

STATE OF ALABAMA,
DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS, LABOR MARKET INFORMATION DIVISION
WORKFORCE INFORMATION GRANT REPORT PY 2005-2006

The Alabama Department of Industrial Relations, Labor Market Information (LMI) Division strives to efficiently and effectively utilize the established methodologies provided by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics to collaboratively fulfill responsibilities as the State of Alabama's official statistical data collection and analysis manager for the Alabama Workforce Investment System. Customers of Labor Market Information will have access to quality information, data and resources to help with better informed decision making at local, regional and state levels.

Methodologies from ETA sponsored consortiums were employed when no BLS directives were available. We worked closely with Workforce Investment Boards (WIB)'s to identify the needs of the workforce investment system in Alabama. This specifically occurred through meetings with Workforce Investment Advisory Area boards (WIAA's) to present labor market information and discuss area needs. Federal grant funds have been used for the delivery of products and services as part of the state's workforce information system. Enhancement of products and services above and beyond those discussed in this plan has incorporated other partner funds.

Accomplishments

1) **Populated the ALMIS Database**

A) *Outcomes for this objective were:*

The ALMIS database version 2.2 was used, Core ALMIS tables were populated according to Consortium guidelines and database content has been maintained and updated to reflect the most current AL publications and data releases. Also, crosswalks to associated database have been maintained as updates have been available as well as participation in ALMIS training opportunities.

B) *Extent to which activities conformed to schedule and variance*

The ALMIS database was maintained and populated as planned with no variance from anticipated milestones.

C) *Aggregated expenditures and variance*

There was no significant variance from the original estimated aggregate expenditures.

D) *Customer satisfaction* for this deliverable is discussed in Section 5D.

2) **Produced industry and occupational projections**

A) *Outcomes*

Ongoing efforts to refine and update historical NAICS series continued. Short-term industry and occupational statewide and area projections for 2005 – 2007 were completed by June 30, 2006. Preparation of long-term industry and occupational statewide and area projections for 2004 – 2014 were completed. Publication deadlines for those projections are described in section 2.B. Projections files were submitted to DOL/ETA for ACINet by June 30, 2006. This data has also been submitted for the ALMIS database for publication via internet. EDS and MicroMatrix training has been attended as offered by the Projections Consortium and Managing Partnership. Industry and occupational skills projections for the state were completed for 2002-2012, and skills projections for areas for 2002-2012 were in the analysis stages during this program year. Development of industry and occupational clusters for inclusion in deliverables has been completed and included in informational products described later in this report.

B) *Extent to which activities conformed to schedule and variance*

All activities except for publication of Long-Term Industry Projections Through 2014 have been completed. This document was delayed due to high workloads and is scheduled for release at the beginning of October 2006. Skills projections for the areas will be published later than originally anticipated due to the extent of analysis involved in the production of a useful product for customers.

C) *Expenditures and variance*

There was no significant variance from the original estimated aggregate expenditures.

D) *Customer satisfaction* for this deliverable is discussed in Section 5D.

3) **Provided occupational and career information products**

A) *Outcomes*

An internet link to the ACINet homepage was maintained as part of Alabama's information delivery. Supplemental wage information was continuously published online as it was released. Labor supply information was published to the internet as educational completer data. Additional supply is under development and publication online is anticipated in the coming months. Staffing patterns for industries using Micromatrix software have been developed. These staffing patterns are not published, but are being used to answer data requests and for internal data analysis. Publication of staffing patterns online through Alabama's Comprehensive Labor Market Information System (ACLMIS) is awaiting three full panels of NAICS-based data. This is anticipated by the end of December, 2006. Career videos continue to be available online and distributed on CD as requested by customers. Informational posters, flyers and other occupational and career information products have been developed/updated with current data and made available. Specifically, posters, flyers, and the Licensed Occupations publication have been updated and published in electronic versions and hard copy where feasible. A flyer announcing the online tutorial was developed as well. Occupational clustering has been incorporated into the Licensed Occupations Guide.

B) *Extent to which activities conformed to schedule and variance*

The Career Exploration Guide is delayed due to training and other priorities. It has been updated and awaiting finalization of layout. This is expected to be available in both hard-copy and online in January, 2007.

