STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA
PROGRESS REPORT FOR WORKFORCE INFORMATION GRANT
July 1, 2003 to June 30, 2004

In accordance with Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) #9-03, Job Service North Dakota submits the following Progress Report on Workforce Information activities for the period July 1, 2003 to June 30, 2004. This report is organized into three sections as directed by the TEGL. Section A describes the accomplishments for each core product or service. Section B presents a summary of the Customer Satisfaction Assessment. Section C contains recommendations for Improvements or Changes to the Suite of Core Products.

A. CORE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

1. Continue to populate the ALMIS Database with state data:
The ALMIS Database is the foundation of the workforce information applications for North Dakota's electronic delivery system. It provides an expansive data storage system from which other data delivery systems may retrieve pertinent workforce information. As such, it is important that this database contains the most current and accurate data possible. The LMI Center updated the ALMIS core tables with new data as it became available, populated new tables, and tested for data integrity. Job Service North Dakota has delayed the implementation of Virtual One Stop (VOS) Version 6.0 developed by GeoSolutions for further testing. GeoSolutions was to update the ALMIS Database to Version 2.2 as a part of that implementation of VOS Version 6.0.

2. Produce and disseminate industry and occupational employment projections:
The LMI Center has updated the NAICS history files in both the short-term and long-term industry employment projections programs. Despite having an historic employment time series in place, the Projections Software Suite continued to have a series of program bugs. As a result, North Dakota chose to wait until a stable version of the projections software was available in late June before beginning to run the projections. Statewide long-term and short-term industry projections were completed in early August 2004. Statewide long-term occupational projections were then completed by September 2004. The long-term industry and occupational projections publication is being developed and is scheduled to be published in fall 2004. Work on the short-term occupational employment projections is also underway. Upon completion of the short-term occupational projections, we will evaluate these projections to see how they should be disseminated.

North Dakota has updated the NAICS short-term and long-term industry employment time series for the eight Governor's planning regions. Short-term industry projections for the state and eight Governor's planning regions were developed this fall and are currently being edited before being loaded onto our website. Because of North Dakota's small and

largely rural labor force, it is uncertain if occupational projections would be reliable at the regional level. The testing of the long-term substate industry and occupational projections will begin this winter after the work on the projections activities mentioned above has been completed. Similarly, the testing of the substate short-term occupational projections will be tested this spring to see if they are of any value.

3. Provide occupational and career information products for public use:
The LMI Center continues to work closely with the North Dakota Career Resource Network (NDCRN) to develop and disseminate pertinent occupational and career information products. The LMI Center again provided data to the CRN for the *Career Outlook*, an annual tabloid provided to high school students, their parents, career guidance counselors, One-Stop resource rooms, etc. In addition, Marcia Slag from LMI has been involved with NDCRN in assisting with the layout and content of the *Career Outlook.*

The Occupational Information System (OIS) was maintained as a part of the LMI Data Warehouse until late spring, when a joint decision was made by NDCRN and LMI to disable the system and replace it with a new system. The old version was outdated and based on old coding systems (SIC and OES based SOC). The LMI Center and NDCRN are currently working with the Georgia CRN to adapt their newly developed OIS product to North Dakota.

The LMI Center developed a new product highlighting the findings of our industry and occupational projections to 2010 entitled *Job Search 2010.* This new colorful brochure shows the fastest growing industries, fastest growing occupations, occupations with largest number of openings, and the projected growth and average wages of occupations at each level of educational attainment. In addition, detailed occupational profiles are provided for selected occupations. This new product was released in the summer of 2003 and has been very popular in schools and One-Stop resource rooms.   In order to provide the full occupational and industrial detail of the 2010 employment projections, the LMI Center also published the *North Dakota Employment Projections 2010* in early fall 2003. Career information posters utilizing the results of the 2010 projections and incorporating wage data from our OES Wage Survey were also developed during the summer of 2003.

The annual *North Dakota Employment and Wages* was published in November of 2003. This publication displays covered employment and wage data at various industrial and geographic breakouts in an updated format.

One of our most popular publications, *Wages for North Dakota Jobs,* came out in late winter 2004. This publication provides detailed occupational wage and employment information for the state of North Dakota, the three MSA's and four substate regions.

Conversations with our local One-Stop offices, economic developers, and business customers indicated a need for occupational wage and fringe benefit information at a local and industry level. In response to this need, the LMI Center developed *Compensation Guides* specifically targeted to individual cities and industries. These

guides provide data from our fringe benefit surveys, occupational wage and employment data, occupational descriptions, and related information in one easy-to-use publication. Each guide provides information for those occupations employed by a particular industry in a specific city or area. *Compensation Guides* for over 160 industry/area combinations were created and were put in PDF format on our website. Since these *Compensation Guides* debuted in April of 2004, they have become extremely popular.

