

# *State of Rhode Island*

## **PY 2004 Workforce Information Grant Plan**

September 24, 2004

### **A. Statewide Workforce Information System**

- **The process used to ensure that the SWIB can exercise its responsibility for ensuring that state workforce information policy is responsive to the needs of the state and local workforce investment system.**

The RI Human Resource Investment Council (HRIC) oversees the State's One-Stop System of Local Offices, called *netWORKri*, as well as the products and activities of the State's Workforce Information System. The HRIC serves as the State's Workforce Investment Board under the Workforce Investment Act. The Executive Director of the HRIC is also the Director of the Department of Labor and Training (DLT). The State Workforce Investment Office is located within DLT and there are currently two local Workforce Investment Boards, *The Workforce Partnership of Greater Rhode Island* and *Workforce Solutions of Providence-Cranston*.

The Workforce Development Services division at DLT has administrative oversight responsibility for the *netWORKri* offices while the Labor Market Information (LMI) division has responsibility for the State's Workforce Information system. The heads of both divisions report directly to the Director of DLT. The Labor Market Information division works in conjunction with *netWORKri* staff to ensure that they are receiving the type of information needed to best perform their primary mission of connecting people with jobs.

In response to the Employment and Training Administration's desire to have the State WIB play a more central role in determining how the funds received for this grant period for core products (3) through (6) are spent, approval of the work plan was discussed at the HRIC's June 2004 meeting. The HRIC authorized its Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Oversight Committee to review the work plan for those core products and services, and to approve the work plan on its behalf. Subsequent to that action, the WIA subcommittee was unable to muster a quorum for a meeting to review the completed work plan. As a result, the work plan was submitted to the Governor for his approval on behalf of the state WIB. The Governor approved the work plan and submitted the same to ETA under his signature.

- **How the statewide workforce information system supports the goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan for state and local workforce development.**

The RI Workforce Information System will support the goals of the State's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan for state and local workforce investment by:

- Seeking input and feedback from the LMI Committee, the WIA Oversight Committee and the State and local WIBs on its products and services.
  - Providing universal access to its products and services through the State's *netWORKri* offices and electronically over the Internet through its LMI web site and through its Internet application, RI Research and Economic Database.
  - Working with *netWORKri* staff and Employer Service Representatives to improve existing products and services and to develop new products and services of use to our common customers.
  - Providing information on the local economies down to the city and town level when possible.
  - Providing timely wage, training, education and employment information on growth industries and occupations.
  - Taking advantage of opportunities to implement nationally developed systems and products (i.e. Internet Delivery Systems, Job Vacancy Surveys, Benefits Surveys) in RI.
- **How the grant activities are consistent with the strategic vision of the Governor and the SWIB.**

The HRIC's mission is to provide leadership as an active partner in the State's long-term, economic development strategies. The State's strategic goals are divided into four broad areas:

- Economic Development - To assist companies to improve their capability to compete in today's marketplace and to assist employers with their training needs.
- Continuous Learning - To augment traditional learning programs for RI residents; to focus on teaching skills directly applicable to the world of work; and to reach students of all ages, encourage internships, apprenticeships, literacy programs and other innovative educational systems.
- Resource Utilization - To maximize spending by reducing duplication and focusing on innovative solutions and to build networks that link scattered organizations into cohesive, intelligent systems.
- Target Populations - To address the distinct needs of those at risk of "falling through the cracks" of traditional support services and to implement inventive solutions via creative partnerships.

The goals are summarized by the tag line of the *netWORKri* offices - *To connect people with jobs*. The purpose of the grant activities is to support this goal by providing the workforce information needed to help make that connection between people and jobs. The grant activities will provide a wide array of workforce information on both a state and local level. They will give policy makers information on which to base their decisions for job training, to employers on how competitive their wage and benefit structures are, to job seekers on what jobs will be most in demand and what the educational and training requirements are, and to workforce professionals as they try to advise workers about the job market.

