

**ARKANSAS
WORKFORCE INFORMATION CORE PRODUCTS
AND SERVICES GRANT
PY 2005**

A. STATEWIDE WORKFORCE INFORMATION SYSTEM

A. The process used to ensure that the SWIB can exercise its responsibility for ensuring the state workforce information policy is responsive to the needs of the state and local workforce system: In accordance with Section 309(e) of WIA, the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) is the designated State Workforce Agency (SWA) responsible for the overall management of the Workforce Information System in Arkansas. Through this responsibility, DWS consults on issues with and manage Labor Market Information (LMI) requests from the state and Local Workforce Investment Boards, private business, individual citizens, and workforce development professionals. The LMI Section works closely with the staff of the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board (AWIB). This provides a communication link concerning state workforce issues and informational dialogue for the AWIB to exercise its responsibility to ensure that state workforce information is responsive to the needs of the state and Local workforce investment system.

B. How the statewide workforce information system supports the goals of the two-year plan for the state and local workforce development: The DWS, through the LMI Section, supports the primary goals of the state's two-year plan through designing, developing, and coordinating efforts, reporting systems, and workforce information products to avoid duplication of efforts/services in achieving a seamless strategy that forwards the governor's and state board's vision. The LMI Section supplies deliverables and activities to the citizens of Arkansas that enhances the strategic vision of the governor and state board of having a globally recognized Arkansas workforce that is educated, trained, and skilled to excel in a changing economy.

C. How the grant activities are consistent with the strategic vision of the Governor and the AWIB: DWS supports the Governor's and AWIB's vision of a globally recognized workforce in Arkansas – educated, trained, skilled - with the character and work ethic needed to excel in a changing economy by continually updating critical LMI information and making it available to Arkansas' citizens. In addition, DWS strives to implement new publications to better inform Arkansans of the ever-changing skills and education requirements needed for success in today's workplace.

D. The Strategy of the DWS and AWIB for consulting with local workforce investment boards and stakeholders in the workforce investment system to determine customer needs for workforce information: To maintain a "local" communication effort, DWS continues having quarterly meetings with Local Workforce Investment Board staff, LMI Users Conferences/Seminars, and 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 Workforce Information System in Arkansas and with the help of the AWIB's business relation's

personnel, DWS continually provides standard and specialized information, services, and products to private citizens, businesses, and non-profit organizations. To better determine local customer needs, DWS plans the continued use of product surveys and may utilize small focus groups to enhance our ability to establish, create, change, and disseminate locally desired information and products.

E. The Broad strategic approach for workforce information delivery to principal customers: As with any system involved in continued informational changes, DWS realizes 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.

F. How workforce information and services are delivered as core services to customers through the state's ONE-Stop service delivery system: As Arkansas has done in the past, DWS 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 Arkansas Workforce Centers and their resource rooms as a focal point for information delivery and customer satisfaction, DWS will be able to continue meeting the needs of our customer base by producing specialized customer driven informational packages.

G. A description of the customer consultation and satisfaction assessment method(s) to be used to collect and interpret customer satisfaction information and the principal customers to be consulted: To achieve better insight from our local and state customers in determining the need and scope of information and products produced through this grant, DWS may utilize small information/product specific focus groups made up of our local and state customers, including industry/employers, eligible training providers, state WIA partners, LWIAs, Arkansas Workforce Center Resource Room personnel, students, teachers and counselors, and private citizens. These focus groups will determine and share their informational needs, to enhance our ability to establish, create, change, and disseminate local and state desired information and products. All grant produced publications and CDs will continue to be sent out to our customers with an enclosed Customer Satisfaction Survey.

H. A concise summary of customer satisfaction findings for the most recent survey of products and services and the effect those findings had on the planned products and services for PY 2005 including how the plan addresses inadequacies or gaps identified by users: In section B, part B below, every activity has a concise summary of customer satisfaction findings for the most recent survey of products and services. When the surveys are sent back to DWS, an appointed Analyst records the findings of the survey and provides the LMI manager with quarterly/yearly results of the findings. The LMI Section managers will meet quarterly to review the overall results of each product and determine whether revisions of any product need to take place in order to identify inadequacies or gaps identified by users. No major findings that would affect our informational products were noted during PY 2004; therefore no major or systematic changes are planned for PY 2005. This information has been shared with the

Arkansas Workforce Investment Board. DWS has also created an online Customer Satisfaction Survey that is applied to most LMI Web pages and Internet products. The completed survey information will be sent electronically to the appointed analyst, who records the findings. The LMI managers in their quarterly meetings, following the same scenario as above, analyze these reports and share the results with the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board.

Other sources of funding within the Workforce Information System in Arkansas that are currently being leveraged or matched to produce labor market information and deliverables of the Workforce Information Grant are:

America's Career Resource Network
Bureau of Labor Statistics
Workforce Investment Act
Wagner-Peyser Act

B. PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

1) CONTINUE TO POPULATE THE ALMIS DATABASE WITH STATE DATA

A. Description of the core product, service or other demand activity: In accordance with the Arkansas State Two Year Plan, Article IX, Section B, page 80 Arkansas will continue to maintain and populate all designated core tables of its ALMIS Database, in accordance with guidelines issued by the ALMIS database Workgroup. DWS is currently utilizing the 2.2 database structure for this grant period to store information for the purpose of information delivery, labor market research, and product development. A new structure was released, version 2.3, and the state will make every effort to conform to the new structure within a reasonable timeframe. The state will utilize the ALMIS Resource Center and its Webb site at <http://www.almisdb.org> for data updates, tools and training relating to the ALMIS Database.

B. Customer support for the product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other consultations with customers and users of workforce information:

Customer support for these deliverable products remains positive. Of the 27 surveys mailed to customers for the *Directory of Licensed Occupations* publication, three surveys were returned to DWS. The results are as follows:

<u>Product Satisfaction</u>		<u>Product Usefulness</u>		<u>Recommend to Others</u>	
67%	Very satisfied	67%	Very Useful	100%	Yes
33%	Satisfied	33%	Useful	0%	No
0%	Indifferent	0%	Fair	0%	Did Not Answer
0%	Did Not Answer	0%	Did Not Answer		

C. How the deliverables support the goals of the state two-year plan: These efforts conform to the governor's and the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board's strategic vision, in the state's

two-year plan, of having a globally recognized Arkansas workforce that is educated, trained, and skilled to excel in a changing economy.

