

# BRIEFLY...

Highlights of Report Number: 02-03-204-03-390, a report to the Assistant Secretary, Employment and Training Administration. September 30, 2003.

## WHY READ THE REPORT

This report summarizes results from a nationwide audit of participants from 12 states who enrolled in the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) Dislocated Worker program (DWP) between July 1, 2000, and June 30, 2001, the first full year of WIA operations. WIA intended for the DWP to serve primarily individuals who have been terminated or laid off and who are "unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation." The program provides a range of services that include job search assistance and skills retraining to help eligible jobseekers reenter the workforce with benefits and the prospect of a more secure future. The OIG's audit provides a snapshot of individuals served, services provided, program performance and participant satisfaction.

## WHY OIG CONDUCTED THE AUDIT

With the approach of WIA reauthorization, the OIG conducted an audit of the DWP to determine: (1) if there was sufficient evidence to support participant eligibility; (2) what outcomes were obtained; (3) status of participants not exiting the program; and (4) participant satisfaction.

The audit reviewed participation and outcomes for a sample of 360 participants who enrolled with local One-Stop career centers for DWP services from July 1, 2000, through June 30, 2001.

## READ THE FULL REPORT

The full report, including the scope, methodology, and agency response, is available on the Internet at:

<http://www.oig.dol.gov/public/reports/oa/2003/02-03-204-03-390.pdf>

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# DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAM COULD HELP JOBSEEKERS RETURN MORE QUICKLY TO THE WORKFORCE

## WHAT OIG FOUND

Overall, participants obtained employment, retained a large percentage of their layoff earnings, kept their post-layoff jobs, and reported satisfaction with most services. However, other key findings included:

- One-stop career centers had difficulty documenting that 65 percent of the participants were unlikely to return to their previous industries or occupations.
- Twenty-five percent of participants were still in the program after a year-and-a-half, falling short of the Secretary's goal of quickly returning the unemployed to the workforce.

Participants were not as positive about the WIA DWP as they were about the DWP under WIA's predecessor, the Job Training Partnership Act; nor were they as positive about job-finding assistance, which is a primary function of WIA.

The report also contains findings related to credential attainment and the type and duration of services received.

## WHAT OIG RECOMMENDED

The OIG recommended that ETA: (1) provide guidance on properly documenting eligibility; (2) require states to report information on *all* participants' employment status; (3) study why participants stay enrolled for over a year; and (4) explore how to provide more intensive job services to help participants exit sooner. ETA generally agreed with the findings and recommendations.