

**ARKANSAS  
WORKFORCE INFORMATION GRANT  
PY 2002**

**A. STATEWIDE EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS SYSTEM**

In accordance with Section 309(e) of WIA, the Arkansas Employment Security Department (AESD) is the designated State Agency responsible for the overall management of the Employment Statistics Program in Arkansas. Through this responsibility, we maintain active consultation on Labor Market Information (LMI) issues and requests from the State and Local Workforce Investment Boards, private business, individual citizens, and workforce development professionals. This is done through monthly staff meetings with the State Workforce Investment Board's staff, quarterly meetings with the Local Workforce Investment Board's staff, LMI Users Conferences, a "by request" speaker's bureau to schools, public and private organizations, and Chambers of Commerce. This activity is enhanced by participation in state and local sponsored job fairs, training sessions, and conferences. As the administrative entity for the Employment Statistics Program in Arkansas, we continually provide standard and specialized information, services, and products to private citizens, businesses, and non-profit organizations.

By providing these services we fulfill the responsibility of management for the Employment Statistics Program in Arkansas' Five Year Unified Plan. This plan emphasizes "producing and communicating labor market information" to employers, the workforce, and general public. As with any system involved in continued informational changes, we realize that more information must be developed and new information disseminated to all users of labor market information. This continued dissemination involves our current structure of producing and releasing labor market information via printed format and an ongoing effort to increase our capacity through Internet delivery services.

As Arkansas has done in the past, we will continue to supply all labor market informational products (whether Internet, printed or CD based) through the One Stop community for dissemination to the business community, citizens of Arkansas, and the State Workforce Development System. With the Workforce Centers as a focal point for information delivery and customer satisfaction, we will be able to continue meeting the needs of our customer base by producing specialized customer driven informational packages.

Arkansas' evolution towards a true One Stop model and to facilitate a partnership under Arkansas' WIA five-year unified plan, AESD is transitioning its Employment Security Department Local Offices into the local Workforce Centers.

Other sources of funding currently being utilized, within the Employment Statistics Program in Arkansas, to produce the various types of labor market information for the State are:

- America's Career Resource Network
- Bureau of Labor Statistics
- Workforce Investment Act
- AESD Special Fund

## **B. CORE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES**

### **CONTINUE TO POPULATE THE ALMIS DATABASE WITH STATE DATA**

In April of 1998, the State joined the LMI Access consortium and made the necessary payments for membership. That included purchasing the required LMI Access software. Even through the break-up of this consortium, we have maintained the use of Geographic Solution's (GeoSol) latest 2.2 version of the ALMIS database structure. We are currently running the 2.2 version of the ALMIS database as "Discover Arkansas", Arkansas' interactive labor market information system. 75% of all mandatory core tables of the database will be updated by June 30, 2003; 100% of tables will be updated by the end of the grant period.

Additionally, the 2003 version (being developed with PY'02 funds) of the Directory of Licensed Occupations in Arkansas will be updated and have the database information files submitted to the National Crosswalk Service Center by June 2003. This information utilizes O\*Net SOC codes and will be available for viewing through America's Career Information Network (ACINet) site, as well as, on AESD's LMI Web Site.

Customers for these activities include libraries, chambers of commerce, educational entities, and vocational/technical institutes. It is anticipated that Workforce Center customers such as dislocated workers, persons seeking their first job, persons relocating within the State/area, training seekers, and individuals planning future careers will benefit from the occupational licensing and labor market data projected in these products. This conforms to the State's WIA State Unified Plan guidelines concerning labor market information and provides additional information for the One-Stop delivery system for data/economic analysis.

To meet the requirement of collaborative consultation with the State Board, the AESD Labor Market Information staff met with the staff of the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board and reviewed the deliverables associated with this grant. No changes regarding this core product were received as part of this consultation process. This plan emphasizes "producing and communicating labor market information" to employers, the workforce, and general public.