D. The principal customers of the deliverable: Customers for ALMIS database information and activities (including licensing information) are private individuals, public and private businesses, the media, local workforce boards, libraries, chambers of commerce, educational entities, and vocational/technical institutes.

E. The outcome(s) and system impact(s) projected for each deliverable:

1. ALMIS database information will be delivered to customers via the “Discover Arkansas” Internet delivery product. Licensing information is provided in a publication, as well as through America’s Career Information Network (ACINet) site and the “Discover Arkansas” Web site.

2. The continued updating of the ALMIS database and the producing of a new *Directory of Licensed Occupations* allows us to maintain and update existing informational products and create new products to serve Arkansas customers. An example of a new product that serves the informational needs of Arkansas citizens is the Internet based “Discover Arkansas” (Workforce Informer) Web site to house information from Arkansas’ ALMIS database.

3. The core tables of the ALMIS database will continue to be updated in a timely manner to reflect the most recent publications and data releases. Licensing data is updated every two years. The *2007 Directory of Licensed Occupations* in Arkansas will be updated starting in January 2007, with 50 percent completed by April 2007. The completed database files will be sent to the National Crosswalk Service Center by June 2007.

F. Planned milestones for the completion of the deliverable: Since all of the different core tables occur at different times such as monthly, quarterly, yearly, and every ten years it is difficult to give a precise date as to when they will be updated. The tables will be updated by the ALMIS administrator within two weeks of receiving the data.

- + The 2005 version of the *Directory of Licensed Occupations* in Arkansas - PY 04
- + Updated Licensed Occupations database files were submitted to the NCSC – June 05
- + The 2007 version will commence in January 2007

G. The total estimated cost of each deliverable, including identification of planned equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost:

PY '05 Funds
\$108,222.55

**2) PRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE INDUSTRY AND OCCUPATIONAL
EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS**

A. Description of the core product, service or other demand activity: In accordance with the Arkansas State Two-Year Plan Article IX, Section B2, pg. 80, Arkansas will produce statewide long-term industry and occupational projections that will utilize 2004 employment estimates and 2014 projections of employment. Substate long-term industry and occupational projections for the workforce investment areas (WIA's) will commence after the statewide projections are completed. These are prepared as an 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) The OES program surveys employers in each industry segment in Arkansas and estimates staffing patterns for those industry segments; 2) Projections of industry employment are developed using the Long-Term Industry Projection software; and 3) Occupational employment projections are developed using the MicroMatrix software. A historical NAICS-based industry series has been developed and will continue to be refined for use in long-term industry projections. The 2004-2014 projections will be comparable to the latest Bureau of Labor Statistics National Industrial and Occupational Projections.

Arkansas will produce state level short-term industry and occupational projections for the 2005-2007 period. Industry projections will be developed using the Short-Term Industry Projection software, and occupational projections will be developed using the MicroMatrix software. A historical NAICS based industry series has been developed and will continue to be refined for use in short-term industry projections. The NAICS based projections will use the base period of 1st quarter 2005, projecting to first quarter 2007. When the statewide revisions are complete, substate industry and occupational projections for the workforce investment areas (WIAs) will be initiated by the state.

Projections staff will attend training offered by the Projections Consortium and the Projections Managing Partnership relating to the Long-Term and Short-Term Industry Projection software and the MicroMatrix system to remain updated in the latest information available.

B. Customer support for the product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other consultations with customers and users of workforce information:

Customer support for these deliverable products remains positive. Of the 170 surveys that were mailed to customers for all projections publications, 22 were received. The results are as follows:

<u>Product Satisfaction</u>		<u>Product Usefulness</u>		<u>Recommend to Others</u>	
27%	Very satisfied	36%	Very Useful	95%	Yes
73%	Satisfied	64%	Useful	5%	No
0%	Indifferent	0%	Fair	0%	Did Not Answer
0%	Did Not Answer	0%	Did Not Answer		

C. How the deliverables support the goals of the state two-year plan: These efforts conform to the governor's and Arkansas Workforce Investment Board's strategic vision in the state's two year plan, at 1,A, pg. 3, by having a globally recognized Arkansas workforce that is educated, trained, and skilled to excel in a changing economy.

D. The principal customers of the deliverable: Customers for long-term and short-term projections include Arkansas Workforce Centers, 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.

E. The outcome(s) and system impact(s) projected for each deliverable:

1. Arkansas will produce publications containing industry and occupational projections. The current projections, as well as all future projections, will be included in the ALMIS Database and be made available to users by electronic media, which includes the "Discover Arkansas" Web site. Also, the statewide short-term occupational projections will be submitted to the Projections Management Partnership Consortium for inclusion in the Career One-Stop and State Occupational Projections Web sites.

2. These projections will allow DWS to update existing products and create new products utilizing the most recent projections for customers to analyze. Some of those updated products include ArkOSCAR, *Top Ten Occupations by Educational Level*, and the *Career Watch Magazine*.

F. Planned milestones for the completion of the deliverable:

1. State level long-term industry and occupational projections for 2004-2014 will begin in January 2006, and the publication will be ready for distribution by September 2006. Substate long-term projections for 2002-2012 were completed in May 2005, and the publication will be distributed in July 2005. The 2004-2014 long-term occupational projections will be submitted to the Projections Management Partnership Consortium for inclusion on the Career One-Stop and State Occupational Projections Web sites within 30 to 45 days after the data is finalized.

2. The production of state level short-term projections will begin in November 2005 and will be approximately 60 percent complete by late-January 2006, with a 100 percent completion by mid-March 2006. The state level short-term publication will be ready for distribution by May 2006. Substate short-term projections will begin after the final release of the state level projections and will be made available in publications for distribution by September 2006. The short-term occupational projections will be submitted to the Projections Management Partnership for inclusion in the Career One-Stop and State Occupational Projections Web sites within 30 to 45 days after the data is finalized. Publications for the 2004-2006 projections will be distributed by September 2005.

