

# Commonwealth of Kentucky Workforce Information Core Products and Services Annual Report for PY 2007

Education and Workforce Development Cabinet  
Department for Workforce Investment  
Office of Employment and Training  
Research and Statistics Branch  
Workforce Information

**Kentucky is pleased to present the 2007 Annual Report on the Workforce Information Core Products and Services achievements.**

The Research and Statistics (R&S) Branch accomplished numerous objectives during PY 2007. Kentucky's workforce information core products and services were designed to improve access and expand use of labor market information for current and future customers. Workforce information and website training were priorities during PY 2007 as were increased collaboration and cooperation with the State Board.

Kentucky reinforced efforts in the areas of training, marketing, and customer service. Over 700 participants attended 20 informational training sessions that were structured to meet the specific needs of various customer groups. Employers, counselors, WIA staff, economic development representatives, and government officials were all afforded training in PY 2007. The Commonwealth's electronic labor market information delivery system, **Workforce Kentucky**, was featured in addition to other available workforce products and services. These presentations and training sessions resulted in a significant increase in the number of visits to the **Workforce Kentucky** website. An increase in the number of customers who contacted the Branch directly requesting information, products, and services was also noted.

Approximately 92,000 electronic and print copies of Labor Market Information (LMI) publications and products were distributed to customers. In addition, over 1,000 LMI requests received in person, by phone, email, or fax were filled. Enhanced customer input and improved utilization of resources enabled the R&S Branch to continue to meet the needs of business and individual customers.

## 1. Continue to populate the Workforce Information Database (formerly ALMIS) with state and local data.

The Workforce Information Database is the primary statistical database accessed by the **Workforce Kentucky** application. In PY 2007, significant improvements were made to Kentucky's Workforce Information Database.

Throughout the program year, the database continued to be populated with routine monthly, quarterly, and annual numbers and was also updated with historical revisions for many types of statistics. Some of the items housed in the Workforce Information Database include: Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS); Current Employment Statistics (CES); Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) data; Consumer Price Index (CPI); Income data; Occupational Wages; Industry and Occupational Projections; and Population data.

Short- and long-term occupational and industry projections, originally scheduled to be loaded into the Workforce Information Database during PY 2007, were delayed by security threats that developed late in the program year. As a result, the loading of this data carried over into PY 2008. Projections data was loaded into the Workforce Information Database in August 2008.

Another key component in the Workforce Information Database is the Info-USA Employer Database. The First Edition of the 2008 Version, which includes 157,846 employers, was incorporated into the Workforce Information Database during PY 2007 and is accessible through the **Workforce Kentucky** website.

In addition to the enhancements made to the data housed in the Workforce Information Database, there were also substantial improvements made to the **Workforce Kentucky** website, the main platform for accessing the data. Upgrades were performed, maintenance options explored and finalized, and new directions for management of the site investigated.

The upgrade to Workforce Informer Version 3.1 was completed during PY 2007. Along with minor improvements and bug fixes, one of the major components of this upgrade was a new Find Employers Tool which accesses the Employer Database and allows users to search for and map employers within a particular industry and geography.

Major website security upgrades were also undertaken in PY 2007. In response to threats that arose in May 2008, these security updates, now referred to as WI Upgrade Version 4.1, were completed in July 2008.

Additionally, work was completed which implemented a new job search engine on the site. America's Job Bank (AJB) was phased out in July 2007, and America's Job Exchange (AJE) was the replacement chosen by Kentucky for the Workforce Kentucky website. The AJE integration was completed in August 2007.

In PY 2007, the R&S Branch also initiated talks with OET management regarding website hosting options. In May 2008, R&S staff prepared and submitted a proposal, along with a time/cost savings analysis, to the Executive Director's Office requesting that the agency explore the possibility of acquiring website hosting through the software vendor, Ciber.