- **The strategy of the SWA and the SWIB for consulting with local workforce investment boards and stakeholders in the workforce investment system to determine customer needs for workforce information.**

The HRIC has established a Labor Market Information Committee to provide advice to DLT's LMI unit concerning the relevance of the products and activities funded by the One-Stop LMI Grant. It also advises the HRIC on LMI-related issues. The chair of the LMI Committee represents our Economic Development Corporation and is currently a member of the Board of the State's largest WIB, *The Workforce Partnership of Greater Rhode Island*. The LMI Committee includes members from various agencies including the Department of Labor and Training, Department of Human Services, the Office of Rehabilitation Services, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Community College of RI, the University of Rhode Island, the RI Economic Policy Council, the RI Economic Development Corporation, the United Way of RI, the RI School Counselor Association as well as a representative from business and labor. DLT's LMI unit provides staff support to the committee. Our LMI Director currently serves as a regional representative on the NASWA LMI Committee.

As previously mentioned, the LMI Committee represents not only the State WIB but also has representation from the largest of the two State WIBs, the Workforce Partnership of Greater Rhode Island, which consists of 37 of the State's 39 cities and towns. LMI Committee input and the administrative organization at DLT ensure that the activities and planned outcomes support the State's strategic workforce investments as outlined in the State's Five-Year Workforce Investment Plan for WIA/Wagner-Peyser. The LMI Committee also oversees the activities of the State's Career Resource Network, which is also the responsibility of DLT's LMI unit. The LMI Committee provides input, feedback and suggestions for our annual work plan.

This organizational structure has proven to be advantageous to the overall coordination of the State's LMI efforts in the past. The diverse membership of the LMI Committee, which includes WIB and business representation, has enabled all constituencies to provide input into the products and activities produced with the One-Stop LMI Grant funds. It has also helped DLT and the LMI unit in securing support and funding for its LMI training activities from the State WIB. The LMI Committee has taken an active role in advising the LMI unit and provided active support in securing the LMI training funds. With their support, the RI Human Resource Investment Council (HRIC) provided \$40,000 in state funds in PY 2000 to develop LMI's Internet application (the *Analyzer*: [www.dlt.state.ri.us/analyzer](http://www.dlt.state.ri.us/analyzer)) for business and research users. In addition, the HRIC previously earmarked up to \$600,000 over a three-year period to support the LMI Committee's LMI Training initiative. This initiative has just completed its third and final year.

Finally, the LMI unit has designated an employee to act as a liaison to work with the *netWORKri* managers, Employer Service Representatives and WIB staff to get direct feedback on LMI products and services. This person plays a central role in measuring customer satisfaction with our products and services.

- **The broad strategic approach for workforce information delivery to principal customers.**

Workforce information will be made available to our customers in both hard copy and electronic format. The LMI unit maintains its own web site that includes the full extent of labor market information collected through its contracts with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Employment and Training Administration, and the US Department of Education. In addition to the web page, the LMI unit has contracted with an outside vendor to provide an interactive workforce information delivery system (called the RI Research and Economic Database).

The LMI unit provides training to the *netWORKri* staff and to other members of the State workforce development system who have need of this information. We try to address the needs of our employer community by working with the State's Employer Service Representatives.

- **How workforce information and services are delivered as core services to customers through the state's One-Stop service delivery system.**

Universal access is ensured through the LMI web site and interactive Internet delivery system (the RI Research and Economic Database). In addition, copies of our products are provided to all *netWORKri* offices for display and use by walk-in customers. Specific products have been developed for the *netWORKri* offices based on feedback from center managers.

- **A description of the customer consultation and satisfaction assessment method(s) to be used to collect and interpret customer satisfaction information and the principal customers to be consulted.**

Customer consultation and satisfaction assessment begin with the contact LMI staff has with the *netWORKri* staff and the State's Employer Service Representatives. The HRIC LMI Committee also has provided valuable feedback and advice in the past on potential useful products and services. Finally, customer satisfaction forms will be included with our hard copy publications for direct feedback from customers.