G. The total estimated cost of each deliverable, including identification of planned equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost:

PY'05 Funds
\$ 105,580.05

3) PROVIDE OCCUPATIONAL AND CAREER INFORMATION PRODUCTS FOR PUBLIC USE

In accordance with the Arkansas State Two-Year Plan Article IX, Section B, pg. 80, the Occupational/Career Information staff produces and disseminates many customer-focused occupational and career information products. All publications can be found on Arkansas' "Discover Arkansas" Web site at www.discover.arkansas.gov. All of our products are SOC-based and developed in consultation with intended customers. Below is a description of each product, unless it has been described elsewhere within this grant narrative:

A. Description of the core product, service or other demand activity: The *Projected Employment Opportunities List* is a listing of training programs for occupations that have been determined to be in demand for the State and each Local Workforce Investment Area. The list is derived from the LMI Section's short-term Occupational Employment Projections. It is a guide to assist customers in locating and obtaining training for occupations that are currently listed as occupations with projected employment opportunities. The Arkansas Workforce Investment Board approved updated methodology in 2004 that will be used to produce the list.

B. Customer support for the product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other consultations with customers and users of workforce information: Although customer satisfaction surveys are not done for this product it is the most read publication on the Discover Arkansas Web site.

C. How the deliverables support the goals of the state two-year plan: The *Projected Employment Opportunities List* supports a governor's priority at Section II, pg. 7 of the state's two-year plan, which is "to utilize Arkansas' labor market information to identify high growth/high demand target industries in the ten workforce areas."

D. The principal customers of the deliverable: Customers for this product include dislocated workers, the unemployed, educators, counselors, students, parents of students, chambers of commerce, educational entities, vocational/technical institutes, the media, and local workforce boards in Arkansas.

E. The outcome(s) and system impact(s) projected for each deliverable: The *Projected Employment Opportunities List* will impact the training considerations of Arkansas citizens by showing projected opportunities of employment within the state and local areas. The *Projected Employment Opportunities List* also meets the mission statement of the State's Two Year Plan, of "establishing a unified, flexible, accountable workforce training system implemented through the collaboration of business, industry, labor and citizens, and characterized by accessible and responsive one-stop career development networks."

F. Planned milestones for the completion of the deliverable: The *Projected Employment Opportunities List* will be released by July 1 of each year.

A. Description of the core product, service or other demand activity: The *Occupational Employment and Wage Data* publication provides detailed wage and salary information. The publication identifies occupation and wage profiles statewide and for each metropolitan statistical area. The “Discover Arkansas” Web site also has occupation and wage profiles for the Local Workforce Investment Areas. The wage information found in this publication is collected by BLS’ Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Survey. Beginning with the 2002/04 OES survey, two surveys a year are conducted. Arkansas will produce one yearly publication utilizing three years of data (six panels) and will include the fourth quarter survey panel (2004/04).

B. Customer support for the product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other consultations with customers and users of workforce information:

Customer support for this deliverable product remains positive. Of the 218 surveys that were mailed to our customers for all wage publications, 14 were returned. The results are as follows:

<u>Product Satisfaction</u>		<u>Product Usefulness</u>		<u>Recommend to Others</u>	
64%	Very satisfied	64%	Very Useful	93%	Yes
36%	Satisfied	29%	Useful	0%	No
0%	Indifferent	7%	Fair	7%	Did Not Answer
0%	Did Not Answer	0%	Did Not Answer		

C. How the deliverables support the goals of the state two-year plan: The *Occupational Employment and Wage Data* publication supports the governor’s vision at 1, C, pg. 4 of the state’s Two-Year Plan, which is to, “improve the responsiveness to customer needs through customer contact and use of improved labor market information.”

D. The principal customers of the deliverable: Customers for this product include dislocated workers, the unemployed, educators, counselors, students, parents of students, chambers of commerce, industrial facilities, educational entities, vocational/technical institutes, the media, local workforce boards, and varying industries (public and private) in Arkansas.

E. The outcome(s) and system impact(s) projected for each deliverable: The planned outcome of this publication is to provide Arkansas citizens and employers with methodologically-sound wage information for the state that will increase their awareness of wages being paid in the workforce and make Arkansas citizens aware of the availability of higher-paying jobs for people who receive increased education/training. It will also help in their career exploration efforts.

F. Planned milestones for the completion of the deliverable: The anticipated release date of the yearly publication is January 2006. The “Discover Arkansas” Web site will be updated with wage data at the end of each survey panel or twice per year.

A. Description of the core product, service or other demand activity: *Arkansas Affirmative Action Data* is fully published through our Web site and contains three tables of affirmative action information. Table 1 (Population by Race and Gender) and Table 3 (Summary Occupations by Gender and Race) are based on Bureau of Census information available from the latest census. Table 2 (Employment Status by Race and Gender) is updated on the Web site annually.

B. Customer support for the product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other consultations with customers and users of workforce information: While no customer satisfaction survey is done for this product, DWS is continually asked for this information from businesses, grant writers, and our educational and state partners.

C. How the deliverables support the goals of the state two-year plan: The *Arkansas Affirmative Action Data* supports the governor's vision at 1, C, pg. 4 of the state's two-year plan, which is to, "improve the responsiveness to customer needs through customer contact and use of improved labor market information."

D. The principal customers of the deliverable: The primary customers for this information are employers, grant writers, and our educational and state partners.

E. The outcome(s) and system impact(s) projected for each deliverable:

1. Providing Arkansas specific affirmative action data will allow many users of this information an opportunity to plan and meet their hiring goals and meet requirements of many of their state and federal grant proposals.

F. Planned milestones for the completion of the deliverable: The census data (Tables 1,3) will be released every ten years after the release by the Census Bureau. The employment data (Table 2) will be released each spring.

A. Description of the core product, service or other demand activity: *The Future Awaits* is a guide for instructors to teach young adults who are entering the workplace. It is designed to instruct the "pre-employment preparation" basics (e.g. resume, job application, appropriate dress, interview tips) and explain federal tax forms.

B. Customer support for the product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other consultations with customers and users of workforce information:

Customer support for this deliverable product remains positive. Of the 206 surveys mailed, three were returned and the results are as follows:

<u>Product Satisfaction</u>		<u>Product Usefulness</u>		<u>Recommend to Others</u>	
67%	Very satisfied	67%	Very Useful	100%	Yes
33%	Satisfied	33%	Useful	0%	No
0%	Indifferent	0%	Fair	0%	Did Not Answer
0%	Did Not Answer	0%	Did Not Answer		

C. How the deliverables support the goals of the state two-year plan:

1. The *Future Awaits* publication supports the governor's vision at 1, F, pg. 6, of the state's two-year plan, which is to, "Create a Collaborative Approach to Prepare Youth for Success in a Global, Demand-Driven Economy."

