blunt trauma. None of the drowning victims were reported as wearing a personal flotation device (PFD) or survival suit.

Salmon fishing (7 incidents) and crabbing (6 incidents) were the two most frequent fisheries with reported fatalities. The location of the incidents was distributed between coastal waters, the Puget Sound, moorage/harbors, and the Columbia River. Half victims for whom the race was known were White/Caucasian, and half were Native American. The following report summarizes key elements of these incidents and provides brief descriptions of each fatality.

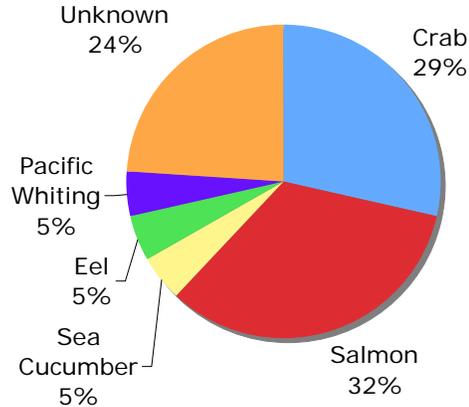
Types of Fatalities

The most frequent type of fatal incident was vessel-related events (11 incidents). These include sinkings, missing vessels, capsizes, and wrecks. Falls overboard was the second most common type of incident, with 8 fatalities. Diving-related and struck-by objects each had one incident.



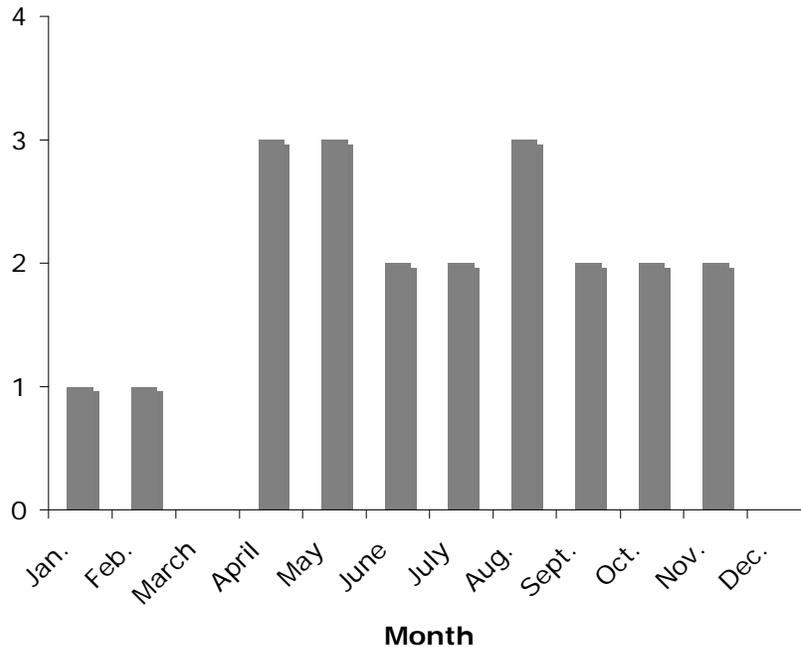
Fatalities by Fishery

Salmon fishing was the most common fishery involved in reported fatalities (7 incidents), followed by crabbing with 6 incidents. Sea cucumber, pacific whiting, and eel fisheries each had one fatality. There were 5 fatalities of unknown fishery.



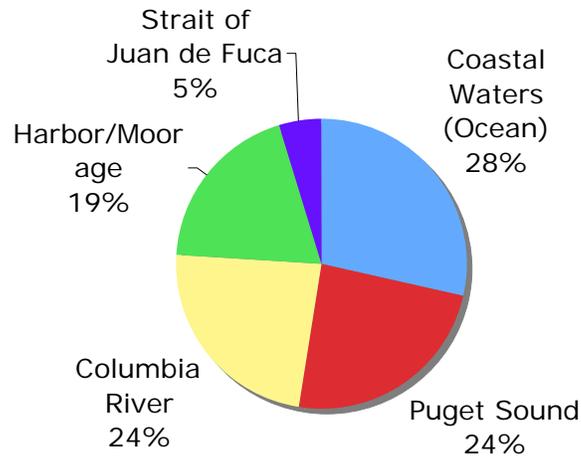
Fatalities by Month

Fatal incidents in commercial fishing were relatively evenly distributed, with 2 or 3 fatalities each month between April and November. There were no reported incidents in December or March, and one incident each during January and February.