- **A concise summary of customer satisfaction findings for the most recent survey of products and services and the effect those findings had on the planned products and services for PY 2004 including how the plan addresses inadequacies or gaps identified by users.**

The feedback we have gotten from our customers indicates general satisfaction with what has been produced to date. There have been some suggestions for improvements and new products that have been included in last year's plan and this year's proposed plan. After we did our initial Job Vacancy Survey in PY 2002, we received positive feedback from the Health Services industry about their desire for more information specific to their industry. In response to their interest, we developed a new publication, *Health Services in the Ocean*

*State - An Analysis of Employment and Wages in Rhode Island's Health Care Industry.* Their desire to focus on information on Health Services occupations also led to our decision to conduct a PY 2003 Job Vacancy Survey tailored to the Health Services industry that went out with letters of support from two Health Service organizations.

Our contact with the State's Employer Service Representatives has led to new products being developed. One is a "LMI for Business Brochure" developed with employers in mind. Past requests have also indicated that an employee benefits survey would provide useful information to employers and workers. This has been included in our current PY work plan.

- **Identify funds leveraged or matched from funding sources other than these grant funds and how these funds will enhance delivery of products and services as part of the State's workforce information system.**

We have just completed a three-year LMI Training project in conjunction with the Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University that was funded with state funds by a grant from our HRIC. Prior to that, we also received \$40,000 in state funds to develop our original Internet application for the business community.

While no funds have been earmarked for specific purposes as yet during this program year, the HRIC is open to future proposals depending on the specific purpose, funding requested, and availability of state funds.

## **B. Core Products and Services**

### ***STATE WORKFORCE AGENCY DELIVERABLES***

#### **1. Continue to populate the ALMIS Database with state data.**

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

This will be an ongoing task throughout the program year. We are currently using version 2.2 of the ALMIS database. We will upgrade to newer versions as they are made available by the ALMIS Database Consortium.

We have expanded beyond the core data tables and will continue to add and maintain data tables to the extent possible. Tables are updated on a weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual basis depending on the data type and frequency of publication. We will also maintain and update the following occupational licensing files: license.dbf, licauth.dbf and lichist.dbf. The latest files have been submitted through the National Crosswalk Service Center for inclusion on the America's Career Information Network (ACINet) site using the O\*NET SOC coding taxonomy. Funds will be used for personnel costs associated with the collection, review and entering of data.

We have sent an individual to both the basic and advanced ALMIS Database Training courses offered by the LMI Institute in previous years. We fully intend to take advantage

of the resources and future training opportunities provided to the states through the LMI Institute or by other means.

We had previously procured an Internet web application (RI Research and Economic Database) that allows our customers easy access to information on the State ALMIS Database. Individual models are provided for Services to Individuals, Services to Employers and Labor Market Analysis. We continue to maintain and update this application. We will be using a portion of funds (\$5,000) from this part of the grant to help pay for Network Attached Storage to expand the capacity of our current server. Another \$5,000 will be allocated from the funds set aside for core products 3 through 6.

- **Customer support for product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations**

This is a required work item specified by ETA. It provides the backbone of information for our Internet delivery system, RI Research and Economic Database (RI RED), which has been well received by our *netWORKri* centers and other workforce development system users. One of our *netWORKri* managers sent the following e-mail message: *"Congratulations on this new web site. I am beginning to use it and am telling others in the office about it. Tremendous job!!!!"*

- **Support goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan**

It provides the means for universal access of our workforce information by our customers. Information is provided down to the city and town level whenever possible and also aggregated for our two WIB areas. The information is kept up-to-date so that the latest information is always available electronically for our customers.

- **Principal Customers**

The principal beneficiary of this activity will be the *netWORKri* One-Stop Career Centers and their front-line employment counselors as they help the unemployed search for work. Since this database is the backbone of our Internet delivery product, the RI Research and Economic Database, it will also benefit other customers who have access to the Internet - students and their parents, teachers and career counselors, job seekers, employers, and labor market professionals.

- **Projected outcome(s) and system impact(s)**

It will allow us to continue to provide our data electronically to our customers on a timely and cost-efficient basis.

- **Planned milestones**

Files will continue to be updated on a weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual basis depending on the availability of data. Should a new version of the ALMIS database become available, we will upgrade to that version as soon as possible.