2. The *Future Awaits* also addresses the governor's vision statement in Section 1, pg. 3 of the two-year plan and will help in the development of "a Globally-recognized workforce in Arkansas – educated, trained, skilled – with the character and work ethic needed to excel in a changing economy."

D. The principal customers of the deliverable: The primary customers of this publication are instructors in schools and community-based organizations that are teaching workplace readiness skills. Others who utilize the publication are high school students, recent graduates, other young adults, the unemployed and underemployed.

E. The outcome(s) and system impact(s) projected for each deliverable: This publication is utilized in the Arkansas Workforce Centers for readying citizens for job interviews and used as an instructional tool at the various job fairs held within the state.

F. Planned milestones for the completion of the deliverable: This publication is updated as the need arises and distributed upon requests of customers.

A. Description of the core product, service or other demand activity: *Labor Market Information Resources* is a booklet detailing Arkansas's LMI products and whom to contact to receive the different types of industry and occupational information.

B. Customer support for the product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other consultations with customers and users of workforce information: This is a tool to assist users in locating LMI products, and no customer satisfaction survey is done.

C. How the deliverables support the goals of the state two-year plan: Each product within this grant proposal is listed within the resource guide; therefore, it supports the overall goals and objectives of each product.

D. The principal customers of the deliverable: The primary customers of the *Resource Guide* are Arkansas citizens needing the many different types of LMI products produced by the State's Workforce Information Agency.

E. The outcome(s) and system impact(s) projected for each deliverable: The major impact of the Labor Market Information Resources booklet is a duplication of the previous paragraph.

DWS provide a catalog of the different types of LMI products to Arkansas citizens to help them in their informational pursuits.

F. Planned milestones for the completion of the deliverable: This publication is updated as the need arises and distributed upon request and at all training sessions, job fairs, and conferences.

A. Description of the core product, service or other demand activity: In support of the Arkansas State Two-Year Plan Article IX, Section B2, pg. 80, the *Career Watch* Magazine is an annual publication containing profiles of Arkansas occupations, including job descriptions, average pay, growth rate, and educational and scholarship information. Of all the publications and products DWS produces, the *Arkansas Career Watch* Magazine receives the largest positive response from all areas of our customer base. Currently DWS has a customer circulation of about 105,000 copies per year.

B. Customer support for the product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other consultations with customers and users of workforce information: DWS continually receives extremely favorable accolades from dislocated workers, the unemployed, educators, counselors, students, and parents of students, for this deliverable product. Of the 102,050 surveys that were mailed to our customers of the *Arkansas Career Watch* Magazine, 335 were returned with the following results:

<u>Product Satisfaction</u>	<u>Product Usefulness</u>	<u>Recommend to Others</u>
34% Very Satisfied	48% Very Useful	95% Yes
59% Satisfied	41% Useful	4% No
6% Indifferent	10% Fair	1% Did not answer
1% Did not answer	1% Not very useful	
	.3% Not useful at all	

C. How the deliverables support the goals of the state two-year plan: The *Arkansas Career Watch* Magazine will continue to impact Arkansas' Workforce System and its customers in helping to fulfill the Governor's vision at Section 1, A, pg. 3 of the state's two-year plan which is "a Globally-recognized workforce in Arkansas – educated, trained, skilled -with the character and work ethic needed to excel in a changing economy."

D. The principal customers of the deliverable: Even though the principal users of the *Arkansas Career Watch* Magazine are dislocated workers, the unemployed, educators, counselors, students, and parents of students, DWS has strived to make sure of its availability to all the citizens of Arkansas through the Arkansas Workforce Centers and public libraries. DWS

has also made it available for downloading from the Arkansas Career Watch Web site located at: <http://www.careerwatch.org>

E. The outcome(s) and system impact(s) projected for each deliverable: To achieve this success, DWS has developed a network that promotes collaborative effort among several state agencies. These are the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education, Arkansas Department of Economic Development, Arkansas Department of Education, Arkansas Department of Information Systems, Arkansas Department of Higher Education, Arkansas Department of Human Services, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, and the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board. Representatives from this group are contacted and provide editorial content to the publication. LMI staff maintains sole responsibility for drafting, editing, publishing, and distribution of this highly successful magazine. It is through this multi-agency collaborative effort that the 2005/2006 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.

F. Planned milestones for the completion of the deliverable:

1. Work began on the 2005-2006 *Career Watch* Magazine in February 2005, with 50 percent completed by mid-April 2005.
2. DWS will submit the completed document to the printer by August 2005, with distribution to customers to be completed in October 2005. Once the 2005/2006 *Career Watch* is delivered to us from the printer (early October 2005) and distributed, it will be updated and made available for downloading from the Arkansas *Career Watch* Web site.
3. In addition, our popular *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 magazine for enhancement to Arkansas students.

A. Description of the core product, service or other demand activity: Arkansas will continue 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, DWS has replicated and distributed over 400. The videos are additionally available in a closed captioned version for the hearing impaired and in a Spanish language version and can be found on the "Discover Arkansas" Web site.

B. Customer support for the product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other consultations with customers and users of workforce information: While DWS has no customer satisfaction findings for this product, it remains a highly sought after product from counselors and teachers providing career exploration tools for Arkansas students. Over the past year DWS received orders for more than 125 sets of the videos.

C. How the deliverables support the goals of the state two-year plan: The Career Video library supports the governor's strategic goal at 1, B, pg. 3 of the state's two-year plan, which is to "maximize the state's resources to support statewide economic development activities through research, information, service, training, and education."

D. The principal customers of the deliverable: The distribution of the Career Videos has primarily been focused on the Arkansas Workforce Centers and educational entities (career orientation teachers, high school counselors, libraries, educational cooperatives, and two-year colleges) within the state.

E. The outcome(s) and system impact(s) projected for each deliverable: The major outcome of providing the career videos has been and will continue to be in educating the students and citizens of Arkansas on the needed qualifications and skills required in their occupational exploration. The ability to view a person performing the actual duties of a job enhances their ability to comprehend the details and requirements of the occupation.

F. Planned milestones for the completion of the deliverable: This is a continuing project and distribution is ongoing by request. Distribution is supplemented by requests made during educational conferences and job fairs.

