

## **Statewide Employment Statistics System**

In developing the PY 2002 One-Stop LMI plan, the Division of Research and Statistics consulted with both the State and local Workforce Development Boards (WIB). Central-office based Division staff regularly attend and make presentations to the State Board and its subcommittees. Recent presentations include a demonstration of CareerZone (our career exploration tool), a discussion with a Board workgroup on dealing with systems integration and indicators/measures, and a presentation on determining priority demand occupations. Our field Labor Market Analysts attend local Board meetings, serve on appropriate LWIB subcommittees, and serve as “consultants” to the Board on labor market related issues. It is through the dialog generated, as well as the issues raised, at these meetings that staff identify activities that are addressed and included in this Annual Plan. Our Agency’s Workforce Development Division supports the State WIB. Staff from our Division meet weekly with Workforce staff to discuss issues of mutual concern, including labor market information-related and other activities needed to support the State Board. Research conducted by our Division is transmitted to the Board through the Workforce Division.

The Division of Research and Statistics meets twice yearly with representatives of New York State’s greater workforce community (system, businesses, and individuals) through conferences hosted by the New York Association of Employment and Training Professionals (NYATEP). Our staff conduct workshops and other sessions dealing with the availability of labor market information, as well as accessing, interpreting and using labor market information. These sessions are invaluable, not only in developing new products/services and training local workforce professionals on the use of LMI, but in networking and interacting with our local partners.

The Workforce Development Division is responsible for the development and updating of the WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five Year Strategic Plan. Analysis of the State’s economy, including labor market trends, skills shortages, occupational and population trends, and implications of other programs (Welfare-to-Work for example) are completed by Research staff in conjunction with program staff. This analysis forms the basis for much of the development of the remainder of the Plan.

The Division of Research and Statistics is a major player in New York State’s Workforce Development System. The One-Stop LMI Grant allows us to develop the products and services required for the System to function efficiently and effectively. Staff is involved in planning as well as executing the plan and the eventual evaluation of program outcomes.

## **Products and Services to be Provided**

### **1) Continue populating the ALMIS Database with State Data** (Estimated cost \$500,000)

During PY 2002, New York's ALMIS database team will continue to update the core data tables and add some additional optional data tables, including unemployment claims, eligible training providers, post-secondary degrees conferred, and occupational demand lists, that it was unable to complete in the prior year. The ALMIS web-based application continues to reside on a server that was modified to accommodate ALMIS-specific requirements. A request to purchase a server capable of handling the ALMIS Database and related web applications is included in this grant application.

New York currently uses Version 2.1 of the ALMIS database. We intend to upgrade to Version 2.2 during this program year. Additionally, we intend to purchase sufficient computer software and hardware, including application and web servers, to allow us to host the ALMIS database on our own equipment. Savings in vendor-hosting costs will eventually offset initial startup costs.

Log analysis software will be used to track the volume of hits on the database, the specific pages being viewed, and the IP address of customers viewing the pages.

Field analysts and central office staff will complete, test, and enhance the web-based front end to query the ALMIS database. It will allow local boards, partner agencies and the public at large to access the database from home or office at any time.

### **2) Produce and disseminate long-term, industry and occupational employment projections.** (Estimated cost \$150,000)

New York continues to serve on the Projections Consortium and micro-matrix users group. Long-term occupational projections (2000-2010) will be prepared for New York State and ten labor market regions. These projections will be one of the sources used to identify occupations in demand by Workforce Investment Area. In addition, the State and regional projections will be available on the New York State Department of Labor website. Educators, students, counselors, labor market intermediaries, planners, and economic developers reference these projections. The long-term regional occupational projections will be developed using long-term industry projections from the Governor's Budget Office for each region and the State.

Statewide projections will be completed by January 2003 while regional projections will be completed by the end of March. These projections will then be incorporated into the ALMIS database, appear in the publication *Occupational Outlook and Wages*, and be made available to One-Stop partners and the general public.

**3) Produce and disseminate short-term industry and occupational employment forecasts.** (Estimated cost of \$50,000)

All industry projections are prepared by the Governor's budget office. Short-term occupational projections will be developed as needed to address specific issues as they arise. Sub-state short-term industry and occupational projections will be completed as requested by local workforce boards.

Additionally, staff is involved in conducting Employer Surveys for Local Workforce Boards on a request basis. Surveys ask businesses about the commutation of their workforce; skills and occupational shortages; training needed; and reasons for employee turnover. Findings from these surveys help identify occupations for which hiring is expected in the coming year and skill shortages for which training could be offered.

