

# News

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## **OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN PHILADELPHIA, CAMDEN, AND WILMINGTON, MAY 2006**

Employment was more highly concentrated in 10 of the 22 major occupational groups in the Philadelphia, Pa. Metropolitan Division<sup>1</sup> (MD) than in the nation. Among the groups with above-average employment shares were healthcare practitioner and technical and business and financial operations occupations. Eight other groups, including production and construction and extraction occupations, had a significantly smaller presence in Philadelphia than nationwide, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics.

In the Camden, N.J. MD<sup>2</sup>, employment shares were significantly above their respective national averages in 8 of the 22 major occupational groups, including office and administrative support and education, training, and library. Eight other groups had significantly smaller presences locally than they did nationwide, including production and food preparation and serving related.

Regional Commissioner Sheila Watkins noted that employment was more concentrated in the Wilmington, Del.-Md.-N.J. MD<sup>3</sup> than in the United States as a whole for 7 of 22 occupational groups, including office and administrative support and business and financial operations. Nine occupational groups had employment shares below the national average, two of which were production, and transportation and material moving.

Workers in the Philadelphia area earned an average (mean) hourly wage rate of \$20.68 in May 2006. For the same period, workers in the Camden and Wilmington areas averaged \$20.41 and \$21.44 an hour, respectively. In all three areas, wages were significantly above the nationwide average of \$18.84. In the Philadelphia area, wage rates for 14 of the 22 major occupational categories were significantly higher than their respective national averages, while only 1 group reported significantly lower wages. In the Camden area, wage rates were significantly above their respective national averages in 15 of the 22 occupational groups and significantly lower in only 1 occupational group. Of the three divisions, Wilmington had the largest number of occupational groups (18 of the 22) with wage rates significantly higher than their respective national averages. Similar to Philadelphia and Camden, only one occupational group in Wilmington had significantly lower wages than the national average. (See table A.) The Philadelphia, Camden, and Wilmington Metropolitan Divisions were chosen for comparison because they make up the larger Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, Pa.-N.J.-Del.-Md. Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).

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1 The Philadelphia, Pa. Metropolitan Division (MD) includes Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties in Pennsylvania. For convenience, this area will be referred to as the Philadelphia area (or by similarly abbreviated titles) throughout this release.

2 The Camden, N.J. Metropolitan Division (MD) includes Burlington, Camden and Gloucester Counties in New Jersey. For convenience, this area will be referred to as the Camden area (or by similarly abbreviated titles) throughout this release.

3 The Wilmington, Del.-Md.-N.J. Metropolitan Division (MD) includes New Castle County in Delaware, Cecil County in Maryland, and Salem County in New Jersey. For convenience, this area will be referred to as the Wilmington area (or by similarly abbreviated titles) throughout this release.

These statistics are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey, a federal-state cooperative program between BLS and State Workforce Agencies, in this case the Delaware Department of Labor; the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development; and the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. The OES survey provides estimates of employment and hourly and annual wages for wage and salary workers in 22 major occupational groups and up to 801 non-military detailed occupations for the nation, states, and 409 metropolitan areas.

**Table A. Employment and wages by occupational group for the Philadelphia, Camden, and Wilmington Metropolitan Divisions compared to the U.S. average, May 2006**