A. Description of the core product, service or other demand activity: As specified in the Arkansas State Two-Year Plan Article IV, Section F, pg. 103, the "Top Ten Occupations By Educational Level" information incorporates the top ten occupations by educational category as deemed through Arkansas' short-term projections. This information is combined with each occupation's OES average wage, primary skill requirements from O*Net, and career video. In the past this information has been available on CD and posted on the "Discover Arkansas" Web site. The future method of distribution will be Internet only.

B. Customer support for the product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other consultations with customers and users of workforce information:

Customer support for this new product has been excellent. Of the 140 surveys that were mailed to our customers for the Top 10 Occupations, four were completed and returned. The results were:

<u>Product Satisfaction</u>		<u>Product Usefulness</u>		<u>Recommend to Others</u>	
75%	Very satisfied	50%	Very Useful	100%	Yes
25%	Satisfied	50%	Useful	0%	No
0%	Indifferent	0%	Fair	0%	Did Not Answer
0%	Did Not Answer	0%	Did Not Answer		

C. How the deliverables support the goals of the state two-year plan: The *Top Ten Occupations by Educational Level* supports the governor's priority at Section II, pg. 7 of the state's two-year plan, which is to "utilize Arkansas' labor market information to identify high growth/high demand target industries in the ten workforce areas."

D. The principal customers of the deliverable: The primary customers of this informational product are instructors in schools and community-based organizations who are teaching workplace readiness skills. Others who utilize the information are high school students themselves, recent graduates, other young adults, the unemployed and underemployed. This deliverable is also utilized in the Arkansas Workforce Centers to provide a career exploration tool for citizens and used as a search tool at the various job fairs held within the state.

E. The outcome(s) and system impact(s) projected for each deliverable: The major outcome of providing the “Top Ten Occupations by Education Level” is to prospectively direct Arkansas’ students and other members of our workforce to acquire an education level needed to attain the skills in these high growth/ high demand occupations and ultimately fill the vacant positions.

F. Planned milestones for the completion of the deliverable:

1. This deliverable has been updated with the *2004-2006 short-term projections* and the 2004/05 OES wage data.
2. It will be updated to include 2005-2007 short-term projections and 2005/05 OES wage data when the information becomes available.

G. The total estimated cost of the combined deliverables, including identification of planned equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost:

PY'05 Funds
\$59,097.85

- I. Estimated cost to produce the *Career Watch Magazine* is \$30,000.
- II. Estimated, averaged cost to produce all other occupational and career information products is \$29,097.85.

4) ENSURE THAT WORKFORCE INFORMATION AND SUPPORT REQUIRED BY STATE AND LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARDS ARE PROVIDED

A. Description of the core product, service or other demand activity:

1. Because of our close collaboration with and location to the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board, an opportunity has been provided for quality information sharing on the thoughts and processes taking place in the state. As the “eyes and ears” for career development and LMI products in the state, labor market information staff continually meet with the Local Workforce Investment Boards’ staffs to determine localized needs, provide training, provide input on existing and innovative LMI products and measure consumer services. To meet the standards being vocalized through the local boards, DWS have set quarterly meetings with the local boards’ staffs to examine problems and offer solutions to informational questions. An LMI staff

person attends state Workforce Investment Board meetings, and DWS participates in 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, DWS is better able to create or modify products for the good of the state's users of LMI.

2. The LMI Section continues to provide expertise to the educational community through our commitment to educational cooperatives, school counselors, and administrators. Our 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. Specific activities for training our educational partners, are the statewide Career Orientation Conference held every year in Hot Springs, Arkansas, and the yearly Arkansas School Counselors conference in Eureka Springs, Arkansas. During the Career Orientation Conference, the LMI staff provides training and information on Arkansas' career delivery system (ArkOSCAR) and has sessions throughout the conference on ACINet and O*NET.

3. To pursue a more active role in the business sector, DWS has 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, DWS has 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 meet the requests of employers from across Arkansas, DWS have a staff person responsible for the distribution of localized wage information gathered through the Estimates Delivery System (EDS) and continue to explore new ways of presenting this information. DWS has also updated our Geographic Information System (GIS) to the newest version of ArcView. With this, and continued internal staff development, DWS is hopeful that we'll be able to pursue some of the noncomplex employer requests for specific geographic data. Currently, DWS has designated one staff person with this responsibility, and as the geo-coding information is made known to our customers; DWS anticipates this workload will increase.

4. With our Internet-based Arkansas Consumer Report System (ACRS), the local workforce investment boards are finding a more user-friendly system for reviewing and approving Eligible Training Provider applications. This system also has both predefined reports built in and the ability to run ad-hoc reports. These reports have allowed the LMI staff the opportunity to provide the local WIBs with detailed system statistical and informational reports. With the data warehouse available within the system, historical reports can also be generated.

5. The Department of Workforce Services, in consultation with the state Workforce Investment Board, public and private educational providers, and public and private businesses has revised the methodology for the *Projected Employment Opportunities List*. This listing determines which educational programs may be eligible to be added by the local workforce investment boards to the state's Eligible Training Provider Listing. A new list will be released July 1 of each year.

6. Arkansas continues to actively pursue its partnership with the U.S. Bureau of Census in the Local Employment Dynamics (LED) study. With the submittal of the fourth quarter 2004 Enhanced Quarterly Unemployment Insurance (EQUI) and Unemployment Insurance (UI) employee data, DWS has reached the required level of ten quarters of data, enabling our Quarterly Wage Indicator (QWI) data to be released to the public in the next cycle, this will occur by September 1, 2005. DWS will make these data available to the public through a link from our "Discover Arkansas" Web site. DWS is planning to conduct training sessions for Local Workforce Investment Board staff into the use of the QWI data. DWS will be sending one LMI employee to attend the next U.S. Census led Local Employment Dynamics training session later this year. DWS further plans on using the LED QWI data in several future publications.

7. To provide information on the skill needs of jobs/occupations in Arkansas, the LMI Section has created (through the National Governors Association Pathways to Advancement Policy Academy) a skills matching prototype on the "Discover Arkansas" Web site. The tool links Arkansas' growth industries to the nationally recognized Educational Career Clusters. It also identifies if a growth industry is a targeted industry by the Arkansas Department of Economic Development or an industry that has been identified by the Department of Labor High Growth Employment Initiatives. The tool identifies occupations related to each growth industry and career pathway and provides information on skills, projections, wages, training programs, and licensing requirements. It is also noted if an occupation is a "demand" employment opportunity. A complete version of the tool for the entire state and each of the ten Workforce Investment Areas will be available by November 2005.

