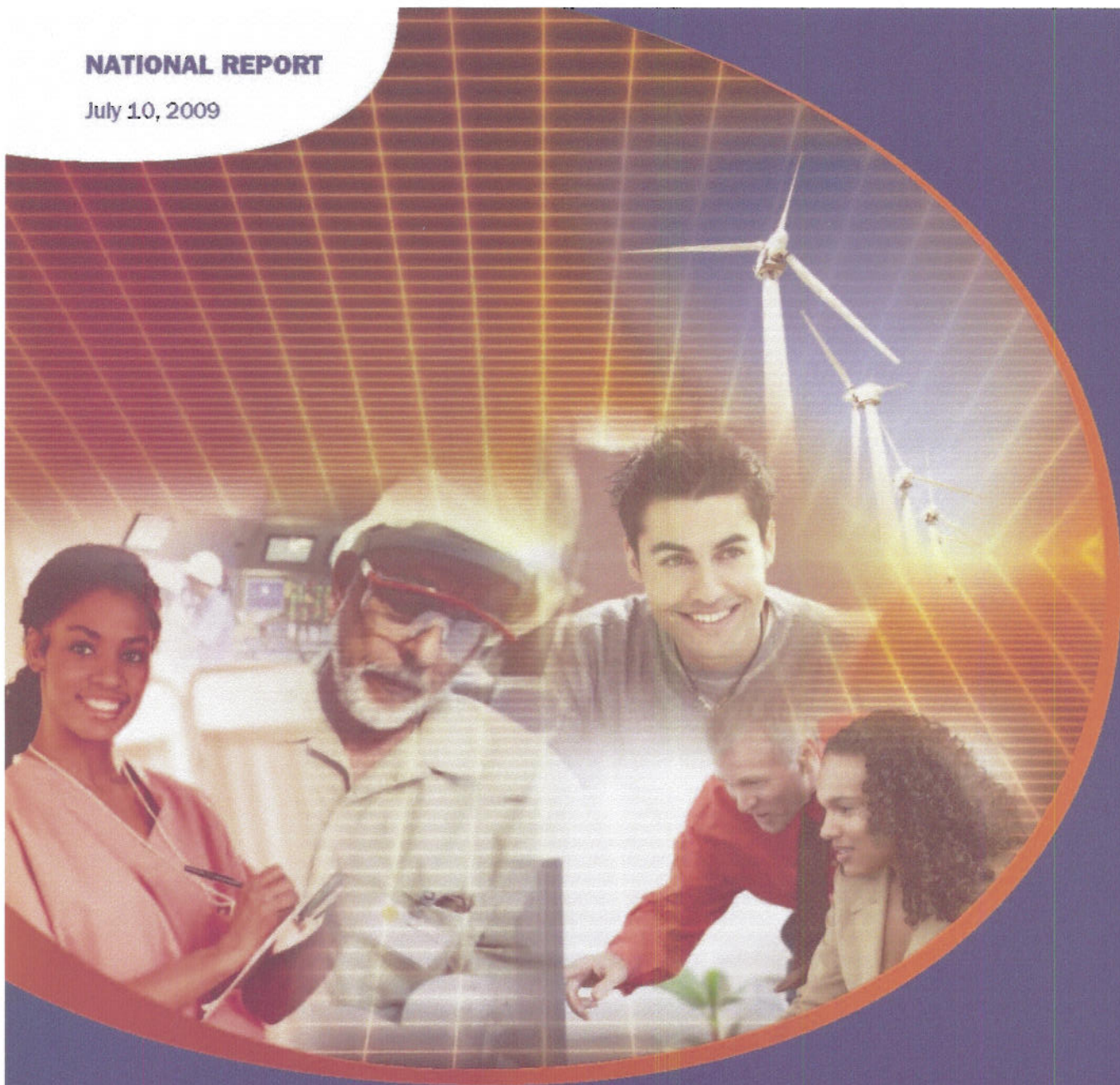


**NATIONAL REPORT**

July 10, 2009



**NATIONAL WORKFORCE SYSTEM READINESS LEVEL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT (THE RECOVERY ACT)**



United States Department of Labor  
Employment & Training Administration



## National Workforce System Readiness and Technical Assistance Needs

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (referred to as the Recovery Act), signed by President Barack Obama on February 17, 2009, is intended to preserve and create jobs, promote the nation's economic recovery, and to assist those most impacted by the recession. With the additional workforce funding provided in the Recovery Act, and the increased employment and training services such funding will support, the workforce system will play a vital role in America's economic recovery by assisting workers who are facing extraordinary challenges to retool their skills and re-establish themselves in viable career paths.

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA) embarked on a Recovery Act Assessment and Technical Assistance Consultation process to understand the level of state and local workforce system readiness and to inform ETA's strategic technical assistance plans. Consultations were held with all 53 states and territories and 156 local areas throughout the country for a total of 209 visits between mid-April and May 22, 2009. The information captured through these readiness reviews and laid out in this report represents a snapshot in time and has provided ETA with a preliminary indication of state and local readiness. In response, numerous technical assistance activities have already been carried out by ETA national and regional offices (see Appendix II: ARRA Implementation Chronology through July 9, 2009). Further technical assistance throughout the Program Year is also being planned based on the input from these consultations and other stakeholder feedback that ETA has been made aware of, including input received at six Recovery and Reemployment Forums conducted throughout the country, (see Appendix III), as described in the attached Executive Summary of ETA Regional Recovery and Reemployment Forums (see full report located at [www.doleta.gov](http://www.doleta.gov)).

The Readiness and Technical Assistance Consultation Guide which was used for the 209 visits is composed of 63 questions grouped under twelve sub-categories, which have been rolled up here under two capacity areas: 1) *Administrative Capacity* – Financial Management, Reporting, and Communication and Partnership; and 2) *Program Capacity* – Adult Services, including Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Adult/Dislocated Worker/Wagner-Peyser Activities, Training Capacity, Rapid Response/National Emergency Grants, One-Stop

Readiness, Supportive Services, Reemployment and Unemployment Insurance Integration, and Trade-WIA Integration; Youth Services; and Demand Industries and Workforce Information.

A significant number of states/territories (46) and their local areas were determined to be ready or are now ready with low to medium technical assistance. Specifically, the data suggests that 87 percent of state systems are in good readiness health. The majority of states (40) or 75 percent require only low levels of technical assistance to help them implement the provisions of the Recovery Act. Although the majority of states/territories were assessed as needing low levels of technical assistance, the number requiring medium to high levels of assistance varied considerably.

In some instances, as with the implementation of a new legislative initiative, the states were looking to ETA to provide direction around financial, programmatic, and policy issues. In other instances, states and territories simply wanted to learn from peers what they were doing to implement key provisions of the law. Finally, the states and territories were also looking for resources and tools to support their ongoing improvement efforts. This data suggests that the workforce system has a sense of awareness regarding its current needs and future direction.

The most common areas of technical assistance needs reported in the state and local workforce readiness consultations were in the categories of Reporting, One-Stop Readiness, Supportive Services, Trade-Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Integration, and Demand Industries and Workforce Information.

Since enactment of the Recovery Act on February 17, 2009, ETA has provided timely guidance to the workforce system on provisions of the Recovery Act and on implementing the Recovery Act within the system. Systematic outreach efforts intensified after ETA obligated the bulk of its Recovery Act allocated funds. ETA also officially began implementing the newly reauthorized Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program, which is part of the Recovery Act, as of May 18, 2009. Implementing guidance and operating instructions on the Trade Act were disseminated to the workforce system along with a series of live Webinars on other implementation areas of the Recovery Act. Staff training sessions, and regional Recovery forums and conferences were held to better inform the system and move them along the implementation continuum.

As compared to the workforce investment system enacted in 1998 under the Workforce Investment Act, the data affirms that the majority of the system is being proactive in positioning itself for the current economy and its approach to service delivery, therefore providing a critical window of opportunity for WIA reauthorization.

ETA is working vigorously in tandem with the workforce investment system and other stakeholders to provide further direction, guidance and technical assistance in implementing the intent of the Recovery Act, while listening closely to the needs noted by system stakeholders for reform. The ETA National and Regional Offices play a critical role to continue to provide technical assistance for system integration, reemployment and other reform principles likely to be mainstays of a reauthorized workforce investment system.



## National Workforce System Readiness and Technical Assistance Needs

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### Introduction

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (referred to as the Recovery Act), signed by President Barack Obama on February 17, 2009, is intended to preserve and create jobs, promote the nation's economic recovery, and to assist those most impacted by the recession. With the additional workforce funding provided in the Recovery Act, and the increased employment and training services such funding will support, the workforce system will play a vital role in America's economic recovery by assisting workers who are facing extraordinary challenges to retool their skills and re-establish themselves in viable career paths. Recovery Act funds will enable One-Stop Career Centers across the country to serve both workers and employers in support of our economy.

The Recovery Act contains many provisions for ensuring a successful implementation of effective workforce interventions. To ensure success, Federal, state, and local workforce systems must be guided by four principles:

1. Transparency and accountability in the use of Recovery Act funds;
2. Timely spending of the funds and implementation of activities;
3. Increasing workforce system capacity and service levels; and
4. Using data and workforce information to guide strategic planning and service delivery.

ETA recognizes the opportunity provided by Recovery Act funding to carry out activities and services for a broadening group of citizens in need. The public workforce system is a dynamic system, designed to sustain fluctuations in the cyclical labor market, but even such a system is challenged by current levels of unemployment and the need for training in emerging industries. Implementation of the Recovery Act workforce initiatives help the workforce system to further transform itself and remain relevant in the current global economy.

