



Assessing Worker Satisfaction with PFDs in the Bristol Bay Salmon Gillnet Fishery

Professional Training Opportunities Program (PTOP) study

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October 22, 2020



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<https://www.amsea.org/>

- Problem = Commercial fishing is widely regarded as one of the most hazardous occupations.
 - With a fatality rate of 74.2 per 100,000 workers, commercial fishing in the U.S. is second only to logging when it comes to work-related death.
- Mission = reduce injury and death in the marine environment through education and training provided by qualified marine safety instructors.
- Education Pathway = Drill Conductor courses are USCG accepted and meet requirements for fishermen onboard commercial fishing vessels.

70 class participants received novel flotation devices (PFDs).



vest



Bibs with flotation

Personal Flotation Device = PFD

Why do this study?

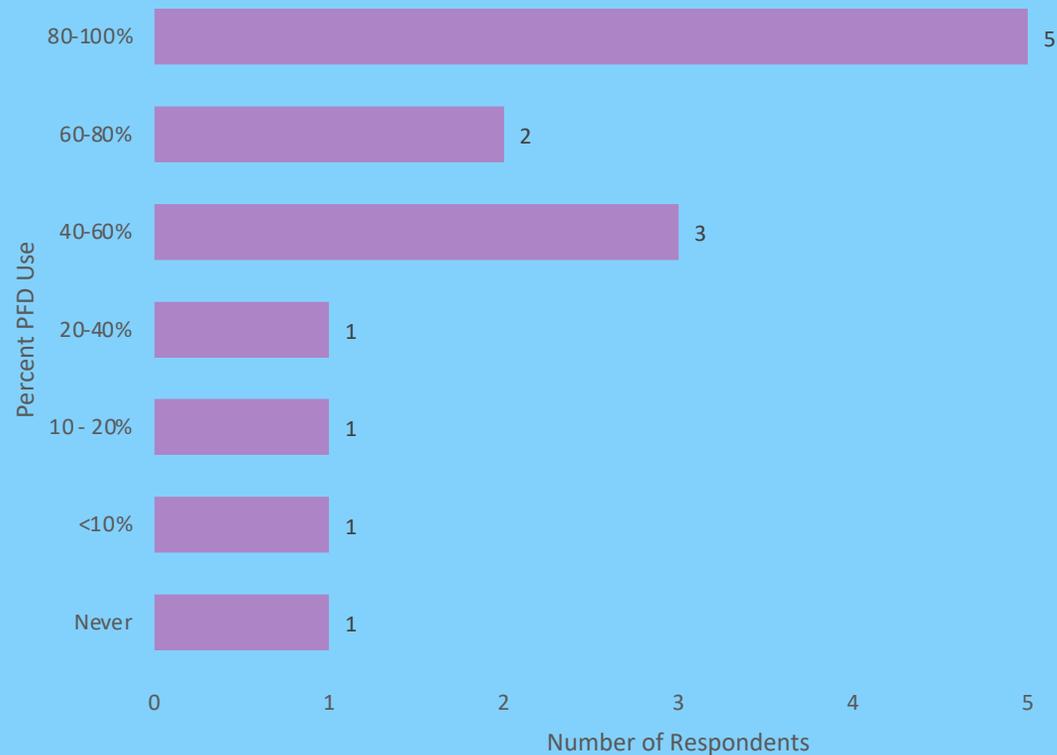
- On drift gillnet (small, 30 foot) boats, crew are not required to wear PFDs.
- Overboard deaths in the Bristol Bay salmon fisheries occur almost every season.
- Overboard deaths are preventable.
- Will fishermen wear these novel PFDs?