**4) Develop occupational analysis products.** (Estimated cost of \$350,000)

In prior years, the New York State Department of Labor developed and implemented an internet-based career exploration and occupational information program known as CareerZone®. This system has been completely updated and re-written to accommodate changes in the Occupational Information Network (O\*NET) database, and the increased usage by one-stop staff and customers. Designed around the O\*NET database, the CareerZone® system provides career and labor market information (e.g., skills, abilities, tasks, education and training requirements, wages, and outlook) for over 900 occupations. By seamlessly interacting with other systems, CareerZone® provides access to captioned career videos, current job openings, and college databases. On-going support for the updated version of CareerZone® will focus on furthering the incorporation of the product at self-help One-Stop sites.

Monies will also be used to expand job seeker tools and the expand the online Career Portfolio. The Portfolio provides an encrypted, password-protected environment for customers to explore and document their career-development activities. Containing a (O\*NET developed) career interest, skill, and value assessment modules, the Portfolio is an ideal complement to other self-help products. The results of these, and other portfolio modules, can then be formatted and printed out for off-line use.

For grade school youth and customers unable to access the CareerZone® system, a "low-tech" alternative is available. Staff from the Division of Research and Statistics, trained as certified facilitator trainers in the Real Game™ Series of career development products, continue to provide training on this system. Designed to simulate the world of work and allow customers (student and adult) to develop career exploration and job search skills, these products help customers more effectively use occupational and labor market information.

**5) Provide an employer name and address list that can be accessed by the public.**  
(Estimated cost of \$5,000)

New York will purchase the InfoUSA employer database, or its successor, and provide it to One-Stop Centers, local boards, regional staff and others in the ALMIS database. As in the past, the database will be used to provide employer contacts to job seekers as they conduct their job search.

**6) Provide information and support to Workforce Investment Boards and produce other state information products and services.** (Estimated cost of \$750,000)

- New York's out stationed labor market analysts maintain regular contact with local Workforce Investment Boards and their staff, offering assistance in interpreting local labor market trends, helping with applications for grant monies and training local staff in the use of labor market information. Central office staff and local Analysts, in consultation with LWIB staff, conduct workforce development surveys to determine skill needs of local businesses, commutation patterns, worker retention issues, hard-to-fill job openings, and training and recruitment methods. Local staff analyze survey results and prepare the final report. Field staff, in conjunction with LWIB staff, have agreed on a standard set of LMI tools appropriate for local workforce development web sites. Research staff maintain these sites at no cost to the local areas.
- In order to help with this review, we have created and will continue to populate the Skills Training Request Database that includes all requests for skills training received by the Department's Workforce Development Division as well as local boards. Provisions will be made during the program year to allow local boards to submit training requests information into the database electronically.
- As in the past, Division of Research and Statistics staff will continue to attend state and local Workforce Investment Board meetings and act as resource staff for questions and issues pertaining to the labor market.
- The Division will also pilot various methods to measure customer satisfaction related to labor market information. Businesses, job seekers, local boards and their staff, and the State Board will be surveyed.
- The Division has embarked on the enhancement of ES-202 physical locations and firm addresses in the database to allow for electronic geocoding; this will allow our analysts to better serve our customers by mapping employment opportunities and labor market information for local partners.

- New York will prepare monthly estimates of employment by industry for smaller counties in New York State for which such estimates are not funded under the BLS Cooperative Agreement. The estimates will be disseminated and staff will respond to labor market information requests from local planners and other interested parties.
- New York will continue to publish its statewide newsletter, *Employment in New York State*.

**7) Support the development of State-based workforce information delivery systems.**  
(Estimated cost of \$350,000)

New York will expand the accessibility of the One-Stop Operating System (OSOS) database for labor market information purposes. Regional web sites will allow employers or persons in need of job training to search the OSOS database of job-ready workers by geographic area, job title, experience, desired wage and/or education. Regional web sites will also allow job seekers to search the OSOS job bank, which is updated daily.

The Division of Research and Statistics will continue to provide LMI Mini-Grants (up to \$3,000) to individuals or groups for the purpose of encouraging the development of unique ways of preparing and disseminating LMI. Grants will be available to teachers, counselors, planners, and others to help defer costs of LMI preparation or dissemination.

**8) Support State workforce information training activities.**  
(Estimated cost of \$250,000)

- The Division of Research and Statistics continues to provide training in the Real Game™ Series of products. Trainings are provided both by invitation and upon request, in an effort to develop and expand the cadre of approximately 100 facilitators trained in the prior year.
- The Division of Research and Statistics continues to provide CareerZone® training to staff and partners statewide. In the coming year these trainings will focus on updates and enhancements to the systems, as well as its linkage with the New York State Education Department Career Plan program. The Division also provides in-depth trainings to certify others as trainers for their local areas.
- New York's Division of Research and Statistics has started training staff of the Division of Employment Services and the Division of Workforce Development in the availability and use of LMI. The Division of Research and Statistics has three Certified Career Development Facilitators (CDF) trainers on staff who will continue to conduct trained-the-trainer sessions across the State for WIA, One-Stop and Labor Department staff.

