

Hire Natives

Willie Ratcliff, chairman of Alaska State Commission for Human Rights announced that the commission has recently entered into a conciliation agreement with Vita Food Products, Inc., which operates major crab processing facilities in Dutch Harbor and elsewhere along the Aleutian chain.

Earlier this year, Neil Thomas, executive director of the State Commission for Human Rights, filed a complaint alleging that Vita Food discriminated against Alaskan Natives in its recruitment and hiring practices.

In the past, approximately 85 per cent of the employees working at the Aleutian operations were hired in Seattle and flown up to work in Alaska.

The conciliation agreement does not represent a determination of the charges, but is the result of voluntary efforts by both sides to resolve the matter short of public hearing.

Vita Food has agreed to first make attempts to hire Natives along the Aleutian Chain before looking elsewhere. If it cannot fill its workforce with people living along the Aleutians, then Vita Food agrees to hire people elsewhere in Alaska before hiring from Seattle.