8. DWS will use the Skills-Based Projection System to identify skills gaps in Article IV, Section H, pg. 52 of the Arkansas State Two-Year Plan. This tool generates information on current supply, projected demand, skills gap and replacements for job requirements (knowledge, skills, and generalized work activities) by integrating short- and/or long-term occupational projections with the Department of Labor's Occupational Information Network (O*NET) data. In general, the method links projected occupations with O*NET occupations and assigns the base and projected employment levels from the former to specific job requirements in the latter. This tool assigns employment only to those job requirements that are at least either moderately important or required for the performance of the O*NET occupation. DWS may be applying the information obtained from this application to various projects to identify skill gaps.

B. Customer support for the product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other consultations with customers and users of workforce information: Because the above listed activities are either a courtesy or mandatory, customer satisfaction surveys are not used.

C. How the deliverables support the goals of the state two-year plan: The activities listed above conform to the goals of the state's two-year plan concerning labor market information. Additional information concerning these activities can be found in Sections 3, 5, and 6 of the core product deliverables.

D. The principal customers of the deliverable: The primary users of these products include dislocated workers, the unemployed and underemployed, high school and college students, parents of students, educational entities, "Discover Arkansas" users, and the media.

E. The outcome(s) and system impact(s) projected for each deliverable: For simplicity, the outcome(s) and/or system impact(s) projected are listed within the description in this section.

F. Planned milestones for the completion of the deliverable: Again, for simplicity, the milestones have been listed in the descriptions above where applicable.

G. The total estimated cost of each deliverable, including identification of planned equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost:

PY'05 Funds
\$26,484.10

5) MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE ELECTRONIC STATE WORKFORCE INFORMATION DELIVERY SYSTEMS

A. Description of the core product, service or other demand activity: The Labor Market Information Section continues to maintain and update the Arkansas Consumer Report System (ACRS) which provides post-secondary education and training providers with an Internet application in which they can enter information about programs they provide to potential students, both WIA and non-WIA eligible. These providers can also use the ACRS system to generate WIA Training Provider applications in order to become certified eligible training providers. Local Workforce Investment Boards can use the system to review applications and assign an approval status. 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>.

B. Customer support for the product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other consultations with customers and users of workforce information: The ACRS system was built with a tremendous amount of input from state and local users of training and training provider data. Through quarterly meetings with the local areas to determine local needs or system upgrades, DWS continues to improve the system. No actual surveys are done for this system, since the primary users have almost daily access to the LMI staff to address any system failures or upgrades. From July 1, 2004, through June 30, 2005, more than 75,000 informational accesses to the ACRS database files have been made by Arkansas citizens, with more than 1,900 program applications being made to the ACRS database.

C. How the deliverables support the goals of the state two-year plan:

1. The Arkansas Consumer Report System supports a governor's strategic effort at Section 1, B, pg. 3 of the state's two-year plan, which is "To prepare workers to take advantage of new and increasing job opportunities in high growth/high demand and economically vital industries and sectors of the state's economy."

2. ACRS also correlates to the state's two-year plan vision statement of providing "A globally recognized workforce in Arkansas – educated, trained, skilled – with the character and work ethic needed to excel in a changing economy."

D. The principal customers of the deliverable: Customers of ACRS include not only the state and Local Workforce Investment Boards, but also dislocated workers, the unemployed, educators, counselors, students, parents of students, educational entities and vocational/technical institutes in Arkansas.

E. The outcome(s) and system impact(s) projected for each deliverable: The Arkansas Consumer Report System will impact the training considerations and informational knowledge of Arkansas citizens by providing training/program results and outcomes within the state and local areas. This allows the citizens to be highly involved when planning and making their educational and career decisions about their futures.

F. Planned milestones for the completion of the deliverable: Since the ACRS database is an ever-changing platform of training information, it is continually being upgraded with new educational training programs, costs, and performance measures. It is the LMI staff's goal to maintain this system with few, if any, delays to the citizenry of Arkansas of getting complete and accurate educational training data. To obtain this goal, DWS will continue meeting quarterly with state and local WIA staff to determine informational problems and fix any programming problems within three working days.

A. Description of the core product, service or other demand activity: The Arkansas LMI Section continues to update and maintain the Arkansas Career Information Delivery System (CIDS), known as Arkansas OSCAR (ArkOSCAR), through the developer, the Texas Workforce Commission. ArkOSCAR was the first Internet version of OSCAR produced in the United States. ArkOSCAR showcases the O*NET database, with emphasis on providing assessment tools to assist dislocated workers to new careers and students in their career exploration endeavors. 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 and toolbars. This product also includes features for our educational partners by using the Arkansas 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 Labor Market Information Section produces for the public.

B. Customer support for the product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other consultations with customers and users of workforce information: Since its inaugural kickoff on July 1, 2002, the career orientation teachers and school counselors have

been the primary customers of ArkOSCAR. Due to continued training in LMI conferences, the Arkansas Workforce Centers are now becoming heavy users of the product to accomplish the assessments needed under the Workforce Investment Act. From July 1, 2004, until June 30, 2005, 14,862 individuals accessed ArkOSCAR.

C. How the deliverables support the goals of the state two-year plan: ArkOSCAR supports the governor's strategic goal at Section 1, B, pg. 3, of the state's two-year plan, which is to "Identify the workforce skill sets needed in high growth, high demand industries and adapt Arkansas' education and workforce development systems to prepare Arkansas' citizens for the business opportunities and skill demands of today and tomorrow."

D. The principal customers of the deliverable: Customers of ArkOSCAR include not only the state and Local Workforce Investment Boards, but also dislocated workers, the unemployed, educators, counselors, students, parents of students, educational entities and vocational/technical institutes in Arkansas.

E. The outcome(s) and system impact(s) projected for each deliverable: The ArkOSCAR System impacts the informational and career exploration knowledge of Arkansas citizens as they explore the possibilities of the world of work. The system provides assessment outcomes and occupational descriptions and includes Arkansas specific labor market information. This allows the citizens to be highly involved when planning and making their career decisions about their futures.

F. Planned milestones for the completion of the deliverable:

1. ArkOSCAR was updated with the 2003-2005 short-term projections and the 2003/04 OES wage data.
2. New school information was received from the Arkansas Department of Education and updated.
3. It will be updated to include 2005-2007 short-term projections and fourth quarter of 2003 OES Wage data when the information becomes available.