Major occupational group	Employment share (in percent)				Average hourly wage (in dollars)			
	United States	Philadelphia (MD)	Camden (MD)	Wilmington (MD)	United States	Philadelphia (MD)	Camden (MD)	Wilmington (MD)
Management	4.4	3.9 *	4.5	4.9 *	\$44.20	\$47.19 *	\$49.36 *	\$49.18 *
Business and financial operations	4.4	5.7 *	4.4	5.9 *	28.85	30.58 *	29.38	30.49 *
Computer and mathematical	2.3	2.9 *	2.2	3.5 *	33.29	33.27	32.60	35.68 *
Architecture and engineering	1.8	1.9	1.6 *	2.1	31.82	32.89 *	32.74	34.01 *
Life, physical, and social science	0.9	1.4 *	0.6 *	2.0 *	28.68	29.22	30.78 *	33.67 *
Community and social services	1.3	1.9 *	1.6 *	1.5 *	18.75	17.93 *	21.37 *	19.84 *
Legal	0.7	1.1 *	0.8 *	1.1 *	41.04	40.59	44.97	46.03 *
Education, training, and library	6.2	6.8 *	7.3 *	5.4 *	21.79	24.50 *	22.76 *	23.57 *
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3	1.2 *	0.9 *	1.2	22.17	21.82	20.72 *	20.92 *
Healthcare practitioner and technical	5.1	6.5 *	5.6 *	5.5	29.82	31.02 *	32.90 *	31.79 *
Healthcare support	2.6	2.9 *	2.8	2.3 *	11.83	12.64 *	12.87 *	13.32 *
Protective service	2.3	2.4	2.4	1.8 *	17.81	18.01	22.97 *	17.31
Food preparation and serving related	8.3	7.4 *	7.1 *	7.4 *	8.86	9.31 *	9.83 *	9.63 *
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.3	3.2	3.1 *	3.4	10.86	11.95 *	12.21 *	11.60 *
Personal care and service	2.5	2.9 *	2.7 *	2.0 *	11.02	11.51	12.13 *	11.47 *
Sales and related	10.6	10.7	11.4 *	10.6	16.52	18.66 *	17.91 *	17.05
Office and administrative support	17.4	18.3 *	19.2 *	19.0 *	14.60	15.40 *	15.32 *	15.84 *
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.1 *	0.2 *	0.1 *	10.49	11.90 *	9.91	13.36 *
Construction and extraction	5.0	3.7 *	3.8 *	5.1	18.89	22.50 *	23.45 *	20.61 *
Installation, maintenance, and repair	4.0	3.5 *	4.1	3.8 *	18.78	20.25 *	20.25 *	20.39 *
Production	7.7	5.7 *	5.8 *	5.3 *	14.65	16.39 *	15.81 *	19.39 *
Transportation and material moving	7.3	6.0 *	8.1 *	6.1 *	14.16	14.71	14.43	14.59

\* = The employment share or mean hourly wage for this area is significantly different from the national average of all areas at the 90 percent confidence level.

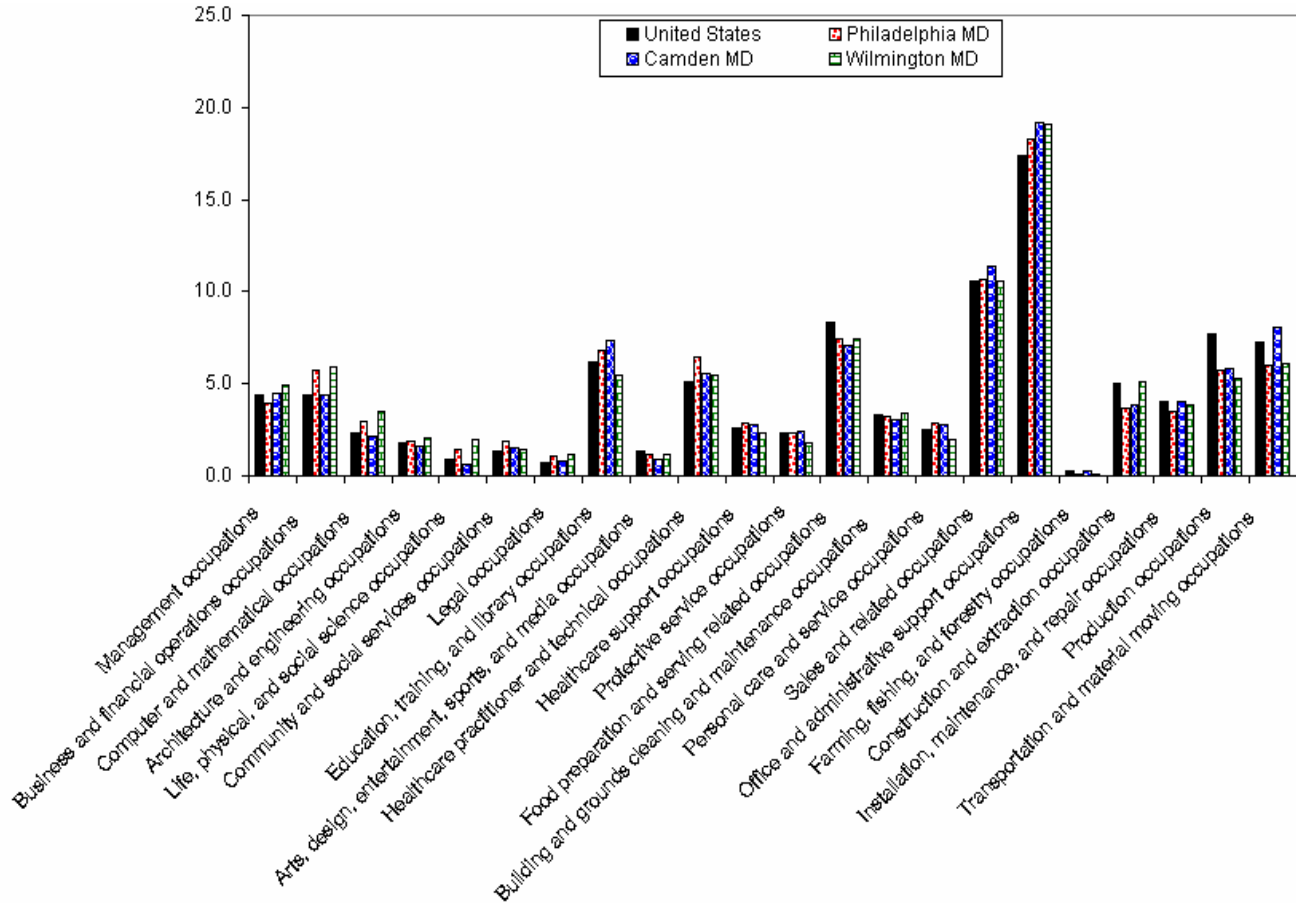
### **Occupational employment and wages in the Philadelphia Metropolitan Division**

