

State of Connecticut
PY 2005 WORKFORCE INFORMATION ANNUAL PLAN

This plan identifies the information products and services that the Connecticut Department of Labor's Office of Research is planning to produce to support the State's workforce investment system. The One-Stop Career Center/America's Labor Market Information System funds provided for this purpose are critical to the development of the workforce information on which Connecticut's strategic workforce investments are made, as well as to the decisions made by the workforce development professionals and customers of the State's workforce investment system.

The development and dissemination of high-quality workforce information within the State of Connecticut is an essential component in establishing a comprehensive Workforce System. The Workforce Investment Act provides a valuable framework through which to organize and coordinate a broad range of undertakings to support State and local workforce investment activities and Connecticut is making every effort to fill as many of the identified information needs as possible with the funding available. To that end, following is (a) a description of the employment statistics system, (b) a description of the products to be developed and services to be offered with the funds provided, and (c) a description of the strategy to be employed for assessing customer satisfaction with the workforce information produced.

a) The Employment Statistics System

Strategy for Consulting with Workforce System Professionals and Customers

Since the initial implementation of the Workforce Investment Act, our strategy for consulting with the Connecticut Employment and Training Commission (CETC, the State workforce investment board) and the local workforce investment boards (local Boards) has been to continuously engage them concerning the needs of the State's system. The Office of Research regularly attends CETC committee meetings, actively participates in workforce system issues that require or can be enhanced with relevant workforce information, and provides progress reports on LMI activities to support the State's workforce development initiatives. We also consult with the staff of the CETC in the Office for Workforce Competitiveness (OWC) to discuss the information needed to meet the planning requirements of the system. This has included such areas as WIA funding allocations to the local Boards, the list of WIA-eligible training programs, system performance measures for the CETC's annual report to the State legislature, and the occupations most needed to be filled by Connecticut's employers. We also meet annually with local workforce investment board planners to review their planning information needs and modify our data and products to meet their needs accordingly.

We consult directly with representatives of the business community through CETC committee meetings, job fairs, telephone contacts, and LMI Web site emails. We also participate in Agency-sponsored employer focus groups. We further identify business needs through meetings with local workforce investment boards and CTDOL Business Services staff.

The information needs of the individuals served by the State's workforce development system are most effectively obtained through the professionals that serve them. Along with feedback from the front-line employees of the One-Stop system, contacts with individuals are made through Agency-sponsored job fairs, telephone and email requests.

The Office of Research has frequent interactions with local workforce investment boards and other stakeholders in the workforce investment system identifying customer needs for workforce information. Through regular contacts with state and local policy makers, planners, educators, and economic developers, workforce information is provided to assist them in carrying out their responsibilities in a more informed, efficient, and effective manner.

In addition to our collaboration with the State and local workforce investment boards and administrators of the public employment service, we provide workforce information training to all front-line workforce development system staff as requested. We regularly give presentations and training on the available Office of Research electronic and print resources to State and local agencies and organizations involved in providing workforce assistance to individuals and businesses. Included among them are representatives from the education community, welfare client service providers, rehabilitation services providers, and the corrections system. The Office of Research also conducts an annual regional conference (*Connecticut Learns & Works*) for educators, counselors, employment and training specialists and businesspersons interested in career and workforce development issues.

Support for the State's Strategic Workforce Investment Plan

The economic, workforce and career information gathered from many sources and disseminated throughout the State's workforce development system provides the core information needed by system administrators and service providers to plan, evaluate, and effectively serve the business and individual customers of the system.

Workforce information is provided for planning and staying abreast of the services delivered by the State's workforce investment system. Career exploration resources are available and used by individual customers of the system and the counselors that assist them, as well as by training providers to identify the programs needed to meet the current and emerging instruction needs of employers. Also available through the Office of Research is a comprehensive source of education and training programs offered throughout the State that both individuals and employers use to locate appropriate

training. To ensure a demand-drive system, performance evaluation measures are produced and used to assess the success and progress of the State's workforce system investments.