A. Description of the core product, service or other demand activity: Arkansas' new Workforce Informer Web portal known as "Discover Arkansas" is completely operational and was deployed to the public on January 31, 2005. This is an Internet-based system that Arkansas uses for the delivery of its ALMIS database. It is hosted by the full-service systems engineering company Ciber, Inc. The site also displays labor market and economic information in articles, tables and online publications. The Web site uses both the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) domain names of <http://www.discoverarkansas.net> and <http://www.discover.arkansas.gov>.

B. Customer support for the product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other consultations with customers and users of workforce information: The "Discover Arkansas" project was the culmination of over three years of work in cooperation with

the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board. To identify customer satisfaction with the system, the public may complete an Internet based customer satisfaction survey on-line from the Web site itself.

C. How the deliverables support the goals of the state two-year plan: “Discover Arkansas” supports the governor’s vision at Section 1, C, pg. 4, of the state’s two-year plan, which is to “improve the responsiveness to customer needs through customer contact and use of improved labor market information.”

D. The principal customers of the deliverable: The primary customers for this information will be any Arkansas citizen that utilizes or needs information. This list ranges from employers and grant writers to educational and state partners to students and the unemployed.

E. The outcome(s) and system impact(s) projected for each deliverable: The “Discover Arkansas” deliverable will provide people one-stop access for all of their labor market informational needs, whether it be unemployment rates, educational data, tax revenue summaries, localized information, or specialized articles.

F. Planned milestones for the completion of the deliverable:

1. The information displayed on the “Discover Arkansas” Web site is being expanded and improved as time allows, needs are identified and new information becomes available.
2. The data for the ALMIS database is loaded into the Web site as it becomes available. This allows current data from the database to be available to the public as soon as possible.

A. Description of the core product, service or other demand activity: Arkansas continues to actively pursue its partnership with the U.S. Bureau of Census in the Local Employment Dynamics (LED) study. Once LED is established in Arkansas, DWS plans to add the quarterly measures to the “Discover Arkansas” Web site. DWS then plans to visit the local WIA sites and help set up LED Web site presence for their areas. DWS anticipates establishing a free service for new prospective employers to help determine optimum locations for their specific type of business in a community by utilizing LED data. By utilizing informational employer data from infoUSA (if allowed through our cooperative agreement), DWS plans to develop a publication that will show three-digit industry locations by density maps of 15 and 30-mile radius around approximately 300 cities in Arkansas.

B. Customer support for the product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other consultations with customers and users of workforce information: Because the LED study is still in the development stage, there are no customer surveys to report. An online or hard-copy survey will be created in order to collect customer satisfaction data.

C. How the deliverables support the goals of the state two-year plan: The LED project supports the vision and mission statement of the state’s two-year plan, which is:

Vision Statement

A globally recognized workforce in Arkansas – educated, trained, skilled – with the character and work ethic needed to excel in a changing economy.

Mission Statement

To establish a unified, flexible, accountable workforce training system implemented through the collaboration of business, industry, labor and citizens, and characterized by accessible and responsive one-stop career development networks. The system will offer employers a resource for workers in existing and emerging occupations and empower Arkansans to receive employment services as well as job-specific training.

D. The principal customers of the deliverable: Principle customers for this deliverable will include economic development organizations, businesses, industry, chambers of commerce, and Arkansas Workforce Centers.

E. The outcome(s) and system impact(s) projected for each deliverable: A major outcome of this project will be to provide the Arkansas Department of Economic Development maps and associated data on potential labor supply for their economic recruitment of prospective new employers to the state and local areas.

F. Planned milestones for the completion of the deliverable: The United States has started processing the individual UI data without names. This has allowed us to submit the minimum requirement of ten quarters of summary and detail data necessary for the LED Quarterly Wage Indicators (QWI) to be published. The data will appear on the Census Web site September 1, 2005. At that time DWS will provide a link to our “Discover Arkansas” Web site and develop a publication using QWI data. DWS is exploring developing potential labor supply data for a 15 and a 30-mile radius around the 300 Arkansas towns using ArcView GIS software and DWS active participants. DWS would use the physical addresses for location purposes.

A. Description of the core product, service or other demand activity: A new product that Arkansas continues to explore is Reality Check developed by the Texas Workforce Commission. This system allows individuals to match their anticipated wages or occupations against indicators of personal living costs to determine whether the salary for their chosen occupation will be enough to provide individual sustainability. Through this process, it makes the individuals aware of “real life” choices that they will have to make in their lives.

B. Customer support for the product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other consultations with customers and users of workforce information: Because Reality Check is still in the development stage, there are no customer surveys to report. An online or hard-copy survey will be created in order to collect customer satisfaction data.

C. How the deliverables support the goals of the state two-year plan: Reality Check would support the governor’s vision at 1, F, pg. 6, of the state’s two-year plan, which is to “create a Collaborative Approach to Prepare Youth for Success in a Global, Demand-Driven Economy.”

D. The principal customers of the deliverable: Principle customers for this deliverable will include students, teachers, counselors, parents, the underemployed and unemployed, and community- based organizations.

E. The outcome(s) and system impact(s) projected for each deliverable: Making citizens knowledgeable of occupational wages that are paid in Arkansas compared to the living costs within the state should create a new awareness of the need for increased training or higher levels of education.

F. Planned milestones for the completion of the deliverable: Work has begun on Reality Check and it is in the early planning stages. DWS conceives that Reality Check will be 50% complete by February 2006 and 100% operational by August 2006.

A. Description of the core product, service or other demand activity: Arkansas' Estimates Delivery System (EDS) produces and publishes employment and wage data derived from the Occupational Employment Statistics Program. In 1999, when BLS decided to supply statewide and MSA estimates from a centrally run system, it ended the state's ability to run estimates. With the evolution of WIA and other programs, Arkansas and other states maintained the need to produce estimates for areas other than statewide and MSA's. Due to these needs, EDS was created in the latter part of 1999, and DWS has maintained its information and program since.

B. Customer support for the product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other consultations with customers and users of workforce information: Every year the LMI Section produces specialized reports for Arkansas customers. For PY '05, the LMI Section will require a customer satisfaction survey be processed with each individual request for this specialized information.

C. How the deliverables support the goals of the state two-year plan: The EDS program supports the governor's vision at 1, C, pg.4, of the state's two-year plan, which is to "improve responsiveness to customer needs through customer contact and use of improved labor market information."