- **Estimated costs (identify equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost)**

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.43
Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$ 43,000
Estimated travel/training costs:	\$ 1,500
Estimated share of cost of Network Attached Storage:	\$ 5,000

## **2. Produce and disseminate industry and occupational employment projections.**

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

**a)** We recently completed our industry and occupational projections with calendar year 2002 as the base year and 2012 as the projected year, in coordination with the BLS National Projections for the same time period. We used the methodology, software tools and guidelines developed by the Long-Term Employment Projections Consortium and the MicroMatrix User's Group, in consultation with BLS and ETA. This data was used to populate the ALMIS database and was submitted for public dissemination following procedures established by the Consortium in consultation with BLS and ETA. We will continue to review the projections output and make any revisions as needed during the year as new information becomes available.

Rhode Island does not plan to produce sub-state, long-term projections. Our State LMI Committee, which represents the state WIB on LMI issues, has previously discussed this issue and it was agreed that the State's small size negates the need and usability of such data for RI. Since RI is essentially one large labor market, it makes little sense to try and break the projections down into smaller areas. Every resident is within easy commuting distance of any employer within the state.

**b)** We will produce and disseminate State-level, short-term industry and occupational employment forecasts using the methodology, software tools and guidelines developed by the Short-Term Forecasts Consortium and the MicroMatrix User's Group, in consultation with ETA. We plan to use the fourth quarter 2004 as the base quarter and forecast to the fourth quarter 2006. We will submit the forecast data for public dissemination in accordance with procedures to be developed by the Consortium in consultation with ETA.

As with the long-term projections, Rhode Island does not plan to produce sub-State, short-term forecasts. Our State LMI Committee discussed this issue and it was agreed that the State's small size negates the need and usability of such data for RI. Every resident is within easy commuting distance of any employer in the state.

- **Customer support for product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations**

These two items are required ETA work items. Our long-term projections data are essential in identifying the high-growth occupations and industries for our customers.

- **Support goals of the state’s WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan**

This grant activity provides information that is necessary for planners and policy-makers to make decisions on where to spend job training dollars and what occupations are appropriate for job seekers to be trained in. This information is also extremely helpful to the educational community in assisting students in making future career decisions.

- **Principal Customers**

The principal customers for the long-term industry and occupational projections include career counselors, students and their parents, teachers, training providers, state and local planners, employers and economic development professionals.

- **Projected outcome(s) and system impact(s)**

This information will be available for users to review and update their training plans as needed.

- **Planned milestones**

We expect to complete our long-term 2012 projections early in this program year and begin disseminating the information through electronic methods and hard-copy publications. The new short-term projections based on the fourth quarter 2004 data and projecting through the fourth quarter 2006, will be completed by June 2005.

- **Estimated costs (identify equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost)**

Long-Term Projections:

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.43
Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$ 43,000
Estimated cost of Annual Projections Publication:	\$ 3,000
Estimated cost of Industry-Specific Projections Pamphlets:	\$ 1,582
Estimated travel/training costs:	\$ 4,000

Short-Term Projections:

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.20
Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$20,000
Estimated travel/training costs:	\$ 2,000



**STATE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD (SWIB)/STATE WORKFORCE AGENCY (SWA) DELIVERABLES**

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

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

Since our LMI unit also has responsibility for the Career Resource Network in RI, we work in conjunction with Career Resource staff to produce various occupational and career information products. During the last program year, LMI staff and CRN staff collaborated in producing the *RI Career Anchor*. The publication was completed in the second half of the last program year and 50,000 copies were produced. Most of these copies were distributed to high schools throughout the State. This is one of our most popular products for students, their parents and teachers and is in great demand by the educational community. During this year, LMI staff will again assist CRN staff to produce a product similar to the *RI Career Anchor* geared towards the middle schools in the State.

We have also been producing and will continue to produce a series of eight occupational information brochures and pamphlets with wage data and occupational projections data. They include: Opportunities in Construction; Opportunities in Education; Opportunities in Finance, Insurance and Real Estate; Opportunities in High Technology Opportunities in Health Services; Opportunities in Leisure & Hospitality; Opportunities in Manufacturing; and Opportunities in Retail Trade. This program year we will update these brochures to reflect the NAICS coding structure as well as the new occupational projections and the latest occupational wage data. A wage book containing employment and wage data for more than 500 occupations and a shorter pamphlet for the 20 most common occupations (they represent 75 percent of total employment) will also be produced.