These uses of workforce information for planning, delivery of services and evaluation are key components of Connecticut's *Strategic Two-Year State Workforce Investment Plan*. Included in the Plan are references to Office of Research products that provide information for the workforce development system needs assessment, including economic and workforce trends, identification of growing industries and occupations, and the availability of education and training graduates that can be matched to the demand for workers so informed decisions can be made on the need for expanding, reducing, or initiating new occupational programs.

Also in the Plan are products and information supplied by the Office of Research for determining funding allocations to the local workforce investment boards, for providing electronic access to occupational information (*Connecticut Job and Career ConneCTion*), for developing an eligible training provider list and accompanying consumer report information (*Connecticut Education and Training ConneCTion*), and for producing workforce system performance measures. These contributions of the Office of Research play a significant role in Connecticut's effort to establish and advance the State's workforce investment system.

The Plan also requires that the customers of the workforce system have access to local information. The Office of Research's electronic and print products are valuable tools used in the daily operation of the state's One-Stop centers. To ensure that front-line staff and customers are aware of our products and services, training is conducted throughout the centers as needed.

Delivery of Workforce Information to Customers

The Office of Research recognizes the need to disseminate workforce information to our varied customers by incorporating multiple user-friendly formats. While many of our customers are computer literate and have access to the Internet, there are some who prefer or need information delivered in another format. As a result, the Office of Research's methods of information delivery include electronic/Internet systems, printed products, in-person presentations and training, and telephone access. Access to timely, local information is paramount to the success of Connecticut's workforce system and every effort is made to ensure this.

We continue to focus efforts on developing and enhancing Internet-based tools and resources targeted to specific user groups for identified purposes, while acknowledging the need to maintain paper products. Among the Internet-accessible workforce information resources currently available is a career exploration tool for job seekers and students, an education and training search tool for individuals and businesses, and a data supply site for planners, policy-makers and other data users. Advances in the

delivery of workforce information electronically enable the workforce investment system to serve its many customers as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Workforce information and services are delivered as core services to customers through the One-Stop delivery system. The Office of Research has collaborated in the training provided to employment counselors in the One-Stop centers to offer an extensive course on the availability and use of labor market and workforce information. This training builds a process for identifying a customer's needs and a path towards reemployment. In many of the State's One-Stop centers, the counselors provide workshops on the uses of workforce information for identifying demand occupations, availability of training, and employment opportunities.

We work directly with the State and local Boards to meet their system planning and management needs, as described earlier. We also supply many types of print products to the One-Stop Centers for use in serving their customers and continue to work directly with the front-line staff to address the needs of the broadest range of business and individual customers of the State's workforce development system. The information and service needs of the system are varied and need to be addressed in a multifaceted way. To do so, in addition Internet information delivery systems and paper products, we provide training to facilitate the understanding and use of workforce information, and implement numerous customer outreach initiatives through job fairs, conferences, and targeted (direct mail/email) and broadcast (media) communications.

To meet all of the information needs of the workforce system as effectively as possible, the Office of Research maintains ongoing collaborative relationships with the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, the State Department of Education, the Connecticut Department of Higher Education and the University of Connecticut. The Office of Research houses the Connecticut Career Resource Network, and through it maintains regular contacts with, and provides significant support to the products and services delivered to, the local education community. Finally, in addition to the State and local Boards, we have established working relationships with the Wagner-Peyser, TANF and WIA program administrators, the State University System, the Community College System, the Connecticut Economic Resource Center, and other partners in and contributors to the State's workforce investment system.

b) Products and Services

1. **ALMIS Database:** *Continue to populate the ALMIS Database with State data.*

- Description of core product, service or other demand activity:

America's Labor Market Information System (ALMIS) is a dynamic system that produces quality, standardized labor market information and tools in a wide variety of media and formats to job seekers, employers, and the workforce development community. The ALMIS Database provides a common framework for populating information delivery applications. It provides the critical infrastructure to support the workforce investment system nationwide with the primary goal of serving the customers of the local one-stop service delivery system.

During program year 2005, the Office of Research will complete the implementation of version 2.3 of the ALMIS Database and include all core data tables in accordance with the guidelines issued by the ALMIS Resource Center (ARC). As before, the data in the ALMIS Database will be displayed through our Internet applications.