C) *Expenditures and variance*

There was no significant variance from the original estimated aggregate expenditures.

D) *Customer satisfaction* for this deliverable is discussed below. A majority of the occupational and career products are now available online; therefore customer satisfaction is captured as demand. Please refer to the webmetrix below.

4) **Provided support to state local workforce investment boards and state partners**

The following tasks are the result of consultation and collaboration with workforce investment partners as well as WIB's. In PY 2005, LMI products, services and publications were further developed and enhanced based on feedback from the partners. An overview of these enhancements was provided to each of the 10 Workforce Investment Advisory Areas (WIAA) that comprise the Statewide Local Board including the Statewide Board and the Boards for Jefferson and Mobile Counties. Additionally, intensive automated and onsite training was conducted and offered to WIA partners statewide as a direct result of increased requests for technical assistance in understanding and utilizing these enhanced and new LMI tools. The training initiative goal was to provide assistance and support to workforce investment partners to allow better informed decision making for local demand driven areas. Preliminary performance review via the Customer Satisfaction process yielded high ratings (an average of 4.3 on a 5.0 scale across 5 modules) for content, trainers and applicability of resources. These tasks/products support the five-year plan and are a direct result of active and ongoing consultation and collaboration with workforce investment leaders in the state and local areas. Training satisfaction is reviewed in Section 6D of this report.

A) *Outcomes*

LMI products were marketed to WIB's and other interested parties through product demonstrations. For example, LED mapping has been of interest due to its ability to provide immediate meaningful information. As a result, it has been demonstrated at a variety of meetings to increase customer's awareness of strategic industry placement in their local area with respect to employment and place of residence. LED Industry Focus was implemented to provide regional boards, and various other local

areas, with reports displaying top industries in respective areas using the eight quarterly workforce indicators provided by the Local Employment Dynamics Program. LMI products, services, and publications continue to be enhanced to accommodate requests for more localized information. It has been determined that skills analysis products using Skills Projections are not only possible, but completion of local area skills analysis reports is anticipated at the end of 2006. Current program data is regularly analyzed using GIS, administrative records and other data mining sources in order to bring greater breadth to LMI informational materials. For example, in presenting localized reports to Workforce Investment Advisory Area Boards, commute and labor sheds have been mapped using GIS to show members the direct scope of workers commuting practices. Continuation of LED program (cooperative program with U.S. Census Bureau) and Quarterly updates to LED are ongoing. The LED Mapping application is operational and online, and Census is in process of adding 2004 data at the state's request through additional funding. LED reports also make information available on workers by age and stratification within industry. Industry and occupational analysis of workforce advisory areas and exploration continue as data becomes available.

B) *Extent to which activities conformed to schedule and variance*

Activities of this nature are based on the demand of the state WIA Board and local WIB's. To this extent data was provided within the scope of the schedule in which it was requested. Skills Projections, again, have been carefully analyzed to make certain that it is presented in a way which accurately presents the data, so that our customers will be able to use it to make better informed decisions. This analysis has taken more time than estimated, and therefore will be published later than originally hoped. LED reports are being produced on a continuous basis to have on hand for customers.

C) *Expenditures and variance*

There was no significant variance from the original estimated aggregate expenditures.

5) **Maintained and enhanced electronic workforce information delivery systems.**

The standardized coding systems employed in the ALMIS database allow for systematic analysis of comparable data and have been developed to provide a seamless interface with other partner agency information. Coding systems now include SOC/O*Net and NAICS. We will seek to make more LMI products user-friendly and available on-line and automated where feasible, including customer support. The primary delivery system for fulfilling this objective is ACLMIS (Alabama's Comprehensive Labor Market Information System), with additional delivery system tailored to the Black Belt Region of Alabama, ARVOS (Alabama's Regional Virtual One Stop).