	<u>PY 02 Funds</u>
Cost estimates associated with the ALMIS Database and Directory of Licensed Occupations attributed to the OS/LMI programs are:	\$36,882.21

### **PRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE LONG-TERM, INDUSTRY AND OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT PROJECTION**

Current occupational and industrial projections utilize 2000 estimates and 2010 projections of industrial and occupational employment. These are prepared via extension of the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) program of the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor

Statistics. The process involves three major steps: 1) employer surveys of each industry segment in Arkansas and estimates of staffing patterns for those industry segments; 2) projections of industry employment; and 3) development of occupational employment projections using the Utah Micromatrix Projection System. By February 2003, the State will produce state-level industrial and occupational employment projections to the year 2010 using CY'00 as the baseline year. The Statewide publication will be ready for distribution by March 2003. The 2000-2010 projections will be comparable to the latest Bureau of Labor Statistics National Industrial and Occupational Projections. When the statewide revisions are complete, sub-state industry and occupational projections for the Workforce Investment Areas (WIAs) will be initiated by the State and made available for distribution in May 2003. The current projections, as well as future projections, will be included in the ALMIS structured Arkansas' "Discover Arkansas" and be made available to users by electronic media, that includes the State's LMI web page.

The 2000-2010 state level projections will be posted to the AESD website and submitted to the long-term consortium within 30-45 days after data is finalized and approved for release.

Customers for projections include Chambers of Commerce, industrial facilities, educational entities, vocational/technical institutes, the media, and the varying industries (public and private) in Arkansas. Many national customers use this information as well, particularly educational facilities, libraries and newspapers. This data has also been made available to international outlets for use by individuals and corporations who have an interest in employment trends in Arkansas. It is anticipated that Workforce Center customers such as dislocated workers, persons seeking their first jobs, persons relocating in the State/area, those seeking training, and those planning future careers will benefit from the occupational projections. This conforms to the State's WIA State Unified Plan concerning labor market information and provides additional information for the One-Stop delivery system for data/economic analysis.

To meet the requirement of collaborative consultation with the State Board, the AESD labor market information staff met with the staff of the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board and reviewed the deliverables associated with this grant. No changes regarding this core product were received as part of this consultation process. This plan emphasizes "producing and communicating labor market information" to employers, the workforce, and general public.

	<u>PY 02 Funds</u>
Costs associated with producing long-term projections	\$34,272.07

### **PRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE SHORT-TERM, INDUSTRY AND OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT FORECAST**

Arkansas has finalized the production of state-level industry and occupational projections for the 2001-2003 projections cycle. The base period for these projections will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2001, forecasting to 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2003. The projections will be posted to the ESD/LMI Internet web-site

[http://www.accessarkansas.org/esd/LaborMarketInfo/AESD\\_labormarketinfo.htm](http://www.accessarkansas.org/esd/LaborMarketInfo/AESD_labormarketinfo.htm), and submitted to the state ALMIS Database administrator for inclusion in "Discover Arkansas" within 30-45 days after data is finalized and approved for release. Submission to the short-term consortium for inclusion on ACINet will be completed by mid-March 2003. A hardcopy publication will be released to the public by mid March 2003.

Arkansas will also produce sub-state area industry and occupational projections for our 10 Local Workforce Investment Areas. Upon completion, they will be posted to the ESD/LMI Internet Site and submitted to the ALMIS Database manager for inclusion in "Discover Arkansas" by Mid-March 2003. A hardcopy publication will be produced and released to the public by July 2003.

Arkansas will begin production of state-level industry projections for the 2002-2004 projection cycle in March 2003 and will have approximately 80% completed by mid-May 2003, with a 100% completion by July 2003. This will be the first year for the conversion to NAICS-based industry projections and Arkansas will use the CY base period of 2nd quarter 2002, projecting to 2nd quarter 2004. The production of occupational projections for this projection period will be deferred or delayed due to components of these projections not being created until the release of the national long-term projections.

In addition, Arkansas will test the production of short-term forecasts data for its sub-state areas in accordance with the Consortium's guidelines, to determine a production cycle for their release.

As with the Long-term projections, the customer base for Short-term projections will include Chambers of Commerce, industrial facilities, educational entities, vocational/technical institutes, the media, and the varying industries (public and private) in Arkansas. We anticipate many national customers to use this information particularly educational facilities, libraries, and newspapers. This data will also be made available to international outlets, for use by individuals and corporations who have an interest in employment trends in Arkansas. It is anticipated that Workforce Center customers such as dislocated workers, persons seeking their first jobs persons relocating in the State or area, those seeking training, and those planning a future career will benefit from these projections. This conforms to the State's WIA State Unified Plan concerning labor market information and provides additional information for the One-Stop delivery system for data/economic analysis.

To meet the requirement of collaborative consultation with the State Board, the AESD labor market information staff met with the staff of the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board and reviewed the deliverables associated with this grant. No changes regarding this core product were received as part of this consultation process. This plan emphasizes "producing and communicating labor market information" to employers, the workforce, and general public.

