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FOR RELEASE:
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2008

OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN ATLANTA AND MIAMI, MAY 2007

Employment was more highly concentrated in 8 of the 22 occupational groups, including office and administrative support and sales and related, in the Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta, Ga. Metropolitan Statistical Area¹ (MSA) than in the nation. Eleven other groups had significantly less of a presence in Atlanta, two of which were life, physical, and social science and community and social services occupations, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that in the Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Miami Beach, Fl. MSA², employment was more highly concentrated than in the United States as a whole for 8 of the occupational groups, including office and administrative support and sales and related. Eight other occupational groups had a measurably lower employment share in Miami than they did nationally, two of which were management and community and social services.

Workers in the Atlanta area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$20.28 and those in the Miami area averaged \$18.92 in May 2007. In Atlanta, wages were significantly higher than the nationwide average of \$19.56, but in Miami, wages were significantly below that for the nation. In the Atlanta area, wage rates were significantly above their respective national averages in 6 of the 22 occupational categories and measurably lower in 8 groups. In the Miami area, wage rates were significantly higher than their national averages in 3 of the 22 occupational categories and measurably lower in 10 groups. Atlanta was chosen for comparison with Miami since both metropolitan areas were among the 12 largest employment centers in the country, had workforces of similar size, and are within the South Atlantic division. (See table A.)

¹ The Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta, Ga. Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) includes the counties of Barrow, Bartow, Butts, Carroll, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, Dawson, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Fulton, Gwinnett, Haralson, Heard, Henry, Jasper, Lamar, Meriwether, Newton, Paulding, Pickens, Pike, Rockdale, Spalding, and Walton in Georgia.

² The Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Miami Beach, Fl. MSA includes the counties of Broward, Miami-Dade, and Palm Beach in Florida.

Table A. Employment and wages by occupational group for the Atlanta and Miami metropolitan areas compared to the U.S. average, May 2007

Major occupational group	Employment share (in percent)			Average hourly wage (in dollars)		
	United States	Atlanta	Miami	United States	Atlanta	Miami
Management	4.5	6.4 *	3.1 *	\$46.22	\$46.42	\$50.08 *
Business and financial operations	4.5	5.4 *	5.3 *	30.01	31.51 *	29.53
Computer and mathematical science	2.4	3.0 *	1.9 *	34.71	33.81 *	29.39 *
Architecture and engineering	1.9	1.7 *	1.4 *	33.11	31.17 *	29.56 *
Life, physical, and social science	0.9	0.6 *	0.6 *	29.82	29.38	27.77 *
Community and social services	1.3	0.9 *	1.1 *	19.49	19.68	19.75
Legal	0.7	0.8 *	1.2 *	42.53	49.31 *	40.15
Education, training, and library	6.2	6.1	5.0 *	22.41	20.13 *	22.60
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3	(1)	1.3	23.27	25.05 *	22.19 *
Healthcare practitioner and technical	5.1	4.1 *	5.2	31.26	31.71	31.64
Healthcare support	2.7	1.5 *	2.6	12.31	12.65	12.09 *
Protective service	2.3	2.0 *	3.3 *	18.63	16.40 *	17.90
Food preparation and serving related	8.4	8.4	8.5	9.35	8.99 *	9.90 *
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.3	2.8 *	3.7 *	11.33	10.95 *	10.44 *
Personal care and service	2.5	2.0 *	2.8 *	11.53	13.94 *	13.00
Sales and related	10.7	11.1 *	13.3 *	16.94	17.71 *	18.42 *
Office and administrative support	17.3	19.2 *	20.0 *	15.00	15.36 *	14.26 *
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.1 *	0.4	10.89	11.43	10.03
Construction and extraction	5.0	4.3 *	5.2 *	19.53	17.26 *	17.39 *
Installation, maintenance, and repair	4.0	4.3 *	3.9	19.20	19.27	17.72 *
Production	7.6	6.0 *	3.8 *	15.05	13.85 *	13.47 *
Transportation and material moving	7.2	8.0 *	6.3 *	14.75	16.28	15.17

* The employment share or mean hourly wage for this area is significantly different from the national average of all areas at the 90-percent confidence level.