The LMI Center conducts Fringe Benefit Surveys in 13 North Dakota cities and areas on a two-year rotating basis. During this program year, surveys were completed in Dickinson, Wahpeton, Williston, Minot, Jamestown, Fargo and West Fargo. The results of these surveys were compiled and published in PDF format on our website.

All of the publications listed above have been loaded on our LMI website as PDF's.

4. Provide public electronic access to ALMIS Employer Database:
The LMI Center loaded the most recent version of the employer database from InfoUSA as soon as the CD was available. The database provides users with a current listing of employer data that can be accessed by firm name, city, county, industry, or firm size. The use of the InfoUSA database allows us to provide employer specific information to our customers without release of confidential employer data from our UI Tax or QCEW files.

5. Provide information and support to state and local Workforce Investment Board (WIBs) and provide other special demand information products and services:
The LMI Center continues to work closely with the Workforce Development Council (WDC). (The WDC is North Dakota's only Workforce Investment Board.) Designated staff have attended all the WDC meetings and LMI staff members have made several presentations to the WDC and its subcommittees during the past program year. We have provided technical expertise to the WDC in the development and design of new surveys to provide valuable information on labor availability and occupational skills needs in the workforce.

In collaboration with the Bismarck-Mandan Development Association (BMDA) and the WDC, the LMI Center completed work on an Employer Needs Survey and Labor Availability Study in October 2003. This unique combination of concurrent studies allows the civic leaders in Bismarck-Mandan to compare the workforce needs of their businesses in their area with the available labor supply in their vicinity.

The LMI Center partnered with the WDC and the Department of Commerce to conduct Labor Availability Studies in 22 North Dakota communities/areas. This is the second round of these very useful and highly requested surveys. The Social Science Research Center at the University of North Dakota completed the telephone survey in the spring of 2004. The LMI Center then compiled the results and provided the analysis and narrative reports to the 22 communities in summer 2004.

The LMI Center is currently partnering with the WDC, Department of Commerce, North Dakota University System, and the Department of Career and Technical Education to conduct an Occupational Skills Needs Assessment for key industries in North Dakota. The survey was delayed to some degree as partner agencies worked out the details and agreed to a methodology for this new project. The LMI staff members designed the survey instrument, selected the sample, and began the mailing of the surveys in the early summer of 2004. December 2004 is the target date for providing the compiled results to the partner agencies.

The LMI Center held monthly economic briefing meetings to discuss monthly employment and unemployment data releases, other new workforce information, current economic conditions in the state, and a variety of related topics. Representatives from the Department of Commerce, Tax Department, Workforce Development Council, Office of Management and Budget, Governor's Staff, Dislocated Worker Unit, and our Job Service Executive Director are invited to attend.

The MOU between the Census Bureau and Job Service North Dakota has been signed, and the Census Bureau has obtained additional funding to allow North Dakota to become a member of the LED partnership. Job Service North Dakota had assembled the history files of wage records and QCEW data for submittal to the Census Bureau. However, the submittal of these files has been put on hold pending the development and approval of a LED communication plan. In addition, the new BLS interpretation of the federal CIPSEA regulations and how it relates to the confidentiality of the QCEW files has caused delays in the submittal of those data files. It is hoped that these issues will be resolved in the fall of 2004 to allow submittal of those files.

The LMI Center developed a new product entitled *Local Area Profiles* in support of local economic development efforts and our local One-Stop offices in 13 of our largest cities. The *Local Area Profiles* utilize data from the QCEW program and other sources to provide data on industry employment and wages, number of firms, firm size, census information, and other related information for the current year and the previous year. Due to printing delays, the *Local Area Profiles* were not published until April 2004. However, the response we received from local economic developers, Chambers of Commerce, our business services representatives in our One-Stop offices, and other local civic and business group was extremely positive. While these profiles have been beneficial to all cities in promoting their communities, those cities that are not MSA's and as a result do not have any other source of employment information, found it especially valuable.

The Largest Employer Listing was updated on our website in late May 2004. This listing provides a ranking of the top 100 employers in North Dakota based on total employment. In addition, we updated the listing of the 10 largest employers in each of the 14 largest cities in North Dakota.

Customer feedback from our One-Stop offices indicated a need for an area workforce summary specific to their area, similar to those used in the LMI@ Work training. As the

LMI Center began to investigate the best way to do these, it became apparent through discussions with our One-Stop Area Directors, that it would be better to train the One-Stop staff members on how to develop these themselves. As a result, the LMI Center developed a very detailed area workforce summary template, and a two-day training session for One-Stop Staff members on how to find and use the information on the LMI Data Warehouse to fill in this template. This training was successfully piloted in the Grand Forks Area in May 2004, and will be provided to the rest of the state in the coming program year.

Using the "IMPLAN" software, the LMI Center has done several impact analysis studies. These studies have varied from the impact of plant closing and major layoffs to the potential impact of new manufacturing plants locating in a community. One of the larger studies involved the impact of the several scenarios for the closing or partial closing of each of North Dakota's Air Force Bases in Minot and Grand Forks.