- The Division of Research and Statistics developed an Eligible Training Providers web site and will continue to conduct sessions explaining the site and related procedures. Staff have begun developing the “report card” capabilities of the site and will train partner staff on this aspect of the site.
- Out-stationed labor market analysts (LMAs) will continue to inform local board and partner staff concerning LMI available, especially as it relates to applying for RFA funds made available through the State Board and serving customers of the One-Stops.
- The Division of Research and Statistics will hold at least two training sessions for its LMAs for the purpose of bringing them up to date on WIA and related issues.
- Staff of the Division of Research and Statistics will continue work with public library staff on the availability and use of LMI.
- New York will continue to take advantage of the LMI Institute courses to enhance the analytical skills of staff. Our extensive network of out-stationed labor market analysts will be fully trained through the Institute.
- We will continue to participate with the University at Albany in their Internship program. During calendar year 2003, we will fund up to eight Graduate Interns to work with staff in the development of statistical tools for obtaining labor market information for sub-state and WIB areas in New York for which data does not exist or are not normally produced.
- The Division of Research and Statistics will expand its marketing effort for Labor Market Information. Our expanded Marketing plan will be based on principles discussed in the Institute’s LMI Marketing Training. We envision the implementation to be a two-step process to include our LMI Customer Satisfaction plan and our Agency’s marketing plan.

## **Customer Satisfaction Plan**

Information generated from our Customer Satisfaction program will be used to foster Continuous Improvement, and will be coordinated with the Department's Marketing/Advertising Plan. Businesses need information on which to base business decisions; individuals need information to inform life decisions; and the Workforce Development System and educational entities need information with which to plan. Because customer needs do not remain static over time, our plan will require repeated asking of customers' needs and suggesting what they might need. We will ask users and potential users about both the information provided and the manner in which it is provided. We will elicit the satisfaction of current users as well as those who do not currently use our LMI.

Once we have operated under this plan for a year, we will assess whether other methods of soliciting customer satisfaction should be employed. Where possible, we will use questions that allow respondents to reply according to a scale of possibilities. This will give us a benchmark of satisfaction on which to build.

Step 1: Create a Customer Database. We will create (we are well on the way already) and maintain a database of all customers contacting the LMI system (through the Central Office, the field staff network, our auxiliary LMI providers, and the web site) – whether by phone, letter, personal visit, e-mail, or the Internet. This database will provide a list of customers who can be queried concerning their satisfaction with our products and services. The database will record the types of customers we serve and the types of organizations they are affiliated with. It will also allow us to tailor our continuous improvement efforts on particular products for particular groups.

Step 2: Finalize a Pop-up Customer Satisfaction Questionnaire on the LMI part of the Department's web site. This is well under way; the questions are settled, the basic rules and approach is decided. Completion of the questionnaire will not be compulsory, and customers will not be asked to complete the questionnaire over and over. All that remains to be done is to connect the questionnaire to the database where results will be recorded, finalize a way to have the questionnaire pop up only when a customer is leaving the LMI part of the web site, and create monthly reports.

Step 3: Assess customer satisfaction among businesses. We will assess responses from businesses to the web pop-up; evaluate the use of web pages under "LMI for Business" (increases or decreases may indicate satisfaction or dissatisfaction); and conduct a mail survey of a small sample of businesses taken from the customer database (see Step 1 above), and from the 202 database (non-customers). We'll determine what can be done to improve services or publications after evaluating responses. Our local Analysts interact with local employers and employer groups, including Chambers of Commerce and Economic Developers, on issues related to the local labor market. Feedback from these activities is used to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of products and services.

The use of focus groups is being considered as an additional tool to systematically measure satisfaction among various customer groups.

Step 4: Assess customer satisfaction among individuals. We will survey by mail individuals (jobseekers, unemployed persons, students, etc.) from the customer database (see Step 1 above.) and from OSOS. We will evaluate results of the customer satisfaction pop-up survey from individuals. We will determine improvements after evaluating the responses. Additionally, our Agency is considering the use of Swipe Card technology by individuals to better track services provided. This would allow us to better target customer satisfaction inquires to those who use LMI related services.

Step 5: Assess customer satisfaction of the Workforce Development System partners. We will survey the State Workforce Development Board, local boards, Job Service Division staff, Workforce Development Division staff, and training providers. We will use evaluation forms after training sessions. We will evaluate customer satisfaction pop-up survey results from these groups. We will determine improvements after evaluating the responses.