

RESOLUTION

ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE SAFETY TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR FISHERIES PERSONNEL

WHEREAS, fisheries workers often perform field sampling subject to extreme weather conditions;

WHEREAS, fisheries workers may use hazardous chemicals, entanglement gear, electricity, mechanical equipment, and power tools in the course of their job duties;

WHEREAS, fisheries workers frequently trailer and work with boats, or serve on fishing or research vessels on coastal or other large bodies of water which are restricted work environments often crowded with sampling gear;

WHEREAS, fisheries workers may be required to dive underwater to collect biological information, or to fly in small aircraft to conduct surveys;

WHEREAS, formal comprehensive safety training programs are standard in the private sector, where companies have recognized the importance of these programs and provide adequate staff and funding to ensure proper safety training of their employees;

WHEREAS, state and federal laws require employers to provide a safe work environment to minimize situations and employee actions that could result in bodily harm, disability and death, and employers have stated their intention to provide such in their safety policies;

WHEREAS, employees are the most important resource of any company/agency/institution, and the mental and physical health of each employee affects his or her ability to contribute to the mission of the employer;

WHEREAS, we live in a litigious society, and state agencies may not be sufficiently protected from wrongful death and other lawsuits due to limitations on sovereign immunity;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the American Fisheries Society, assembled at its annual meeting on this 13th day of September, 2005 in Anchorage, Alaska, strongly recommends that all employers of fisheries professionals and students commit the necessary staff and financial resources to the establishment and development of comprehensive, on-going safety training programs that address all potentially hazardous aspects of assigned job duties.