The ALMIS Database will include the required occupational license files, which will be updated to the O*Net/ SOC taxonomy and submitted through the National Crosswalk Service Center for inclusion on ACINet.

We will continue to play a major role in the ALMIS Resource Center's Database Structure Committee, addressing the national, state, and local customer information needs. The ALMIS Resource Center plays a key role in providing staff training and support to the states in the implementation, population, and updating of state-specific data in the ALMIS Database. The Office of Research will continue to take advantage of the new and more effective methods for providing staff training and information methods as they become available through the Resource Center.

- Customer support for product or services as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations:

Assessment of customer support for the ALMIS Database is measured through the extent of the use of our Internet-based labor market information resources. By using software to gather web-site usage statistics, the Office of Research is able to obtain and analyze the inquiries made to the website, measure the frequency of use, the length of visits, the most requested information, and the number of unique and repeat users.

We also assess the usefulness of our information through customer feedback, obtained through our Internet resources as well as through telephone and email requests, and through direct customer contacts through training and other outreach efforts.

- **Product/Activity Support of State’s WIA/Wagner-Peyser Strategic Plan:**
The ALMIS Database is identified as an integral part of the plan in accordance with the guidelines of the ETA-LMI grants (sub sections 111(d)(8), 112(b)(1) and 134(d)(2)(E)) to provide the most current workforce information, publications, and data releases to the state’s customers.
- **Principal Customers:**
Users of the ALMIS Database include individuals and organizations seeking economic and workforce information for the state of Connecticut and its local areas. These may include, but are not limited to job seekers, employers, economic development organizations, government, and research associations.
- **Projected Outcome(s) and System Impact(s):**
The Connecticut Department of Labor, Office of Research will provide access to data included in the ALMIS Database through each of its Internet resources. In this way, high quality, up-to-date information will always be readily available to help a wide variety of users make informed decisions.
- **Planned Milestones:**
The planned milestones are as follows:

1. Populate the ALMIS database	Ongoing
2. Update occupational license data	June 2006
3. Participate in the work of the ALMIS Resource Center	Ongoing
- **Estimated Costs:** \$28,000

2. **Industry and Occupational Employment Projections:** *Produce and disseminate industry and occupational employment projections.*

- **Description of core product, service or other demand activity:**
The Connecticut Department of Labor’s industry and occupational forecasts provide arguably the best economic outlook information that planners, service providers and customers of the workforce investment system can use to enhance their understanding of current business needs and trends.

In program year 2005, the Office of Research will produce and disseminate statewide long-term industry and occupational employment projections for the 2004 to 2014 period, using the methodology, software tools, and guidelines developed by the Projections Workgroup and the Projections Managing Partnership. The industry employment projections will be developed on the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). The occupational employment projections will be developed on the Standard Occupational Classification. Once completed, the statewide long-term projections data will be published on the

Office of Research's web site and in print format, and will be submitted for further dissemination following procedures established by the Projections Workgroup and the Projections Managing Partnership. Forecasts to 2012, already underway, will also be completed for each the workforce investment areas.

The Office of Research will develop statewide short-term industry and occupational employment forecasts for the 2005 to 2007 period. Following their completion, the data will be published on the Office of Research web site and in print format.

We will participate in the various training opportunities provided by the Projections Workgroup and the Projections Managing Partnership if considered valuable to building experience of the Office of Research staff.

- Customer support for product or services as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations:

The projections data continue to be a valuable tool in planning and evaluation. The education community references this data to validate, modify, and develop education programs. The State's One-Stop professionals use the projections information to identify training needs and programs for occupations in demand and to provide direction to job seekers. Economic development professionals interpret the projections information to compare labor supplies and business needs. Economists reference the Office of Research's statistics in making their own assessments of the short and long-term direction of the State's economy.

Through use of web metrics software, the Office of Research is able to measure the inquiries made to the projections section of the website, the frequency of use, and the number of unique and repeat users.

We also assess the usefulness of our information through customer feedback, obtained through our Internet resources as well as through telephone and email requests, and through direct customer contacts through training and other outreach efforts. Many of our electronic and print materials include the projections data and are routinely made available to the participants for use in their knowledge-building efforts. The information needs identified through our collaboration with the State's workforce investment boards, workforce partners and others contribute to the modification of existing and production new labor market and workforce information products.