D. The principal customers of the deliverable: Principle customers for this deliverable will include economic development organizations, businesses, industry, chambers of commerce, education planners, the employment projections and ALMIS database units of DWS, and Arkansas Workforce Centers.

E. The outcome(s) and system impact(s) projected for each deliverable: The outcomes for EDS is to produce the following information to our customers:

- 1) occupational employment and wage data for customized geographies, such as local workforce investment areas and counties.
- 2) occupational employment and wage data for NAICS-based industries.
- 3) occupational wage level data (i.e. average, entry, experienced, percentiles).
- 4) nonstandard statistics (i.e., employment estimates for a given wage, employment and wage estimates for a combination of ownerships and size classes).

F. Planned milestones for the completion of the deliverable: DWS will continue to meet the needs of providing the above information to Arkansas users and will update the information within the EDS system within five days of receiving new data content.

G. Planned milestones for the completion of the deliverable:

PY'05 Funds
\$144,598.10

- I.** Estimated cost of maintaining and updating the ACRS is \$4,000.
- II.** Estimated cost of maintaining and updating ArkOSCAR is \$8,000.
- III.** Estimated cost of maintaining and updating the "Discover Arkansas" Web site is \$59,009.25.
- IV.** Estimated cost of maintaining and updating the Local Employment Dynamics is \$58,009.25.
- V.** Estimated cost of designing and implementing Reality Check is \$14,579.60.
- VI.** Estimated cost of maintaining and updating the Estimates Delivery System is \$2,000.

6) SUPPORT STATE WORKFORCE INFORMATION TRAINING ACTIVITIES

A. Description of the core product, service or other demand activity: Given the dynamic world of labor market information (LMI), it is imperative that our agency serve as the LMI authority for the state. It is important to maintain a properly trained staff in order to provide information and technical assistance to local workforce investment boards. While our staff develops many LMI products, others are produced on a national scale. Products such as the CareerOneStop and O*NET Online are examples of cutting edge, Internet Web sites that provide access to LMI. Other products are being developed in a rapid and ever changing manner. It is important that DWS take advantage of opportunities to experience and understand how local area staff can utilize these new products to better serve clients. Clients can use this invaluable information to enhance their current careers through additional training opportunities or seek new career avenues. Providing access to LMI and informing others on how to use LMI remains part of our primary mission.

In an effort to provide the basis to successfully execute this mission, DWS and state WIB staff will participate in the following training activities sponsored by the agency:

Advanced Access training.

PowerPoint training.

Advanced Excel training.

GIS training.

Interpersonal Skills and Customer Service training.

Agency Leadership training.

2005 LMI Forum, in Norfolk, VA.

ALMIS database seminar.

The appropriate staff will participate in other specialized training that may be offered related to the production of short-term and long-term employment projections.

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 other training seminars and classes offered by local training companies.

Arkansas plans to hold an LMI Users Conference in the fall of 2005. State and local WIB and workforce center staff members will be trained during this 1 1/2-day event. All state and federal LMI products will be discussed in detail. A "hands-on-training" on O*NET, ArkOSCAR, ACINet, and "Discover Arkansas" utilizing the computer lab. On the final day of this training, focus groups will be formed and asked to offer suggestions on several LMI products.

Arkansas continues to sponsor LMI training to all partners of the WIA community. DWS anticipate providing at least ten individual LMI training activities or events by July 2006. These will include career fairs, one-and two-day seminars, conference meetings, and special meetings of WIA partners. The LMI staff will also present product informational sessions at each meeting of the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board upon request.

B. Customer support for the product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other consultations with customers and users of workforce information:

Customer support for these activities is reflected through surveys mentioned throughout this narrative. This is possible as a direct result of having a well-trained staff.

C. How the deliverables support the goals of the state two-year plan: These training activities support the staff's production of information which in turn supports the overall vision of the state's two-year plan, which is "a Globally – recognized workforce in Arkansas – educated, trained, skilled – with the character and work ethic needed to excel in a changing economy."

D. The principal customers of the deliverable: Our customers in Arkansas include business and educational partners, workforce centers, and private citizens.

E. The outcome(s) and system impact(s) projected for each deliverable: With a better-trained LMI workforce, DWS is better able to meet the needs of all our external and internal customers alike, which provides system development for the One-Stop delivery system in Arkansas.

F. Planned milestones for the completion of the deliverable: For all training activities sponsored by the LMI Section, participants will be asked to fill out a specialized training survey. All other training activities (career fairs, speaking engagements, conferences, seminars) will be handled on an as needed basis.

G. The total estimated cost of each deliverable, including identification of planned equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost:

PY 05 Funds
\$28,127.35

C. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION ASSESSMENT

Throughout Section B of the grant narrative, DWS has given customer satisfaction assessment statistics for the PY '04 grant year deliverables.

DWS has incorporated several of the suggestions our customers made into several of the product deliverables. In PY '05 Arkansas will remain relentless in its pursuit to furnish the citizens of Arkansas with good, reliable, and accurate sources of labor market information. DWS will continue to strive for excellence in our products' customer satisfaction assessment and adapt our information using suggestions from these surveys through future Workforce Information grants.

As Arkansas strives to satisfy the needs for labor market information to the users within the state, DWS will constantly look for ways to improve the information disseminated through the Workforce Information System. To help achieve this goal, DWS will continue to insert customer satisfaction surveys with each published product DWS disburses. DWS will log the number of surveys by product, along with the number of surveys returned. DWS will obtain the information by category (business, education, citizen, etc...) when possible, reflecting their satisfaction with the product reviewed. Also collected will be the customers' opinions of the "usefulness" of each product, and their ideas will be solicited on how to make the publication more beneficial for their purpose. As seen in Section B of the grant narrative, DWS will continue to use the following grading scale for our surveys in PY 2005:

Satisfaction Usefulness Grade

- + 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.

DWS will develop an aggregate average from all returned surveys as an independent measure of the categories of satisfaction and usefulness to give an overall customer assessment (evaluation).

This statement reflects DWS's attempt at meeting the customer satisfaction assessment in this grant. On issues affecting other programs or deliverable products, work groups or focus groups may be employed to better gauge the thinking of outside groups. Members of such groups may include representatives from businesses, workforce center employees, local and state WIB staff, school counselors and teachers, and Arkansas citizens.