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA) embarked on a Recovery Act Assessment and Technical Assistance Consultation process to understand the level of state and local workforce system readiness and to inform ETA's strategic technical assistance plans. Consultations were held with all 53 states and territories and 156 local areas throughout the country for a total of 209 visits between mid-April and May 22, 2009. The information

captured through these readiness consultations and laid out in this report represents a snapshot in time and has provided ETA with a preliminary indication of state and local readiness. In response, numerous technical assistance activities have already been carried out by ETA national and regional offices (see Appendix II: ARRA Implementation Chronology through July 9, 2009). Further technical assistance throughout the Program Year is also being planned based on the input from these consultations and other stakeholder feedback that ETA has been made aware of, including input received at six Recovery and Reemployment Forums conducted throughout the country as described in Appendix III: Executive Summary of ETA Regional Recovery and Reemployment Forums (see full report located at [www.doleta.gov](http://www.doleta.gov)).

The Recovery Act “Readiness” Consultation process was aimed at achieving the following critical implementation objectives:

- Determining the capacity of state and local systems to use Recovery Act funds to significantly increase the number of workers and employers who receive ETA services with a focus on increased training opportunities in areas such as the President’s Green Jobs Initiative.
- Determining if state and local systems are in place that will prevent waste, fraud and abuse from occurring with the additional Recovery Act funds.
- Identifying gaps that ETA staff could address through technical assistance collaboratively with the state; collaborating with other Regions to identify technical assistance that is globally needed to ensure Recovery Act goals are met.
- Determining that the state or local workforce area has the capacity to manage Recovery Act funding and what level of technical assistance should be provided.

Throughout the months of April and May of 2009, ETA Regional representatives, in consultation with State leaders, performed 53 state-level evaluations of administrative capacity, with an emphasis on reporting, financial tracking systems and communications with local workforce investment areas.

Simultaneously, 156 local-level readiness consultations were conducted and focused on local workforce investment areas that received the largest share of Recovery Act funds and that serve the largest number of customers. Small local workforce areas were also reviewed and, where needed, alternative strategies such as individual conference calls were utilized. The local level assessments were critical, as individual service delivery takes place on the local level where the



pressure for services, change, and adaptability is the greatest. It is also the likeliest area of need for technical assistance in any service strategy re-design.

The readiness tool was not intended to be a monitoring instrument nor was it designed to collect or duplicate information that is collected through the State WIA-Wagner Peyser Plan modification process. Rather it provided a mechanism for consulting with the state and local areas on their readiness to implement these major additions to programming, and served to provide ETA with an indication of what level of technical assistance was needed to best support the system.

### **Methodology for Calculating Readiness**

As stated, a total of 209 consultations were conducted in 53 states/territories and 156 local areas. The Readiness and Technical Assistance Consultation Guide is composed of 63 questions grouped under twelve sub-categories which are rolled up under two capacity areas—

#### **Administrative Capacity:**

- Financial Management
- Reporting
- Communication and Partnership

#### **Programmatic Capacity:**

- Adult Services
  - Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Adult/Dislocated Worker and Wagner-Peyser Activities
  - Training Capacity
  - Rapid Response/National Emergency Grants
  - One-Stop System Readiness
  - Supportive Services
  - Reemployment and Unemployment Insurance Integration
  - Trade-WIA Integration
- Youth Services Program
- Demand Industries and Workforce Information

To gauge overall state levels of readiness, a color-coded quartile system was applied to identify overall readiness levels by state, by sub-category and by the two capacity areas. The colors

indicated on the scale are used to quickly identify system readiness on the matrix (Appendix I) to aid planning for and deployment of technical assistance resources. To determine a level of readiness for any grouping of questions, the number of “yes” determinations in a grouping is compared against the number of “no” determinations in a grouping. Based on this comparison, a state would fall into one of four quartile groups (see Figure 1 and also Appendix I). For example, there are 18 questions that fall under Administrative Capacity. If a state was determined “ready (yes)” for 10 of those questions (55 percent), the Administrative Capacity readiness level for the state would fall into Quartile 2.

**Figure 1 - Quartile Used for Administrative Capacity Readiness Chart**

Quartile 1	Quartile 2	Quartile 3	Quartile 4
76-100% (14-18 questions)	51-75% (10-13 questions)	26-50% (5-9 questions)	0-25% (0-4 questions)

Similarly, the overall level of readiness of a state system was determined by the number of “yes” and “no” determinations given for the 63 questions listed on the assessment tool as applied to the local areas as well as each state. For example, if a state is found ready on 50 out of the 63 questions, then that state’s readiness level is 83 percent and falls within Quartile 1. Please refer to Appendix I.

Along with a level of readiness score, each of the 63 questions on the Readiness and Technical Assistance Consultation Guide received a designation as having High, Medium, or Low technical assistance needs. This framework is based on three basic elements of readiness:

- Awareness/Assessment of Need;
- Development of Strategy; and
- Implementation.

To determine a level of technical assistance need for any grouping of questions, the number of “high”, “medium”, and “low” determinations in a grouping are compared. A simple majority rule is applied to determine overall technical assistance levels (see Figure 2). For example, there are 18 questions that fall under Administrative Capacity. If a state is determined to have a “high” level of technical assistance need for 10 of those questions (56 percent), five questions with a “medium” level (27 percent) and three questions with a “low” level (17 percent), the state’s overall Administrative Capacity technical assistance level would be “high (Level 3).”

As with the overall readiness rating, the technical assistance needs of the local levels reviewed are also included in the state level. In the event of a tie between any one need level, the higher level of need would be the default level.

**Figure 2 - Technical Assistance Level Designations Chart**

Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
NONE	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH

### **Readiness Consultation Findings**

A significant number of states/territories (46) were determined to be ready or are now ready with low to medium technical assistance. Specifically, the data suggests that 87 percent of state systems are in good readiness health. This data combines the results of questions to both state and selected local areas within each state.

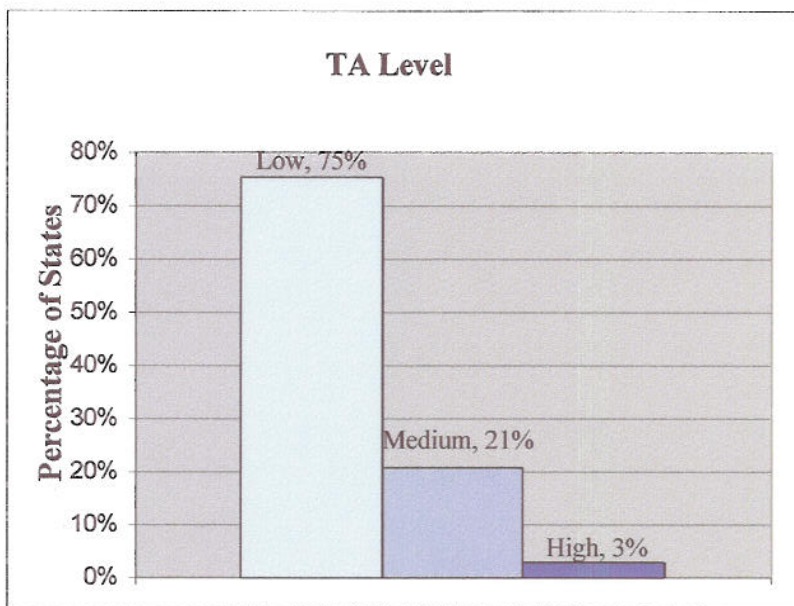
With regard to the administrative capacity elements of the readiness consultations, more than 90 percent of states/territories are ready to implement administrative requirements associated with the Recovery Act. As for program capacity requirements, 80 percent of states/territories are ready to implement overall program requirements; however there are a number of specific program capacity areas in which substantial numbers of states/territories are “not ready.” A lack of readiness is most pronounced for Trade-WIA integration for which only 35 percent of states-territories were assessed as being ready to implement changes associated with the Recovery Act. In addition, there are several additional areas in which 75 percent or fewer are ready such as: Adult Training (69 percent), Supportive Services (73 percent), and Demand Industries and Workforce Information (75 percent). The specifics of those readiness needs are discussed later and in each regional area report.

Another indicator of the vitality of the system has to do with the level of technical assistance needed or requested by the workforce system during these consultations. Only 3 percent of the states and territories were determined to have a high level of need for technical assistance to help them implement the provisions of the Recovery Act. The majority of states (40) or 75 percent require only low levels of technical assistance to help in the implementation process. In some instances, as with the implementation of a new legislative initiative, the states were looking to ETA to provide further direction and guidance around policy, programmatic and financial areas of implementation. In other instances, states and territories simply wanted to

learn from peers about their approach to implementing key provisions of the law. Finally, the states and territories were also anticipating resources and tools to support their ongoing continuous improvement efforts. This data suggests that the workforce system has an awareness regarding its current needs and future direction.

Figure 3 provides a snapshot of overall technical assistance need levels across 53 states and territories.

**Figure 3 - Overall Technical Assistance Needs Levels, % of States**



**Key Readiness Areas** - Although all 63 questions were weighted equally, there were several questions in the readiness guide that highlighted key readiness areas crucial to meeting Recovery Act legislative requirements, agency implementation guidance, and state system requests essential to the smooth implementation of Recovery Act provisions. Figure 4 (on the next page) lists those key readiness questions and depicts the number of states/territories ready to implement each of the key readiness areas and the corresponding level of the states' technical assistance need, in order of readiness.