Costs associated with producing short-term projections PY 02 Funds  
\$ 32,272.07

## **PROVIDE OCCUPATIONAL AND CAREER INFORMATION PRODUCTS FOR PUBLIC USE**

The Arkansas Employment Security Department's (AESD) Communication and Media Officer works closely with the Agency Director, AESD's Bureau of Labor Statistics and Occupational/Career Information staff and Labor Market Information (LMI) line management. This individual is responsible for media releases, development of agency publications, audio and visual aids, and other products used to disseminate LMI information to customers who use such information. Occupational/ Career Information, Workforce Investment Act (WIA), Wagner-Peyser, and other agency administrative funds primarily are being used to fund this position. Workforce Information funds will be used only for the costs associated with the review, development, and dissemination of publications, audio and visual aids and other LMI products.

It is AESD's goal to give customers up-to-date information they need to make informed labor market decisions. This information will continue to be developed, disseminated and used by the school systems and other educational entities, Workforce Centers, employers, and private citizens through publications, media releases, press contacts, audio and visual aids, training courses and software development. This conforms to the State's WIA State Unified Plan concerning labor market information and provides additional information for the One-Stop delivery system for system development and correct some data gaps.

The following is a list of current useful LMI publications and products. Items annotated with an asterisk are reproduced based on "real-time" demands and needs. All other items have a date in parenthesis of the anticipated release date. LMI publications and products used are:

- Guide to Educational Training Programs for Demand Occupations (05/30/03)  
This publication is a guide to assist customers in locating and obtaining training for occupations that are currently listed as occupations in demand within Arkansas and by Local Workforce Investment Area.
- Arkansas Wage Survey  
Detailed wage and salary information statewide, and by metropolitan statistical areas, in the State. The wage information found in this publication will be used by other government agencies such as the mayor's office, the governor's office, chambers of commerce, educational entities, private businesses, and citizens needing wage information. (03/01/03)
- Directory of Licensed Occupations in Arkansas  
A bi-annual publication containing readily accessible occupational licensing information requirements to practice a given occupation in Arkansas.

Approximately 350 printed copies of this Directory will be released and distributed by August 2003.

- Covered Employment and Earnings (ES 202 employer data)  
A quarterly and annual publication that contains employment and wage data by industry and county for Arkansas. This data is compiled from quarterly contribution and wage reports submitted by employers subject to the Arkansas Employment Security Law
- \*The Future Awaits-A guide to gaining employment for young adults  
This publication is intended for high school students, recent graduates, and other young adults. This publication is also utilized in the Workforce Centers for readying citizens for job interviews and used as an instructional tool at the various job fairs, held within the State.
- Labor Market Information For Arkansas Counties  
A monthly publication that contains statistical tables showing civilian labor force, employment, unemployment, and unemployment rates for Arkansas' 75 counties.
- Arkansas Labor Market Trends  
A monthly publication containing statistical tables, charts, and narrative analysis depicting current economic conditions in Arkansas and five metropolitan statistical areas.
- Arkansas Labor Force Statistics (Annual)  
An annual publication that provides county employment statistics for the State. This publication is used by many agencies and organizations throughout the State that are involved in area analysis and economic development planning.
- \*Labor Market Information Resources  
A booklet detailing Arkansas' LMI products and whom to contact to receive the different types of industry and occupational information.
- Arkansas Affirmative Action Data-10 year data book will be released upon delivery of full Census information (anticipated 09/01/03). Other affirmative action data, by table, is updated upon receipt of new information.

We continue to remain in compliance with Section 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by providing materials to the sight and hearing impaired. The majority of our information can be obtained through computer access; therefore, computer screen readers have been installed in all Workforce Centers in the State. We have developed some Braille and Spanish versions of our brochures and pamphlets for this growing population. We currently have one brochure (Labor Market Information Resources) that has been provided to each Workforce Center in both Braille and Spanish print. We have examined the need for expanding this initiative to our entire line of informational booklets, and determined we will begin exploring options for the next installment of several new Braille and Spanish version booklets in late Spring 2003.