- Product/Activity Support of State's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Strategic Plan:

Employment projections provide insight into Connecticut's industry and occupational employment trends. This information is a valuable part of the State's Strategic Plan, as well as to higher education's program planning and day-to-day guidance to job seekers, students and others. The Office of Research is committed to the development of high-quality and timely employment projections to better support decision-making.

- Principal Customers:

The principle customers of the projections data include, but are not limited to the State and local workforce investment boards, educators, students, job seekers, vocational and career counselors, businesses, and public and private planning and policy-making groups.

- Projected Outcome(s) and System Impact(s):

Statewide long-term and short-term industry and occupational projection information will continue be available on the Office of Research's web site and in print copy. This information is among the most important for making informed workforce education, training and employment decisions.

- Planned Milestones:

The planned milestones are as follows:

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| 1. Complete long-term industry projections, 2004-14 | December 2005 |
| 2. Complete long-term occupation projections, 2004-14 | February 2006 |
| 3. Complete short-term industry projections, 2005-07 | April 2006 |
| 4. Complete short-term occupational projections, 2005-07 | June 2006 |

- Estimated Costs: \$125,000 (and other funding)

3. **Occupational Analysis Products:** Provide occupational and career information products for public use.

- Description of core product, service or other demand activity:

The Workforce Investment Act requires the provision of accessible and relevant labor market information as part of the core services provided through the workforce investment system. In program year 2005, the Office of Research will continue to enhance its electronic applications, publications and related resources to deliver occupational and career information to our varied user groups. Improvements to our electronic products have become essential to enable the workforce investment system to serve its many customers in an efficient and effective manner. As required, our electronic and print products will incorporate occupational demand by geographic area, occupational wages, education and training requirements, licensure or certification requirements, and skills information. All products delivered through the Office of Research will be SOC-based and developed in consultation with intended customers.

The *Connecticut Job & Career ConneCTion* will undergo a significant revision to accommodate current occupational information, expanded career videos and licensing information. The industry and occupational classifications used will be updated to reflect the NAICS and O*NET-SOC standards. The *Connecticut*

Education & Training ConneCTion will also be modified to include the new CIP2000 program classifications and updated program and provider information.

In addition to our electronic tools, the Office of Research will continue to produce a variety of occupational and career publications in print format, as needed. Among them is the extremely popular *Connecticut Career Paths* publication. Developed through our association with the Connecticut Career Resource Network, the *Connecticut Career Paths* is targeted to secondary school students, educators, community and non-profit training providers throughout the State. It is widely distributed to these schools, the local *CTWorks* centers, community colleges, correctional facilities, and others – more than 135,000 copies in all in the past year.

Connecticut Careers - Career Decisions for Entry Level Jobs provides a concise description of entry-level occupations that is designed to assist job seekers and students in making career choices. Included for each occupation are wages, annual openings, job requirements, training providers, and career paths. As time permits, this publication will be updated to include new occupations and information.

Current employment and wages paid to persons employed in all occupations in the State will continue to be collected and updated semi-annually. A printed issue of *Connecticut Occupational Employment and Wages* will again be published.

Our newly produced projections will be released with a fresh analysis of the trends seen in industry and occupational employment. In addition, other analyses of the forecasts will be prepared to address specific areas that are part of the State's strategic workforce development plan. An example of these would be an analysis of Connecticut's occupations that require math, science, and/or engineering knowledge as well as their corresponding industries. Another would identify emerging industries in the medical device and fuel cell sectors.

Other occupational and career information products were recently updated and will not need to be updated again during PY2005. These will, however, be available to customers throughout the year. These products include *Your Job Search Guide*, *Writing Your Resume for Success*, *Soaring to New Heights – Connecticut Job Outlook by Training Level*, and Occupational Posters.

- Customer support for product or services as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations:

High quality workforce information is a critical component for Connecticut's workforce system and occupational and career information products have been our most highly requested and used products. They have been used in developing the State's Strategic Workforce Investment Plan, in evaluating the need for establishing or expanding education programs in the community colleges and technical high schools, and by various task groups formed to identify approaches to addressing current State workforce issues. Examples of

these groups include the Career Ladder Advisory Committee and the Allied Health Workforce Policy Board.

