From Pago Pago to Maui to Dutch Harbor to Barrow to Bristol Bay to Homer to Ketchikan to Neah Bay to Newport to Crescent City to Ventura to Brownsville to Galveston to Panama City to Key West to Fajardo to Brunswick to New Bedford to Newcastle to Toledo to Traverse City to Sault Ste. Marie, and AMSEA is everywhere in between.

Although AMSEA’s roots are in Alaska (the state with a drowning rate that used to be 10 times the national average) our reach now extends far beyond the 49th state. AMSEA instructors train boaters how to survive emergencies from the numbing northern saltwater to the frigid waves of the Great Lakes to the deceptively perilous southern seas. AMSEA’s ever-expanding instructor network actively serves every Coast Guard District in the nation across 6 time zones.

We all know that tragedy strikes in warm waters as well as cold waters. In recent years it has been fishermen from the Gulf of Mexico with the highest fatality rates. That’s why AMSEA trainers are working hard to help people practice survival skills, no matter where they live. In fact, about 70% of our students are trained outside of Alaska.

Our hot-climate team has recently grown. We warmly welcome Roberto Silva, our very first resident-instructor from Puerto Rico; Anthony DelleFave from Hawaii; and both Phillip Trutanich and V. Frank Thomsen from American Samoa. These new trainers graduated from our September Marine Safety Instructor Training among a group of 17 instructor-candidates. We are happy to add these new trainers to our hot-climate teams who already teach in Georgia, Florida, the Gulf of Mexico, and southern California.

New AMSEA Trainers. September MSIT graduates also include new instructors Amanda Johnson, Andrew Schaeffer, Angela Bowers, Brandon Viator, Iain McElrath, Jack LeBlanc, Jen Smola, Julia Tawney, Lily Herwald, Mariah Warren, Michael Jackson, Shellie Dunn, and Thomas Morrell. We look forward to working closely with each of these folks in the upcoming years.
2016 Sitka MSIT (continued from page 1)
During the MSIT we were also fortunate to have Ed Dennehy, the very prolific trainer and Director of Safety Training for Fishing Partnership Support Services in New Bedford, MA, in attendance as a refresher.

We need you, because our work never ends. There will always be a risk of dying at-sea. There will always be a need for good people to share their experience and wisdom - to help others learn how to stay alive through a really bad day. We encourage you to save lives with us and join the AMSEA family. Become a trainer. Our next scheduled Marine Safety Instructor class is from April 25-30 in Seward, Alaska. Check our website, www.amsea.org, for new listings for additional opportunities and for more information.

U.S. Coast Guard Regulation Update
Q: Why isn’t the Coast Guard enforcing some of the new safety laws from 2010 and 2012?

A: A law needs to become a regulation before it may be enforced. The rule-making process has been slow, and parts of the 2010 and 2012 Acts are not yet written as regulation. We expect that someday the regulations will be on the books, and most of the safety rules in the Acts will be enforced. Until then, we have transition guidelines intended to help keep the fleet safe.

It’s been years since the passage of “The Acts” (Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2010 and the Coast Guard Marine Transportation Act of 2012.) These two Acts applied classification-society rules to a wider range of commercial fishing vessels. The Coast Guard recognizes that most fishing vessels were not built to classification requirements. Older vessels would not be accepted for classification due to their age and original non-class construction. Therefore, the Acts provided for an Alternative Safety Compliance Program (ASCP) for such vessels.
U.S. Coast Guard Regulation Update (continued from page 2)

Now, the Coast Guard is suspending the development of the ASCP. Why? The Acts require that older vessels meet additional safety measures, but these requirements are not yet written as regulations, and therefore, are unenforceable. Without existing regulations for these older vessels, an alternative to the standard cannot be developed.

While we wait for new regulations and an ASCP, we will have new guidelines as of January 1, 2017, in the form of “Voluntary Safety Initiatives and Good Marine Practices for Commercial Fishing Vessels”. You will want learn about these are new voluntary guidelines. They have been compiled after identifying common hazards that all fishing vessels could face. These cover a dozen safety categories, including:

- Certificates, Documents, and Records
- Lifesaving Equipment
- Communications Equipment
- Deck Safety Equipment
- Fire Safety Equipment and Practices
- Machinery and Electrical Safety
- Material Condition
- Flooding Prevention
- Periodic Testing of Equipment and Systems
- Refrigerant Safety
- Stability Standards
- Combating Fatigue

The Coast Guard recognizes that individual fleets may wish to modify these measures because some of the practices may not apply in all fisheries or operating situations. Fishing organizations representing specific fleets are encouraged to work with Coast Guard District CFVS Coordinators to determine the measures that may or may not apply to their fleet.