**Figure 4 - Key Readiness Question Areas by Aggregate Number of States**

Question Number	Key Question	# Ready	Technical Assistance Need Level			
			None	Low	Medium	High
7. <sup>a</sup>	Do the Recovery Act funds supplement and not supplant existing resources which are spent on workforce programs and services?	50	24	22	4	2
22	Has the state/local area updated its growth occupations and targeted industries, based on changing economy, including the President's targeted priorities of green jobs and health care occupations?	48	17	25	10	1
27	Does the local area workforce system have strategies to directly contract with Community Colleges and other eligible training providers to respond to the need for increased training?	47	21	26	6	0
40	Has the State/local area UI, WIA, and WP program staff collaborated to develop reemployment services to UI claimants most likely to exhaust UI benefits?	46	15	28	6	4
51	Has the state/local area developed a plan for providing quality work experience in a summer jobs program?	47	21	26	5	0
13. <sup>a</sup>	Can the state/local area submit summary aggregate data within 10 days following the month to satisfy	45	13	26	8	5
31	Do One-Stops have the staff and systems to serve increased numbers of customers to meet ARRA expectations and local economic demand?	44	16	26	8	3
3	Can the state/local area track ARRA funds in a manner clearly distinguishable from non-ARRA funding?	41	19	20	11	2
61	Does the State have projections outlining the growth of green jobs and healthcare jobs and strategies for providing training in these fields?	41	13	21	17	2

<sup>a</sup> Information on TA needed is missing for one state

At least 75 percent of states/territories were assessed as ready on each of the nine key readiness questions. However, 12 states/territories (22 percent) are not ready to track Recovery Act

funds in a manner clearly distinguishable from non-Recovery Act funds. Also, 12 states do not have projections outlining the growth of green and health care jobs and strategies to provide effective training in these fields. These two issues have the greatest need for technical assistance—35 percent of states/territories (19) need medium to high levels of technical assistance in green and health care jobs training and other related training strategies. Twenty-four percent of states/territories (13) need medium to high levels of technical assistance tracking Recovery Act funds. An equivalent number of states/territories need this level of technical assistance related to meeting the quarterly ten-day reporting requirement mandated for all Recovery Act funded grantees, per Section 1512 of the Recovery Act.

### **Common Technical Assistance Areas, Needs, and ETA Efforts**

Figure 5 provides a snapshot of the extent of technical assistance needed by states within each of the capacity areas assessed. Although the majority of states/territories were assessed as needing at least “low” levels of technical assistance, the number requiring medium to high levels of assistance varied considerably.

**Figure 5 - Capacity Areas Most Needing Technical Assistance by Number of States**

Activity	None	Low	Medium	High
<b>Overall Administrative Capacity</b>				
1. Financial Management	5	36	7	5
2. Reporting	6	30	14	3
3. Communications	9	37	6	1
<b>Overall Program Capacity</b>				
<b>4. Adult Services</b>				
i. Adult/DW/Wagner-Peyser	9	30	13	1
ii. Training Capacity	10	34	9	0
iii. Rapid Response/NEG	16	29	6	2
iv. One Stop /Readiness	8	28	12	2
v. Supportive Services	13	20	18	2
vi. Reemployment and UI Integration	4	34	14	1
vii. Trade WIA Integration	4	26	16	7
5. Youth Services	5	39	8	1
6. Demand Industries And Workforce Information	11	26	14	2

Consistent with the readiness assessments, the greatest need for technical assistance is in the area of Trade-WIA Integration – 43 percent of states/territories need medium to high levels of technical assistance in this area. It should be noted that the guidance on the implementation of the new Trade program was not issued until May 15, 2009 which would have post-dated these consultations, and, therefore, the publication of the guidance and subsequent training has begun

to address this need. Other areas in which at least 30 percent of states/territories need medium to high levels of assistance are: Supportive Services (37%), Reporting (32%), and Demand Industries & Workforce Information (39%).

Since enactment of the Recovery Act on February 17, 2009, ETA has provided timely guidance to the workforce system on provisions of the Recovery Act and on implementing the Recovery Act in the system, (see Appendix II: ARRA Implementation Chronology). Systematic outreach efforts intensified after ETA obligated all its Recovery Act Workforce Investment Act formula and Wagner-Peyser funds, dislocated worker national reserve grants, Indian and Native American Program grants, and Senior Community Service Employment Program grants, by 30 days after enactment of the Recovery Act on March 19, 2009. Implementing guidance was disseminated to the workforce system through a series of Training and Employment Letters (TEGLs) and Unemployment Insurance Policy Letters (UIPLs), training sessions, and through a series of live Webinars on implementation areas of the Recovery Act.

ETA officially began implementing the newly-reauthorized Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program, enacted as part of the Recovery Act, on May 18, 2009 and has issued corresponding operating instructions to the workforce system. In addition, timely guidance was disseminated around extending the timeframe for which individuals are eligible for Unemployment Insurance and encouraging states to modernize their Unemployment Insurance systems (through UIPLs mentioned above).

ETA has also hosted a series of Recovery Act-related conferences and training events around the country to provide an opportunity for states, local areas and workforce system practitioners to learn more about the provisions of the Recovery Act and share best practices and strategies with one another. Among those conferences of note are the six Regional Reemployment and Recovery Forums, held in Boston, Baltimore, Atlanta, Kansas City, Dallas and San Francisco, and a Recovery Act Performance Accountability National Conference in Baltimore. These Forums provided ETA with a wealth of information on needed further technical assistance and they are summarized in Appendix III of this document. ETA is planning additional workforce system technical assistance events based on that input as well as a Reemployment Research Conference.

In addition, ETA has taken advantage of opportunities to reach out to stakeholders with technical assistance through ETA's partners in the intergovernmental community, such as presenting at plenary sessions and workshops for the National Association for Workforce Boards, the National Association of State Workforce Agencies, the National Governor's Association, and the U.S. Conference of Mayors, to name a few. ETA is meeting with such organizations on a regular basis, and will continue such coordinated technical assistance efforts with intergovernmental organizations, often referred to as IGOs. Such organizations are particularly helpful in reaching local partner organizations of the national workforce system.

**Reporting** – A substantial number of states and local areas need technical assistance related to Recovery Act reporting, per Section 1512 of the Recovery Act, and this was noted in the reviews. The workforce system is in need of final ETA guidance and training on this critical reporting requirement, which is underway now. States can then finalize any necessary modifications to their current systems and provide local areas with needed assistance. Many states expressed concerns about their ability to meet the quarterly ten-day on-line Section 1512 reporting requirement which begins in October 2009.

The Office of Management and Budget issued final implementing guidance on Recovery Act reporting requirements, per Section 1512 of the Act on June 22, 2009. Prime non-Federal recipients (usually states or direct grantees), first-tier sub-recipients and recipient vendors of Recovery Act funds are statutorily required to report ten days after the end of each quarter, starting October 10, 2009 on a number of data elements, financial and programmatic, including the number of jobs created and retained in support of Recovery Act-funded activities and projects. While ETA issued financial and performance reporting requirements related to the Recovery Act in Training and Employment Guidance Letters (TEGL) 17-08 and 24-08, respectively, the final OMB guidance was not available until very recently. Therefore, ETA is currently working diligently on a change to the issued TEGL to ensure that timely and thorough guidance on Recovery Act recipient reporting is disseminated to the workforce system during the month of July 2009.

Other planned efforts to provide guidance include developing internal policies and procedures to ensure effective implementation of the recipient reporting requirements, and plans for technical assistance and training for grantees and Federal staff. There are nine programs administered by ETA which will be subject to the OMB reporting requirement and States are



awaiting finalization of these requirements which ETA describes for our grantees in agency guidance on this critical reporting requirement.

Other reporting assistance needs were noted such as, tracking Summer Youth Employment Program participants should they transition from the SYEP to become year-round Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Youth customers, reporting the increase in the age category of youth from 22 to 24 per the Recovery Act, and in reporting Wagner-Peyser Employment Service data. To the extent that policy guidance has been issued on these subjects by ETA, training and technical assistance is still needed by the system on these topics, and in fact has begun to be provided by ETA National and Regional Offices.

**Trade-WIA Integration** – ETA officially began implementing the newly reauthorized TAA program, which was reauthorized by the Trade and Globalization Adjustment Assistance Act of 2009 (TGAAA), a part of the Recovery Act (Pub. Law No. 111-5, Div. B, Title I, Subtitle I) by the statutorily-mandated date of May 18, 2009. Operating Instructions for the system were issued by ETA in TEGL No. 22-08, to assist State Workforce Agencies who were designated by the Governor as “cooperating state agencies” in implementing the provisions of the TGAAA that amend the TAA program, and creates or expands programs for workers, firms, communities, and farmers. In addition, guidance was also provided in TEGL No. 23-08, providing the workforce system with a revised TAA petition form for the new expanded program.

State and local areas reported in their readiness reviews the need to be trained for effective implementation of the Trade Adjustment Assistance amendments, mandated in the Recovery Act. Trade-WIA integration of funds, case management and co-enrollment were categories noted for assistance. Shortly after the March 18 implementation date, ETA met with Regional Trade Coordinators from all six ETA Regions in Washington, DC for technical assistance on the TAA 2009 amendments. ETA is also hosting a series of Regional Roundtable meetings between July and September of 2009 to provide training to workforce personnel on the new TAA program. There will most certainly be a need for additional training in addition to these planned outreach efforts on an on-going basis.

**Demand Industries and Workforce Information** – This is another area in which large numbers of states have requested assistance. The greatest need is for additional information around defining green jobs and identifying effective career pathways for green industries,

matching existing training opportunities to green jobs training. Many states, and local areas, also saw a benefit from staff training on how to collect and analyze labor market information (LMI) data to inform service delivery strategies and provide appropriate individualized guidance to customers.

