Introduction

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey collects data on occupational employment and wages of wage and salary workers by industry in nonfarm establishments. The program is a Federal-State cooperative effort between the State Employment Security Agencies (SESAs) and the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). BLS provides technical assistance and the statistical procedures for the survey; the SESAs collect the data.

The tables in this bulletin present national, State, Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), and industry employment and wage data for detailed occupations. The industry data are identified based on the 1987 Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) system. The occupational data are identified based on the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system. Under the SOC system, workers are classified in 1 of more than 760 occupations. For each detailed occupation, table 1 shows cross-industry national estimates of employment, hourly mean wage, annual mean wage, and percentile wages.

Table 2 presents a sample of the data available from the OES survey, including national industry-specific and State and MSA cross-industry employment and wage data for the five largest occupations in each SOC major group. The industry data are national industry-specific data for both the five industries with the greatest employment and the five industries with the highest wages for a given occupation. This differs from the national estimates in table 1, which are based on data from all industries. The employment ranks and wage ranks for the industry data refer to the industry's employment or wage estimate for a given occupation relative to comparable data for the same occupation in other industries. In other words, the industry with employment rank 1 has the largest number of workers in the designated occupation; that with employment rank 2 has the second-largest number of workers, and so forth. Likewise, the industry with a wage rank of 1 is the highest paying industry for workers in the designated occupation; a wage rank of 4 represents the fourth-highest paying industry for the occupation. In addition, table 2 presents State and MSA employment and wage estimates for the five areas with the highest relative employment and the five areas in which workers in the given occupation earn the highest wages. The relative employment is the percentage of the total State employment found in the occupation. This measure provides more information than does total employment, which usually parallels population—the largest States and MSAs usually have the largest numbers of workers, regardless of the occupation.

In 2001, all 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands participated in the survey. Data for the territories are not included in the national estimates. Industry-specific occupational employment and wage estimates for each participating State and territory are available from the SESAs listed on the inside back cover of this bulletin.

Occupational employment estimates are based on survey results adjusted to reflect total industry employment. Mean wage is the estimated total wages for an occupation divided by the occupation's weighted survey employment. Occupations or industries with fewer than 50 workers, or with an employment relative error greater than 50 percent, are not shown. Wage estimates with a relative error greater than 30 percent are not shown. Employment totals for all industries surveyed reflect employment levels in each industry for the survey reference months listed in appendix B. Appendix B provides more complete definitions of terms and statistical concepts.

National, State, and MSA data across surveyed industries are available on the OES Web site at **http://www.bls.gov/oes/**. National occupational employment data for all occupations at the two-digit and more detailed three-digit SIC levels also are available on the Web site. Additional information about the structure of the OES classification system is provided in appendix A of this bulletin. Definitions for all occupations are available on the Standard Occupational Classification Web site at **http://www.bls.gov/soc/**.