In response to requests from local economic developers and Native American tribal leaders, the LMI Center began work on *Demographic Profiles* this spring and completed them in August of 2004. Based on the most recent census information, the *Demographic Profiles* contain general demographic information, selected social characteristics, selected economic data, and housing characteristics available in PDF format on our website. Profiles were developed for all the North Dakota counties, reservations, MSA's, selected cities, and the state as a whole.

Work also began on the spring on *Affirmative Action Packages* for each of North Dakota counties. These *Affirmative Action Packages* were completed in August and loaded on to our website in PDF format.

Several of the products mentioned in core product #3 have also proved to be very useful by our WDC and its partners.

6. Improve and deploy electronic state workforce information delivery systems:
The LMI Data Warehouse contains all the information on the ALMIS database as well as additional workforce information items produced only by North Dakota. Data items produced regularly in the LMI Center are loaded upon release into the Data Warehouse. In addition, all hard copy publications have been loaded onto the website in PDF's within a week or two of publication. Work on the conversion of data tables within the LMI Data Warehouse from SIC to NAICS was completed last fall and a NAICS based historical time series has been loaded for each industry employment program.

The new agency website was launched in November of 2003. This new website (jobsnd.com) has a cleaner look and integrates and displays the LMI links in more user-friendly way. Users can now access the LMI Data Warehouse, LMI publications, LMI contact information, etc., in a more intuitive manner through this website.

As mentioned in core product numbers 3 and 5, the LMI Center has developed several new web-based products for our customers and is continuing to explore ways to utilize

the web to minimize the costs and increased turnaround time associated with printing and hard copy distribution. As an example, the new *Compensation Guides*, *Demographic Profiles*, and *Affirmative Action* publications are available only on our website. Because of the limited shelf life of some products and the many area/industry combinations of others (i.e., users can pick from over 160 area/industry combinations for the *Compensation Guides*, about 75 areas for the *Demographic Profiles*, and all 53 counties for the *Affirmative Action* publications), the use of PDF's was the most efficient and timely method of delivery.

Due to this expanded need for an efficient and user-friendly electronic delivery system, the LMI Center has begun the process of upgrading or replacing the LMI Data Warehouse. A Data Warehouse replacement work team is now studying how to best replace or upgrade the Data Warehouse and still maintain consistency with our agency's website and Virtual One Stop. This team is investigating the possibility of purchasing special LMI Delivery systems from private vendors such as Workforce Informer and Virtual LMI from GeoSolutions, contracting with an independent website designer, or perhaps doing the redesign internally. This major project is now part of the agency wide Information Technology Plan. Because we are a small state with limited resources, we have been strategically planning for this major project for some time and have consulted with ETA's LMI Federal Project Officer (FPO) on numerous occasions. As past grant savings opportunities have arisen, we have pooled the dollars associated with those savings with the long-term goal of upgrading the infrastructure of the major delivery mechanism for our workforce information.

7. Support state workforce information training activities:
North Dakota's work in this area had two primary focuses: LMI staff development and the training of and presentations to specific customer groups.

LMI staff members attended a variety of training to improve their skills and knowledge, to find out about new developments relating to workforce information, to learn about best practices from other states, and to interact with LMI staff from around the country. The LMI Center utilized the LMI Institute for much of this training. Marcia Slag, Warren Boyd, and Nelse Grundvig attended the LMI Forum in St. Louis in October 2003. Sharon Viton attended the Occupational Descriptor Training in Boise in October 2003 and Estimates Delivery System Training in Albuquerque in May 2004. Our ALMIS Database specialist, Bala Pendyal, attended two training sessions, an ALMIS Overview Seminar in Atlanta in November 2003 and a more Advanced ALMIS Database Training in Raleigh in June 2004. In preparation for this year's cycle of short-term and long-term employment projections, we had two analysts attend training on the new Projections Software Suite. Craig Koch attended the Long-Term Industry Projections Training in January, and Sharon Viton attended the Micro Matrix Training in March.

North Dakota has become a member of the LED partnership with the Census Bureau. Related to this, Nelse Grundvig participated in the LED national meeting and training session in Washington, DC, in January, and Marcia Slag attended the LED Quarterly

Workforce Indicators (QWI) Training. Nelse also attended a Census Bureau sponsored workshop on county migration.

LMI Staff members also participated in national and tri-regional conference/training that provided them with updates on new program developments and procedures, new program software, and the opportunity to discuss problems and ideas with national and regional BLS staff as well as their peers. Stacy Kramer, Julie Larson, and Sharon Viton attended the national technical training conferences for the QCEW, MLS, and OES programs, respectively. Michael Ziesch and Warren Boyd attended the national LAUS technical training conference and Micheal attended the CES national technical training conference. In addition, Michael attended special training on the new LAUS modeling software last winter.