ETA has released a series of Solicitation for Grant Applications (SGAs) related to Green Jobs Training. Of the \$750 million allotted the U.S. Department of Labor for competitive discretionary grants under the Recovery Act, \$500 million is designated for projects that prepare workers for careers in the energy efficiency and renewable energy sectors described in Section 171(e)(1)(B) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 as amended to incorporate the Green Jobs Act of 2007. Subsequent to the grant solicitation roll-out, ETA issued a Training and Employment Notice (TEN) No. 44-08 describing the plans for awarding these Green Jobs Training funds under the Recovery Act so that interested organizations could begin to plan for the application process and to allow time to strengthen or build partnerships to be successful applicants.

ETA is being proactive with its outreach efforts on the Green Jobs Training grants. Prospective applicant webinars are being held during the month of July to provide high-level overviews of each Green Jobs Training grant solicitation and to respond to questions. There are more outreach and technical assistance efforts on Green Jobs training planned.

**One-Stop Readiness** – State, and sometimes local hiring freezes, instituted prior to the enactment of the Recovery Act due to general revenue budget issues, has resulted in lagging One-Stop Career Center staff capacity, especially when faced with increased customer flow due to increasing unemployment trends nationwide. Development of staff capacity is a need throughout the system. Technical assistance needs were reported in providing quick and nimble staff training for new Recovery Act staff hires, while resolving issues around retaining these new hires once the life of Recovery Act funds expire. An increase in the complexity of customer issues also requires refreshed staff development and training for comprehensive One-Stop assistance.

ETA Regional Offices across the country have already started working closely with state workforce systems to target areas in need of technical assistance.

**Supportive Services** – Technical assistance needs were also reported in the supportive services area, particularly around the provision of Needs-Related Payments (NRPs). Limited funding levels under WIA in recent years have not permitted the provision of NRPs in most areas of the country. The major concerns at the state level were around offering NRPs in the short-term and then subsequently rolling them back after Recovery Act funds are exhausted and regular resources cannot support them. Determining eligibility for NRPs, tracking such payments, and assistance around supportive services models were also of concern to local areas.

**Other Technical Assistance Needs** – To a lesser extent, states and local workforce areas reported the need for technical assistance around the integration of reemployment services and unemployment insurance programming. Many states need assistance to serve unemployment insurance claimants most at risk of exhausting their benefits, (those with limited benefit periods, or multiple barriers to reemployment).

States and local areas requested assistance in areas related to the implementation of youth services as mandated by the Recovery Act, such as measuring an increase in work readiness, (required for the Summer Youth Employment Program), and in serving older, out-of-school youth. They also seek a better understanding of how to transition older youth to WIA Adult services, and how to monitor the Summer Youth Employment Program activities was also discussed.

States and local areas reported a need for assistance around adult training, particularly strategies to work with community colleges and other providers to increase training opportunities and capacity and to provide training in rural areas that do not have community colleges.

ETA has responded with outreach efforts and basic training in these areas during the Recovery and Reemployment Forums, (see Appendix III) but more is needed in order for an effective implementation of all Recovery Act provisions.

### **Looking Forward: WIA Reform**

In concert with a reinvigorated effort to reform and reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) among the White House, Congress, the Department of Education and workforce system stakeholders, the Department of Labor (DOL) is developing policy priorities for WIA reform and plans for broad stakeholder engagement through listening sessions and other

means. Through WIA reform, DOL seeks to modernize the workforce system, building on strengths within the existing system and by addressing areas of the workforce system that could be operating more effectively or efficiently.

The following areas capture the critical aspects of WIA that provide the foundation for the Department's approach to reform:

- *Universal Access with Focus on Serving Most-in-Need* - The public workforce system provides universal access for all needing workforce information or assistance while focusing WIA programs for adult workers and youth on those most in need of services and assistance to be able to enter the workforce and pursue viable career paths and simplifies eligibility qualifications for low-income.
- *Integrated and Accessible Workforce Programs* - All workforce programs for dislocated and laid off workers are integrated and accessible within the state and local One-Stop Career Centers (e.g. WIA Dislocated Workers; Trade Adjustment Assistance; Pell grants for unemployment insurance claimants; Wagner-Peyser Employment Services; and Reemployment Eligibility Assessments), providing each individual quick and effective triage, assessment of skills, and the best plan for services.
- *One-Stop Access to Consolidated Services* - Customers access all programs through the One-Stop system in a manner that consolidates services and presents clear career pathways regardless of the program funding source used to support the achievement of the career credential and job placement.
- *Strategic Partnership with Educational Institutions* - Every organization, particularly Community Colleges and Community-based Organizations, that can assist in gaining education and workforce skills, finding and sustaining employment is an active partner in the public workforce system.
- *Performance Measures to Reward Interim and Long-Term Outcomes* - The performance accountability framework for the public workforce system is based on measures of both interim and long-term outcomes which account for all those served and specifically encourage the system to serve those most in need.
- *Dual-Customer Approach* - The needs of workers and employers are both important in developing thriving communities where all citizens succeed and businesses prosper, in a dual-customer approach to strategic action.

- *Innovative and Effective Career Counseling Service Strategies* - Career counseling services and training provided through the One-Stop system are of the highest quality, reflect a deep understanding of labor market demands in industry sectors important to the regional economy, and focus on long-term goals of skills development and career pathways.
- *Emphasis on Regional Context* - The state and local operation of the public workforce system reflects the understanding that today's economy operates in a regional context and crosses political jurisdictions.
- *Streamlined Workforce Investment Boards* - State and local workforce investment boards are more streamlined, representative, more strategic, effective and efficient in governing and overseeing the operations of the public workforce system.

The Recovery Act state and local workforce area readiness consultations provide ETA with some broad insights regarding the general health of the workforce development system and what technical assistance is needed to best improve the system. The readiness consultations also reflect the proactive positioning of the system with transformational building blocks for a look to the future in the context of WIA Reauthorization. It is important to note, however, that the readiness consultations were not initially intended to elicit information specific to WIA reauthorization.

### **Proactive Positioning of the Workforce System**

In reviewing the Recovery Act Readiness and Technical Assistance Consultation Guide, there are 15 questions ETA identified as indicative of the “forward thinking” nature of the workforce system (See Figure 6 on the next page).

**Figure 6 - Fifteen (15) “Forward Thinking” Questions as Referenced in Readiness Guide**

Question # in Guide	“Forward Thinking” Question
14	Has the state/local area refined and developed a vision to use Recovery Act funds to drive change throughout its workforce system to meet 21 <sup>st</sup> century workforce and economic challenges?
15	Has the state/local system formed partnerships and shared vision with community colleges and education agencies, business and labor organizations, civic groups, and philanthropy to align workforce development strategies for regional development and shared prosperity?
18	Does the state/local area have a process to communicate and coordinate with other agencies doing Recovery Act activity?
21	Have policies been developed to ensure emphasis on serving low-income, displaced, and under-skilled adults and disconnected older youth?
22	Has the state/local area updated its growth occupations and targeted industries, based on changing economy, including the President’s targeted priorities of green jobs and health care occupations?
23	Has the state/local area designed a service strategy which aligns all services and resources to support career pathways to emerging and future high growth jobs and industries?
28	Do Rapid Response strategies and procedures exist to avert or respond quickly to announced and occurring lay-offs?
32	In the context of a low-growth economy, have the One-Stops changed training strategies that address longer-term unemployment?
44	Does the State have a plan for its share of the \$500 million of administrative funds? What will it be spent on?
48	Does the State have an integrated TRA/ TAA One Stop Workforce system?
51	Has the state/local area developed a plan for providing work experiences for summer employment?
60	Has the state/local area identified economic trends and emerging industry and job growth in the near and long term?
61	Does the State have projections outlining the growth of green jobs and healthcare jobs and strategies for providing training in these fields?
62	Is this economic and job information widely available to workers seeking employment and training services?
63	Does the state/local area utilize electronic labor market tools, such as LED, EMSI, and/or other tools?

The data affirms that the majority of the system is being proactive in positioning itself for the current economy and its approach to service delivery. Eighty-four (84) percent of states are ready to refine and develop a vision to use Recovery Act funds to drive change throughout its workforce system to meet future workforce and economic challenges. Ninety-four (94) percent of states signaled readiness in the area of partnerships and a shared vision with education, labor, civic and philanthropic institutions to drive regional development strategies. As for targeting those hardest-to-serve populations, 91 percent of states have developed policies to serve those most-in-need. Another area of relatively high readiness levels is in the question relating to

updating training strategies to address long-term unemployment (85 percent). Where the states signaled the least readiness levels was in the area of Trade-WIA integration throughout the One-Stop service delivery continuum (only 74 percent of states signaled readiness).

As for technical assistance, states requesting “high” levels of technical assistance, in response to the 15 forward thinking questions are only a few. Eight (8) percent of states request assistance in the Trade-WIA integration effort, the highest percentage noted for “high” levels of technical assistance. Four (4) percent of states requested “high” levels of technical assistance in two strategic areas: 1) tools to identify economic trends and emerging industry and job growth in the near and long term; and 2) strategies to provide timely and widely-disseminated economic and job information to workers seeking employment and training services. The “high” levels of technical assistance noted in these areas are to be expected, given the relative “newness” of the Recovery Act and due to an unprecedented economic downturn requiring more intensive training and information-sharing efforts than anticipated. These technical assistance needs are also in response to policy areas that ETA continues to deliberate on internally.