In response to requests from school-based counselors, we will produce a new pamphlet highlighting the educational and training requirements for occupations in demand based on our latest projections. This product should also prove useful to *netWORKri* staff. In addition, posters that provide information on the highest demand occupations (i.e. fastest growing occupations) will be developed for these groups.

Most of these materials will be printed in-house on our Color Copier/Printer and funds will be used to pay the associated costs.

- **Customer support for product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations**

The "Opportunities in..." brochures have been well received by *netWORKri* staff and customers. They provide the basic information needed on occupations and wages in specific industries and can be given out to job seekers to be used as a handy reference. Past feedback from school-based counselors led to the development of the new pamphlet

that includes the educational and training requirements for the occupations in demand based on our long-term projections. These brochures recently received the 2004 NASWA LMI Communications Publication Award in the category of Product or Service for One-Stops.

- **Support goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan**

These products support the goals of the State's plan by providing information on training needs, identifying educational and training requirements for demand occupations to facilitate development of training programs, and by informing students of what they need to do to qualify for certain careers.

- **Principal Customers**

The principal customers for these products will be individuals who attend our LMI training sessions, our *netWORKri* One-Stop Career Center staff and the unemployed customers as they seek to determine their employment prospects in various occupations. The Career Anchor is geared specifically towards high school students, their parents and educational counselors. That product is funded primarily through our Career Resource Network grant.

- **Projected outcome(s) and system impact(s)**

The projected outcome is a more informed community of service providers and a better informed work force on the educational and training requirements for various jobs. The products developed and distributed under this section will raise awareness among high school students, teachers and parents on the local job market and enable them to make more informed career decisions. This should also lead to better decisions being made by those involved in making decisions on the best training opportunities.

- **Planned milestones**

This activity will be continuous throughout the Program Year. The series of eight "Opportunities in..." pamphlets will be updated with the new projections data during the first half of the program year and then again during the second half of the program year after more current wage data becomes available. The posters on high demand occupations should be completed by the end of the first half of the Program Year. The pamphlet on the educational and training requirements should be available early in the second half of the Program Year.

- **Estimated costs (identify equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost)**

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.25
Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$ 25,000
Estimated cost of Printing Services:	\$ 3,000

**4. 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**

- a) The LMI unit will continue to provide staff support for the State LMI Committee which serves as the LMI authority for the State Workforce Investment Board (also known as the RI Human Resource Investment Council). The LMI Committee also has representation from the largest of the two State WIBs, the Workforce Partnership of Greater Rhode Island, which consists of 37 of the State's 39 cities and towns. LMI Committee support will be an ongoing activity and provides for continuous feedback from our users.

In the past, our work with the committee directly resulted in state funds to support the development of the LMI *Analyzer* Internet product (\$40,000) and the current three-year (now in its third year) LMI Training project with Northeastern University for career and employment counselors (\$600,000). Two years the LMI Training project received a 2002 National Customer Service Award in the *Building a World Class Workforce: Professional Development and Capacity Building* category from the U.S. Department of Labor and the National Association of State Workforce Agencies.

- b) We recently completed our latest Job Vacancy Survey which was started in the last Program Year focused on the Health Services sector. We published the results in a booklet and pamphlet in August 2004. We also listed these publications on our web site ([www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi/jys/results04.htm](http://www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi/jys/results04.htm)) and sent out a News Release in September 2004. We used the tools developed by the National Job Vacancy Survey Workgroup. We also purchased the required Base SAS software as part of this effort and will continue to maintain it through the payment of the annual maintenance fee. We will use funds from this year's grant to do a follow-up survey of our first statewide Job Vacancy Survey beginning in spring of 2005 with an expected completion date of July 2005.
- c) We also plan to develop and conduct our first employee benefits survey. This is a piece of information often requested by employers, policy makers and economic development professionals in our state. This will also benefit workforce investment board officials. We will examine surveys conducted by other states to benefit from their experience. The survey will be developed in the first half of the program year and implemented in the second half of the program year.
- d) We will also use some funds to pay our prorated share of the Agency's membership in the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA). Our annual membership provides us with valuable information and provides support for our LMI efforts. We estimate our LMI share of the membership cost to be about \$3,000. We will also use some funds to support our LMI Director's participation on the NASWA LMI Committee as the Region One representative.