A variety of other training was utilized for capacity building on the LMI team. Craig Koch and Julie Larson attended a series of Access training classes. Marcia Slag attended an ICDM 'train the trainer' session. Duane Broschat attended the NASWA LMI Director's Conference and the BLS LMI Director's Conference.

All of these training activities have added to the knowledge base and technical abilities of the LMI Center staff. This in turn has and will continue to manifest itself in many new and innovative products and services for our customers.

The second focus of this deliverable is the training of our customers. The training of our customers is a very high priority in North Dakota. In addition to the many formal and informal training sessions listed below, the LMI Center has developed a series of on-line LMI training modules. This series of modules is designed to help specific customer groups use our LMI Data Warehouse as they work through cases studies unique to them. These modules use screen shots of the Data Warehouse to assist trainees in answering typical workforce related questions in their case study.

Members of the LMI staff have provided over 40 presentations or training sessions for various customer groups during the past program year. These ranged from formal in-depth training sessions of two or three days to short presentations to specific customers groups.

Several LMI presentations were made to the Workforce Development Council, as well as to the North Dakota Youth Council, the Governor's staff, the North Dakota Board for Career and Technical Education, North Dakota Commerce Department, Job Service Senior Management, and a variety of other groups. In addition, we provided LMI workshops at statewide conferences for the economic developers, career guidance counselors, veterans representatives, and Association of University Women.

Special LMI training sessions have been tailored to specific customer groups. For example, the LMI Center has developed a track for local economic developers and has presented this to individual local economic development entities and at two regional conferences for local economic developers.

LMI Staff members conducted training in eleven of our One-Stop offices on how to utilize our LMI products in working with businesses and job seekers. We have also teamed with our local One-Stop offices in providing the LMI portion of the re-employment workshops in the cities where significant layoffs have occurred. Many other local presentations/training sessions were provided to a wide range of customer groups such as the Dickinson Manufacturers Roundtable, the Council of United Way Agencies, the Turtle Mountain Business Expo, the Burdick Job Corps, the Fargo-West Fargo Public Schools, etc. In other cases, the LMI Center provided Power Points, speakers notes, and supporting information for our One-Stop staff members to make presentations to local civic or business associations.

In addition, Nelse Grundvig from the LMI Center served as a trainer for the LMI Institute on a national basis, conducting five training sessions over the past year, training LMI professionals, economic development personnel, and workforce investment boards on the usage of LMI. The expertise Nelse has gained in conducting these training sessions has been very helpful to us in developing LMI training for our customers in North Dakota.

B. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION ASSESSMENT:

North Dakota feels very strongly that customer feedback is extremely important in planning for and developing an efficient and comprehensive workforce information delivery system. North Dakota used a combination of strategies to obtain feedback on customer satisfaction, with existing workforce information and services, as well as suggestions for developing new products and improving existing products. As mentioned in the discussion of our activities for the various core products in Section A, the LMI Center has utilized the feedback we have received from our customers to develop several new products and delivery formats. This customer feedback will continue to be the key element the LMI Center will use in evaluating current LMI products and services and in the planning for future LMI activities.

Three of the approaches the LMI Center used in assessing customer satisfaction and needs are listed below along with a summary of the findings of each.

1. Customer Satisfaction Survey:
In order to develop customized information to our core customers, a survey was developed and sent to businesses, economic developers, individuals involved in rural economic development (county extension agents), and various planning organizations.

Most of the respondents reported that they did not access labor market information from any source in the past six months. However, when compared to others, Job Service North Dakota was the preferred point of contact. Of those who responded, 42 percent reported contacting the local JSND staff and 15 percent reported contacting the LMI staff directly. The preferred point of contact however, was not through an office; rather the most common method of gathering data was through our electronic links to publications with 54 percent reporting downloading or accessing the files within the past six months. Another popular source was the LMI Data

Warehouse with 39 percent accessing that source of information in the last six months. Approximately 30 percent of those who access labor market information used hard copies of our reports.

Respondents were asked to name other contacts that provided them with labor market information; the following were listed:

Employment Agencies (other than JSND) (2)
NDSU Census Data Center
Tribal Employment Rights Office

The respondents were also asked to list the other websites that were used to obtain labor market information. The following is a compilation of the websites listed:

Census website (3)
USDA
Monster.com
State Data Center
Salary.com
Three Affiliated Tribes

In addition, the respondents reported using four publications that gave them labor market information:

Mercer County Labor Availability Study
BIA Labor Force Report
FMHRA – Wage and Benefit Survey
Publications from the State Data Center

The following is a compilation of specific pieces of labor market information they obtained through these different sources:

Wage and Salary information (included statements that expressed concerns about the timeliness of our data)
Demographic information
Income
Numbers of unemployed, employed by economic sector
Available jobs
Labor Pool
Names of recent graduates by educational facility
Number of Native American Owned businesses
The respondents reported that they search and use labor market information to fulfill a variety of roles. The following table reports the different roles that people perform when searching for labor market information and their percentages:

42%	Managers/Owners	12%	Staff	24%	HR Staff
6	Students	6	Teachers	0	Counselors
12	Elected/Appointed Officials	9	Media	21	Researchers
24	Economic Developers	9	Job Seekers	9	Business Groups
12	Chamber of Commerce	9	Other		

Other roles listed: None (don't use LMI)
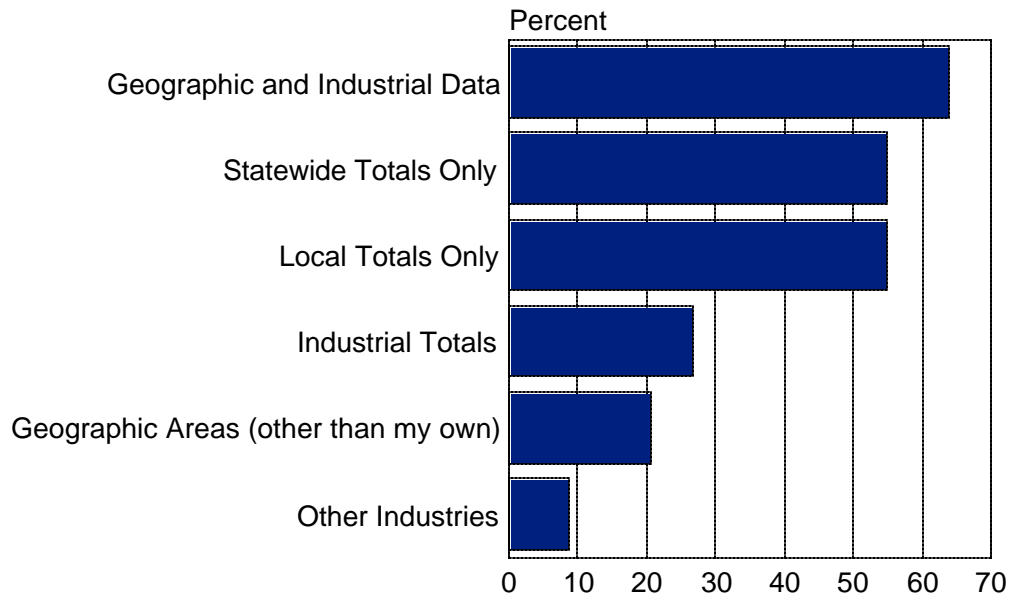Note: Multiple responses were allowed

The type of information sought by the respondents include:

Topic	Percentage
Wages by Occupation	58
Available Labor Force	52
Cost of Living	49
Job Benefits Offered	42
Educational Requirements by Occupation	33
Regional Economic Analysis	33
Skill Levels of Employees	33
Educational Attainment of Adults	30
Occupations in the Area	27
Turnover Rates by Industry	21
Race, Sex, Age of Population	21
Commuting patterns to my area	18
Local Industrial Mix	18
Number of Firms by Industry	18
Local Training Providers	12
Short-Term Industrial Projections	9
Impact Analysis	9
Race by Sex and Occupation	9
Strength of Local Employers	9
Short-Term Occupational Projections	6
Historical Industrial Employment Levels	3

Data that these respondents need include:
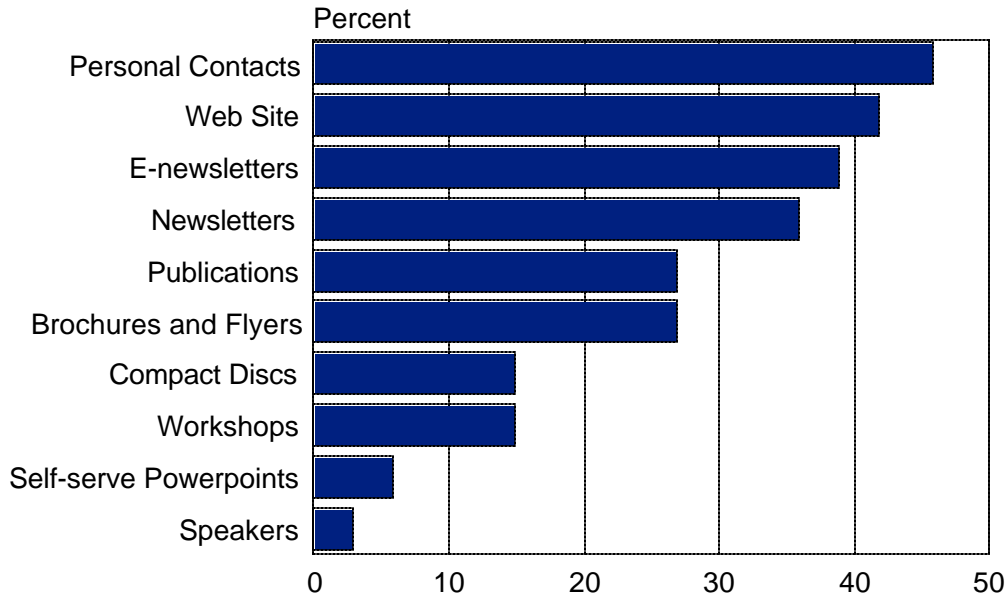
Commuting patterns for rural workers
Detailed breakdown of pay ranges by position
More timely data
Poverty rate and income by reservation
Wages and benefits for drivers in transportation industry
Skills of existing labor market
City specific data
What my competition pays

