

VERMONT
PY 2004 WORKFORCE INFORMATION GRANT
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

A. Accomplishments

1. ALMIS Database

Version 2.2 of the ALMIS Database was maintained through monthly and quarterly updates to files. In addition to maintaining data for counties, labor market areas and towns, data items were also updated for local WIBs.

Staff stayed informed about new development through communication from the consortium and the web.

The survey of state licensing agencies was completed and updated information was sent to Steve Rosenow of the National Crosswalk Service Center to be included in ACINet. Staff moved forward and began work on updating the Vermont web site with the new licensing information, which is scheduled for completion in PY 2005.

All activities completed within planned milestones and expenditure levels. Spending totaled \$65,000.

2. Industry and Occupational Projections

The short run industrial and occupational projections statewide to 2006 were completed as planned. We published ranking of occupations projected to have the most openings on the state LMI web page. ETA extract for short run projections has been completed and transmitted per instructions from the consortium.

Long run, statewide industrial and occupational projections were completed last year (PY 2003). This year, the LMI unit finished working on area projections to 2012 for Burlington and Balance of State. Information for both state and area projections were added to the LMI web page. Brochures for area and state occupational projections were finished and distributed to schools and government planning organizations.

All activities completed within planned milestones and expenditure levels. Spending totaled \$75,000.

3. Occupational and Career Information Products

We expanded the Occupational Information Center on the LMI web site to include skill information from O'Net. The system includes information on knowledge, skills and abilities for occupations. This complements the existing information on wages, licensing, employment projections and other specific information. As part of the system update, we also added occupational training requirements and a link to the educational institutions offering the required training. This web application was updated and maintained by in-house/LMI staff, which allowed us to respond quickly to the needs and preferences of Vermont workers and employers.

We completed the occupational wage estimates for 4 substate areas using the North Carolina EDS software and added the information to our Occupational Information Center on the web.

We have worked with the Vermont Department of Health Care Administration to review the need for a fringe benefit survey. Information was obtained from the Fringe Benefit Consortium about recent activities and the latest questionnaire. We started the process of adapting their questionnaire for use in Vermont, and plan to conduct a comprehensive fringe benefit survey during PY 2005.

All activities completed within planned milestones and expenditure levels. Spending totaled \$60,000.

4. Provide Information and Support to WIBs

The LMI unit produced monthly and quarterly updates to data on employment and unemployment by WIB. In addition, regular updates were provided to the Labor Exchange Database from the DET administrative file for active applicants and job openings. This information provides a current indicator of the occupational supply/demand relationship for each WIB.

Following discussion with the Executive Director of the state WIB, the 'Regions' page was established on the LMI web site (see activity 5). This tab combines information from numerous sources for selected geographic units, e.g. WIBs, in one location, providing a snapshot of the most important economic and social indicators. This new resource will provide valuable information about local WIBs.

Vermont also joined the consortium of state participating in the U.S. Census Bureau's Local Employment Dynamics (LED) program. A MOU between DET and Census allows the sharing of confidential wages record data. LMI provided historical data back to fourth quarter 1999. Quarterly updates were sent to Census Bureau for wage records and the QCEW EQUI file. The Census Bureau has added Vermont to the group of states on its web site with

Quarterly Workforce Indicators. See
<http://lehd.dsd.census.gov/led/datatools/qwiapp.html>

In addition, we have discussed with the HRIC Director the most valuable products for LMI to produce from the detailed files the Census Bureau returns to the states. Turnover statistics and detailed industry demographic data are two items that are likely to be analyzed by LMI and added to the LMI web site for the WIBs in the future.

All activities completed within planned milestones and expenditure levels.
Spending totaled \$60,000

5. Improve Electronic Workforce Information Delivery System

The LMI unit maintained recent enhancements to the LMI web site. Examples include the following Cold Fusion systems: ALMIS Employer Database application, Labor Exchange Summary Tables, Occupational Information Center. We cooperated with the Jobs and Training Division by providing employment projections and occupational wages for the recently installed Vermont Job Link system. LMI expanded the information available on the web by creating a “Regions” tab to improve accessibility of diverse information for selected geographic regions, such as WIBs. As mentioned above, we also added occupational skill information from O'Net to our Occupational Information Center. In-house LMI staff handled all the computer programming for our web system.