The largest occupational group in the Philadelphia area was office and administrative support with a total of 341,930 workers representing 18.3 percent of area employment. This group's share of local employment was significantly above the U.S. average of 17.4 percent; nationally, this was also the largest occupational group. Sales and related jobs was the second-largest major occupational group in the Philadelphia area with 199,300 workers representing a 10.7-percent share of local employment, comparable to the national share of 10.6 percent. (See chart A.)

Employment shares were higher in Philadelphia than in the nation for 10 occupational groups, including healthcare practitioner and technical; business and financial operations; computer and mathematical; and education, training, and library occupations. In Philadelphia, the healthcare practitioner and technical occupational group had an employment share of 6.5 percent, compared to the national share of 5.1 percent. In the local area, the business and financial operations group accounted for 5.7 percent, compared to the U.S. average of 4.4 percent. Computer and mathematical and education, training, and library jobs had shares of 2.9 and 6.8 percent, respectively. Nationally, the respective shares for these occupations were 2.3 and 6.2 percent.

On the other hand, eight occupational groups in the Philadelphia area had employment shares significantly below the corresponding national averages; among these groups were production, construction and extraction, and transportation and material moving. In the Philadelphia area, 5.7 percent of workers held production jobs, compared to the U.S. average of 7.7 percent. Construction and extraction and transportation and material moving jobs had local shares of 3.7 and 6.0 percent, respectively; nationally, the shares were 5.0 and 7.3 percent.

**Chart A. Employment distribution in the United States and the Philadelphia, Camden and Wilmington Metropolitan Divisions by major occupational group**



