

State of ALABAMA PY 2004 Workforce Information Grant Plan

A. Statewide Workforce Information System

The Alabama Department of Industrial Relations, Labor Market Information (LMI) Division is committed to providing consumers of labor market information the highest quality data available using established methodologies from The Bureau of Labor Statistics. Methodologies from ETA sponsored consortiums may be employed when there are no BLS directives. This commitment includes working with Workforce Investment Boards (WIB)'s to identify the needs of the workforce investment system in Alabama.

The Workforce Information System broadly accommodates the needs of data users as expressed in previous program year's customer satisfaction surveys, participation in meetings with workforce investment board members, and field interaction with employers and career center staff during training. All of these individuals have made data requests that reflect areas of current interest across the nation. These include an immediate need for skills-based information and analysis, continued training in LMI Internet access and continued pioneering of Internet products and training for the Alabama Career Center System and related counselors. To that end, this plan reflects Alabama's effort to provide excellent demand-driven services.

The Internet will be the primary vehicle for broadcasting information to users. Hard copy publications will also be available and sent via email, fax, or U.S. Postal Service. The Alabama Career Center System uses online LMI applications as well as bound publications in the resource rooms and requests training for staff throughout the program year. Customers in the Career Center are able to access online LMI in the resource room and also through printed publications and products maintained on location. Mailing lists are maintained in the LMI office for a variety of customer groups that have requested regular publications.

Customer satisfaction and consultation provides input for increasing the quality of LMI products. Satisfaction measures have been developed and are refined to ensure that meaningful data is captured regarding content, layout, usefulness and satisfaction of published materials. Similar measures are used for training events. A full discussion of customer satisfaction assessments is included at the end of this document. Satisfaction assessment is also one of the main customer inputs to insure that gaps in service are identified. Focus groups are also convened to discuss current data and research efforts.

Federal grant funds will be used for the delivery of products and services as part of the state's workforce information system. Enhancement of products and services above and beyond those discussed in this plan may incorporate other partner funds.

B. Products and Services

The State of Alabama plans to work on the following seven objectives during Program Year 2003-2004. Several tasks that are needed for an objective may be listed as ongoing. These will not have completion dates, but rather through continuous performance they feed into the completion of other tasks or data development projects.

State Workforce Agency (SWA) Deliverables

1. Continue to populate the ALMIS Database.

This deliverable supports the goals of Alabama's Five Year Strategic Plan by providing the backbone of the labor market infrastructure on the Internet. The ALMIS database integrates labor market information with workforce investment applications through the standardized coding architecture. It is easily accessible for all customers who have access to the Internet. Occupational licensing data and tables were updated in PY 2003-2004. Files were also submitted for inclusion in America's Career InfoNet (ACINet). We continue to use the InfoUSA, Inc. database to provide our customers with employer information via the Internet.

Anecdotal comments from individuals who have attended training with the online Alabama LMI system indicate that users are pleased with the content of the ALMIS database and frequently remark on the wide variety of data.

The tasks for this objective are:

	Task Description	System Impact	Milestones	Customers	Cost
A.	<i>Continue to use the most recent version of the ALMIS database, currently version 2.2</i>	Remain current with ALMIS Consortium	NA-continuation of service	All	
B.	<i>Populate core ALMIS tables according to Consortium guidelines</i>	Remain current with ALMIS Consortium	Continuous process, will resume when Consortium posts PY03-04 guidelines.	All	
C.	<i>Maintain and update database content to reflect most current AL publications and data releases</i>	Data update	Continuous update	All	
D.	<i>Populate and update crosswalks to associated databases</i>	Data update	Continuing process	All	
E.	<i>Participate in ALMIS training opportunities as they are made available</i>	Data update	Ongoing	All	\$53,000

2. Produce industry and occupational projections.

Projections data is necessary for the state workforce investment system to quantify the labor demand in both industry and occupations. These projections support the state's 5-year plan by identifying high-growth, high-demand occupations and subsequent skills necessary for WIA training objectives. This allows for targeted training in customer groups within the WIA system.

Alabama will use the methodology, software and guidance developed by the Projections Consortium to continue to develop statewide, short-term projections from 2004 to 2006. Long-term projections for the state and local areas were a PY 2003-2004 deliverable.