All activities completed within planned milestones and expenditure levels.
Spending totaled \$55,000.

6. Training Initiatives

LMI staff provided training on LMI applications in Montpelier in November 2004. A second session was held in Winooski in June 2005. Training is open to staff from VDOL Career Resource Centers, Social Welfare, WIBs, Vermont Students Assistance Corporation (VSAC), Community College of Vermont (CCV), Economic Development Specialists and Nonprofit Career Counseling Organizations. The latest classes included participants from VDOL, VSAC and Social Welfare. The LMI web site is used as a guide to help individuals understand the concepts and application of labor market information.

LMI staff attended training in September 2004 on the use of GIS systems to evaluate future enhancements for LMI. We also participated in the LED conference in Washington, which was sponsored by the Census Bureau in

January 2005. Vermont provided support for the LMI Training institute by contributing 0.5 percent of our grant to the Institute's operations. This is a valuable investment that will ensure the availability of training for LMI professionals in the future.

All activities completed within planned milestones and close to expenditure levels. Spending totaled \$19,989, which was \$78 less than planned.

B. Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is tracked by maintaining statistics on the usage of printed and electronic products, and by soliciting customer input through surveys. The latest tally of major printed publications shows:

Publications Printed, July 2004 - June 2005	Number of printed copies distributed
Vermont Labor Market Newsletter	16,320
Monthly Economic & Travel Indicators	1,202
Quarterly Labor Market Bulletin	2,888
Job Creation & Destruction Annual Report	139
Directions Career Tabloid	10,585
Annual DET Report (for Department)	155
Licensed Occupations	410
Annual UI Statistical Tables	127
Annual Employment and Wages (QCEW)	358
Annual County Profiles	384
Totals	32,568

The Department's newsletter is clearly the most widely distributed paper product, accounting half of all the publications sent. LMI conducted a customer survey during PY 2004 to determine the level of satisfaction and to help determine areas for improvement of the newsletter. A questionnaire was mailed to 1,300 individuals on the mailing list and responses were received from 357 people. The survey provided a guide to which sections of the newsletter were used most frequently. These results were used to trim two pages from the newsletter and to focus the remaining material on the most important areas. The survey provided a clear indication that readers were 'satisfied' with the publication and helped us make decisions about how to improve the publication.

Although we still distribute a large number of paper publications, the Internet is the main resource to provide information to the public. The latest usage statistics show the continued importance of the Occupational Information Center. This area has been the focus of our development efforts recently. As indicated above, we added the O'Net skills information to provide more detailed information about each occupation. Resources are committed to keeping the whole range of occupational information current, including wages, skills, licensing, employment projections, and related background.

Web Activity Report				
Vermont Labor Market Information - www.vtlmi.info				
7/1/04 - 6/30/05				
Web product / page	Visitors	Visitor Sessions	Page Views	Hits
TOTAL	38,298	117,124	211,568	990,286
LMI home	13,946	28,200	33,500	160,422
Occupations home	9,933	17,615	22,801	111,067
Occupational info center	7,656	14,983	39,066	248,384
Wages & income home	6,664	9,411	10,588	46,555
Qcew (BLS Program)	5,378	11,980	17,728	40,208
Career exploration	4,930	10,908	13,758	58,449
Income	4,474	6,968	7,815	9,205
Occupational video images	4,229	6,684	15,460	65,410
Ces (BLS Program)	3,769	8,222	10,147	17,260
Downloads	2,938	8,638	11,814	14,001
Faq	2,458	3,606	4,210	16,443
Unemployment home	2,419	3,799	4,317	13,980
Laus (BLS Program)	2,287	4,819	7,153	10,957
Press release	2,220	4,055	4,331	6,879
County profiles	2,042	4,736	6,174	23,255

The usage statistics are obtained from a program created by LMI staff to determine the level of access of individuals on the LMI web page.