Fatalities by Location

The location of fatal fishing incidents was distributed between bodies of water or location. There were 6 incidents in coastal waters, 5 in the Puget Sound, 5 in the Columbia River (including river mouth), 4 in harbors/moorage, and 1 in the Strait of Juan de Fuca.



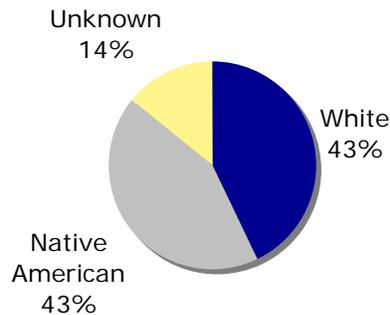
Number of Fatalities by Incident

There were a total of 16 incidents (with 21 total victims). Most of the incidents involved one victim (12), and there were 4 incidents with multiple victims.

- Incidents with 1 victim = 12
- Incidents with 2 victims = 3
- Incidents with 3 victims = 1

Race of Victims

There were 9 White/Caucasian and 9 Native American fatalities. Three of the victims were of unknown race.



Notes

This report summarizes data collected by the Washington State Fatality Assessment & Control Evaluation (FACE) Program. The FACE Program is operated by the Safety and Health Assessment and Research for Prevention (SHARP) Program in the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries. The FACE Program is funded in part by a grant from CDC/NIOSH. Fishing incidents are defined as acute trauma fatalities with the event occurring in Washington State or in state waters. The industry classification is based on the registered North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) Code for the company, or one assigned by primary business activity if one is not available.

Commercial Fishing Safety Resources

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) maintains an commercial fishing topic web page with information and resource links.

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/fishing/>

The US Coast Guard maintains an extensive commercial fishing safety web page with information and resources.

<http://www.fishsafe.info/>

The North Pacific Fishing Vessels Owners' Association maintains a vessel safety program.

<http://www.npfvoa.org/>

WA Fatality Assessment & Control Evaluation (FACE) Program

Safety and Health Assessment & Research for Prevention (SHARP) Program

WA State Department of Labor and Industries

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<http://www.Lni.wa.gov/Safety/Research>, skic235@Lni.wa.gov



Summaries of Commercial Fishing Fatalities, Washington State 1998-2006

Incident date	4/1/1998
Death date	4/1/1998
FACE case	98WA09001
NAICS	114112 (Shellfish fishing)
Type of fishery	Crab
Incident description	Deckhand fell from back deck of fishing boat while making crab pot ready to throw overboard.
Event circumstance	Fall from ship/boat
Occupation	Crew/deckhand
Cause of death (per d.c.)	Presumptive drowning
Incident location	Coastal waters
Type of vessel	Commercial fishing
Time	09:30
PFD	No
Age	43
Race	White

Incident date	4/8/1998
Death date	4/8/1998
FACE case	98WA07401
NAICS	114119 (Other marine fishing)
Type of fishery	Sea cucumber
Incident description	The victim was commercially diving for sea cucumbers. His face mask detached during dive.
Event circumstance	Dive related
Occupation	Commercial diver/fisherman
Cause of death (per d.c.)	Saltwater drowning
Incident location	Strait of Juan de Fuca
Type of vessel	Unknown
Time	14:36
PFD	n/a
Age	27
Race	Native American