To meet the many needs of Arkansas' diverse clientele for labor market information, we expanded ETA's funding role in the 2002-2003 Career Watch magazine, and will continue that monetary effort with the 2003-2004 edition. Of all the publications and products we produce,

Career Watch receives the largest positive response from all areas of our customer base. Currently we have a customer base that exceeds a 100,000-copy circulation. We continually receive extremely favorable accolades from dislocated workers, the unemployed, educators, counselors, students, and parents of students. To achieve this success, we have developed a network that promotes collaborative effort among several State agencies. These are the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education, Arkansas Department of Economic Development, Department of Education, Department of Information Systems, Department of Higher Education, Department of Human Services, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, and the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board. Representatives from this group meet, and provide editorial advice and content to the publication. AESD maintains sole responsibility for drafting, editing, publishing, and distribution of this highly successful magazine. It is through this multi-agency collaborative effort that the 2003/2004 edition will remain a highly professional Arkansas publication that features colored glossy pages, in-depth job related articles, necessary skills, assessment articles, and factual information on many different occupations. We anticipate our distribution will be approximately 100,000 copies, with approximately 80,000 copies delivered by September 2003. Once the 2003/2004 Career Watch is published (June 15, 2003) and distributed, it will be made available for downloading from the Arkansas Career Watch web site, <http://www.careerwatch.org>. In addition, a new "Teacher's Guide" will again be produced and delivered to the career orientation teachers and school counselors, within the same time frame. The teacher's guide is a complement to the Career Watch Magazine and includes activities and worksheets to reinforce the philosophies and ideas presented in the current magazine for enhancement to Arkansas students.

Arkansas continues to replicate and distribute the USDOL sponsored Career Video Library, which contains a collection of 350-career video clips on nine CDs, produced by the New Jersey Department of Labor. Currently, we have replicated and distributed 285 sets (9 CDs per set) of the Career Videos. This distribution has been primarily focused on the Workforce Centers and educational entities (Career Orientation Teachers, High School Counselors, Libraries, Educational Cooperatives, and 2-year colleges) within the State. This is a continuing project and distribution is usually by an ongoing request basis. Distribution is supplemented by requests made during educational conferences and job fairs. Usually we have approximately 50 sets of these CDs in stock for use in upcoming conferences, but due to a change by the New Jersey DOL to begin using a 700-megabyte CD profile (which has caused a storage capacity and writing problem for our existing 4x duplicator) we have depleted our current stock levels. With this problem in mind, a new duplicator will be purchased in March 2003, for approximately \$5,000.00, so we can again meet the needs of our many customers in a timely fashion.

A new career information product that is in the developmental stage, which also utilizes the duplicator technology, is the "Top Ten Occupations By Educational Level" listing. In general, we will incorporate the top ten occupations by educational category deemed through the 2001-2003 short-term projections and combine this information with each occupation's 2001 wage data, primary skill requirements from O\*Net, and career video. As stated, this will be in CD format and distributed to all Workforce Centers, educational entities, and libraries. As other

customers are defined, we will freely give the product to those establishments. We should have this product ready for market by June 2003.

In June 2002, Arkansas deployed the Career Information Delivery System (CIDS) known as the Arkansas OSCAR product (ArkOSCAR) from the developer, the Texas SOICC. Of noteworthy performance is that ArkOSCAR was the first Internet version of OSCAR produced in the United States. ArkOSCAR showcases the O\*Net database, with emphasis on providing tools to assist dislocated workers to new careers. It was designed with a user friendly "look and feel" to avoid intimidating any person who might not be familiar with computers and their menus, toolbars, etc... This product also includes features for our educational partners by using the Department of Education's career clusters in describing the various jobs contained in ArkOSCAR. To help the citizenry of Arkansas determine their interests toward different types of activities an interest profiler was developed. ArkOSCAR also contains the various labor market information that the State's Employment Statistics Program puts out to the public. Since its inaugural kickoff of July 1, 2002, through January 29, 2003, more than 6,000 "sign-ins" have used ArkOSCAR for their career exploration. With new information being made available such as; projections, wage information, and industry distribution, ArkOSCAR will be updated to reflect this fresh labor market information by April 2003.

Several full imaged career product color posters/place cards have been developed and are being displayed by our various partners. Each poster promotes a separate product, one being ArkOSCAR, another for the Career Watch magazine. These will be placed within every Workforce Center within the State. Additional posters will be distributed to local libraries, schools and public entities.

To meet the requirement of collaborative consultation with the State Board, the AESD labor market information staff met with the staff of the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board and reviewed the deliverables associated with this grant. No changes regarding this core product were received as part of this consultation process. This plan emphasizes "producing and communicating labor market information" to employers, the workforce, and general public.