- **Product/Activity Support of State’s WIA/Wagner-Peyser Strategic Plan:**
Occupational and career information products directly support the State’s Strategic Plan by identifying the current and future needs for workers with occupational skills that are in short supply, providing information that can be used to direct individuals pursuing employment and for planning education and training programs. As identified in the State Plan, “The Governor’s vision, based on labor market information and other economic data, includes not only developing a skilled information technology workforce (the initial focus of Connecticut’s talent and innovation efforts), but also other areas that are critical to the State’s long-term economic competitiveness: Bioscience, Aerospace, Alternative Energy (particularly fuel cell technology), Health Care (medical technology, nursing, and allied health), Nanotechnology, and Photonics.
- **Principal Customers:**
The principle customers of our products include the State and local workforce investment boards, legislators and other policy makers, businesses, education and training providers, job seekers, vocational and career counselors, and others needing information about occupation and career opportunities in Connecticut.
- **Projected Outcome(s) and System Impact(s):**
High quality occupational and career information products and services result in the workforce system responding more effectively to the State’s workforce development needs and individuals making better-informed career choices. This in turn leads to individuals being better able to attain the skills in demand by businesses and eventually, to move to higher-skilled, higher-paying, and/or, perhaps more importantly, more satisfying jobs and careers.
- **Planned Milestones:**
The Office of Research will continue to produce occupational and career products in electronic and print format:

Electronic products	(See Section 5)
Publications:	
<i>Connecticut Career Paths</i>	April 2006
<i>Connecticut Careers – Career Decisions for Entry Level Jobs</i>	October 2005
<i>Connecticut Occupational Employment and Wages</i>	March 2006
<i>Connecticut Forecast, 2004-2014</i>	March 2006
- **Estimated Costs: \$62,000 (and other funding)**

4. **Information and Support to Workforce Investment Boards:** *Ensure that workforce information and support required by state and local workforce investment boards are provided.*

- Description of core product, service or other demand activity:

State and local Workforce Investment Boards are important customers of the workforce information system. Considering their role, their ability to obtain up-to-date and local workforce information is essential to the success of the system. They need information from the Office of Research for strategic planning, providing services, and evaluating program operations. In program year 2005, we will conduct an information review session with the State's workforce investment board planners with the objective of identifying their data needs and to discuss the applicability of the Office of Research's *Information for Workforce Investment Planning (IWIP)* publication to their planning efforts. The *IWIP* includes economic, workforce and other relevant information for each of Connecticut's five Workforce Investment Areas. The geographic detail is extremely useful for planners and policy makers who need to make critical workforce system decisions.

We will continue to produce the *Connecticut Economic Digest*, which is published through a collaborative effort with the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development. Through the *Digest*, users receive the most current, up-to-date data available on the workforce and economy of the state and its labor market areas, within perspectives of the region and nation.

We plan to complete work on an employment analysis of the State's identified industry clusters. The respective industries, by industry classification, that are part of the industry clusters have not been previously identified. This will provide a foundation for identifying the cluster employment trends and the occupations in demand by each cluster, which will make possible the development of education and training programs that will support industries deemed important to Connecticut's current economy and future growth. This will also enable us to identify the cluster employment that exists in each Workforce Investment Area. We plan to include this information in the *IWIP* publication for each of the local workforce boards.

The Office of Research occasionally undertakes special studies and projects of importance to the State on topics relevant to the labor market, workforce, and the workforce development system. In program year 2004, we conducted a job vacancy survey of more than 3,300 firms throughout Connecticut, which provided information on the current nature of the market for workers and occupational skills. We will consult with the CETC to determine the interest in a similar study in program year 2005.

As time permits, the Office of Research will create Internet-accessible regional profiles of each of the State's Workforce Investment Areas. The proposed *WIA*

Region-At-A-Glance will contain up-to-date local industry and workforce information and serve to keep the local workforce investment boards informed of current conditions in their local regions. Through the *WIA Region-At-A-Glance*, the local workforce boards will be able to get an easily accessible, always current, summary of important workforce information for their respective regions.

