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## **Trident Seafoods taking maximum precautions after four workers test positive for COVID-19 in Akutan, Alaska**

Jan. 18, 2021 (Seattle, WA)—Trident Seafoods is taking the possibility of exposure “very seriously” after three seafood-processing workers and a galley employee tested positive for COVID-19 yesterday at their facility in Akutan, Alaska, despite rigorous preventative measures that include 14-day quarantines, diligent sanitation protocols, personal protective equipment, testing, safe transit and temperature checks.

“Health and safety are our absolute priority,” said Trident CEO Joe Bundrant. “We have said from the beginning of this pandemic that if we have an issue, we’re going to shed a light on it. We want to be sure people are aware and know that we are taking this very seriously.”

The company is also assessing any potential operational impacts and will communicate directly with affected stakeholders as more is known.

Trident has continuously maintained strong COVID-19 community and workforce protections since last March. To date, the company’s approach has been successful. Trident has been applauded by the industry for its diligence and structured approach.

“Whenever we’ve had a concern, we’ve erred on the side of caution,” Bundrant said. “We have consistently put the safety of our employees first.”

In spite of all its efforts, the company learned over the weekend that one of its Akutan facility employees was having difficulty breathing. In the course of working to get him medical care, he was tested for COVID-19. That positive result spurred testing of his three roommates, all of whom also had positive tests. All four had received a negative test just two weeks ago, after a 14-day quarantine in Anchorage. Three employees are in isolation in company housing, and the situation is currently limited to company facilities. Trident arranged for an air evacuation of the ill employee to a hospital in Anchorage.

Normal transportation measures weren’t possible, due to extreme weather conditions.

“The brave men and women of the Coast Guard stepped in to fly in poor weather conditions to transport our employee and get him on his way to Anchorage,” Bundrant said. “We can’t thank them enough for their courage and commitment.”

Trident management has been in communication with the company’s 700 employees in Akutan and is working to identify where the employees could have been exposed. Stefanie Moreland, Trident vice president of government relations and seafood sustainability, said the company expects to be working through the next several weeks to ensure no risks remain.

“We have notified the State of Alaska, the City of Akutan and our medical partners and are coordinating with all to conduct further tests, implement protocols and contain exposure,” Moreland said. “Next actions may include extensive testing and isolation for those who are at most risk. We are holding on sending 365 additional processing workers who are in quarantine at this time and destined for Akutan.”

Bundrant emphasized that Trident is taking every possible step to keep people safe.

“Our success so far has not come without cost and sacrifice,” he said. “Thousands of our employees have spent multiple days and weeks in quarantine, which is not easy. The expense of quarantine hotels, food, wages and transportation has been huge. But we have to do what’s right, and that’s what we will continue to do.”

## **ABOUT TRIDENT**

Trident Seafoods, 100-percent American owned and privately held, is the largest vertically integrated seafood harvesting and processing company in North America—employing more than 8,000 people and serving hundreds of independent harvesters throughout Alaska each year. In addition to its primary processing facilities in ten coastal communities in Alaska, Trident owns and operates three large whitefish catcher-processors and four mobile processing ships. Trident’s “From the Source to the Plate” motto exemplifies its continuing commitment to stay close to the resource, to know its fish and its fishermen, and to maintain the quality and integrity of its products throughout the value chain. Trident serves markets in over 50 countries with wild Alaska seafood products from its facilities in the U.S., Japan, Europe, China, and Latin America.

Trident’s Akutan shore plant is remote and entirely self-reliant, in proximity to Bering Sea fishing grounds on an island located 750 miles southwest of Anchorage in Alaska’s Aleutian Chain. With more than 1,400 company-housed employees during peak seasons, Akutan sustains a year-round, multi-species frozen seafood operation capable of processing as much as 3 million pounds of raw fish per day. Wild Alaska pollock—the Bering Sea’s most abundant whitefish—is the primary focus of the Akutan operation, and the plant also processes significant volumes of Pacific cod, Alaska king & snow crab, halibut and other important species.

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