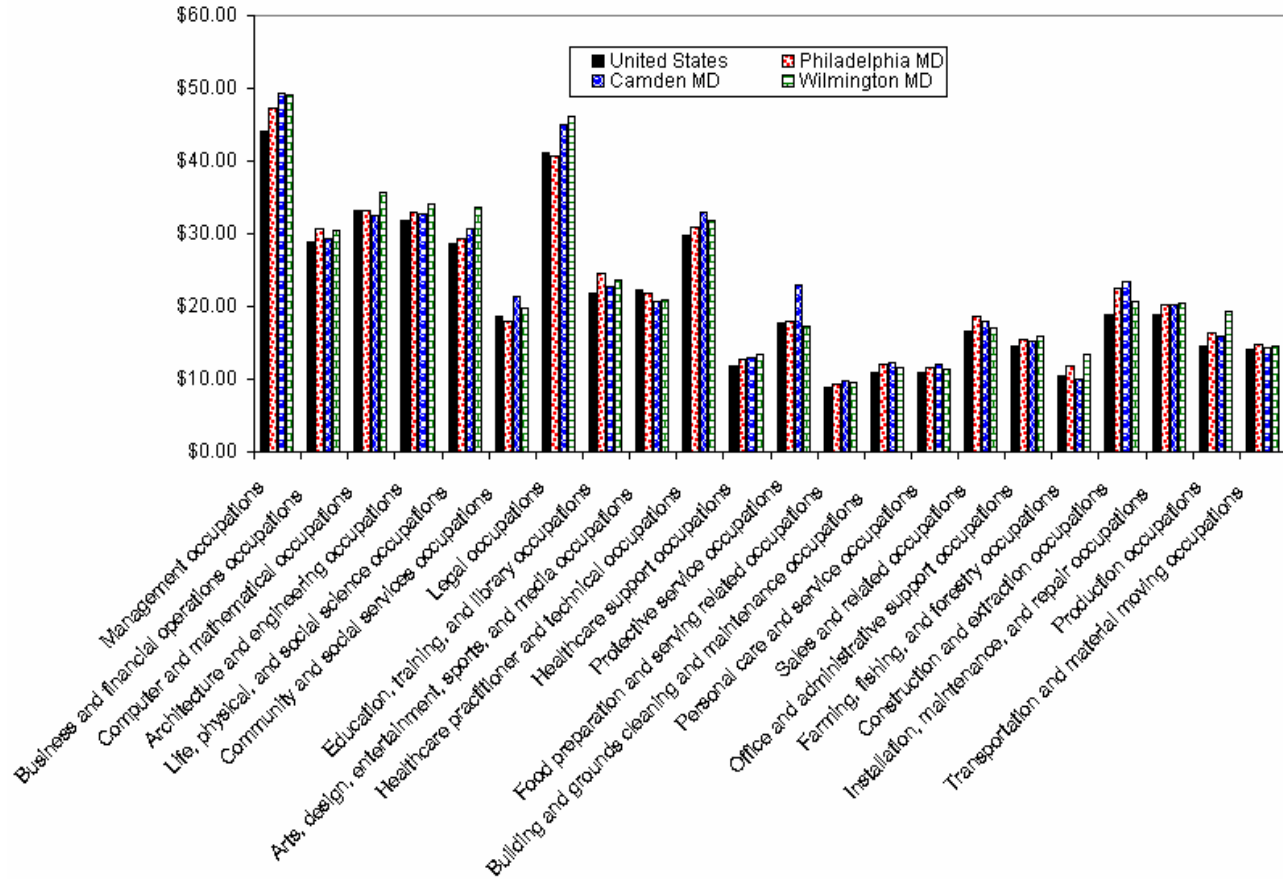
Management and legal occupations were the two highest-paying occupational groups in the Philadelphia area, with management positions averaging \$47.19 an hour and legal, \$40.59. (See chart B.) Nationwide, these were also the highest-paying occupational groups, with average earnings of \$44.20 in management and \$41.04 in legal occupations. The average wage for management was significantly higher in the Philadelphia area than for the nation, while the wage for legal occupations in Philadelphia was little different from the national average.

Computer and mathematical (\$33.27), architecture and engineering (\$32.89), healthcare practitioner and technical (\$31.02), and business and financial operations (\$30.58) were also among the better-paid occupational groups in Philadelphia. While wages for computer and mathematical occupations in Philadelphia were almost identical to those of the nation, the average wages for the other three groups locally were measurably higher than at the national level. Food preparation and serving related workers were the lowest-paid occupational group in the Philadelphia area at \$9.31 an hour; still, this wage was significantly higher than the national average of \$8.86.