To better inform and build knowledge among front-line staff of the One-Stop centers and others, the Office of Research also plans to increase its use of broadcast email software to notify the local boards and One-Stop staff of new workforce data and products.

- Customer support for product or services as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations:

Our information session with the workforce investment board planners provides us with direct feedback from them, particularly on the IWIP publication. In addition to ideas for changes and enhancements, the planners have openly expressed the value they place on the IWIP. The local boards have requested the industry cluster information for each region, and we will provide that information in PY2005. Similarly, the job vacancy survey was conducted in response to requests by staff of the State workforce board. The other initiatives being made are in response to what we have learned about the needs of local board and One-Stop center staff in repeated personal contacts with them.

- Product/Activity Support of State's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Strategic Plan:

The activities identified support the goals of the strategic plan. All goals require timely and reliable information about the economy, industries, occupations, wages, or other information on the State and local labor markets. In addition, the labor market information made available was instrumental to the preparation of the State's Strategic Plan as well as the annual regional plans of the local workforce boards.

- Principal Customers:

Connecticut's state and local workforce investment board planners and One-Stop system professionals.

- Projected Outcome(s) and System Impact(s):

The *Information for Workforce Investment Planning* publication and planners information session enables the workforce investment boards and One-Stop professionals to better understand their local labor markets and thus more capably establish plans for and carry out their objectives and job functions. This in turn benefits the customers of the One-Stop system. The other efforts to continuously provide the local workforce boards with current information on the economy, workforce, industries, occupations and other labor market information will further enhance their knowledge of their regions and their preparedness to

respond to the workforce development needs of the workers and businesses in their areas.

- Planned Milestones:

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| 1. Complete the <i>Information for Workforce Investment Planning</i> | October 2005 |
| 2. Review information needs with WIB planners | March 2006 |
| 3. Publish the <i>Connecticut Economic Digest</i> | Monthly |
| 4. Produce industry cluster employment for WIA regions | September 2005 |
| 5. Produce the <i>WIA Region-At-A-Glance</i> | January 2006 |
| 6. Expand use of email broadcasts to local One-Stop staff | October 2005 |

- Estimated Costs: \$68,000 (and other funding)

5. **Workforce Information Delivery Systems:** *Maintain and enhance electronic state workforce information delivery systems.*

- Description of core product, service or other demand activity:

The Office of Research remains committed to enabling access to workforce information through its electronic resources. In program year 2005, all of our Internet applications will receive content upgrades and/or format improvements that support the self-service demands of our customers.

Our popular *Connecticut Job and Career ConneCTion* (www.ctjobandcareer.org) application will undergo a significant revision to accommodate the inclusion of current occupational information, expanded career videos and licensing information. The industry and occupational classifications used in these applications will be updated to the new NAICS and O*NET-SOC standards. Its sister site, the *Connecticut Education and Training ConneCTion* (www.cttraining.info) will also be modified to include the new CIP2000 program classifications and updated program and provider information. The *Job and Career ConneCTion* and the *Education and Training ConneCTion* have become key resources within the State's workforce investment system and are popular with the customers of the One-Stop Career Centers. Training in these self-service applications is available to the One-Stop front-line staff, partner agencies, and others as requested.

The Office of Research will continue to add new data and downloadable offerings to our *Labor Market Information* site to deliver information in an expedient and efficient manner to businesses, individuals and other information customers. We will also explore adding new capabilities to allow users to specify and retrieve data, and analytical capabilities offered by graphing and mapping functions.

In addition, the Office of Research is considering the development of other customer-focused Internet resources. One would be a resource for Connecticut

businesses, through which employers would be able to identify and compare themselves with the characteristics of other employers in their industry and use this information in making relevant business decisions. We are also exploring the development of a planning resource for education and training providers. This application would allow education planning professionals to quickly and easily view workforce needs for occupational skills in a variety of ways and compare this demand to the number of programs and graduates available to meet those needs. It is uncertain if these will be able to be pursued, but significant value to State workforce development efforts would clearly be provided by each. Additional resources from other sources would be needed to consider pursuing these.