A) *Outcomes for this objective were*

The division maintained an internet link to ACINet employer search page as a part of information delivery; maintained ACLMIS and ARVOS on the Internet as well as Spanish versions of internet applications (ACLMIS, ARVOS); provided ongoing, application system maintenance (database maintained by partner agency) for the Internet based Consumer Report System; and expanded LMI products available via LMI home page to include LED mapping, LED Quarterly Workforce Indicators, and LED Industry Focus. Newly added features to the website include .pdf files of wage data, occupational trend data, and other publications to allow customers easier access to information. Technical assistance continues to be provided as needed. An Alabama tutorial was developed to mirror LMI Tools You Can Use onsite training for the Alabama LMI Home website.

B) *Extent to which activities conformed to schedule and variance*

The ALMIS database and ACLMIS was maintained and populated as planned with no variance from anticipated milestones. The tutorial went online slightly behind schedule, but did become available July 2006. The Spanish online version is still under development.

C) *Expenditures and variance*

There was no significant variance from the original estimated aggregate expenditures.

D) *Customer support* for this activity is evidenced by over 130,566 Alabama Labor Market Information website hits for the second half of the program year alone. The first table presents the first half of PY05-06 in a tabular format used to count product demand during that time period. The second table is the

current format implemented in January 2006. This format will continue into the next program year. During this time, the Consumer Report System alone averaged over 34,847 hits per month from January 2006 through June 2006. Please review the following tables for actual site counts.

| Web Site Name and URL | Target Groups | | | | | Web Metrics | | |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| | Job Seekers, Counselors | Businesses, Business Svc Reps | Rschrs, Econ, Ec Dev | WIA Admin, Planners, Policy Makers | Students, Teachers, Cnslr | # Visitor Sessions | # Unique Visitors | # Unique Visitors, Mo Avg |
| AL Virtual LMI (www.dir.alabama.gov/lmi/vlmi) | X | | X | X | X | 335,567 | 7,133 | 1,189 |
| Consumer Report (www.dir.alabama.gov/lmi/crs) | X | | | | X | 189,224 | 4,626 | 771 |
| AL LMI Homepage (www.dir.alabama.gov/lmi) | X | X | X | X | X | 476,016 | 49,130 | 8,188 |
| Region VOS (www.alabamavos.org) | X | | | | | 277,606 | 8,206 | 1,368 |

| | 2nd Half PY Avg. Hits |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Geosol Sites | 80,342 |
| ALCRS | 34,847 |
| VLMI | 45,385 |
| VOS('alabamavos.org) | 37,066 |
| Benefits Survey | 977 |
| Career Exploration Guide | 16,228 |
| Current Employment Statistics | 4,646 |
| Current Employment & Wages | 10,324 |
| LMI Homepage | 4,826 |
| LMI Info & Redirect | 1,920 |
| Local Area Unemployment Statistics | 5,968 |
| Local Employment Dynamics | 1,487 |
| Licensed Occupations Guide | 2,793 |
| LMI Newsletter | 942 |
| Occupational Employment Statistics | 1,105 |
| LMI Posters | 808 |
| LMI Projections | 17,841 |
| LMI Statistical Bulletin | 20,259 |
| Tutorial Access | 313 |
| Underemployment in Alabama | 1,454 |
| Occupational Videos | 1,071 |
| Occupational Wages | 38,474 |

6) Support State workforce information training.

LMI training opportunities are structured toward guidance and rehabilitation counselors, educators, and regional/local WIAA staff and members. Training participants learned about traditional LMI resources as well as newly developed or other data mined resources that become available. In PY 2005-2006, over 500 individuals from all identified customer groups attended training through the LMI Tools You Can Use: Better Informed Decision Making Through New Tools and Techniques. As an extension from this training, an online tutorial began to be developed to mirror this training. This tutorial would be available

in English and Spanish and include the same training modules as the onsite training. Additionally, presentations and training sessions were conducted for guidance counselors, vocational rehabilitation staff, employment service field staff and Career Tech counselors and administrators. Customer satisfaction surveys were completed for each session and will be discussed below. The LMI Division staff constantly review the satisfaction surveys for modification of training curriculum and materials. Additionally, it is through the various training, education and outreach endeavors that additional feedback regarding needs for local and demand driven data and resources are gleaned. This information is incorporated into product and service enhancement as well as plans and programs for upcoming years.