- e) This activity will include the cost of our monthly Employment Bulletin, our annual Employment Trends pamphlets, and our pamphlets describing our Internet products and web site. Based on customer feedback, our Employment Bulletin will be updated during this Program Year.

The pamphlets and our Occupational brochures were used as handouts in our recently completed LMI Training project with Northeastern University. We will continue to provide training using our own staff during the current program year.

- f) We are also investigating participating in the Local Employment Dynamics program with the Census Bureau during this Program Year. We are currently working internally on the Memorandum of Understanding necessary for our participation. Based on advice from our Legal staff, we will be submitting legislation to change our state confidentiality law to allow our participation in this program. In preparation for our participation in the program, we sent a staff member to the September 2004 training offered for analysts on Quarterly Workforce Indicators.

- **Customer support for product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations**

- a) LMI staff support for the LMI Committee was a result of the HRIC desire to have that Committee advise the larger HRIC on workforce information matters. The HRIC support for the LMI Training project and the LMI *Analyzer* Internet application indicates their support and satisfaction with the activities supported by the LMI Committee.
- b) Our last Job Vacancy Survey generated interest from the Health Services industry. We expect that a follow-up to our original survey will provide us with a measure of how the economy is doing.
- c) Information on the type of benefits the employees receive is one of the items most requested by employers, economic development professionals and workers. Information received from other states that have conducted these surveys indicates that the information is very useful to these customers.
- d) NASWA has proven to be a valuable resource for information, technical advice and national workforce system coordination.
- e) Our current Employment Bulletin mailing list includes only those who have expressed a desire to receive this monthly information.
- f) ETA has indicated their support to the Census Bureau to expand this program to additional states. Feedback on the usefulness of the output from the 30 that are currently part of the program has been encouraging.

- **Support goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan**

All of these products support the State's goals by providing useful and timely information on the condition of the State's workforce and the current demand for workers. They will help the workforce development professionals make decisions on training and employment needs. We are taking advantage of nationally developed systems to acquire local information.

- **Principal Customers**

- a) The principal customer or beneficiary of our work with the State LMI Committee is the *netWORKri* system itself as we get feedback and suggestions for improvements to LMI data and products. This is one of the ways we learn what the WIBs and other workforce development system partners need in the way of workforce information.
- b) The principal customers for the Job Vacancy Survey are the HRIC, the local WIBS, *netWORKri* managers and economic development professionals.
- c) The principal customers for the Employee Benefit Survey are employers, job seekers, and economic development professionals.
- d) The principal customer for our support of NASWA is the Department of Labor and Training itself from the information and support provided by NASWA to the agency on a broad range of workforce development issues.
- e) Our principal customers for these products are the employers, workforce professionals in the *netWORKri* system, and State and local government personnel involved in economic planning.
- f) Principal customers will likely be the local workforce boards and local planners that need more localized information. This program should also benefit the *netWORKri* centers by providing localized data.

- **Projected outcome(s) and system impact(s)**

- a) It is expected that the continued use of the LMI Committee to provide guidance and feedback for LMI products and services will continue to satisfy the needs of the HRIC, the local WIBS and other workforce development partners.
- b) Our second Job Vacancy Survey will give us an opportunity to measure the change in the State's job vacancy rate since the first survey. This will provide another gauge to measure the progress made by the State's economy since the last survey.
- c) We expect our first employee benefits survey to be a very popular product. It should satisfy requests we get from employers, job seekers and economic development professionals about RI specific data.

- d) Our participation in NASWA should allow DLT to keep up-to-date on many workforce development issues. Our Assistant Director's participation on the NASWA LMI Committee will allow us to have a voice in national decisions on workforce information and allow us to benefit from products developed in other states.
- e) Our Employment Bulletin is meant to keep the employer community informed about the current employment trends both locally and statewide. It is a good vehicle for maintaining contact with interested employers.
- f) Better localized information will be available to local entities on the characteristics of the workforce.