- Customer support for product or services as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations:

Internet access to workforce information provides Connecticut users with open access to the information that identifies the economic and workforce conditions and dynamics of the State and local areas. The resources developed, maintained and continuing to be enhanced offer the most comprehensive workforce information available specific to Connecticut for workforce development planning and service delivery, for exploring careers, and for identifying education and training offered in the State. These Internet resources received over 600,000 visitors during 2004.

- Product/Activity Support of State's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Strategic Plan:

The electronic dissemination labor market information supports the State's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Strategic Plan by making this information readily available to all workforce system customers in easy-to-use format(s).

- Principal Customers:

Customers include job seekers, employers, economic and workforce development entities, government and research organizations – anyone in need of timely and up-to-date workforce information.

- Projected Outcome(s) and System Impact(s):

The projected outcomes of electronic information delivery systems are: improved economic analysis and decision-making, market-driven economic development, demand-driven One-Stop service delivery, a larger customer base, and better overall performance by regional workforce boards. All customers, from the highest-level policy makers to the youngest career information seeker, are able to easily access quality workforce information, allowing them to make more informed decisions.

- Planned Milestones:
 1. Update *Job and Career ConneCTion* August 2005 & ongoing
 2. Update *Education and Training ConneCTion* August 2005 & ongoing
 3. Enhance the *Labor Market Information* website Ongoing
- Estimated Costs: \$235,000 (and other funding)

6. **Workforce Information Training**: *Support state workforce information training activities*

- Description of core product, service or other demand activity:

Local capacity building has been identified as a critical element of Connecticut's workforce investment system. As part of the State's system capacity building effort, the Office of Research will continue to identify and provide workforce information training to front-line service providers at the One-Stop centers and to others expressing a need for this training.

We will work with the Department of Labor's Staff Development division to design and establish appropriate training that will ensure all facets of workforce information is integrated into an effective training curriculum for the workforce staff and partners serving both individual and employer customers of the One-Stop system. With new staff additions to the One-Stop offices, this effort will be essential in helping them understand what is available and how it may be used. Training materials for Internet applications will be available to the front-line staff and customers of the One-Stop Career Center. When requested, the Office of Research will provide training through a variety of mediums, including the *Career Express*, the Agency's new mobile career center.

As time permits, we will prepare a periodic electronic newsletter, *LMI Notes*, for One-Stop staff and other workforce professionals, focusing on LMI topics and occupational and workforce issues. We anticipate that this will help workforce system professionals acquire a better understanding of workforce information.

Office of Research staff will also utilize training opportunities offered through the US Department of Labor, the Labor Market Information Training Institute, and elsewhere to upgrade their knowledge and skill sets. Where applicable, we will continue to incorporate the materials presented in the training into our ongoing capacity building efforts directed to field staff. These sessions have been valuable means for providing LMI professional staff with better understanding of the role of labor market information in the workforce investment system.

- Customer support for product or services as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations:

Customer support for previous LMI training efforts has been high, based on evaluations completed at the end of each training session. The demand for increased knowledge of information on the labor market is evident from the number of continuing requests for training of One-Stop center staff and for special presentations by various customer groups.

- Product/Activity Support of State’s WIA/Wagner-Peyser Strategic Plan:

Building the capacity of State workforce investment system professionals to better understand information on the labor market and workforce, and to use it effectively in planning and providing services to business and individual customers of the system, is a foundational aspect of the State workforce development strategy. The development of the State Strategic Plan began with an assessment of the State’s workforce and labor market conditions and trends, and there are State-mandated requirements for local workforce investment areas’ strategic planning that require the same environmental scan and analysis.

- Principal Customers:

The primary customers of workforce information training are workforce development professionals, including One-Stop center staff and their workforce partners that provide services to businesses and to workers. Other customers include private sector businesses and their employees, students and educators, and rehabilitation and career counselors. LMI professionals in the Office of Research also obtain training to expand their knowledge and capacity to respond to the information needs of all our customers.

- Projected Outcome(s) and System Impact(s):

Workforce investment system personnel with greater knowledge and skill in the use of workforce information will result in improved alignment of workforce programs to the needs of the State, improved services to the workforce system’s customers, and better informed decisions by those customers, making the entire workforce system more effective.