The most common use of data sought by respondents is to learn about their local area (52 percent). Other common usage included: developing new strategies (42 percent), conduct comparative studies (33 percent), share with policymakers (33 percent), cut and paste (27 percent). These results are consistent with the respondents reporting the most useful information is localized and industrial specific. The following chart shows the usefulness of different types of data.

Percent

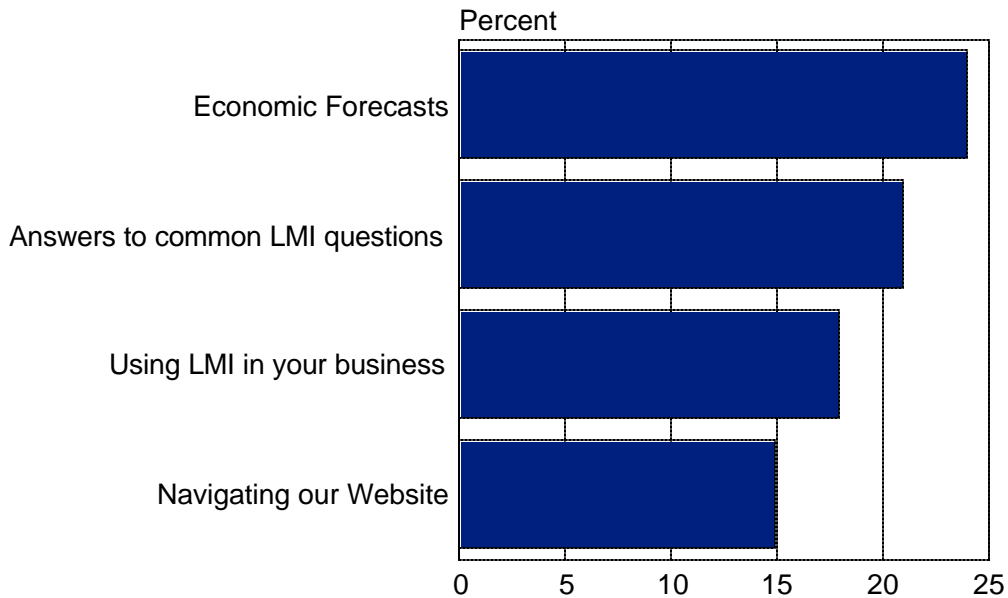| Category	
Geographic and Industrial Data	
Statewide Totals Only	
Local Totals Only	
Industrial Totals	
Geographic Areas (other than my own)	
Other Industries	

0   10   20   30   40   50   60   70

Additional comments on the level of detail included labor market information by reservation

In contrast to the way individuals gather labor market information, where accessing on-line publications was the most popular, the preferred method of gathering data is by means of personal contact. The following chart shows the preferred means of gathering labor market information.

Percent

Method	Percent
Personal Contacts	46
Web Site	41
E-newsletters	38
Newsletters	36
Publications	27
Brochures and Flyers	27
Compact Discs	15
Workshops	15
Self-serve Powerpoints	6
Speakers	3

The most popular workshop that people expressed an interest in attending was economic forecasts. The following chart shows the interest level of the respondents by topic

Percent

Topic	Percent
Economic Forecasts	24
Answers to common LMI questions	21
Using LMI in your business	18
Navigating our Website	15

Most users would not be willing to pay for services (55 percent). However, 27 percent did express a willingness to pay for services. Several responded that fees would have to be small and would be dependent on the services requested.

In conclusion, the typical respondent is often gathering or using labor market information in a variety of roles. The users typically want to use on-line publications or the Data Warehouse to gather data and that data will be used for comparative purposes. While these individuals would prefer a personal contact when dealing with labor market information, most users feel comfortable downloading the information from our website. Special workshops are not of interest to most users; however, economic forecasts and answers to common questions could be

of interest. At this time, fee for services is not a popular option, although in some situations our users feel it would be appropriate.

There are opportunities for labor market information to be a tool that is accessed by our core customers. However, these opportunities appear to be dependent on being able to inform our customers that they have a need for labor market information and that we are the providers of that information.

2. Informal Focus Group and Meetings:

During the past year, staff members from the LMI Center made an effort to sit down and visit several of our key customers about products and services in a very informal focus group/discussion group type setting. In addition, we have had several one-on-one sessions or group discussions with One-Stop offices, North Dakota Career Resource Network, WDC staff, Commerce Department, and local economic developers. These conversations have been invaluable in discovering their workforce information needs and how we might be able to help them. Listed below are notes from some of these discussions.