A) *Outcomes*

Staff from this office attended the LMI Forum and LMI Institute training opportunities as they were offered. Training was conducted for users of LMI through seminars, workshops, and the internet as well as sponsored LMI Training through facilities at Auburn University in Montgomery, Center for Technology. As a follow-up to training and as requested by customers, LMI staff have provided guided, online technical assistance when needed. The department explored access to online applications for training in our goal to provide an on-line, self-service tutorial. Webmetrics will be included in PY 06-07 for that product demand. We have also maintained a presence at statewide WIA Board meetings to stay abreast of their data needs.

B) *Extent to which activities conformed to schedule and variance*

Training is an ongoing process and it was conducted where and when it was requested. In addition all scheduled training sponsored by the LMI division, such as O*NET and the LMI Tools You Can Use was presented at the scheduled times originally set for the program year. The online tutorial was a bigger feat than originally expected, for the design and proofing process took much longer than the original schedule. The English version was ready in July 2006. The Spanish Version is still in development.

C) *Expenditures and variance*

There was no significant variance from the original estimated aggregate expenditures.

D) *Customer satisfaction*

In PY 2005-2006 customer satisfaction assessments were revised based on PY 2004-2005 experiences and feedback. Evaluation forms were mailed with hard copy publications and provided at each training event. The "LMI Tools You Can Use Training" was separated into six modules for customer satisfaction. Overall, this training was received extremely well. Ratings indicate a 4.2 average satisfaction on a Likert scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is completely unsatisfied/disagree and 5 is completely satisfied/agree. Participants indicated that before training, 12.4% had never used our LMI, 61.1% had occasionally used our data, and 26.5% used our data often. As expected, there was a dramatic shift of opinion after training. At that point, no participants reported that they wouldn't ever use our information. After training, 59.5% indicated they would frequently use our data, where only 40.5% indicated an expected occasional use.

Overall satisfaction with ONet training exceeded expectations in November 2005 with ratings that came in at 4.7 using the same Likert scale. Additional training combining O*Net and Tools You Can Use included 51 participants with an overall satisfaction rating of 4.5.

Clearly there are areas for improvement in our training programs, however the vast majority of comments are very uplifting and show support for increased outreach in this area. The following are anecdotal comments taken from assessments and emails thanking us for our services:

"...everyone was very impressed in Washington (NASWA Winter Forum) with the posters...they were a hit!" Phyllis Kennedy, Director of Alabama Department of Industrial Relations via email

"When I attended the training, I had just started working here. Since the training, I have had no trouble finding information on the internet. The web links that you taught have been very valuable." D. Roberson, Research Analyst in Gadsden, AL

“ I thought it was well organized and presented. It certainly enhanced my knowledge of data sources and what is available to address specific information needs. I use the materials from the course regularly, and leave the companion CD in my computer at all times. DIR is doing a wonderful job of providing useful data and training on its applicability.” S. Turkoski, Economic Development.

B. Recommendations for Improvements or Changes to the Deliverables

The Alabama Labor Market Information Division will continue to improve current products so that users can see the data in various formats to make it more understandable. A narrative report will be written to combine industry data, occupational data, and wage data for the state, and other materials will be developed from occupational projections to address specific customer needs. The division will continue to improve the data available on the website, allowing for easier access to publications, files, and data. Local Employment Dynamics will be analyzed to a greater extent to provide reports of various kinds, such as a report on the older workforce in Alabama. One improvement in this area is to provide .pdf files for all printed publications so that users can download these documents and print them themselves. The division continues to highlight new products available on the website when they are available.

Through the continuation of customer satisfaction surveys, the division will alter presentation of data and develop data and training based on the comments of customers. In the same respect, the division will provide data to local WIB's for decision making for the appropriate regions. Business Employment Dynamics will be analyzed further to look at industry job flow by establishment. Also the division will continue to take a look at sources for occupational supply, which is very important to Education and Workforce Development. The division will continue to develop visual representations of the data using GIS and various charts and graphs to allow customers to more easily see differences in various areas and major shifts in industries and occupations in the state and local areas.

Respectfully Submitted,

SWA Director of Dept. of Industrial Relations

Governor, State of Alabama