Beginning January 1, Coast Guard commercial fishing vessel examiners and boarding officers will be asking fishermen about their progress in implementing these safety protocols. You may read and download the specific initiatives and practices in the working draft at this link. https://www.uscg.mil/hq/cgcvc/cvc3/news_and_activities/VoluntarySafetyInitiativesGoodMarinePracticesForCFVs_10-25-16.pdf

AMSEA Membership

Your membership to AMSEA helps save lives! A large majority of fishermen who have completed AMSEA training plan to focus on risk prevention and intend to practice on-going safety drills. Now, that intent has turned into good news...remarkably for the first time in Alaska, no one in died commercial fishing in a vessel-related incident in federal FY15. This is a contrast from the period of 1980-1988, where an average of 31 fishermen died in Alaska annually. AMSEA is a major reason for these improving trends.

We hope you will renew your membership today. With your support we can continue to make a positive impact in marine safety through national training. AMSEA is a respected and recommended training organization and we are proud to have our headquarters in Sitka. Thanks for your support keeps Alaskans and mariners safe.
Heading in the Right Direction: Safety in the Alaskan Halibut/Sablefish Fleet

By KC Elliott, Samantha Case, and Laura Syron of NIOSH, Western States Division, Anchorage Office

For the twenty-year review of the Pacific Halibut and Sablefish Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Management Program, NIOSH was asked to provide a current assessment of work-related deaths and vessel disasters within the halibut/sablefish fleet to determine if the IFQ program accomplished its goal of improving safety. The IFQ Program was expected to improve safety by lengthening fishing seasons, eliminating congestion on fishing grounds, and reducing the tendency to overload vessels, thereby allowing vessel operators to make determinations on whether to fish based on weather, sea, and crew conditions instead of competing in a short derby opening.

Figure 1 – Fatality rates and trend in the Alaskan halibut/sablefish fleet, 1991*–2015

During 1991–2015, 32 fatalities occurred in the halibut/sablefish fleet, with an average of four deaths per year during 1991–1994 (pre-IFQs) and one death per year during 1995–2015 (post-IFQs). While the annual average number of fatalities decreased over time, that comparison does not take into account the consolidation of the fleet. Instead, fatality rates like those in Figure 1 are estimates of risk (expressed as the number of fatalities per 100,000 full-time equivalent workers [FTEs]) that adjust for the number of vessels, workers, and days at sea each year. By using an estimate of risk instead of the number of fatalities per year, the risk each year can be compared even though the size of the fleet changed considerably during this time period.

In previous evaluations of safety trends during several years immediately following IFQ implementation (1995–2000), significant declines in rates of fatalities and search and rescue missions were found. However, now looking at a longer time period post IFQ implementation, the fatality rates in some years were the same or even higher than the pre-IFQ years. Because of these fluctuations, there was no statistically significant decline in the fatality rate in the halibut/sablefish fleet for the entire time period 1991–2015. Unfortunately, fatality data for the halibut/sablefish fleet from the 1980s do not exist. If rates of fatalities

Continued on Page 5
Heading in the Right Direction (Continued from page 4)

were known for the 1980s and were high, then the trend might be stronger. With only four years of pre-IFQ observations and 21 years of post-IFQ observations, the timeline is imbalanced.

Nevertheless, IFQs allow fishermen the time and ability to make safer choices, and there has likely been some decrease in hazards as a result of IFQs. Any time a vessel waited for severe weather to pass or crews got some extra rest instead of heading out to sea, the IFQ program could have contributed to preventing a vessel disaster or other incident. However, the continued incidence of fatalities and vessel disasters during the 2000s indicate that while the IFQ program influenced safety in some ways, other factors may be responsible for the persistent hazards observed in the fleet.

Attention should be given to such hazards, particularly vessel disasters and falls overboard, to prevent further deaths among halibut and sablefish fishermen. In 2001–2015, 46% of all deaths were from vessel disasters, and severe weather contributed to all incidents. Vessels should be well-maintained and kept watertight. Fishing or transiting in severe weather should be avoided. Crewmembers should take a marine safety class and participate in monthly emergency drills. To prevent deaths from falls overboard, (27% of deaths during 2001-2015), crewmembers should wear a personal flotation device (PFD) any time while on deck, regardless of work task or weather conditions. If someone fishes alone, a plan should be in place to re-board their vessel unassisted after a fall.

Ultimately, the safety of the fleet is headed in the right direction, and IFQs have helped, but hazards still exist. We encourage fishermen to consider the recommendations in this report and make adjustments where needed to reduce hazards and prevent injuries.

For full NIOSH report, see:

For more information about the assessment and commercial fishing safety, contact the NIOSH Commercial Fishing Safety Research Program, dluca@cdc.gov or visit our website: http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/fishing.
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Support training. Save lives.

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☐ AMSEA's 30 Year Anniversary Mug.
Hand thrown mug by Deneen Pottery. Navy w/ white glaze.