	<u>PY 02 Funds</u>
Costs associated with providing occupational and career Information products for public use	\$ 102,684.75

**PROVIDE AN EMPLOYER NAME AND ADDRESS LIST THAT CAN BE ACCESSED  
BY THE PUBLIC**

Arkansas will continue to update the "Discover Arkansas" program for the benefit of local areas and identified customers in obtaining information on recognized employers. "Discover Arkansas" contains the USDOL sponsored Employer Database, which allows Job Service, Workforce Centers and other entities, involved in job related activities to access employer

information in an efficient and timely manner. This product will be updated, when feasible, upon the release of new databases from the DOL provider. AESD/LMI is currently involved in providing an Internet version of "Discover Arkansas," with an anticipated 50% completion by October 2003 and a 100% completion and release of the product by the end of the grant period. This conforms to the State's WIA State Unified Plan concerning labor market information and provides additional information for the One-Stop delivery system for data/economic analysis and corrects some data gaps.

To meet the requirement of collaborative consultation with the State Board, the AESD labor market information staff met with the staff of the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board and reviewed the deliverables associated with this grant. No changes regarding this core product were received as part of this consultation process. This plan emphasizes "producing and communicating labor market information" to employers, the workforce, and general public.

Costs associated with providing an Employer Name and  
Address List That Can Be Accessed By The Public

PY 02 Funds

\$ 1,000.00

**PROVIDE INFORMATION AND SUPPORT TO WORKFORCE INVESTMENT  
BOARDS (WIBs) AND PRODUCE OTHER STATE INFORMATION PRODUCTS AND  
SERVICE**

The Arkansas Employment Security Department (AESD) remains vital as an active major contributor in the Workforce Center implementation for the State of Arkansas. AESD's Director maintains a chair on the State Workforce Investment Board and many of our Local Office Managers sit on the Local Workforce Investment Boards. This provides quality information on the thoughts and processes taking place in the State. As the "eyes and ears" for career development and LMI products in the State, AESD's labor market information staff continually meet with the Local and State Workforce Investment Board's staff. This is done to determine localized needs, provide training, to provide input on existing and innovative LMI products and to measure consumer services. To meet the standards being vocalized through the Local Boards, we have set quarterly meetings with the Local Board's staff to examine problems and offer solutions to informational questions. We also attend State Workforce Investment Board meetings and participate in a monthly staff meeting with the State Board Staff, as well as, attending as many Local Board meetings as possible to remain at the forefront of all questions concerning labor market information. With this continual feedback of offered suggestions, we are better able to create or modify products for the good of the State's users of LMI.

AESD/LMI continues to provide expertise to the educational community through our commitment to educational cooperatives, school counselors, and administrators. Our continued

presence will include participating in educational conferences, hosting and participating in training events, serving as judges in State contests for students (such as SkillsUSA), and speaking at Career Fairs, Seniors Day, and Parents Night. A couple of such activities for the training of our educational partners were the statewide Career Orientation conference held August 1-2, 2002, in Hot Springs, Arkansas and the upcoming Arkansas School Counselors conference in Eureka Springs, Arkansas, in March 2003. During the Career Orientation conference the LMI staff hosted the initial general session of the conference featuring Arkansas' new career delivery system (ArkOSCAR) and held breakout sessions throughout the conference on ACINet and O\*Net.

To pursue a more active role in the business sector, we've taken a proactive approach to stay in contact with the local Chambers of Commerce, in different areas of the State. At some of their monthly meetings, we've presented training sessions on the use of wages, trends, educational opportunities, economic data, and other items found in the "Provide Occupational and Career Information Products for Public Use" section of this grant. To the degree possible to provide this information on a continual basis, we have assigned a staff person with this responsibility. To meet the requests of employers from across Arkansas, we have a staff person responsible for the distribution of localized wage information gathered through the Estimated Delivery System (EDS) and continue to explore new ways of presenting this information. We have also updated our Geographic Information System (GIS) to the newest version of ArcView. With this done, and with continued internal staff development, we are hopeful that we'll be able to pursue some of the non-complex employer requests for specific geographic data. Currently, we have designated one staff person with this responsibility and as the geo-coding information is made known to our customers, we anticipate this workload will increase to encompass approximately .25 of their time.