Incident date	2/28/1999
Death date	2/28/1999
FACE case	99WA01401
NAICS	114112 (Shellfish fishing)
Type of fishery	Crab
Incident description	A crabber was working alone from a 23-foot boat with an

	outboard motor. A witness on shore saw the victim fall into the water. His boat was found running in circles.
Event circumstance	Fall from ship/boat
Occupation	Commercial crabber
Cause of death (per d.c.)	Saltwater drowning
Incident location	Puget Sound
Type of vessel	Commercial fishing (23-ft. boat with outboard motor)
Time	12:00
PFD	Unknown
Age	33
Race	White

Incident date	11/10/1999
Death date	11/10/1999
FACE case	99WA07701
NAICS	114111 (Finfish fishing)
Type of fishery	Salmon
Incident description	Two tribal commercial fishermen were using a net to fish for salmon from a 15-foot boat with and outboard motor. Their boat was swamped by heavy waves. The body of one victim was recovered, the other victim's body was not found.
Event circumstance	Boat swamped by wave
Occupation	Fisherman
Cause of death (per d.c.)	Saltwater drowning
Incident location	Puget Sound
Type of vessel	Small open boat (15-foot outboard)
Time	Sometime after 15:00
PFD	No
Age	38
Race	Native American

Incident date	11/10/1999
Death date	11/10/1999
FACE case	99WA07702
NAICS	114111 (Finfish fishing)
Type of fishery	Salmon
Incident description	Two tribal commercial fishermen were using a net to fish for salmon from a 15-foot boat with and outboard motor. Their boat was swamped by heavy waves. The

	body of one victim was recovered, the other victim's body was not found.
Event circumstance	Boat swamped by wave
Occupation	Fisherman
Cause of death (per d.c.)	Saltwater drowning
Incident location	Puget Sound
Type of vessel	Small open boat (15-foot outboard)
Time	Sometime after 15:00
PFD	Unknown
Age	25
Race	Native American

Incident date	6/7/2000
Death date	6/7/2000
FACE case	00WA02701
NAICS	114111 (Finfish fishing)
Type of fishery	Pacific whiting
Incident description	A catcher-processor vessel deckhand was supervising the loading of a surimi tank from a barge onto the vessel. The victim had just cleared the crane operator to lift the 350 lb. tank when the improperly rigged tank fell out of the rigging onto the victim.
Event circumstance	Struck by falling object
Occupation	Deckhand
Cause of death (per d.c.)	Crushing blunt impact to the head
Incident location	Harbor
Type of vessel	Commercial catcher-processor vessel
Time	01:26
PFD	n/a
Age	41
Race	White/Hispanic

Incident date	6/12/2000
Death date	6/12/2000
FACE case	07WA02801
NAICS	114111 (Finfish fishing)
Type of fishery	Dogfish (salmon)
Incident description	A commercial fisherman fell off his 27-foot boat while mooring at dock.
Event circumstance	Fall from ship/boat
Occupation	Fisherman
Cause of death (per d.c.)	Drowning
Incident location	Dock/harbor

Type of vessel	Commercial fishing boat
Time	p.m. (exact time unknown)
PFD	No
Age	57
Race	White

Incident date	8/7/2001
Death date	8/7/2001
FACE case	01WA05401
NAICS	114112 (Shellfish fishing)
Type of fishery	Crab
Incident description	A 45-foot fishing vessel capsized in choppy water at the mouth of the Columbia River. Two crew members were swept away and perished. The captain was found alive trapped in the vessel's hull.
Event circumstance	Vessel capsized
Occupation	Crew
Cause of death (per d.c.)	Presumed drowning
Incident location	Mouth of Columbia River
Type of vessel	Commercial fishing vessel
Time	07:30
PFD	No
Age	19
Race	White

Incident date	8/7/2001
Death date	8/7/2001
FACE case	01WA05402
NAICS	114112 (Shellfish fishing)
Type of fishery	Crab
Incident description	A 45-foot fishing vessel capsized in choppy water at the mouth of the Columbia River. Two crew members were swept away and perished. The captain was found alive trapped in the vessel's hull.
Event circumstance	Vessel capsized
Occupation	Crew
Cause of death (per d.c.)	Presumed drowning
Incident location	Mouth of Columbia River
Type of vessel	Commercial fishing vessel
Time	07:30
PFD	No
Age	32
Race	White