Finally, the original agreement for support and maintenance of the Workforce Kentucky website expired on June 30, 2008. During PY 2007, Kentucky worked extensively with the vendor to draft and finalize a new five-year renewable maintenance contract for the site.

## **2. Produce and disseminate industry and occupational employment projections.**

During PY 2007, long-term industry and occupational projections were completed for the period of 2006-2016 at the statewide level. Short-term industry and occupational projections were also completed for 2007-2009 at the statewide level. All mandatory Employment and Training Administration projections deliverables were submitted to the Projections Consortium by the June 30, 2008 deadline.

Due to security threats, **Workforce Kentucky** was shut down for three months. This prevented us from making our long-term and short-term projections available electronically before the end of the program year as originally planned. Both sets were added immediately when our website became functional in August 2008.

Printed publications containing 2004-2014 projections for each of Kentucky's 14 Area Development Districts were completed in August 2007. This was a carryover from PY 2006.

## **3. Publish an Annual Economic Analysis Report for the Governor and the SWIB.**

In PY 2007, the annual, detailed, state economic analysis report for the Governor and State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) for PY 2006 was completed and submitted to the national office. The report, originally scheduled for completion by the end of PY 2006, was temporarily delayed due to staff shortages. Staff performed extensive research and conducted analysis on several economic indicators including employment and unemployment data, income and poverty data, wage data, unemployment insurance data, tax receipts, transfer payments, educational attainment, data from the American Community Survey (ACS), layoff and closure information, and Local Employment Dynamics (LED) data. The economic analysis report consists of a combination of narrative, tables, and charts along with an Executive Summary version.

In addition, the PY 2007 annual, detailed, state economic analysis report for the Governor and SWIB was completed in PY 2007. Included in this report are data on employment and unemployment, income, wages, unemployment insurance, tax

receipts, transfer payments, educational attainment, population, mass layoff events, and local employment dynamics. The PY 2007 report expands on the PY 2006 review by including comparative analysis to measure Kentucky's economic progress. This economic study comprises an Executive Summary, in conjunction with a combination of narrative, tables, and charts.

#### **4. Post products, information, and reports on the internet.**

The *Kentucky Career Profiles* were completed in September 2007 and were uploaded and released through **Workforce Kentucky** in November 2007. The publication was downloaded approximately 23,000 times. Numerous paper copies were requested by high school counselors; electronic copies continued to be provided to the gamut of our customer base.

*Occupational Outlooks* for each Area Development District (ADD) were uploaded to the website in November 2007. There are 14 *Outlooks* that cover 15 districts in Kentucky (Buffalo Trace and Gateway are combined). Over 16,000 were downloaded and more than 400 paper copies were disseminated.

The updated *Kentucky LMI Directory* was uploaded to the site in August 2007. It was downloaded almost 4,700 times via the website. The directory provides contact and program information.

The calendar function of the **Workforce Kentucky** website was repaired during this program year, but has not yet been implemented. This calendar will include dates for press releases, training, job fairs, and other LMI-related events.

The structure and design of the site were scheduled to be altered during this program year (January 2008), but site upgrades and security threats delayed progress. Modifications to **Workforce Kentucky** will continue during this program year.

The site was augmented with the annual economic report and the monthly LMI newsletter, enabling the latter to become available to an even broader customer base. The newsletter was previously released solely in paper format. The economic report is prepared annually for the Governor and the SWIB.

Publishing other materials and information i.e., monthly occupational spotlight articles, the annual *Kentucky Total and Nonwhite Population and Labor Force Data by County*, monthly and annual press releases, monthly unemployment insurance data tables, and monthly unemployment insurance statistical comparison, continued in PY 2007.

## 5. Partner and consult on a continuing basis with workforce investment boards.

In PY 2007, the R&S Branch continued its active collaboration and consultation with state and local workforce investment professionals and board members. Branch personnel attended and participated in quarterly meetings of the State Workforce Investment Board. These meetings provided a forum for staff to market workforce information, elicit the exchange of ideas, and address the information needs of membership.