Arkansas is now pursuing its partnership with the U.S. Bureau of Census in the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) study. We anticipate by using the current information coming out of the Labor Market Information Department and combining with the latest statistics from the Bureau of Census, we will be able to generate additional timely geographic specific information for employers and other customers of labor market information. Preliminary discussions have taken place and we will be meeting with the LEHD group in March 2003, to begin our journey into this valuable informational base. We anticipate, as being a partner of the LEHD group that we will be producing data by the end of the grant period.

The activities listed above conforms to the State's WIA State Unified Plan concerning labor market information and provides additional information for the One-Stop delivery system for data/economic analysis and corrects some data gaps.

To meet the requirement of collaborative consultation with the State Board, the AESD labor market information staff met with the staff of the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board and reviewed the deliverables associated with this grant. No changes regarding this core product were received as part of this consultation process. This plan emphasizes "producing and communicating labor market information" to employers, the workforce, and general public.

Costs associated with State Information Products and Services PY 02 Funds  
\$ 65,110.93

### **IMPROVE AND DEPLOY ELECTRONIC STATE WORKFORCE INFORMATION DELIVERY SYSTEMS**

Arkansas continues to define all aspects of its Workforce Information Delivery Systems. In 2002 we released a product that focuses on skills identification, analysis, and work-based data for Arkansas citizens. The Internet version, titled "ArkOSCAR," is live and can be found at, <http://www.arkoscar.org>.

We have also expanded the format and content of the Arkansas' Eligible Training Provider System into a true Arkansas Consumer Reporting System (ACRS). Currently, all information (including WIA program statistics), pending actions, and approvals concerning WIA Eligible Training Providers are being seamlessly processed through this paperless system. This system is able to report informational data about training programs by institution to Arkansas citizens to help make educated career and occupational decisions. This product can be found on the Internet at <http://www.arkansascrs.org>. When this system was first being developed it incorporated three different computer languages. Arkansas began contract negotiations for a rewrite of the ACRS system in January of 2003, and anticipates 50% of the rewrite should be completed by August 2003, with a 100% rewrite completed by December 2003. With this rewrite we will bring the system into a one-language format and add many enhanced administrative and user functions. Once fully functional, the system will be brought into Arkansas for total hosting and maintenance. This project will be funded by a mixture of funds from this grant, specifically earmarked WIA funds, and AESD special project funds.

With the deployment of the 22-State WORKFORCE Informer consortium's Internet based delivery system for the ALMIS database (through the National Systems Research Company (NSR)) we remain active with the consortium and continue our transition toward an NSR Internet application. We have had preliminary meetings and reviews of the system with NSR and have established current pricing for our entry into this product. The anticipated time for delivery of the NSR Internet system module will depend on the contract date with NSR. The currently projected implementation of this automated labor market information delivery system will be June 30, 2003. We currently have reserved the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) domain name of <http://www.discoverarkansas.net> as the website for our Internet version of the ALMIS database.

Arkansas maintains the goal of giving customers the information they need to make informed educational and labor market decisions. The information provided in this section and other sections of this grant will continue to be developed, disseminated and used by the Workforce Centers, school systems and other educational entities, employers, and private citizens. This conforms to the State's WIA State Unified Plan concerning labor market information and

provides additional information for the One-Stop delivery system for data/economic analysis and corrects some data gaps.

To meet the requirement of collaborative consultation with the State Board, the AESD labor market information staff met with the staff of the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board and reviewed the deliverables associated with this grant. No changes regarding this core product were received as part of this consultation process. This plan emphasizes “producing and communicating labor market information” to employers, the workforce, and general public.

	<u>PY 02 Funds</u>
Costs associated with Support the Development of State-based Workforce Information Delivery Systems	\$ 182,678.28

### **SUPPORT STATE WORKFORCE INFORMATION TRAINING ACTIVITIES**

Given the ever changing and dynamic world of Labor Market Information (LMI), it is imperative that our agency serves as the LMI authority for our state and maintains a properly trained staff to provide both information and technical assistance to local areas. While our staff develops many LMI products, many others are produced on a national scale. Products such as the CareerOneStop and O\*Net Online are examples of cutting edge, Internet web sites for access to LMI. Others are being produced and will be made available in a rapid and ever changing fashion. Opportunities to experience and understand how these products can be utilized by local area staff to provide clients with this invaluable information, is very important. Whether the clients are interested in enhancing their current careers through additional training opportunities or they are seeking new career avenues, providing access to and the use of LMI is one of our primary missions.