- Planned Milestones:

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| 1. Provide LMI training to One-Stop center and partner staff on request | Ongoing |
| 2. Promote use of an LMI training PowerPoint slideshow in the LMI training workshops in the One-Stop centers | Ongoing |
| 3. Develop and offer customized LMI training sessions on request | Ongoing |
| 4. Distribute the LMI Notes newsletter | Periodic |
| 5. Obtain training for LMI professionals | As needed and available |

- Estimated Costs: \$26,427

Related Services: *Workforce information services not included in the categories above.*

The Office of Research played a key role on the Governor's Sub Base Strike Force. It was a lead contributor in the data collection and analysis of the impact of the sub base closing on Connecticut to be included in the State's rebuttal to the BRAC Commission. We will continue to contribute to this cause as needed and will provide the occupational and career information that will be needed to assist the affected businesses and workers should the efforts to preserve the base in Connecticut not be successful.

The Office of Research will continue its involvement in job fairs, conferences, trade shows, and similar outreach efforts in program year 2005. Through our partnerships with local chambers of commerce, educational and business organizations, we will administer eight regional job fairs throughout Connecticut, bringing hundreds of companies and thousands of job seekers together. We will again work with a consortium of Connecticut and Massachusetts education and business leaders to develop a college and career fair for the communities located near the state borders. As needed, the Office of Research will coordinate job fairs with other state agencies to assist targeted groups such as college students, individuals with employment barriers, *Title5* recipients, veterans, and ex-offenders.

In program year 2005, the Office of Research will again play a lead role in the annual *Connecticut Learns and Works Conference*. A joint effort of professionals from the business community, education, higher education and the State's workforce investment boards, the conference provides workshops for educators, counselors, employment and training specialists and businesspersons interested in workforce development issues that will affect jobs and careers in the future.

The Office of Research continues to play a key role for the Agency's Rapid Response Unit by providing workforce information to Connecticut employers and their workers experiencing a plant closure or staff reduction. We also provide important industry and occupation data and analyses to other state agencies such as the Department of Economic and Community Development, One-Stop partners, and economic development organizations to assist companies considering expansion and out-of-state firms contemplating relocation to Connecticut. Workforce information typically includes, but is not limited to, occupation wages, employment, outlook, industry profiles, and business starts, expansions and closings.

The Office of Research continues to respond to a significant number of requests each year to speak at meetings, conferences and schools. Staff from the Office of Research speak before local and national groups including government organizations, business associations, and schools regarding economic and workforce information issues.

c) Consultation and Customer Satisfaction Assessment

Customer consultation and satisfaction assessment is an essential component to improving Connecticut's workforce information system. The Office of Research will continue to assess the usefulness of our electronic and print products and services through customer surveys, indicators of website activity, numbers of publication and training requests, and daily contacts directly with our information users.

The Office of Research conducts numerous workshops and training events each year. The voiced and written response from participant surveys, as well as the continued high participation rate by both employers and job seekers, has indicated the high value these have achieved and provides us customer feedback we can directly use to improve future events.

Ad hoc requests for economic, workforce and career information that require specialized preparation or research are stored in a logging system and used to evaluate customer information needs and satisfaction with our existing products and services.

Each of our Internet-based applications, the Office of Research *Labor Market Information* site, *Connecticut Job & Career ConneCTion*, and *Connecticut Education and Training ConneCTion*, enable users to submit questions, comments and suggestions. For our print publications, we periodically solicit comments from our subscribers. This feedback identifies features liked by customers and areas in need of improvement. The Office of Research also meets with local workforce investment board planners annually to review their information needs.

We will continue to generate website usage information for each of our Internet-based applications. Through this information, we can identify user tendencies, such as the number and length of user sessions, types of users and popular website segments. This information is useful in identifying where enhancements can be made and in demonstrating the level of demand for the information being provided.

Connecticut does not have specific performance measures or targets in terms of customer satisfaction. Current consultation and customer satisfaction efforts are geared more towards continuous improvement. Nevertheless, Connecticut's LMI Director is currently serving on an ETA Workforce Information Performance Measurement Workgroup whose purpose is to develop measures for the nationwide workforce information system.