In addition, the Branch provided regular support to the local WIA professionals in meeting their demands for workforce information products and services. The primary contact between the R&S Branch and the WIA community is the business liaison/services staff of the LWIB. Kentucky continued to support these staff members, meeting their data requirements for business prospects and supplying other information.

Finally, the State WIB Administrative Coordinator and the LMI Manager maintained ongoing dialogue relating to the creation and use of workforce information to best meet the needs of WIA customers. Collaborative efforts are evidenced by the State and local WIBs who have direct links from their websites to **Workforce Kentucky**. During a visit to a One-Stop Center in June 2008, staff at the center expressed their appreciation for the LMI information provided by the R&S Branch. A discussion about additional information that might be of interest to our customers also took place. This allowed for interaction with not only center staff, but also the Chair of the State WIB and the Director of the local Area Development District.

### 2005 Kentucky Total and Nonwhite Population and Labor Force Data by County

This publication was completed in May 2008 and was not available on **Workforce Kentucky** until after the end of PY 2007 because the website was in static mode. It is utilized by Kentucky employers to complete their annual affirmative action reports and is one of the most requested pieces of labor market information. Kentucky distributed approximately 10 hard copies of the publication in PY 2007. The previous year's *Total and Nonwhite* publication was downloaded 1,768 times, and approximately 50 printed copies were distributed.

### Kentucky Labor Market Information Newsletter

Publication of the *Kentucky Labor Market Information Newsletter* was resumed in February 2008. Release of the newsletter was halted in May 2007 due to temporary staff shortages. This publication highlights Kentucky's labor market conditions and provides statistics on total employment and unemployment, industry payroll employment, hours and earnings of workers in selected industries, Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) employment, Consumer Price Index (CPI), unemployment insurance data, and Workforce Investment Area (WIA) unemployment rates. Economic indicators for Kentucky's five MSAs, previously included in the monthly

MSA Newsletter, have been incorporated into the *Kentucky Labor Market Information Newsletter*. This release is distributed to 335 customers each month.

#### Local Employment Dynamics (LED) Program

During PY 2007, Kentucky sent four quarters of employee and employer data to the Census. Additionally, Kentucky provided customers with access to Census Quarterly Workforce Indicators and LED data via **Workforce Kentucky**. Information from Kentucky's Quarterly Workforce Indicators was included in the 2007 and 2008 economic reports. Additionally, one staff person attended LED training in March 2008.

#### GEO Coded Data

In PY 2007, the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) unit continued GEO coding of data for employers. The GEO coded data is updated quarterly by the QCEW section.

### **6. Conduct special studies and economic analysis.**

Kentucky continued to conduct special state, local, and regional studies to provide information and support to communities undergoing economic transition, implementing workforce development initiatives, or experiencing major layoffs or disasters. In PY 2007, the Branch received many special requests for information. In response, Kentucky not only utilized existing products and programs, but also sought out other avenues and sources of data in an effort to provide the best information to meet the needs of each customer.

The R&S Branch launched several other initiatives in PY 2007. These new endeavors were designed to enhance the agency's ability to provide user-specific data and analysis.

#### Collaboration Between the Mass Layoff Statistics (MLS) Program and Kentucky's Rapid Response Team (RRT)

Ongoing cooperation between the MLS state program leader and Kentucky's RRT continued in PY 2007. Both entities worked together to provide support to Kentuckians prior to and after major layoffs.

#### Geographic Information Systems - Mapping

In PY 2007, Kentucky utilized the newly acquired ArcGIS mapping workstation in various ways. Staff responded to many requests from internal and external customers to generate visual maps of localized economic data. Several maps depicting grant proposal areas, employment for dislocated workers, and incorrect QCEW business locations were created. Staff prepared maps containing diverse sets of county level data for an upcoming geography page on **Workforce Kentucky**. R&S staff attended an introductory training course on ArcGIS in January 2008.