- **Planned milestones**

- a) Participation in the LMI Committee will be an ongoing activity during the program year.
- b) The Job Vacancy Survey will be implemented during the spring of 2005 with planned completion by July 2005.
- c) The Employee Benefits Survey will be developed during the first half of the Program Year with a planned completion date of June 2005.
- d) This will be a continuous activity throughout the Program Year.
- e) This will be a continuous activity throughout the Program Year.
- f) The first half of the Program Year will be devoted to completing the Memorandum of Understanding, familiarizing ourselves with the data that is needed for our participation, requesting the necessary files from our data processing division, and taking the Quarterly Workforce Indicator training. We hope to be on board as an active participant in this program by the end of the second half of the Program Year.

- **Estimated costs (identify equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost)**

- a) LMI Committee Support:

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.20
Estimated Personnel-Related cost	\$ 20,000

- b) Job Vacancy Survey:

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.25
Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$ 24,617
Maintenance Fee for the Base SAS software:	\$ 1,306
Estimated cost of Publication and Pamphlets:	\$ 1,000

c) Employee Benefits Survey:

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.19
Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$ 19,000
Estimated cost of Mailing and Publications:	\$ 2,000

d) NASWA membership and participation:

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.10
Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$ 10,000
Annual Membership Prorated Fee for NASWA:	\$ 3,000
Estimated travel costs:	\$ 4,272

e) Employment Bulletin, employment trends and other pamphlets:

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.10
Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$ 10,000
Estimated cost of Publication and Pamphlets:	\$ 5,000

f) Local Employment Dynamics program:

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.18
Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$ 18,159
Estimated Programming costs:	\$ 7,000
Estimated travel/training costs:	\$ 3,000

**5. Maintain and enhance electronic state workforce information delivery systems.**

• **Description of core product, service or other demand activity**

- a) LMI staff will continue to maintain our LMI web site and ensure that the latest information is always available on-line once it has been released. This includes all of our economic data series as well as our products produced under this contract. Links to other useful economic web sites will also be updated on a regular basis.
- b) LMI staff will continue to provide e-mail notification of the availability of new products/information to users who have requested it through *LMI Stat Track*. To date we have over seven hundred names on this e-mail list.
- c) LMI staff will work with our vendor to fully implement our new RI Research and Economic Database Internet application that will replace our former Job Seeker and Analyzer applications. One of the new features on this application is a direct link from an occupation to actual job openings on America's Job Bank, Monster Jobs and Hot Jobs. We will be using a portion of funds (\$5,000) from this part of the grant to

help pay for Network Attached Storage to expand the capacity of our current server. Another \$5,000 will be allocated from the funds set aside for core products 1 and 2.

- **Customer support for product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations**

- a) Customer feedback on our newly designed LMI web site has been very positive. Usage of the web site (measured by hits on various pages) has been increasing.
- b) The *LMI Stat Track* e-mail notification system has been well received with over seven hundred recipients signed up to date.
- c) Preliminary feedback we have received from those piloting the new RI Research and Economic Database has been very positive. Staff in our *netWORKri* Career Centers have indicated that they find this system very useful in working with their customers.

- **Support goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan**

All of the above activities are means to provide universal access to our LMI products and services. The web files are updated in a timely manner to ensure that the latest information is always available on-line. The RI Research and Economic Database (RI RED) provides an interactive means to find workforce information. One key feature is the capability to let a job seeker access actual job openings from America's Job Bank, Monster Jobs and Hot Jobs related to his/her specific occupation. This is also a useful tool for job counselors in the *netWORKri* Career Centers as they work with job seekers. The RI RED application was developed as part of a national consortium.

- **Principal Customers**

These applications are geared to all users who have computer access. Information for all groups - employers, job seekers, job counselors, economic development professionals, planners and policy makers - is provided through these systems.

- **Projected outcome(s) and system impact(s)**

These applications make self service a viable alternative for the customer. The information is available at all times and can be accessed from the convenience of their home or office. These systems help cut down on the number of routine phone calls received and lets staff focus on the more complex questions.

- **Planned milestones**

The information on the LMI web site is updated routinely as new data becomes available. The RI RED system is currently being implemented and will be the focus of training for local office staff during the Program Year to familiarize them with the new features. Both of these systems will be part of training provided by LMI staff to its customers.