### **Occupational employment and wages in the Camden Metropolitan Division**

Similar to Philadelphia, as well as the nation, the largest occupational group in the Camden area was office and administrative support with a total of 101,910 workers representing 19.2 percent of area employment. The local employment share for this group was significantly above the U.S. average. Sales and related jobs was the second-largest major occupational group in the Camden area with 60,420 workers and an 11.4-percent share of the local workforce, also significantly higher than the national average. Other occupational groups with above-average shares included education, training, and library (7.3 percent); transportation and material moving (8.1 percent); and healthcare practitioner and technical (5.6 percent).

**Chart B. Average hourly wages in the United States and the Philadelphia, Camden, and Wilmington metropolitan divisions by major occupational group**



Production and food preparation and serving related jobs were also among the larger occupational groups in Camden accounting for 5.8 and 7.1 percent of the workforce, respectively. However, the local employment shares of workers in both of these occupational groups were significantly lower than their representation nationally. Camden also posted lower employment shares than the nation in a number of other occupational groups including construction and extraction; arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media; and life, physical, and social science occupations.

As in Philadelphia, the two highest-paying occupational groups in the Camden area were management and legal at \$49.36 and \$44.97 an hour, respectively. Also like Philadelphia, the average wage for management in the Camden area was significantly higher than that for the nation, while the wage for the legal occupational group was not measurably different from the national average.

Healthcare practitioner and technical (\$32.90); architecture and engineering (\$32.74); computer and mathematical (\$32.60); and life, physical, and social science (\$30.78) occupations were also among the better-paid groups in Camden. Average wages for healthcare practitioner and technical and life, physical, and social science occupations were significantly higher than those for the nation, while wages for architecture and engineering and computer and mathematical jobs were not measurably different from their respective U.S. averages.

Similar to Philadelphia, food preparation and serving related workers were the lowest-paid group in the Camden area with an average wage of \$9.83 an hour. As in Philadelphia, the wages for these workers were significantly higher than the national average.

## **Occupational employment and wages in the Wilmington metropolitan division**

The largest major occupational groups in the Wilmington area were office and administrative support with 64,660 workers and sales and related with 35,930 workers. At 19.0 percent, the employment share for office and administrative support occupations was significantly higher in Wilmington than in the nation. However, the employment share for sales and related occupations was similar to the U.S. average. In addition to office and administrative support occupations, other occupational groups with an above-average presence included business and financial operations (5.9 percent); life, physical, and social science (2.0 percent); and computer and mathematical occupations (3.5 percent).

Food preparation and serving related and transportation and material moving jobs were among the larger occupational groups in Wilmington, accounting for 7.4 and 6.1 percent of the workforce, respectively. However, local employment shares for both groups were significantly lower than the corresponding national shares. Wilmington also posted lower employment shares than the nation in a number of other occupational groups, including production; education, training, and library; protective service; personal care and service; and healthcare support.

As in Philadelphia and Camden, management and legal occupations were the two highest-paying occupational groups in the Wilmington area with average wages of \$49.18 and \$46.03 an hour, respectively. The average wages for both groups in Wilmington were significantly higher than those for the nation.

Computer and mathematical (\$35.68); architecture and engineering (\$34.01); life, physical, and social science (\$33.67); healthcare practitioner and technical (\$31.79); and business and financial operations (\$30.49) occupations were also among the better-paid groups in Wilmington. Average wages for all five of these occupational groups in the Wilmington area were significantly higher than those for the nation.

Similar to Philadelphia and Camden, food preparation and serving related workers were the lowest-paid occupational group in the Wilmington area at \$9.63 an hour. As in Philadelphia and Camden, the wages for these workers were significantly higher than the national average.

The OES wage and employment data for the 22 major occupational groups in the Philadelphia, Camden and Wilmington metropolitan areas were compared to their respective national averages based on statistical significance testing. Only those occupations with wages or employment shares above or below the national wage or share after testing for significance at the 90-percent confidence level meet the criteria.

NOTE: A value that is statistically different from another does not necessarily mean that the difference has economic or practical significance. Statistical significance is concerned with the ability to make confident statements about a universe based on a sample. It is entirely possible that a large difference between two values is not significantly different statistically, while a small difference is, since both the size and heterogeneity of the sample affect the relative error of the data being tested.