In addition, visitors to the LMI web page have the opportunity to provide feedback through the online customer survey. Relatively few people take the opportunity to complete the survey. Those who do, provide both positive and negative comments. We are working to improve usability. When possible, we follow up with customers to see that their needs have been met. We do this through email and telephone contacts.

Recently, we completed the 'Regions' tab, which provides an integrated view of the various geographic structures. Instead of going to three separate web pages for information about Windham County, for example, it is easy to view the most important indicators for a region from a single page. This should help users to find information and get the complete picture.

We have also made a commitment to update the fringe benefit survey based on the demand for this product from employers. The issue of health care insurance availability is an important component of this survey and our survey will help policy makers understand

the current availability. We have worked closely with the state Health Care Administration group to ensure that we meet their needs to provide an accurate assessment of the issue.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

July 2004 - June 2005
www.vtLmi.info

Total Responses - 24

The information was:	1	2	3	4	5	0	Overall
Indicate your level of agreement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A 1/	Rating 2/
Number of Responses							
Easy to find	4	3	2	2	3	10	2.8
Timely	3	1	3	1	3	13	3.0
Detailed Enough	4	0	3	2	2	13	2.8
Easy to Understand	3	3	1	1	4	12	3.0
Helpful	4	1	3	1	3	12	2.8
In a useful format	4	1	1	2	4	12	3.1
Overall, I am satisfied with the website	4	2	3	1	3	11	2.8

1/ - Checked by default, includes both those who checked it and those who skipped the question.

2/ - Based on those respondents who checked one of the five rating levels.

What could we do to improve VtLmi?

11 responses

date	email	comment
07/16/04	yes	The web site is outstanding...
08/06/04		Why are there so many "No VT wage data" entries in the very part of the website designed to present wage data? This is aggravating, and makes the website not at all helpful.
12/05/04	yes	make this site speak the language we all speak, not that of the statistician. TRANSLATE it!
12/08/04	yes	It's not easy to find the page to create an account. And when I find it, I never get through to set one up. Frustrating. The site seems a bit cluttered. But that could just be my frustration talking again.
12/09/04	yes	i like it
12/20/04		put in the recommended occupation
01/28/05	yes	Add a search engine tool that lets me choose companies by number of employees and region. I am looking for larger targeted reports than I appear able to make with the current inquiry structure
02/07/05		you can improve things buy getting more jobs in VT and stop worrying about if were destroying the land that's what the EPA is for.
02/26/05	yes	Leave old county information online while you are revising the information. Old data is better than none at all.
03/22/05		It would be nice to have the US unemployment figures alongside the Vermont data whenever possible.
04/24/05		List the information about monetary qualification for unemployment insurance so an individual can determine whether his/her time to file a claim for unemployment insurance.

C. **Recommendations for Improvements**

- Based on the high usage of our web site, it appears that we have been successful in reaching a large audience with our products. We will continue to devote resources to expanding and improving our Internet applications.
- Based on our customer satisfaction survey, we have to do more work to make it easy to find information and make our web site easy to use. We will devote time to improving usability and integrating the LMI web page with the broader goals of our new agency, the Vermont Department of Labor.
- We get direct feedback from customers when we respond to telephone and email requests for information. It is clear that employers would like us to update the fringe benefit survey, which was done two years ago. During PY 2005 we will conduct an expanded fringe benefit survey and publish the results.
- Based on discussions with the Executive Director of the state WIB, we are planning improvements for the 'Regions' tab that will integrate more information from the LED program. The 'Regions' page will also make it easier for users to get an overview of geographic areas, such as labor market areas and WIBs.
- We have received a positive response to our LMI training sessions, as indicated by the evaluations from the participants. We will continue to offer training on how to use LMI, and help clients become familiar with applications for career decision-making and program planning.