### Staff Training

Staff training continued to be a priority in PY 2007. R&S personnel attended several ETA, BLS, and other state-sponsored trainings related to statistical programs. Staff learned about a variety of labor market projects and initiatives, new and changing program requirements, and various software applications. These trainings also afforded participants the opportunity to interact with colleagues from other states who are employed in similar positions and work with comparable workforce information products and services.

### Base Realignment and Closure Announcement (BRAC)

The branch manager led a Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Response Panel discussion at the ETA Workforce Information Driving Regional Economies Conference in St. Petersburg, Florida. The presentation included information about various data resources, including **Workforce Kentucky**.

### Maintain and Cultivate Relationships with Other State Government Agencies in Kentucky

In PY 2007, OET continued to build on its solid relationship with other state government agencies, including the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development and the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet. Throughout the year, R&S staff were in contact with agency representatives and, through meetings, telephone conversations, and email correspondence, worked with each to determine and supply the best possible products and information to suit their needs.

### Cooperate and Participate with the U.S. Census Bureau as Pertains to the LED Project

In PY 2007, Kentucky continued to participate with the U.S. Census Bureau and submit quarterly employee and employer data for the LED project. Kentucky also provided customers with access to the Census Quarterly Workforce Indicators via the **Workforce Kentucky** website.

### Maintain and Cultivate Relationships with Local and Quasi-Government Agencies in Kentucky

Kentucky continued to foster its relationship with local and quasi-government entities in the state, i.e., local economic development agencies, schools, and chambers of commerce. The Branch provided analysis of local economic conditions, including local area projections and wage data, as requested by these agencies and worked with school representatives, local economic developers, and others to provide detailed research on the current employment situation and the projected outlook for a given area, industry, or occupation.

In addition to supplying the analysis and products listed above, the R&S Branch also conducted numerous training sessions during PY 2007. These sessions focused on the many different uses of workforce information and were aimed at all major customer groups. Training was provided for students (two sessions/65 participants),

school counselors and related academic professionals (ten sessions/approximately 400 participants), and vocational rehabilitation counselors (six sessions/200 participants). Additionally, an overview of the website was presented to other Branch personnel.

In addition to these formal training sessions, staff provided daily assistance to customers requesting specific or general information on the website, publications, or upcoming training sessions.

### **Consultation and Customer Satisfaction Assessment**

The R&S Branch recognizes the significance of assessing customer satisfaction and the role it plays in the improvement of products and services. Customers were given the opportunity to provide feedback at all meetings, presentations, and conferences conducted by the Branch. This feedback was then used to improve the content of products and services offered to users of labor market information. Customer response was overwhelmingly positive regarding support and cooperation received from LMI staff.

Kentucky has also implemented a variety of other measures to facilitate customer feedback. From any page on the **Workforce Kentucky** website, users can access the Help link for our toll-free number. There is also a Feedback option that allows customers to send comments and concerns to the website administrator. Finally, the Kentucky LMI Directory provides contact information for LMI outlets throughout the Commonwealth.

A key component in measuring customer satisfaction is to assess reaction to one of our main products and Kentucky's primary workforce information delivery system, **Workforce Kentucky**. Website feedback has been extremely positive and site usage continues to grow as illustrated by web traffic monitoring. In PY 2007, there were over seven million page views on **Workforce Kentucky**, and the number of overall visitors rose by 20% to an all time high of 340,580. Average monthly visits are up as well. In PY 2006, the average number of monthly visits was 23,641, and in PY 2007, this number rose to 28,382.

### **Conclusion**

Funding from the Workforce Information Core Products and Services Program is used to provide essential workforce information to Kentuckians. The Program enables the R&S Branch to publish a wide array of print and electronic products that benefit numerous customers and customer groups. Assessing and responding to the changing needs of our clientele will continue as mandated by Section 309 of the Workforce Investment Act.