Incident date	8/22/2001
Death date	8/22/2001
FACE case	01WA05501
NAICS	114111
Type of fishery	Unknown
Incident description	The skipper of 28-foot commercial fishing vessel was killed when his vessel broke loose from its anchor and lost power and was swept by 15-foot waves, causing it to crash on rocks at the mouth of a river flowing into the Pacific Ocean.
Event circumstance	Vessel wrecked on rocks
Occupation	Fisherman
Cause of death (per d.c.)	Blunt trauma to head
Incident location	Coastal waters/mouth of river
Type of vessel	Commercial fishing
Time	21:00
PFD	Yes (immersion suit)
Age	74
Race	White

Incident date	1/29/2002
Death date	1/29/2002
FACE case	02WA00601
NAICS	114111 (Finfish fishing)
Type of fishery	Unknown
Incident description	A fisherman went to start the engine on his commercial fishing boat which was at its moorage on a river. He was alone and apparently fell from the boat and drowned.
Event circumstance	Fall from ship/boat
Occupation	Fisherman
Cause of death (per d.c.)	Drowning
Incident location	Moorage on river
Type of vessel	Commercial fishing
Time	Unknown
PFD	No
Age	36
Race	White

Incident date	5/3/2002
Death date	5/3/2002
FACE case	02WA02801

NAICS	114111 (Finfish fishing)
Type of fishery	Salmon
Incident description	Three Native American commercial fisherman launched a 16-foot fiberglass boat into the Columbia River shortly after midnight to check their gill net. The weather was windy and the waves were high. The bodies of two of the fisherman were recovered the next day. The body of the third fisherman was not recovered, nor was their boat.
Event circumstance	Vessel swamped/capsized
Occupation	Fisherman
Cause of death (per d.c.)	Drowning
Incident location	Columbia River
Type of vessel	16-foot fiberglass boat
Time	02:00
PFD	No
Age	40
Race	Native American

Incident date	5/3/2002
Death date	5/3/2002
FACE case	02WA02802
NAICS	114111 (Finfish fishing)
Type of fishery	Salmon
Incident description	Three Native American commercial fisherman launched a 16-foot fiberglass boat into the Columbia River shortly after midnight to check their gill net. The weather was windy and the waves were high. The bodies of two of the fisherman were recovered the next day. The body of the third fisherman was not recovered, nor was their boat.
Event circumstance	Vessel swamped/capsized
Occupation	Fisherman
Cause of death (per d.c.)	Drowning
Incident location	Columbia River
Type of vessel	16-foot fiberglass boat
Time	02:00
PFD	No
Age	29
Race	Native American

Incident date	5/3/2002
Death date	5/3/2002

FACE case	02WA02803
NAICS	114111 (Finfish fishing)
Type of fishery	Salmon
Incident description	Three Native American commercial fisherman launched a 16-foot fiberglass boat into the Columbia River shortly after midnight to check their gill net. The weather was windy and the waves were high. The bodies of two of the fisherman were recovered the next day. The body of the third fisherman was not recovered, nor was their boat.
Event circumstance	Vessel swamped/capsized
Occupation	Fisherman
Cause of death (per d.c.)	Drowning
Incident location	Columbia River
Type of vessel	16-foot fiberglass boat
Time	02:00
PFD	No
Age	29
Race	Native American

Incident date	9/19/2002
Death date	9/19/2002
FACE case	07WA01601
NAICS	114112 (Shellfish fishing)
Type of fishery	Crab
Incident description	A fisherman lost his footing on the wet deck of a 27-foot commercial fishing vessel and attempted to steady himself by grabbing a stack of crab pots which were not secured. He fell into the water followed by the crab pots.
Event circumstance	Fall from ship/boat
Occupation	Fisherman/crew
Cause of death (per d.c.)	Drowning
Incident location	Puget Sound
Type of vessel	Commercial fishing
Time	13:00
PFD	No
Age	43
Race	Native American