Eighty-seven (87) percent of the states require “medium” to “low” assistance in utilizing electronic labor market tools and eighty-five (85) percent of states require the same levels of assistance to provide projections outlining growth of green and health care jobs and strategies for offering training in these fields. More than half of the states surveyed require “low” technical assistance levels in the area of communication and coordination with other agencies engaged in Recovery Act activities, and around sixty (60) percent require little technical assistance in devising Rapid Response strategies to announced and occurring layoffs.

The technical assistance needs identified reinforce the self-awareness of the workforce system and its desire for continuous transformation and improvement. Discussions with state and local workforce agencies reveal there are several areas where they have additional questions and around which ETA can develop technical assistance strategies moving forward:

- What will be the growth occupations and targeted industries on the other side of this economic downturn;
- How can new and different labor market information and data be used to inform the discussion;

- How does the system translate the labor market data into meaningful career pathways for the future on an operational level;
- How does the system need to retool its training strategies in the context of low-growth economy;
- How does the system integrate Trade Adjustment Assistance/Trade Reemployment Assistance and One-Stop services in light of Trade Reauthorization;
- How does the system position itself to be a major training provider around Green Jobs and expand health care initiatives to keep pace with demands; and
- How do we effectively empower job seekers with the economic and job information data in a meaningful way?

## **Conclusion**

The Recovery Act has provided unprecedented levels of funding for the workforce investment system and requires an increased level of transparency and accountability of action taken to implement and operate programs funded under the Act. The workforce system is set to play a vital role in America's economic recovery by assisting workers who are facing extraordinary challenges to retool their skills and re-establish themselves in viable career paths. ETA and the workforce system are up to that challenge and are prepared to continue working vigorously to provide further direction, guidance and technical assistance in implementing the intent of the Recovery Act, while listening closely to the needs noted by system stakeholders for reform. The ETA National and Regional Offices play a critical role to continue to provide technical assistance for system integration, reemployment and other critical areas. Regional Offices will use the results of the readiness consultations to guide their assistance to the specific needs of states in the regions they oversee as they continue to implement Recovery Act provisions. Nationally, ETA is using results of the consultations in planning and prioritizing technical assistance activities for the months to come.



## APPENDIX I

**Figure 1 - Matrix of Readiness Levels (Quartiles) by State**

State	Administrative Capacity				Program Capacity								
	Overall	Financial Mgt.	Reporting	Communications	Overall	Adult Services						Youth	Demand Industries and Workforce Info.
						Adult/DW/ Wagner-Peyser	Training	Rapid Response	One Stop	Reemploy. and U.I Integration	Trade and WIA Integration		
<b>REGION 1</b>													
Connecticut	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	1
Massachusetts	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
Maine	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1
New Hampshire	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	3	1	3
New Jersey	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
New York	2	2	1	4	2	2	4	2	3	1	4	1	1
Puerto Rico	2	2	3	2	3	4	4	2	3	2	4	1	4
Rhode Island	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
U.S. Virgin Islands	3	2	4	1	3	2	2	3	3	3	4	2	3
Vermont	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	3	1	3	1	1
<b>REGION 2</b>													
District of Columbia	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2
Delaware	1	1	1	1	2	3	3	1	1	1	4	1	3
Maryland	1	1	1	1	2	3	1	1	1	3	4	1	2
Pennsylvania	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Virginia	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
West Virginia	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	1
<b>REGION 3</b>													
Alabama	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Florida	1	1	1	1	2	1	3	2	2	1	2	2	2
Georgia	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Kentucky	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	2	3	1	4
Mississippi	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1
North Carolina	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
South Carolina	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	3	2	1	1
Tennessee	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1

State	Administrative Capacity				Program Capacity								
	Overall	Financial Mgt.	Reporting	Communications	Overall	Adult Services						Youth	Demand Industries and Workforce Info.
						Adult/DW/ Wagner- Peyster	Training	Rapid Response	One Stop	Reemploy. and U.I Integration	Trade and WIA Integration		
<b>REGION 4</b>													
Arkansas	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1
Colorado	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Louisiana	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1
Montana	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1
New Mexico	1	1	1	1	2	1	3	1	1	3	3	1	1
North Dakota	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1
Oklahoma	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	3	1	1
South Dakota	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Texas	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Utah	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	1	1
Wyoming	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	1
<b>REGION 5</b>													
Iowa	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1
Illinois	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1
Indiana	2	1	1	4	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
Kansas	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	4	1	1
Michigan	1	1	3	1	2	1	1	4	3	1	1	3	1
Minnesota	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1
Missouri	1	1	4	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	4	2	3
Nebraska	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	3	1	1
Ohio	2	3	1	2	1	2	4	1	1	1	3	1	1
Wisconsin	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	4	4	1
<b>REGION 6</b>													
Arizona	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	3	1	3
California	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1
Nevada	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	1
Idaho	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	2
Alaska	1	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	3	1	1
Hawaii	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	1
Oregon	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	1
Washington	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	2

**Figure 2 - Matrix of Overall Technical Assistance Needs by State**

State	Administrative Capacity				Program Capacity									
	Overall	Financial Mgt.	Reporting	Communications	Overall	Adult Services						Youth	Demand Industries and Workforce Info.	
						Adult/DW/Wagner-Peyser	Training	Rapid Response	One Stop	Reemploy. and U.I Integration	Trade and WIA Integration			
<b>REGION 1</b>														
Connecticut	L	M	L	L	L	M	L		L	M	H	L	L	
Massachusetts	L	L	L	L	L	L	L		L			L	L	
Maine	L	L	L		L					L	H	L		
New Hampshire	M	L	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	L	M	L	M	
New Jersey	L	L												
New York	L	H	H	L	L	M	L	L	L	M	M	L	L	
Puerto Rico	L	H	L	H	M	M	M	H	M	H	H	L	H	
Rhode Island	M		M		L			L	L	L	L	L	L	
U.S. Virgin Islands	H	L	H	M	H	M	L	H	H	M		H	H	
Vermont	L	L	L	L	L	H	L	L	L	L	H	L	L	
<b>REGION 2</b>														
District of Columbia	M	M	M	L	M	M	L	L	L	L	H	M	M	
Delaware	L	L	M	L	M	M	M	M	M	M	H	M	M	
Maryland	M	L	M		L	M		M		L	M		M	
Pennsylvania	L	L	M	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	
Virginia	M	L	M	L	L	L	L	M	L	L	M	L	M	
West Virginia	M	H	M	M	M	M	M	L	L	M	L	M	M	
<b>REGION 3</b>														
Alabama	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	
Florida	L	L	M	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	
Georgia	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	
Kentucky	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	M	
Mississippi	L	L	M	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	M	
North Carolina	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	
South Carolina	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	
Tennessee	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	M	

State	Administrative Capacity				Program Capacity								
	Overall	Financial Mgt.	Reporting	Communications	Overall	Adult Services						Youth	Demand Industries and Workforce Info.
						Adult/DW/ Wagner- Peyster	Training	Rapid Response	One Stop	Reemploy. and U.I Integration	Trade and WIA Integration		
<b>REGION 4</b>													
Arkansas	L	L	L	L	L	M	M	L	L	M	L	L	L
Colorado	L			L	L	L	L		L	L	L	L	
Louisiana	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	M	L	L
Montana	L	L	L	L	L	L			M	M	L	L	L
New Mexico	L	H	L	M	M	L	M	M	M	M	M	L	L
North Dakota	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	M	M	L	L	L
Oklahoma					M	M	M			M	M	L	
South Dakota	L	M	L		L	L			M	L	L	L	L
Texas	L	L	L	L	L		L			L		L	
Utah	L	L	L	L	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	L	M
Wyoming	L	L	L	M	M	L	L		M	M	M		
<b>REGION 5</b>													
Iowa	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Illinois	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Indiana	L	L	M	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	M	L	L
Kansas	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Michigan	L	L	M	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	M	M	M
Minnesota	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Missouri	L	L	H	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Nebraska	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	M	L	L
Ohio	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	H	M	M
Wisconsin	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	M	L	L
<b>REGION 6</b>													
Arizona	L		L	M	L	M	L	L	M	L	L	L	M
California	M	M	M	M	L	L				M	L		
Nevada	M	M	M	L	L		L		L	M	L	M	
Idaho	M	M		L	M						M	L	M
Alaska	L	H	L	L	L	L	M	L	M	L	M	L	L
Hawaii					M				M		M	M	
Oregon	L	M	L		L				H		L	L	
Washington	L	L		L	L		L			L	L		

## APPENDIX II

### ARRA Activities Report through July 9, 2009

<b>Recovery Act Implementation Chronology</b>		
<b>February 19 -- July 9, 2009</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Product or Webpage Link</b>
2/18/2009	ETA Executive Leadership held initial ARRA implementation strategy meeting.	
2/19/2009	American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) enacted.	<a href="http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=111_cong_bills&amp;docid=f:h1enr.pdf">http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=111_cong_bills&amp;docid=f:h1enr.pdf</a>
2/20/2009	NASWA Winter Policy Forum: ETA administrators broadly discussed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provisions.	
2/23/2009	UIPL No. 11-09 - New Temporary Federal Acquisition Compensation Program <sup>1</sup>	<a href="http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2713">http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2713</a>
2/23/2009	UIPL No. 12-09 - Extended Benefits Program - Temporary Changes Made by the Assistance for Unemployed Workers and Struggling Families Act	<a href="http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2712">http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2712</a>
2/24/2009	UIPL No. 13-09 - Funding of Administrative Costs for Implementation of the New Temporary Federal Additional Compensation Program	<a href="http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2714">http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2714</a>
2/25/2009	New Treasury Accounts for ARRA	
2/25/2009	New DOL and ETA Recovery web pages established.	DOL <a href="http://www.dol.gov/recovery/">http://www.dol.gov/recovery/</a> and ETA <a href="http://www.doleta.gov/recovery/">http://www.doleta.gov/recovery/</a>
2/26/2009	UIPL No. 14-09 - Special Transfers for Unemployment Compensation Modernization and Administration and Relief from Interest on Advances	<a href="http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2715">http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2715</a>
2/27/2009	Apportionments submitted to OMB.	
3/3/2009	Submission of Weekly ARRA Reports started; posted on DOL Recovery.gov site.	<a href="http://www.dol.gov/recovery/">http://www.dol.gov/recovery/</a>
3/4/2009	UIPL No. 23-08, Change 4 - Emergency Unemployment Compensation, 2008 - Program Extension	<a href="http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2716">http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2716</a>
3/4/2009	TEN No. 30-08 - Overview of the Employment and Training Administration's Implementation Strategy for Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser Funding Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009	<a href="http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2717">http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2717</a>