Customer support for these products is evident by the number of publications regularly mailed. In PY 2003-004, approximately 700 high schools, colleges, and local/state-level planners (economic developers, chambers of commerce, etc.) received these published materials in addition to other requests received at different times throughout the year. The tasks for this objective are:

	Task Description	System Impact	Milestones	Customers	Cost
A.	<i>Continue to refine and update historical NAICS series</i>	Data development	Ongoing	N/A	
B.	<i>Balance state and sub-state projected levels</i>	Data development	Completion by February 2005	N/A	

Produce industry and occupational projections (continued)

C. <i>Develop industry and occupational statewide projections for 2004-2006</i>	Data development	Completion by June 30, 2005	All	
D. <i>Publication of occupational statewide and area projections</i>	Information delivery	Completion by June 30, 2005	All	
E. <i>Submit projections data to DOL/ETA for ACINet</i>	DOL deliverable	Completion by June 30, 2005	All	
F. <i>Short-term projections data will be included in the ALMIS database and published to the Internet as well as hard-copy</i>	Information delivery	Completion by June 30, 2005	All	
G. <i>Participate in training opportunities as provided by the Projections Consortium and Managing Partnership</i>	Staff training	Continuous	N/A	\$148,700

State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB)/State Workforce Agency (SWA) Deliverables

3. Provide occupational and career information products for public use.

This deliverable directly supports the states vision to provide access to an array of services that support workforce development. It incorporates projections, supply and demand indicators, wages, skills, and education requirements. These products will utilize O*Net for typical skills and reflect the local WIA areas.

The tasks for this objective are:

	Task Description	Task Focus	Milestones	Customers	Cost
A.	<i>Maintain Internet link to ACINet homepage</i>	Information delivery	Continuing process	All	
B.	<i>Publish supplemental wage information (6 month OES report)</i>	Information delivery	Continuing process	All	
C.	<i>Publish labor supply information to the Internet</i>	Information delivery	Ongoing	2, 3, 5	
D.	<i>Develop and publish staffing patterns for employee benefits industries using Micromatrix software</i>	Information delivery	Carryover from PY 2003-2004 due to September 2004 completion date of Employee Benefits survey.	All	
E.	<i>Continue to make career videos available as requested</i>	Information delivery	Ongoing	1, 4, 6	
F.	<i>Develop hiring patterns for state and local WIA areas using state UI wage records</i>	Data development for analysis	Continuing process	All	
G.	<i>Develop and distribute informational posters and flyers</i>	Information delivery	Continuing process	1, 4, 6	\$44,000

4. Ensure that workforce information and support required by state and local workforce investment boards are provided.

The following tasks for this deliverable are the result of consultation with workforce investment partners as well as WIB's. A review of LMI products and services was made to heads of partnering agencies and interested business leaders. Leaders expressed an interest in developing skill sets by industry and occupation. These tasks/products support the five-year plan as the result from active consultation with workforce investment leaders in the state and local areas.

Task	Task Focus	Milestones	Customers	Cost
A. <i>Market LMI products to WIB's</i>	Information delivery/Consultation with users	Continuing process	2,3,5	
B. <i>Regionalize LMI products</i>	Information delivery/Data Development	Continuing process	All	
C. <i>Refine skills analysis products using ONet database</i>	Information delivery	Continuing process	All	
D. <i>Expanded analysis of current program data using GIS, administrative records, and outside research.</i>	Data Development/ Analysis	Continuing process	1, 2, 3, 4	
E. <i>Implement Census Bureau Local Employment Dynamics (LED) program</i>	Analysis/ Information Delivery	Effective date of MOU August 1, 2004 with program data revisions ongoing	All	
F. <i>Explore the availability and delivery of Older Worker, Veterans and Youth information</i>	Analysis/ Information Delivery	Continuing process	All	
G. <i>Update industry and occupational analysis of workforce investment advisory areas.</i>	Analysis/ Information delivery	Ongoing	All	
				\$212,300

5. Maintain and enhance electronic workforce information delivery systems.

The standardized coding systems employed in the ALMIS database allow for systematic analysis of comparable data and have been developed to provide a seamless interface with other partner agency information. Coding systems now include SOC/Onet and NAICS. We will seek to make more LMI products user-friendly and available on-line, including customer support.