### **Technical Note**

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is a semiannual mail survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands also are surveyed, but their data are not included in this release. OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Forms are mailed to approximately 200,000 establishments in May and November of each year for a 3-year period. The nationwide response rate for the May 2006 survey was 78.1 percent based on establishments and 73.4 percent based on employment. The survey included establishments sampled in the May 2006, November 2005, May 2005, November 2004, May 2004, and November 2003 semiannual panels. The sample in the Philadelphia metropolitan division included 12,076 establishments with a response rate of 73 percent. In the Camden and Wilmington metropolitan divisions, the samples included 4,472 and 3,820 establishments, respectively, with response rates of 69 and 78 percent.

## The occupational coding system

The OES survey uses the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) occupational classification system, the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system. The SOC system is the first OMB-required occupational classification system for federal agencies. The OES survey categorizes workers in 1 of 801 detailed occupations. Together, these detailed occupations make up 23 major occupational groups, 22 of which are covered in this release. The one exception is military specific occupations which are not included in the OES survey.

For more information about the SOC system, please see the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Web site at <http://www.bls.gov/soc/>.

## The industry coding system

The OES survey uses the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). For more information about NAICS, see the BLS Web site at <http://www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm>.

## Survey sample

BLS funds the survey and provides the procedures and technical support, while the State Workforce Agencies (SWAs) collect most of the data. BLS produces cross-industry and industry-specific estimates for the nation, states, and metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs). Industry-specific estimates are produced at the NAICS sector, 3-digit, 4-digit, and selected 5-digit industry levels. BLS releases all cross-industry and national estimates; the SWAs release industry-specific estimates at the state and MSA levels.

State Unemployment Insurance (UI) files provide the universe from which the OES survey draws its sample. Employment benchmarks are obtained from reports submitted by employers to the UI program. The OES survey sample is stratified by metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas and industry. Samples selected in panels prior to May 2005 were stratified using MSA definitions based on the 1990 Metropolitan Statistical Area standards. Beginning with the May 2005 panel, the sample was stratified using new MSA definitions based on the 2000 Metropolitan Statistical Area standards.

## Concepts

*Occupational employment* is the estimate of total wage and salary employment in an occupation across the industries surveyed. The OES survey defines employment as the number of workers who can be classified as full- or part-time employees, including workers on paid vacations or other types of paid leave; workers on unpaid short-term absences; salaried officers, executives, and staff members of incorporated firms; employees temporarily assigned to other units; and employees for whom the reporting unit is their permanent duty station regardless of whether that unit prepares their paycheck.

*Wages* for the OES survey are straight-time, gross pay, exclusive of premium pay. Base rate, cost-of-living allowances, guaranteed pay, hazardous-duty pay, incentive pay including commissions and production bonuses, tips, and on-call pay are included. Excluded are: back pay, jury duty pay, overtime pay, severance pay, shift differentials, non-production bonuses, employer cost for supplementary benefits, and tuition reimbursements.

*Mean hourly wage.* The mean hourly wage rate for an occupation is the total wages that all workers in the occupation earn in an hour divided by the total employment of the occupation. To calculate the mean hourly wage of each occupation, total weighted hourly wages are summed across all intervals and divided by the occupation's weighted survey employment. The mean wage for each interval is based on occupational wage data collected by the BLS Office of Compensation and Working Conditions for the National Compensation Survey (NCS).



*Annual Wage.* Many employees are paid at an hourly rate by their employers and may work more than or less than 40 hours per week. Annual wage estimates for most occupations in this release are calculated by multiplying the mean hourly wage by a "year-round, full-time" figure of 2,080 hours (52 weeks by 40 hours). Thus, annual wage estimates may not represent the actual annual pay received by the employee if they work more or less than 2,080 hours per year. Some workers typically work less than fulltime, year round. For these occupations, the OES survey collects and reports either the annual salary or the hourly wage rate, depending on how the occupation is typically paid, but not both. For example, teachers, flight attendants, and pilots may be paid an annual salary, but do not work the usual 2,080 hours per year. In this case, an annual salary is reported. Other workers, such as entertainment workers, are paid hourly rates, but generally do not work full time, year round. For these workers, only an hourly wage is reported.