Photo: AMSEA

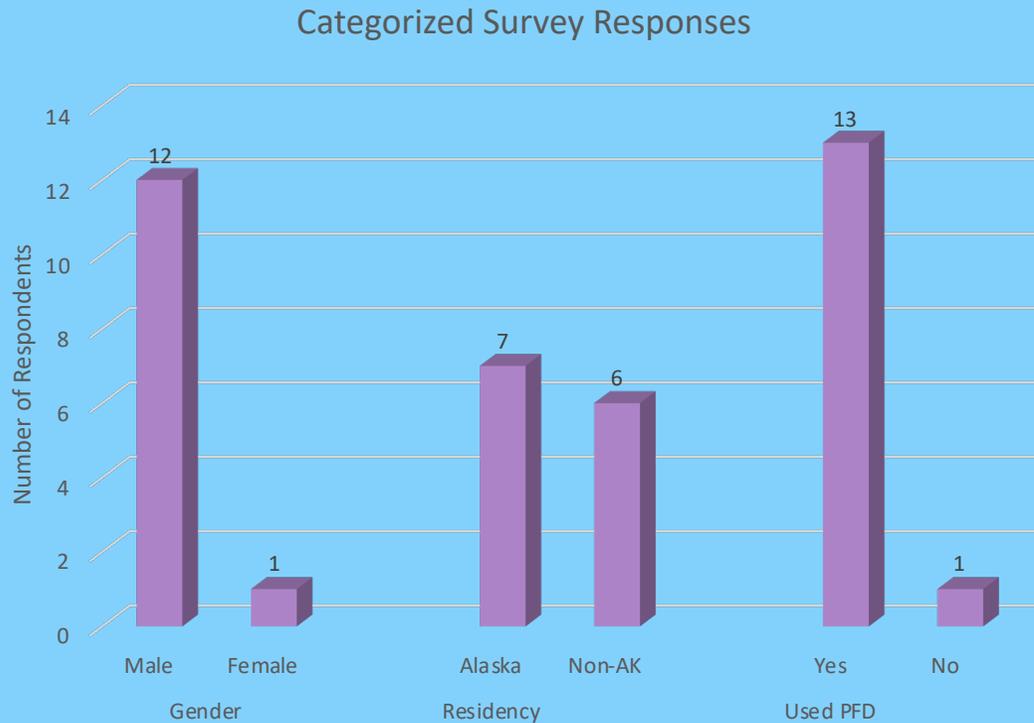
Most Respondents Wore the PFD

PFD Usage by Survey Respondents



- 14 out of 55 people responded to the survey (25.4% response rate)
- 93% indicated some level of use

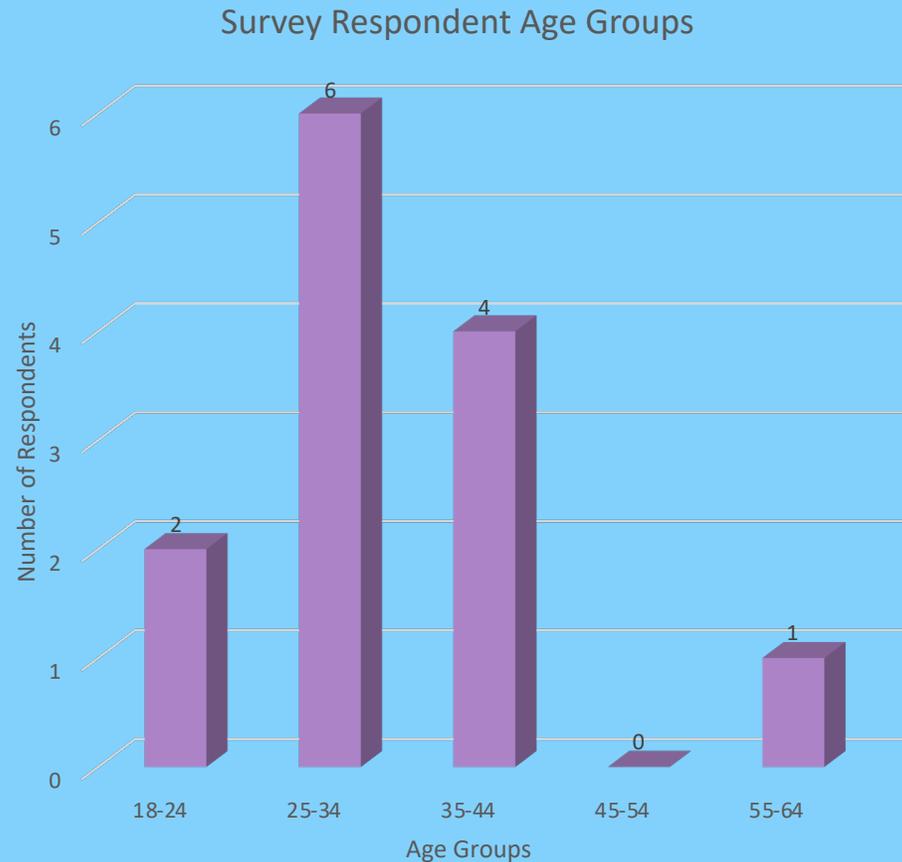
Demographics of Respondents



- Only 1 female respondent*
- Alaska residents vs. non-residents were evenly split
- 4 out of 5 respondents who wore the PFD 80-100% of the time were Alaska residents

*Women typically make up 14% of commercial fishing crew in Alaska

Demographics continued...



- Commercial fishermen tend to be male and young
- Respondents were 93% male and 77% between the ages of 25 – 44.



Respondent Comments



Photo: P. Cullenberg

Likes

- PFDs generally compatible with gillnet gear
- Durable
- Padded in key areas
- Flotation + rain/slim protection
- Warm

Dislikes

- Lack of USCG approval
- Bulkiness
- Difficulty donning and doffing
- Hindered movement
- Too hot

75% of respondents recommended the PFDs to a friend

Recommendations



Improve study method

- Consent
- Timing
- Contact information

Expand study numbers

- Increase response rate
- Replicate usage rate
- Understand cross-sector usage

Expand study to other fisheries

- Commercial
- Recreational
- Other gear types

Thank You!

University of Washington's Northwest Center for Occupational Health and Safety (NWCOHS)



Photo: AMSEA

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