## Recovery Act Implementation Chronology

February 19 -- July 9, 2009

Date	Activity	Product or Webpage Link
3/6/2009	Meeting with Intergovernmental stakeholders to discuss Recovery Act implementation (National Governors' Association, National Association of Workforce Boards, National Association of State Workforce Agencies, US Conference of Mayors, National Association of Counties, National Conference of State Legislatures, and National League of Cities).	
3/6/2009	TEGL No. 13-08 - Allotments for Training and Employment Services as Specified in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) for Activities Under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA). Workforce Investment Act Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Activities Program Allotments, Wagner-Peyser Act Allotments, and Reemployment Service (RES) Allotments.	<a href="http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2718">http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2718</a>
3/7/2009	ETA Administrators addressed NAWB Forum participants on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.	
3/12/2009	ETA conducted teleconference with NASWA state administrators to discuss Recovery Act implementation.	
3/18/2009	TEGL No. 14-08 - Guidance for Implementation of the Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser Act Funding in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and State Planning Requirements for Program Year 2009	<a href="http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2728">http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2728</a>
3/18/2009	TEGL No. 15-08 - American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act) Planning Instructions for All Current SCSEP Grantees	<a href="http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2730">http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2730</a>
3/18/2009	Allocation Reports for WIA and W-P submitted to OMB.	
3/19/2009	WIA Formula Grants and Wagner-Peyser Grants obligated. Funds made available for grantee drawdown in HHS Payment Management System.	
3/19/2009	Dislocated Worker National Reserve Grants obligated. Funds made available for grantee drawdown in HHS Payment Management System.	

## Recovery Act Implementation Chronology

February 19 -- July 9, 2009

Date	Activity	Product or Webpage Link
3/19/2009	Senior Community Service Employment Program grants obligated. Funds made available for grantee drawdown in HHS Payment Management System.	
3/19/2009	Indian and Native American Program grants Obligated. Funds made available for grantee drawdown in HHS Payment Management System.	
3/19/2009	TEGL No. 16-08 - Guidance for Implementation of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Funding in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 as Required by Subtitle D, Section 166, Native American Programs	<a href="http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2731">http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2731</a>
3/19/2009	UIPL No. 14-09, Change 1 - Special Transfers for Unemployment Compensation Modernization and Administration and Relief from Interest on Advances	<a href="http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2732">http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2732</a>
3/19/2009	ETA Operating Plans are cleared by the DOL and are transmitted to OMB for review. Initial Contingency Plans for Recipient Reporting is included in the Operating Plan.	
3/19/2009	Allocation Reports for the Indian and Native American Program and SCSEP completed and transmitted to OMB.	
3/23/2009	Live Webinar - Implementing the Recovery Act in the Workforce Investment System (TEGL 14-08)	<a href="http://economicrecovery.workforce3one.org/">http://economicrecovery.workforce3one.org/</a>
3/24/2009	Live Webinar - Let's Get the Show on the Road: Guidance for Youth Activities	
3/25/2009	TEGL No. 11-08, Change 1 - Extension Period Granted to All State Workforce Agencies (SWAs) and Employers for the Uninterrupted Use of All 2007 Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) Processing Forms	<a href="http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2735">http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2735</a>
3/27/2009	Synopsis for Discretionary Grant Awards posted on Grants.gov.	<a href="http://www.grants.gov/applicants/recovery.jsp">http://www.grants.gov/applicants/recovery.jsp</a>
3/27/2009	Live Webinar - State Plans and Waivers: Plans for the Future	
3/30/2009	Live Webinar - Technical Questions and Answer Session, addressing issues regarding the Recovery Act policy and planning TEGL.	
3/31/2009	Live Webinar - Ramp It Up: Creating Meaningful Work Experience Opportunities for Youth	

<b>Recovery Act Implementation Chronology</b>		
<b>February 19 -- July 9, 2009</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Product or Webpage Link</b>
3/31-4/2/2009	Regional Recovery and Reemployment Forum - Region V Chicago	
3/31-4/2/2009	Series of Conference Calls with States on WIA Youth Recovery Act completed through ETA's Regional Offices.	
4/1/2009	Live Webinar - "Regional ARRA Readiness Staff Training"	
4/1/2009	Risk Management Strategy under development.	
4/3/2009	UIPL No. 21-09 - Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC) for Eligible Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Recipients	<a href="http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2739">http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2739</a>
4/2/2009	Questions and Answers relating to the Trade Adjustment Assistance Reauthorization legislation contained in the Recovery Act posted online.	<a href="http://www.doleta.gov/tradeact/">http://www.doleta.gov/tradeact/</a>
4/7/2009	Live Webinar - What's the Program?: Exploring Program Design Models for Youth	
4/13/2009	State Readiness Review guide approved by OMB.	Recovery Act Readiness and Technical Assistance Guide
4/13/2009	Draft ETA Program Recovery Plans submitted to OASAM for review and finalization by April 17 in advance of May 1, 2009 submission to OMB.	
4/15/2009	TEGL No. 14-08, Change 1: Guidance for Implementation of the Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser Act Funding in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and State Planning Requirements for Program Year 2009	<a href="http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2741">http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2741</a>
4/16/2009	Live Webinar - ETA's Vision and Guidance: Using Your RES Funds	
4/16/2009	Live Webinar - Shared Youth Vision Federal Partnership provided information on how their agency plans to utilize Recovery Act funds to assist youth.	
4/20/2009	Live Webinar - The Recovery Act and Registered Apprenticeship: Yes You Can!	
4/23/2009	TEGL No. 17-08: American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act) Funds Financial Reporting Requirements	<a href="http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2745">http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2745</a>
4/28-30/2009	Regional Recovery and Reemployment Forum - Region 1, Boston	<a href="http://www.regonline.com/builder/site/Default.aspx?eventid=672148">http://www.regonline.com/builder/site/Default.aspx?eventid=672148</a>



<b>Recovery Act Implementation Chronology</b>		
<b>February 19 -- July 9, 2009</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Product or Webpage Link</b>
4/30/2009	TEGL No. 19-08: National Emergency Grants Funded with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 Resources	<a href="http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2748">http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2748</a>
5/1/2009	Training and Employment Notice 42-08 -- COBRA Premium Reduction and Extended Eligibility Provisions in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009	<a href="http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2749">http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2749</a>
5/1/2009	Live Webinar - Are You Ready? Tips for Measuring Work Readiness for Youth Under the Recovery Act	
5/1/2009	Frequently Asked Questions and Answers - Implementing Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser Funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (2009)	<a href="http://www.doleta.gov/recovery/TEGL14-08_Change1_FAQs.cfm">http://www.doleta.gov/recovery/TEGL14-08_Change1_FAQs.cfm</a>
5/4/2009	UIPL 12-09, Change 1 -- Extended Benefits Program -- Temporary Changes made by the Assistance for Unemployed Workers and Struggling Families Act	<a href="http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2750">http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2750</a>
5/5-5/7/2009	Regional Recovery and Reemployment Forum - Region 4, Dallas	<a href="http://www.regonline.com/builder/site/Default.aspx?eventid=720269">http://www.regonline.com/builder/site/Default.aspx?eventid=720269</a>
5/6/2009	Live Webinar - Recovery Act Funds: Financial Reporting Requirements	
5/7/2009	Webinar on green placement opportunities for SCSEP grantees using Recovery Act funds	
5/12-14/2009	Regional Recovery and Reemployment Forum - Region 2, Philadelphia held in Baltimore, MD	<a href="http://www.regonline.com/builder/site/Default.aspx?eventid=717593">http://www.regonline.com/builder/site/Default.aspx?eventid=717593</a>
5/14/2009	Meeting with HUD to discuss implementation of joint outreach to Housing Authorities and One Stop / WIBS. Purpose of project is to send a joint letter to Public Housing Authorities (PHA) and One Stop Offices encouraging them to work with PHA contractors to get residents into green jobs.	
5/15/2009	Training and Employment Notice 44-08 "American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 Competitive Grants for Green Job Training"	<a href="http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?docn=2755">http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?docn=2755</a>
5/15/2009	TEGL 22-08 Operating Instructions for Implementing the Amendments to the Trade Act of 1974 Enacted by the Trade and Globalization Adjustment Assistance Act of 2009	<a href="http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2756">http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2756</a>