LMI products currently using/most useful:
- Useful in a more generic way
- Liked the info on The Wire
- Use Wages book often, as it is easier to use than the Data Warehouse
- Use Projections trifold a lot
- The Wire contained too much info…nothing stood out
- Several staff weren't familiar at all with the LMA
- LMA (particularly for businesses), Benefits Survey, Wages, LES
- View RoadMap as more of a general publication
- LMA info useful for economic developers and to get unemployment rate info

Employer discussions/questions:
- #1 request is wage ranges by industry
- Employers need immediate answers
- Work with economic development associations on a regular basis
- Staff does limited analysis to support general info of labor force
- What compensation package do I need to offer to attract and retain qualified workers in my industry and in my area?
- Wage related data and benefits are most common requests
- Mainly ad hoc requests
- Requests for job descriptions
- Staff is asked about doing training needs evaluations for businesses – could we do this throughout the state?
- Need localized information on wages
- Census data
- Most common complaint is that the info is not up to date

What do businesses ask for that is not currently available?
- More current wage data
- Retention info
- Different pieces of our publications (that they view as necessary) rolled into one piece, specifically for a business
- Turnover rates

- We are already providing a lot of the info they need
- Information such as what we proposed in the template
- Easily accessible labor availability info and wages
- Occupational wages within more immediate area

What kinds of tools or aids would you like to see developed that might help you in working with employers?
- Customized packages
- Pieces of info from different publications combined into one
- Template we proposed
- Ability to generate their own reports
- Specialized publications specific to their area – similar to LES, but more often
- Info more specific to their area

Would businesses/economic developers be interested in specialized LMI training? (i.e. how to find info on LMI Warehouse, etc.)
- Set up sessions every month, then advertise to employers
- Something their staff can handle
- They don't get a lot of requests for this
- Could develop packaged presentations for specific groups
- Not many requests
- Economic developers need to know how to use the info and more importantly, how to find it
- Businesses may not want to take the time to learn this, when it should be a service JSND provides for them; economic developers may be a more likely candidate
- They don't get too many requests for individual presentations, but it could be a possibility at a higher level; i.e. economic developers convention (migration pattern, projections, wage changes)
- Local office targets audience with their own presentations, as they have an understanding of what is needed
- It would be hard for them to use a standard presentation developed by us; LMI should do the presentations
- Could develop packaged presentations for specific groups
- Dickinson is in the process of lining up some presentations and would like for us to be a part of them
- Presentations such as this should be geared more toward economic developers

Does local office staff need LMI training and to what extent?
- Should train local office staff before any employer sessions – perhaps twice per month
- They are working on developing their own scripts to use on LMI based common questions
- They will use the tutorial for job seekers and businesses for a review
- Could possibly use yearly (very general) LMI course for local office staff
- Staff need to become more competent in using and finding info on the Data Warehouse
- Like using tutorial that was developed for job seekers side and business services side
- Yes - they don't use it daily
- It is hard for them to understand the different pieces of information available and how it can be used
- They would like to see us do scenarios in a lab setting, so staff can actually walk through it themselves
- They would like to see us more often

If local offices develop a welcoming kit for new employers, what type of LMI could be included? (discussed at Customer Service Coord. Team rally)
- See a use for economic developer packages, not necessarily for businesses
- Welcoming kit would be too general of a piece to use; they are going to focus on becoming more involved in specifying information based on customer needs

- Probably won't develop a welcoming kit, but rather customized packages based upon their requests for info

Website (specifically Data Warehouse):
- Staff need to become more familiar with data available
- Like idea of being able to generate reports on the web for current and historical data
- More efficient use of scroll down screens – you lose the titles on top
- Should be able to open a description off of the occupational and alternative titles (i.e. Programmer Analyst II)
- Suggested using GIS to apply to LMI site
- Customizable reports where businesses could select their own data elements
- Don't like look of Data Warehouse boxes
- Hard to find titles (option for alternate titles would help)
- Need keyword search
- Primarily uses web to find info, not the publications quite as much
- Have to click twice to get to the employer's site on the List of Employers page (could have that additional info with the employer name on the first page to avoid 2 clicks)
- JSND banner should stay on top no matter what other site you click to from our home page
- Provide link to O*Net code of occupational info
- Would like to see customized, self-services available through LMI site
- Make LMI fully functional in VOS
- LMI section on VOS not useful – should have link to Data Warehouse, to avoid confusion
- Data Warehouse not easy to understand
- Find it difficult to find what they need – info is "all over the board"
- Data Warehouse is not a user-friendly tool for someone other than LMI staff
- Hope our new program (to replace Data Warehouse) will be easier to navigate