*Hourly versus Annual Wage Reporting.* For each occupation, respondents are asked to report the number of employees paid within specific wage intervals. The intervals are defined both as hourly rates and the corresponding annual rates, where the annual rate for an occupation is calculated by multiplying the hourly wage rate by a typical work year of 2,080 hours. The responding establishment can reference either the hourly or the annual rate for full-time workers, but they are instructed to report the hourly rate for part-time workers.

### **Estimation methodology**

Each OES panel includes approximately 200,000 establishments. The OES survey is designed to produce estimates using six panels (3 years) of data. The full six-panel sample of 1.2 million establishments allows the production of estimates at detailed levels of geography, industry, and occupation.

*Wage Updating.* Significant reductions in sampling errors are obtained by combining six panels of data, particularly for small geographic areas and occupations. Wages for the current panel need no adjustment. However, wages in the five previous panels need to be updated to the current panel's reference period.

The OES program uses the BLS Employment Cost Index (ECI) to adjust survey data from prior panels before combining them with the current panel's data. The wage updating procedure adjusts each detailed occupation's wage rate, as measured in the earlier panel, according to the average movement of its broader occupational division. The procedure assumes that there are no major differences by geography, industry, or detailed occupation within the occupational division.

*May 2006 OES survey estimates.* The May 2006 OES survey estimates are based on all data collected from establishments in the May 2006, November 2005, May 2005, November 2004, May 2004, November 2003 semiannual samples.

*Reliability of the estimates.* Estimates calculated from a sample survey are subject to two types of error: sampling and nonsampling. Sampling error occurs when estimates are calculated from a subset (that is, a sample) of the population instead of the full population. When a sample of the population is surveyed, there is a chance that the sample estimate of the characteristic of interest may differ from the population value of that characteristic. Differences between the sample estimate and the population value will vary depending on the sample selected. This variability can be estimated by calculating the standard error (SE) of the sample estimate. If we were to repeat the sampling and estimation process countless times using the same survey design, approximately 90 percent of the intervals created by adding and subtracting 1.645 SEs from the sample estimate would include the population value. These intervals are called 90-percent confidence intervals. The OES survey, however, usually uses the relative standard error (RSE) of a sample estimate instead of its SE to measure sampling error. RSE is defined as the SE of a sample estimate divided by the sample estimate itself. This statistic provides the user with a measure of the relative precision of the sample estimate. RSEs are calculated for both occupational employment and mean wage rate estimates. Occupational employment RSEs are calculated using a subsample, random group replication technique called the jackknife. Mean wage rate RSEs are calculated using a variance components model that accounts for both the observed and unobserved components of the wage data. The variances of the unobserved components are estimated using wage data from the BLS National Compensation Survey. In general, estimates based on many establishments have lower RSEs than estimates based on few establishments. If the distributional assumptions of the models are violated, the resulting confidence intervals may not reflect the prescribed level of confidence.

*Nonsampling error* occurs for a variety of reasons, none of which are directly connected to sampling. Examples of nonsampling error include: nonresponse, data incorrectly reported by the respondent, mistakes made in entering collected data into the database, and mistakes made in editing and processing the collected data.

### **Additional information**

The May 2006 OES national data by occupation, comparable to data in table 1, are available on the BLS Web site at <http://www.bls.gov/oes/>. Users also may access each occupation's definition and percentile wages. The May 2006 cross-industry data for states and metropolitan areas are also available on the BLS Web site, as are the industry staffing patterns at the sector, 3-, 4-, and selected 5-digit NAICS levels. These data include industry-specific occupational employment and wage data. A more detailed technical note for OES is available at <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm>.

OES information is available through our regional web page at <http://www.bls.gov/ro3/home.htm>. If you have additional questions, you can contact the Mid-Atlantic Information Office at 215-597-3282. Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; TDD message referral phone number: 1-800-877-8339.

More detailed Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Major Groups for the Philadelphia, Camden, and Wilmington metropolitan divisions are available on the Web site at <http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcma.htm>.