- **Estimated costs (identify equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost)**

- a) LMI web site:

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.15
Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$ 15,000

- b) LMI Stat Track:

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.02
Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$ 2,000

- c) RI Research and Economic Database:

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.20
Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$ 20,000
Est. cost of Annual Maintenance Contract for RI RED	\$ 25,000
Estimated share of cost of Network Attached Storage:	\$ 5,000
Estimated cost of pamphlets for RI RED and LMI web site	\$ 1,000
Estimated travel/training costs:	\$ 1,000

## 6. Support state workforce information training activities.

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

- a) The LMI training project conducted in conjunction with Northeastern University's Center for Labor Market Studies recently completed its third and final year. This training elevated customer awareness of the information available from DLT's LMI unit. LMI staff will continue to offer training on its products and services to our workforce development system partners.

A series of training sessions are being planned for *netWORKri* Career Center staff and our agency Employer Service Representatives (ESRs) on the RI RED system and the LMI web site. We anticipate that approximately 75 *netWORKri* Career Center staff and 20 ESRs will need this training. We will offer similar training to other interested parties including staff of the two local WIBs.

At the request of the Office of Rehabilitation Services, we will demonstrate the RI RED system, review the LMI web site and give an overview of LMI products and services to approximately 15 employment counselors.

We have a July training session scheduled in conjunction with the RI Education Talent Search for approximately 50 students from eleven target schools in grades 6-11. LMI staff will demonstrate the RI RED system, review the LMI web site and give an overview of LMI products and services.

We have also been asked to do up to three presentations to graduate students in the field of counseling on our LMI web systems and our products and services. There will be an estimated 25 graduate students in each session.

Other training sessions will be scheduled as the need arises during the Program Year.

- b) In addition to providing training to our customers, we will use a portion of our funds to make sure that our own LMI staff is properly trained and up-to-date in their analytical and presentation skills. Training will include courses offered through the LMI Institute as well as other groups. In recognition of the LMI Institute's value as a training resource, we will support the LMI Institute by contributing the requested 0.5% of our FY 2004 grant.

- **Customer support for product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations**

Feedback we received during the three-year LMI Training project indicated that there is an ongoing need and interest in LMI training.

- **Support goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan**

Training in the use and application of LMI products and services for *netWORKri* staff, other employment counselors and other customers provides the system with the ability to access and properly use the data that is available and needed to make training and employment decisions.

- **Principal Customers**

Employment counselors in *netWORKri* offices and from other workforce system partners, and guidance counselors.

- **Projected outcome(s) and system impact(s)**

A better informed group of employment and guidance counselors will provide better guidance to their customers.

- **Planned milestones**

This will be an ongoing activity throughout the Program Year.

- **Estimated costs (identify equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost)**

- a) Provision of training to outside customers:

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.10
Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$10,000

- b) Training for LMI staff & support of LMI Institute:

Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$ 4,000
Estimated travel/training costs:	\$ 4,000
Estimated LMI Institute Support (0.5% of grant):	\$ 1,841

### **C. Consultation and Customer Satisfaction Assessment**

Our customer satisfaction efforts will focus on feedback from *netWORKri* managers and our State's Employer Service Representatives (ESRs). We have designated an LMI staff person to act as a liaison to this group and to the local workforce boards to solicit feedback on the products and services we provide and to get input into additional products/services they feel are needed.

When training is provided by staff we will solicit feedback via a training evaluation form provided at the end of the training to be completed by the participants. In addition, an evaluation form will be included with our publications for feedback on its usefulness from the participants.

As for our web site, we have been using Web Trends to track activity (# of hits on various pages, etc.) and will continue to employ this method. We have been investigating the possibility of adding a customer comment button on our web site but have not made any final decisions on this method yet. We are looking at whether these have been found to be useful by other states.

As in the past, we will use our HRIC LMI Committee or its successor as an integral part of our planning and feedback system, and for ideas on any new products/services we develop during the Program Year. We will also continue to keep track of comments received via e-mails, letters, or in person meetings with individuals or groups on our products and services.