## Recovery Act Implementation Chronology

February 19 -- July 9, 2009

Date	Activity	Product or Webpage Link
5/15/2009	TEGL 23-08 Petition Form. To provide a revised copy of ETA Form 9042 and 9042a, Petition for Trade Adjustment Assistance and Solicitud de Asistencia Para Ajuste del Comercio	<a href="http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2757">http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2757.</a>
April-May, 2009	Recovery Act State and Local Workforce Investment Board Readiness Reviews conducted by ETA Regional staff.	
5/18/2009	The implementation date of the new Trade and Globalization Adjustment Assistance Act of 2009, which is part of the Recovery Act, is May 18, 2009.	
5/19/2009	Live Webinar - Recovery Act-funded National Emergency Grant (NEG) opportunities for Indian and Native American grantees	<a href="http://www.workforce3one.org/view/5000913361490786509/info">http://www.workforce3one.org/view/5000913361490786509/info</a>
5/21/2009	TEGL 24-08 Provides guidance on WIA and Wagner-Peyser Act performance accountability reporting for ARRA	<a href="http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2760">http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2760</a>
5/26/2009	Training and Employment Notice 45-08 "Recovery Act Performance Accountability Forum", June 17 and 18 in Baltimore, MD	<a href="http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2761">http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2761</a>
5/27-29/2009	Regional Recovery and Reemployment Forum - Region 3, Atlanta	<a href="http://www.regonline.com/builder/site/Default.aspx?eventid=717592">http://www.regonline.com/builder/site/Default.aspx?eventid=717592</a>
5/27/2009	Training and Employment Notice No. 46-08: Combining Fiscal Year 2009 YouthBuild Appropriations with the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (P.L. 111-5) YouthBuild Appropriations	<a href="http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2763">http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2763</a>
6/1/2009	TEGL 28-08 -- Program Year 2009 Planning Instructions and Allotments for All Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) Grant Applicants	<a href="http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2768">http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2768.</a>
6/5/2009	TEGL 9-08, Change 1: Revised National Performance Goal Targets for the Government Performance Results Act (GPRA) to support Negotiating State Performance Goals for the Workforce Investment Act Title IB Programs, Wagner-Peyser Act Funded Activities for Program Year 2009	<a href="http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2770">http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2770.</a>
6/5/2009	Webinar - Recovery Act Reports: Web-based reporting system that will be used for the monthly Recovery Act Reports	

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6/10/2009	TEGL 4-08, Change 1 -- Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 State Supplemental Training Fund Distributions Including Case Management Funds and the Process for Requesting Additional Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program Reserve Funds	
6/10/2009	TEGL 29-08 -- Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number/Central Contractor Registration (CCR) Mandatory Requirement for Federal Grant Sub-recipients under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009	
6/1-6/5/2009	Week of June 1: Approximately 175 YouthBuild grant awards announced. About 42% of the grants awarded using ARRA funds.	
6/10-11/2009	Regional Recovery and Reemployment Forum - Region 6, San Francisco	
6/17-18/2009	National ARRA Performance Accountability Conference	<a href="http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2761">http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2761</a>
6/23-25/2009	Webinars are scheduled on the Recovery Act authorized WOTC target groups June 23, 24 and 25.	
6/24/2009	Green Jobs Training Solicitation for 5 Grant Applications (SGAs). Grants competitions totaling approximately \$500 million announced.	<a href="http://www.dol.gov/opa/media/press/eta/eta20090725.htm">http://www.dol.gov/opa/media/press/eta/eta20090725.htm</a>
7/9/2009	OMB Town Hall Meeting for Federal Staff on Recipient Reporting, Section 1512	
	<b><sup>1</sup>Color Code Key:</b>	
	ETA conducted Webinars	
	Unemployment Insurance Program Letter (UIPL)	
	Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL)	
	Regional Recovery and Reemployment Forums	
	Training and Employment Notice (TEN)	



APPENDIX III  
Executive Summary  
Regional Recovery and Reemployment Forums



## ETA Regional Recovery and Reemployment Forums Final Report

### SECTION 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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#### Forum Purpose

ETA's Regional Recovery and Reemployment Forums were implemented to provide timely and regionally-customized technical assistance to the system in a mode that enabled wide system participation. The Forums were envisioned as a follow-up to the *ReemploymentWorks!* Summit held January 27-29, 2009 in Baltimore. They represented a significant component of the larger Reemployment initiative undertaken by ETA in late summer of 2008, with leadership from ETA's Designing Reemployment (DREEM) Team. The Forums were integrally tied to other aspects of the Reemployment efforts to date, including the Reemployment Architects and Designers (RAD) group and the Reemployment Works Community of Practice.

#### Forum Overview

The first of the six Regional Forums was held March 30 – April 1 in Kansas City and the last on June 10 - 11 in San Francisco. The Forums had a combined total attendance of 2,201 participants, with representatives from all 50 states and three of four territories. About 11% of Forum participants (236 individuals) indicated that they had previously attended the national Baltimore Summit which brought together 640 participants. Clearly, the Forums afforded an opportunity to expand the work started at the Baltimore Summit to a much larger group.

#### Forum Focus

All of the Regional Forums focused on immediate and effective implementation of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and enhancing the effectiveness of system-wide Reemployment efforts. Green jobs and summer youth programs also received significant attention at all Forums.

Each Forum offered multiple plenary sessions, and a total of 143 breakout session options were available across the six Forums. Workshops covered all of the seven “reemployment buckets” identified by the RAD group, ARRA-related topics, and a variety of other topics including Green Jobs and Youth. According to a regional topic assessment, the most frequently covered workshop topics were Flexible Service Delivery, Skills Assessment, Technology and Tools, and Actionable Workforce Data.

## **Final Report**

The Regional Forum Final Report was developed to provide an overview for ETA leadership and to provide ETA regional and national office staff with “actionable” data and information that can be used to continue supporting the State and local area staff who are on the front lines of ETA’s recovery and reemployment efforts. The Final Report begins with overview information and a summary of Forum outcomes. The bulk of the report consists of topically-organized summaries of Policy Recommendations Directed to DOL, Questions and Technical Assistance Needs Raised, Highlighted State and Local Solutions, and Action Steps Committed to at Forums. The Report’s final section, “Looking Forward,” concludes with a set of recommended next steps for ETA’s technical assistance efforts. The key points of the Final Report are summarized in this Executive Summary; in the case of Section 10: Looking Forward, the recommended next steps are repeated in their entirety as part of the Executive Summary.

## **Summary: Policy Recommendations and Questions and Technical Assistance Needs**

Following are highlights of policy recommendations, questions and technical assistance needs expressed around the most frequently raised topic areas. The full Final Report includes more details, as well as information on other topic areas raised less frequently. It should be noted that, on every topic raised, participants’ requests for models and best practices permeated the Forum discussions.

***Reemployment:*** Given the theme of the conference, the recommendations, questions and technical assistance needs related to reemployment covered many topics:

- *Training on effective use of data with customers:* People who staff One Stops need training on how to translate labor market impact and economic outlook data into service and training recommendations for their customers.
- *Use of data in strategic planning:* States need training in using LMI data for strategic planning efforts. Related: How to use ARRA resources wisely to invest in LMI efforts.

- *Models for integrated front-line service.* This includes requests for examples of how local areas are providing Reemployment Services to UI claimants.
- *Stackable assessments and training:* Implementing stackable assessments and stackable training designed to help clients receive credentials, find a job, and build a career.
- *Regions and sectors:* Continuing to focus on regional economies and growth industry sectors.
- *Common intake:* Establishing a common intake process for all RES programs. Implementing a universal automated application that can be used by all workforce partners when reviewing client information and/or processing cases.
- *Case manager training:* Providing case managers with training on triaging, determining transferable skills, and advising customers during intake on longer term training options, employment goals and the possible need to relocate in today's low-growth or no-growth environment. Help case managers build a strategy of serving a customer more than once over time to get a sustainable wage.
- *Rapid Response:* Developing meaningful layoff aversion strategies. Look at viable practices to determine the reemployment needs of employers.
- *Training options:* Looking at flexible training options, including OJT, apprenticeship and other learn and earn opportunities.

**Green Jobs:** As a relatively new and undefined topic, Green Jobs garnered possibly the largest number of questions and technical assistance needs of any of the forum topics. There was strong interest coupled with uncertainties about how to proceed. Among the questions raised: What are green jobs? Where are the green jobs? What are green skills? How will green jobs impact the labor exchange process in the States? Technical assistance was requested around all of these areas, particularly defining green jobs and also asking for a coordinated approach around green jobs training, industry fundamentals, green job specific credentials, and partnering with apprenticeship, labor and other Federal agencies.

**ARRA:** Recommendations, questions and technical assistance needs related to the ARRA clustered around several major themes: mapping ARRA assets by agency, having an impact now, and planning an ARRA exit strategy. There were



many requests for DOL to connect the dots for the system as to what other Federal agencies are doing with their ARRA funds and how these agencies are being asked to relate to the workforce system. There were also questions related to how ARRA resources can be used immediately to get people back to work quickly, how they can be used to help build a sustainable economy over the long term, and how to plan ahead now to prevent problems when ARRA funds end.

**Youth:** Not surprisingly the highest interest focused on the 2009 summer jobs program. Documenting youth eligibility poses an immediate and significant challenge to the summer jobs program's effectiveness. In addition, discussion focused on how areas which have not had a summer program for years can quickly gear up. Most of the questions raised and technical assistance needs expressed were concentrated on technical "how to" issues, such as: What is the proper payment for summer youth? Are Job Corps graduates eligible for WIA summer programs? Does ETA have a recommended assessment for Work Readiness? What are promising practices on worksite supervision and monitoring?

**Partnerships:** Participants clearly articulated the need for strong partnerships with other agencies as well as across workforce silos. They emphasized the need to provide seamless services to clients through integration of UI/WIA/ES services, and communicated that ETA must commit to support for such partnerships. They viewed interagency collaboration as essential since much of the ARRA funds for jobs and training are going to other agencies, and stressed that these collaborations must have the commitment of top management at all levels. Forum participants asked for suggestions on how to pull partners in and how to get partners working together towards a common goal when there are so many competing priorities. They asked for federal encouragement of state/local communication and partnerships to facilitate the establishment of partnerships within the system.