Customer support for this activity is supported by over 115,000 website hits during the second half of PY 2003-2004. The Consumer Report System alone averaged over 32,000 hits per month from January 2004 through June 2004. The tasks for this objective are:

Task	Task Focus	Milestones	Customers	Cost
A. <i>Maintain Internet link to ACINet employer search page</i>	Information delivery	Ongoing	All	
B. <i>Maintain Spanish versions of Internet applications(ACLMIS, RAVOS)</i>	Information delivery	Ongoing	All	
C. <i>Provide maintenance for a Spanish version of ARVOS</i>	System maintenance	Online by June 2002; Maintenance ongoing	3, 4	
D. <i>Maintain Alabama's Comprehensive Labor Market Information System(ACLMIS) on the Internet</i>	Information delivery	Ongoing	All	
E. <i>Provide maintenance for a Spanish version of the Job Seeker module in ACLMIS</i>	System maintenance	Online by June 2002; Maintenance ongoing	3, 4	
F. <i>Provide application maintenance (database maintained by partner agency) for the Internet-based Consumer Information System</i>	System maintenance	Ongoing	All	
G. <i>Expand LMI products available on LMI home page</i>	Information delivery	Ongoing as products are developed/updated	All	
H. <i>Provide technical assistance as needed</i>	Training/Tech nical Support	Continuous	All	
				\$98,400

Principal Customers: 1-Counselors, 2- Economic Developers, 3-Employers, 4-Job Seekers, 5-Partner Agencies, 6-Students
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6. Support State workforce information training.

Training is essential for promoting WIA services to customers. The state five-year plan encourages raising awareness of various services to job seekers and other consumers of workforce information. LMI training does this through capacity building of the Career Center staff on Internet applications as well as providing training opportunities for guidance and rehabilitation counselors. Partnering staff not only learn what resources are available for recommendation to consumers, but also how to access those Internet sites and use the information to assist students, job seekers, local chambers of commerce, employers and training providers.

In PY 2003-2004, 168 individuals completed customer satisfaction surveys for training conducted by LMI staff. Of those, 151 rated the content of the material covered on a scale of 1(not useful) to 5 (very useful). According to those responses, 60.3% indicated the training content was *very useful* and another 36.4% indicated the training content was *useful*. Additionally, 93.3% of 149 participants were either satisfied (41.6%) or very satisfied (51.7%) with the training event. The tasks for this objective are:

Tasks	Task Focus	Milestones	Customers	Cost
A. <i>Attend 2005 LMI Forum</i>	Training	Complete by October 2005	N/A	
B. <i>Attend the LMI Institute training for various topics when offered</i>	Training	Continuing process as classes are offered	All	
C. <i>Conduct training sessions for users of LMI through seminars, workshops, and Internet</i>	Training	Continuing process as training is requested/offered	All	
D. <i>Sponsor LMI training</i>	Training	As needed	All	
E. <i>Provide technical assistance as needed</i>	Training	Continuous	All	
F. <i>Purchase software and related materials to develop and distribute tutorials, publications, and presentations on CD</i>	Training Development	Ongoing	All	
G. <i>Explore access to Wireless Internet for presentations and online applications training</i>	Training	Ongoing	All	
				\$47,100

C. Consultation and Customer Satisfaction Assessment

Customer consultation and satisfaction in Alabama will continue to be assessed using employer groups, workforce investment partner reviews, customer satisfaction surveys, the number of requests for publications training events, as well as anecdotal information received from customers. Focus group and workforce investment partner reviews are expected to occur as both planned events and as responses to feedback from presentations and training events. In PY 2003-2004, LMI trainers had access to employers for the purpose of introducing labor market information and soliciting products and feedback.

In PY 2004-2005 customer satisfaction assessments will be revised based on PY 2003-2004 experiences and sent out with publication mailings and after training events that ask the customer to address the following major areas:

1. **Evaluation of the product or event** (general layout, content, usefulness, and write-in comments)
2. **Evaluation of previous experiences** with general products, services, and publications as well as the usefulness of the website and including write-in comments. This includes evaluation of training materials, the trainer and the overall satisfaction with the training.

This information is captured through the use of Likert scales and evaluated numerically. For the occasions where multiple products are requested, only one survey is included for products. That survey highlights the contents of the shipment and asks about general satisfaction with the products as a group rather than for individual products. This provides overall feedback of the LMI service without undo burden on the recipient. All surveys are accompanied with a postage paid return envelop for the customers convenience. PY 2004-2005 assessment templates will be refined to more accurately capture information on customer needs, usefulness and satisfaction.