In an effort to provide the basis to successfully execute this mission, AESD staff will participate in the following LMI Institute and other training activities:

One staff member will attend the LMI Marketing training in PY'02.

One staff member will attend the Basic Analyst training in PY'02.

One staff member will attend the Advanced Analyst training in PY'02.

One staff member will attend the Basic ALMIS Analyst training in PY'02.

Two members of our staff will attend the 2002 LMI Forum in Hershey, PA.

Staff participation in other appropriate training that may be offered through the LMI institute.

Encouragement will continue to be given to staff to increase their knowledge and abilities in utilizing various software and computer applications by supporting their attendance at training seminars and classes offered by local training companies.

A significant amount of Workforce Information funds will be utilized in staff development purposes such as these, not only for the upcoming Program Year, but also for the future. Participation in additional training activities that may be offered through other means may also be utilized.

Arkansas sponsored and held its yearly LMI Users Conference on September 11-12, 2002. Approximately 42 State and Local WIB and Workforce Center staff members were trained during this 2-day event. All state and federal LMI products were covered in detail, as well as, actual "hands-on-training" on O\*Net, ArkOSCAR, ACINet, etc...utilizing AESDs computer lab. On the final day of this training, two focus groups offered suggestions on several products, including the state's Demand Occupation List. Plans are currently being discussed for our 2003 LMI Users Conference.

Arkansas continues to sponsor and lead in LMI training to all partners of the WIA community. We anticipate providing at least 10 individual LMI training activities or events by July 2003. These will include career fairs, one and two day seminars, conference meetings, and special meetings of WIA partners.

Our customers in the State of Arkansas range from business and educational partners to the Workforce Centers to the private citizens of the State. With a better-trained LMI workforce we are better able to meet the needs of all our external and internal customers alike. This conforms to the State's WIA State Unified Plan concerning labor market information and provides system development for the One-Stop delivery system.

To meet the requirement of collaborative consultation with the State Board the AESD labor market information staff met with the staff of the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board and reviewed the deliverables associated with this grant. No changes regarding this core product were received as part of this consultation process. This plan emphasizes "producing and communicating labor market information" to employers, the workforce, and general public.

For all training activities sponsored by the LMI Department, all participants will fill out a specialized training survey.

	<u>PY 02 Funds</u>
Costs associated with Support State Workforce Information Training Activities	\$ 22,200.69

**C. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION ASSESSMENT**

Since we are now exploring how to achieve “measurable customer outcomes” with all our products and to satisfy the needs of labor market information to the users within the State, we are now inserting customer satisfaction surveys with each published (paper/CD) product that’s disbursed. A log of the number of surveys by product will be recorded, along with the number of surveys returned. The information by category (business, education, citizen, etc...) will be obtained, reflecting their satisfaction with the product reviewed. Also collected will be the customer’s opinion of the “usefulness” of each product and their ideas will be solicited on how to make the publication more beneficial for their purpose. Below is a grading scale for such a survey:

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Usefulness</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Very Satisfied	Very Useful	A = 4 pts.
Satisfied	Useful	B = 3 pts.
Indifferent	Fair	C = 2 pts.
Dissatisfied	Not Very Useful	D = 1 pt.
Very Dissatisfied	Not Useful At All	F = 0 pts.

An aggregate average will be obtained from all returned surveys, to independently measure both categories of satisfaction and usefulness to give an overall customer assessment (evaluation).

This statement reflects AESDs attempt at meeting the customer satisfaction assessment, concerning this grant. On Issues effecting other programs or deliverable products, work groups or focus groups may be employed to get a better gauge on the thinking of outside groups such as; Business, Workforce Center employees, Local and State WIB staff, school counselors and teachers, and Arkansas citizens.

**EXPENDITURE BREAKOUTS**

	<u>PY'02 Funds</u>
1) Populate the ALMIS Database with State Data	\$ 36,822.21
2) Long-term Projections	34,272.07
3) Short-term Projections	32,272.07
4) Occupational Analysis Products	102,684.75
5) Employer Name and Address List	1,000.00
6) Info. and Support to WIBS and Produce Other State Info. Products	65,110.93
7) Support Development /Deployment of State-based Workforce Information Delivery Systems	182,678.28
8) Support State Workforce Information Training Activities	<u>22,200.69</u>
<b>Grant Total</b>	<b>\$477,041.00</b>