Review template
- Good start
- Economic developers may use more than businesses
- Businesses, economic developers really don't have a need for something like this, unless they are considering expansion or relocation
- Could use info on the template such as number of people in labor market, skills, wages, commuting patterns, job training
- Could start within a 100 mile radius of city, then become more detailed in info as radius is shortened
- Prefer local office staff do this type of work as it is needed; feels staff need to know the Data Warehouse info
- Like the LMI @ Work template
- Our template should be a Word or Excel file, or something other than PDF, so it can be revised by local offices
- Build template based on most common local office requests
- Need to do more industry-based products/info (be more specific to them)
- Templates for industries, regions, and job seekers (career planning)
- Add where training is available for certain occupations and the success rate for training facilities
- Add number of job openings
- Break down occupational info
- Change language so it is easy to understand (i.e. mean)
- Add projections, wages and info from projections trifold for job seeker template
- Would like something like this accessible online
- Should focus on the industries where there is the most demand

- We could develop a template for local offices to hand out to economic developers to give them an idea of the different types of info that could be provided
- Could also use the template as an info piece for local offices when they are out at meetings or giving presentations
- Businesses need immediate, customized results – can't necessarily wait for us
- Template could be a nice info piece for them to hand out
- Majority of requests need to be customized, within a short time period

Use of Local Employment Surveys
- Businesses find useful
- Would like for them to be done annually
- Make LES a more timely publication
- Like the idea of the new format
- Still want areas such as Wahpeton to have their own LES
- Could we provide data on quarterly basis?
- Would it be possible to post on web
- Prefer annual averages on an annual basis
- Still need largest, smallest employers listed alphabetically (could be done as a special request)
- Would like for us to provide more info on their specific area

LMI's role in CSA's CuSCoT plan
- Help staff to understand our info and present it in correct format
- Assist in developing customized packages
- Suggested getting copies of each CSA's plan to help us determine our role
- Work closely with local offices
- Need LMI expert on their staff
- More training in local offices

Other comments:
- Do we need to date the info on the website – can there be a "Most Current Data" button and a "Historical Data" button? Employers see the dates on the most recent data we have, and think that our website has not been updated.
- Started following Melanie Arthur's economic analysis use
- Need to help enable staff to understand LMI for self-sufficiency
- Would like to see us develop data elements for geographic areas in the form of narrative reports and high-quality power point presentations (i.e. Balancing Act)
- Grand Forks is co-locating with SBA, SBDC which will be an opportunity for joint marketing efforts and to serve as a joint resource area
- In mailing publications, we need to identify and send specifically to people in local offices
- LMI posters were well-received; would like to see more developed
- Like both the wheel and Products and Services booklet ideas as products
- Would like to see something like "Regional RoadMaps" developed
- Could use an LMI presentation on power point for resource room staff – mainly FAQ's
- Screen saver in resource room would be useful
- Suggested doing ongoing labor availability studies
- SBA centers in each CSA would have some helpful suggestions
- Develop focus groups rather than advisory groups to capture different people at different stages
- Notify local offices of major changes immediately (i.e. discontinuation of publications)
- Would like for us to provide customized info in PDF format
- Add instructions in wage books, etc. on how to use or find info in Data Warehouse
- Should have LMI products and services info and links to our info, on mini-CD's for handouts
- Would like to see us there on a more regular basis

3. Feedback From Presentations and Training Sessions:
We have also received valuable feedback from participants in our training sessions and presentations. We closely review the evaluation forms we receive from training sessions and have often received very timely ideas and suggestions from informal discussions with individuals during or after these sessions.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS OR CHANGES TO THE SUITE OF CORE PRODUCTS:

The list of core products and services for the Workforce Information Grant has evolved over the past few years. The current suite of core products provides a relatively concise grouping of the most common categories of products produced by most states while allowing individual states the flexibility to tailor products to the most critical needs in their state. Although it is important for several of the products, such as the ALMIS Database and Projections to be consistent across the nation, the many differences from state to state require that individual LMI departments maintain this flexibility to address the workforce information needs unique to their state.

As such, North Dakota does not have many recommendations for changes to the suite of core products. The following are a few observations we have made based on conversations with our various customers.

The need for fringe benefit information is becoming more and more of a critical need for our business customers. Fringe benefit surveys should be able to identify differences in fringe benefit packages offered by the geographic area, industry, and size of businesses. North Dakota currently conducts its own fringe benefits surveys as a part of core product #3, but this is one item that not all states currently produce.

Our customers are constantly requesting more localized products and services. Individual communities are looking for workforce information that they can use to measure the health and growth of their communities and that they can use to promote their areas. We believe that each state needs to develop some series of localized products.

As we have developed new products and services and made existing ones more useful, our customers are becoming very reliant on many of the products we produce under the Workforce Information Grant. Accordingly, it is critical that adequate funding continues to flow to the state LMI departments through the Workforce Information Grant so that these customers will continue to have access the workforce information they need and have come to depend upon us to produce.