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Insulated, stainless steel, 12 oz.
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Beating the Odds (DVD) covers fire safety including man overboard, onboard fires, survival equipment and more!

☐ Thanks, but no thanks. I want
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*Memberships at $100 or more are eligible for a premium

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With your membership, you get:

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• Non-profit and corporate members are eligible for discounted AMSEA training rates

AMSEA is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and your contributions, less the value of any premium, may be tax deductible. Please consult your tax advisor.
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Seattle Marine & Fishing Supply Company - Seattle, WA
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Mental and physical fatigues are among the greatest dangers during rough weather operations. The hazard of fatigue dramatically reduces the powers of observation, concentration, and judgment. This reduces the ability to exert the effort necessary, and increases the probability that unnecessary risks will be taken and routine safety measures may be ignored. The following are examples of situations that may cause fatigue:

- Operating in extreme hot or cold weather conditions
- Eye strain from hours of looking through sea-spray blurred windshields
- Exposure to the sun
- Exposure to noise
- Poor physical conditioning
- Lack of sleep

The primary symptoms of fatigue are:

- Inability to focus or concentrate/narrowed attention span
- Mental confusion or judgment error
- Decreased coordination of motor skills and sensory ability (hearing, seeing)
- Increased irritability
- Decreased performance
- Decreased concern for safety

The safety of the crew and other passengers should always be the foremost concern of all boat operators. Any one of these symptoms can cause mistakes that may ultimately affect the safety of the crew. It is important to ward off the effects of fatigue before they become too great. Fatigue can lead to faulty decisions and a “don’t care” type of attitude.

Some tips for improving sleep:

- Set a bedtime: Setting a routine bedtime can improve overall health
- Have light snack 30 minutes prior to sleep: Carbs promote sleep, proteins encourage alertness
- Create a winding down routine: Read non-stimulating material, write, wash-up, write a to-do list
- Avoid electronics: As a rule, 30 minutes before bedtime avoid backlit devices.
- Set a wake time: This and setting a bedtime help sync your natural circadian rhythm
- Eat healthily, live actively
- Drink water: Dehydration depletes energy and impairs physical performance

Alcohol and drug use causes slower reaction time, lack of coordination, slurred speech, drowsiness, or an overconfident attitude. Hangovers also cause irritability, drowsiness, seasickness, and a lack of concentration. Alcohol is a well-recognized central nervous system depressant. It is one of the most frequently used and abused drugs in our society. Even small amounts of alcohol in the blood can seriously impair judgment, reflexes, and muscular control and may reduce the restorative effects of sleep. The level of alcohol in the body varies with the frequency and amount of alcohol intake, the length of time following your last drink and an individual’s body weight.

Prescription drugs have the ability to adversely affect or incapacitate crewmembers. Certain medications can be as debilitating as alcohol or worse. In addition, many medications, if taken with alcohol, intensify the effects of both.

The drug caffeine, contained in coffee, tea and many soft drinks, can produce an adverse effect on the body. The amount of caffeine contained in just two cups of coffee appreciably affects the rates of blood-flow and respiration. In small amounts, coffee can be considered a nervous system stimulant. Excessive amounts may produce nervousness, inability to concentrate, headaches, and dizziness.

Source: Mariners Learning System, By Captain Bob Figular
WANTED: Freezing Spray and Icing Observations

Ever experience freezing spray conditions on your vessel? Report it!

Freezing spray is an important safety issue in coastal Canadian and United States waters. In an effort to improve freezing spray forecasts, NOAA and Environment Canada are teaming up to evaluate each country’s freezing spray forecast models and tools. Analysis of freezing spray cases, forecaster feedback, and ship observations will allow Environment Canada and NOAA scientists and forecasters to better predict dangerous freezing spray conditions to protect life and property at sea.

The success of this study depends on you: whenever possible, please report icing conditions to NOAA and Environment Canada

Send reports online:
http://go.usa.gov/WYbm

Online reporting form:
http://go.usa.gov/WYbm
How often have you heard or said the following regarding personal flotation devices (PFDs):

“They’re too bulky, I can’t work with the darn thing on.”
“I’m not wearing something that’s gonna hang up in the gear.”
“I’ve been doing just fine without one for X years.”

Man overboard events are still common and are the leading cause of avoidable fatalities in commercial fisheries. Statistics prove that fisherman wearing some type of PFD have an increased chance of survival and the efforts to rescue them are often easier. If you simply can’t stand the idea of wearing a PFD while on deck, perhaps you just haven’t found the right PFD.

In 2012, NIOSH asked 200 fishermen to evaluate a PFD for one month while working on deck so that wearable PFDs could be identified. Find the preferred personal flotation device for your gear group online at http://www.livetobesalty.org/.