**Employer and Education Relationships:** Employer and education partnerships were seen as particularly critical.

Presenters and participants articulated the need to "Remember our business customers" and to tie every training program to employment, which requires building strong relationships with employers. Participants asked for best practices to engage the employer community and real time information on strategies to determine the reemployment needs of employers.

An emphasis on working with community colleges and four year higher education institutions was a focal point of much of the forum discussions. Participants requested technical assistance/guidance on working with

community colleges to develop more flexible open entry/exit training. Stackable credentials will require working with community colleges and higher level collaboration with the US Department of Education. Taking advantage of community college relationships with employers and even putting One Stop representatives on various community college industry advisory councils were raised.

**WIA Performance/Reporting:** Participants urged a review and redesign of current performance standards for state and local partners. For example, during the WIA reauthorization “listening” sessions, participants noted that current performance standards negatively impact innovation and decrease risk taking because standards are structured such that state/local service providers work out of a position of fear. Performance standards should be designed to drive high expectations while at the same time encouraging innovation. Reporting requirement should not drive the program for their own sake; rather the report elements should provide information as to the effectiveness and efficiency of the program.

**Capacity Building:** As RA Helen Parker put it, “More staff training (and more and more) was probably the most consistent theme I heard in Atlanta.” This sentiment resonated throughout the Forums with participants expressing a need for front line training; training on the use of available LMI tools and data; cross training of staff; training on O\*NET tools; case management training in the areas of triage, assessment and skills transferability analysis; training on the Trade Act; and training on Rapid Response and early warning networks, especially for new staff.

**Branding/Outreach:** Participants in several of the Forums indicated that the image of the workforce system and its capabilities are not well enough known to potential business and jobseeker customers. They voiced a need for a “first-stop” outreach/re-branding campaign to improve the image of the workforce system as a viable provider of quality talent and the best place to find a job or start a career.

### Highlighted State and Local Solutions

While it is apparent from the Questions and Technical Assistance section that there is still much to be done, promising practices and practical, usable solutions do exist. Forum participants freely shared their ideas and successes with each other and a number of the solutions highlighted at the Forums are identified in the Regional Forums Final Report. The following are examples of the many solutions highlighted in the Final Report:

- Nebraska has several innovative ways for aggregating and using data from the Autocoder system.

- A California WIB has hired one group of summer youth enrollees to interview other youth program participants and produce their stories in print and radio media formats.
- Newark, Oakland and Trenton are training local residents for housing energy efficient jobs.
- The I-Best model used by Wisconsin and Washington combine basic skills and technical training.
- Tennessee is considering using a telephone system which identifies career shortages and does a basic assessment of callers' skills. It also refers callers to the correct job center.
- To assist job seekers who find it hard to navigate the many web-based job sites available, Texas and California are working on using available software to leverage all the electronic job boards to better target the job search to an individual's needs.
- Florida is bringing in partners from State and local levels to develop strategies and work on policy issues. They are establishing workgroups around subjects such as trade and have a very active group working with the Florida State Training Institute to look at staff training, especially for new staff coming on as a result of ARRA.
- Boston, MA and Mobile, AL were cited as having two outstanding models for addressing the high school drop-out problem.

#### **Action Steps Committed to at Forums**

At several of the Forums, time was allocated for Regional Architect and Designers (RAD) meetings and state action planning sessions. States worked together to identify key focus areas, derive state-specific desired outcomes, and develop concrete action steps towards these outcomes. These ideas closely mirrored many of the areas summarized above in Recommendations, Questions, and Technical Assistance Needs Raised. Steps that States committed to include:

- Utilizing stackable assessments and training.
- Developing common intake processes.
- Translating LMI into actionable workforce information.
- Utilizing LMI data to create green jobs opportunities.
- Establishing effective partnerships and communication among agencies involved with workforce.
- Working closely with community colleges.
- Emphasizing staff training, especially for front line staff, and cross training partner staff.
- Reaching out to business customers.
- Coordinating with other State agencies to maximize ARRA dollars.

ETA Regional Offices also committed to various Forum follow-up actions, including the following examples:

- Leveraging the Reemployment Works! Community of Practice to develop workgroups to strategize technical assistance activities raised in Reemployment and Recovery Forums. (Region 1)
- Supporting Asset Mapping at the state and local levels, connecting all the ARRA resources at the local level. (Region 2)
- Supporting those states in the region that have expressed an interest in replicating the Forum at the state and local levels to engage more people all the way to the front lines. (Region 3)
- Repeating popular Forum workshops via webinars to the 11-state region. (Region 4)
- Scheduling a series of TAA topic-specific conference calls. (Region 5)
- Exploring the use of social networking modalities to share ARRA success stories across the Region, and maintaining the shared investments “Better Together” database and maps. (Region 6)

### Looking Forward: Forum Follow Up

After “digesting” the outcomes of their respective forums, following up with State and local leaders, and analyzing the initial results of the Regional Readiness Assessments, the Regions, along with members of the DREEM team, reached consensus on providing follow-up technical assistance efforts in the areas specified below and suggested that this assistance be offered in a variety of ways, also specified below.

### Technical Assistance Focus Areas:

- **Reemployment Services.** The need for continuing to concentrate technical assistance resources on Reemployment Services for UI claimants remains high, particularly as States use ARRA resources to ramp up Reemployment Services (RES) functions with new staff. ETA should focus on reemployment services technical assistance from two perspectives:
  - Strategic: Using RES/UI data to identify **where** services are necessary and **what** services would best meet those needs; and
  - Mechanics: **How** to deliver these services effectively and efficiently.
- **Green Jobs.** As the green jobs area evolves, there continue to be many questions out in the system requiring technical assistance attention. Defining green jobs, identifying job requirements, and interfacing with green job initiatives underway in other Federal agencies are just a few of the many areas around which both formula and non-formula grantees need help. One region suggests that, if ETA is going to push for green

initiatives, it may make sense to include green questions in the core monitoring guide.

- **Trade and Rapid Response.** The need for continuing TA in the area of the Trade Program Reauthorization and Expansion was mentioned by several of the regions. Broad orientation of the system about TAA as well as case management training for Trade staff will be important, especially in states where this function for Trade participants is not taken up by experienced staff in the One Stops. In the rapid response arena, the need for continuing to respond to the automotive industry layoffs is a key technical assistance area highlighted. Focusing on meeting the needs of “high end” dislocated workers, including creating virtual one-stop services for this tech savvy group, was suggested.
- **Using Data to Drive Reemployment.** While there are pockets of staff in some states sophisticated in the use of data to target reemployment investments and efforts, knowledge about what data is available and how it can be used remains spotty at best. Several regions suggested involving the Regional Architects and Designers group to help target ETA’s TA approaches in this area.
- **Front-line Staff Training.** Effective, consistent front-line staff training and cross training of staff is an essential TA area. Because front-line staff are being asked to be better prepared to act in a triage role, it is necessary to provide them with the necessary training and tools to do the job. With so many retirements in the system, these efforts should include basic/101 training.
- **Building Partnerships.** Reaching out to potential Federal, State and local partners was stressed by participants and speakers at all of the Forums. ETA’s TA efforts in this area should address what partnerships are already underway at the Federal level (e.g., ETA and HUD), models of successful partnerships at the State and local levels, and a “how to” approach to developing strong and effective partnerships.
- **Technology.** Effective uses of relevant technology and available tools should be woven through the technical assistance provided in all of the above areas.

### Ways to Deliver Technical Assistance

In planning ETA’s technical assistance efforts, ETA must be mindful of State budgets, travel restrictions, furloughs and staff demands. Suggested approaches include:

- **Identify and catalog verified best practices** and make them available to the workforce system. One approach would be to continue to identify and capture best practices on the *ReemploymentWorks!* Website and to promote this site. If so, the site needs to be reorganized and restructured to identify which information/documents are best practices which actually work (the system is starved for these) and which are proposed strategies and presentations.
- **Conduct post-forum webinars** on the most popular topics identified at each of the Forums.
- **Offer in-person training** at regional and/or national meetings. Perhaps hold additional topic-related training sessions, such as the performance and reporting session held June 17-18 in Baltimore.
- **Use the RADs** to support technical assistance efforts as appropriate.
- **Tie Recovery Forum and Readiness Consultations next steps together.** These were just different venues for asking the same question: "How can we help you?"
- **Have Regions set individual technical assistance priorities** for states and locals. Then, collaborate across Regions, if appropriate. Pool resources where common needs occur but allow Regions to customize technical assistance. For example, Region 3 states want state and local forums; Region 2 states do not.

## Conclusion

Clearly, the Forums afforded an opportunity to expand the work started at the Baltimore *Reemployment Works!* Summit – in terms of both the number of participants who attended and the topics covered. Many of the 2,201 Regional Forum participants would not likely have been able to participate in a national meeting given travel and budget restrictions. And the timing of the Forums meant that the ETA Regional staff planning them could address not only the core Reemployment topics but also additional timely subjects such as ARRA implementation, youth summer programs, green jobs, and trade.

While Forum participants overwhelmingly indicated that they took away information and ideas that they will put to use, the gatherings also provided an opportunity for ETA's regional offices to determine what else their States and local areas need with respect to technical assistance. In providing this additional technical assistance (TA) one region emphasized – and doubtless all would agree: **"We need to move as quickly as possible to deliver TA; the need (and the opportunity to make a difference) is now!"**