Incident date	9/25/2003
Death date	9/25/2003
FACE case	04WA01601
NAICS	114111 (Finfish fishing)

Type of fishery	Eel
Incident description	A commercial fishing vessel crew member was pulled overboard after becoming entangled in outgoing fishing lines and net.
Event circumstance	Fall from ship/boat; entangled in net
Occupation	Fisherman/crew
Cause of death (per d.c.)	Drowning
Incident location	Coastal waters
Type of vessel	Commercial fishing vessel
Time	07:00
PFD	No
Age	20
Race	Unknown

Incident date	10/15/2004
Death date	10/15/2004
FACE case	04WA08601
NAICS	114111 (Finfish fishing)
Type of fishery	Unknown
Incident description	A commercial fisherman was working on a moored fishing boat when he fell, hit his head on the dock and fell into a space between the vessel and the dock. His body was recovered from the water by police divers.
Event circumstance	Fall from moored ship/boat
Occupation	Fisherman
Cause of death (per d.c.)	Drowning
Incident location	Dock moorage/harbor
Type of vessel	Commercial fishing
Time	15:50
PFD	No
Age	28
Race	White

Incident date	4/14/2005
Death date	4/14/2005
FACE case	O5WA02101
NAICS	114112 (Shellfish fishing)
Type of fishery	Crab
Incident description	A commercial crab fisherman fishing alone from a 45-foot boat off the coast apparently fell from his boat and drowned. His boat was found the following day drifting on autopilot. His body was recovered a month later.
Event circumstance	Fall from ship/boat

Occupation	Fisherman
Cause of death (per d.c.)	Drowning
Incident location	Coastal waters
Type of vessel	Commercial fishing (45-foot)
Time	Unknown
PFD	No
Age	45
Race	Native American

Incident date	7/26/2005
Death date	7/26/2005
FACE case	05WA04301
NAICS	114111 (Finfish fishing)
Type of fishery	Unknown
Incident description	Two crew members of a 76-foot commercial fishing vessel went missing when their vessel took waves over the stern and water poured into an open fish port and into the hold, causing the boat to capsize. Two other crew members were rescued, one clinging to the boat's hull and another from the water. The crew member rescued from the water was the only member of the crew wearing a survival suit.
Event circumstance	Vessel swamped/capsized
Occupation	Fisherman/crew
Cause of death (per d.c.)	Presumed drowning
Incident location	Coastal waters/Strait of Juan de Fuca
Type of vessel	Commercial fishing
Time	19:00
PFD	No
Age	49
Race	Unknown

Incident date	7/26/2005
Death date	7/26/2005
FACE case	05WA04302
NAICS	114111 (Finfish fishing)
Type of fishery	Unknown
Incident description	Two crew members of a 76-foot commercial fishing vessel went missing when their vessel took waves over the stern and water poured into an open fish port and into the hold, causing the boat to capsize. Two other crew members were rescued, one clinging to the boat's hull and another from the water. The crew member

	rescued from the water was the only member of the crew wearing a survival suit.
Event circumstance	Vessel swamped/capsized
Occupation	Fisherman/crew
Cause of death (per d.c.)	Presumed drowning
Incident location	Coastal waters/Strait of Juan de Fuca
Type of vessel	Commercial fishing
Time	19:00
PFD	No
Age	42
Race	Unknown

Incident date	10/2/2005
Death date	10/2/2005
FACE case	05WA05801
NAICS	114111 (Finfish fishing)
Type of fishery	Salmon
Incident description	Two tribal commercial fishermen were laying a fishing net (gillnet) from a small boat when the net became entangled in the boat's propeller, causing the boat to be pulled down and capsized. One of the fishermen was picked up alive by another boat, the other's body was recovered two days later.
Event circumstance	Boat capsized
Occupation	Fisherman
Cause of death (per d.c.)	Drowning
Incident location	Puget Sound
Type of vessel	Small fishing boat
Time	03:45
PFD	No
Age	19
Race	Native American