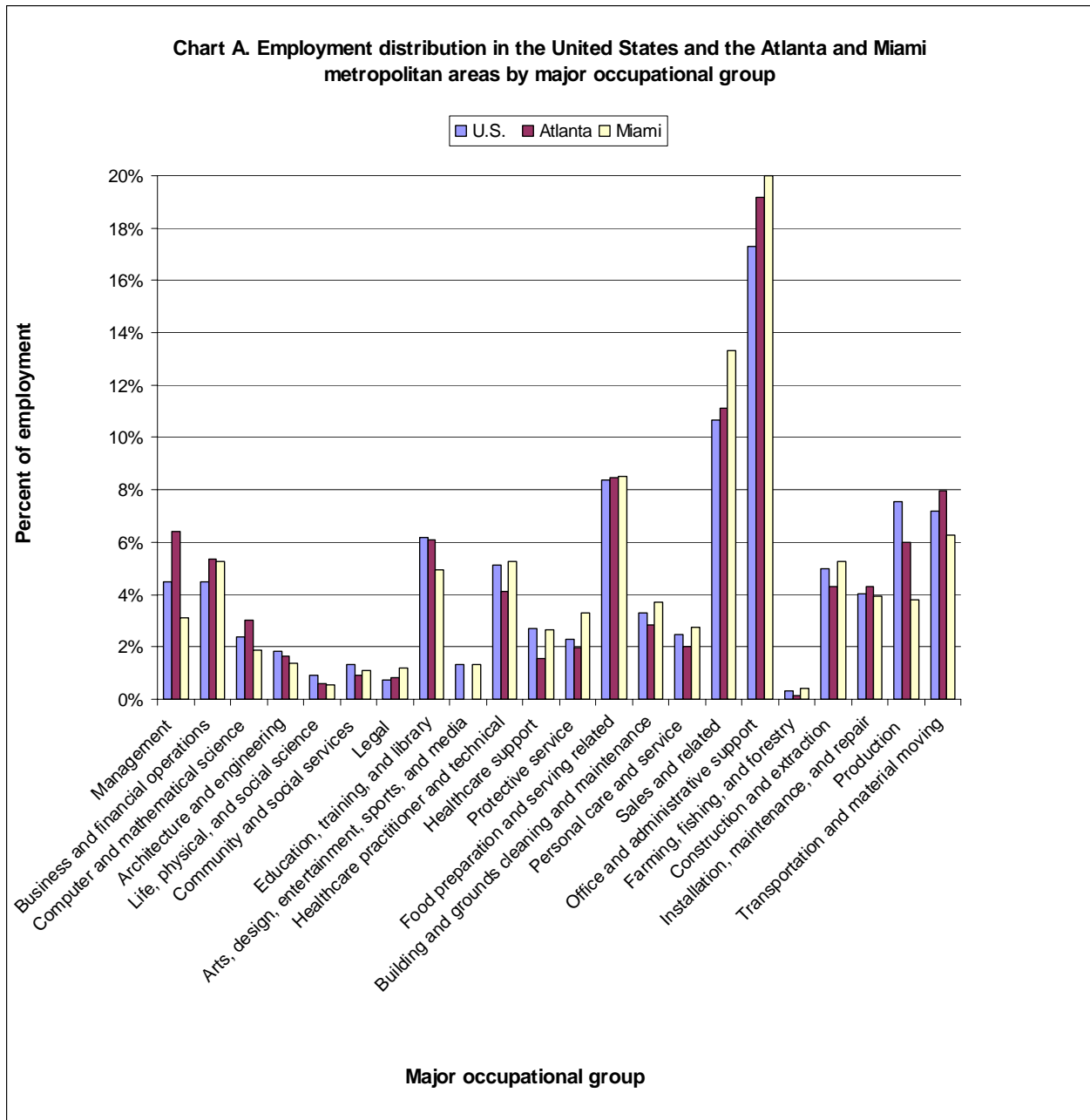
(1) Estimate not released.

These statistics are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey, a federal-state cooperative program between BLS and State Workforce Agencies, in this case the Alabama Department of Labor; the Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation; the Georgia Department of Labor; the Kentucky Department of Labor; the Mississippi Department of Employment Security; the North Carolina Department of Labor; the South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing & Regulations; and the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development. The OES survey provides estimates of employment and hourly and annual wages for wage and salary workers in 22 major occupational groups and up to 801 non-military detailed occupations for the nation, states, 375 metropolitan statistical areas, 34 metropolitan divisions, and 175 nonmetropolitan areas.

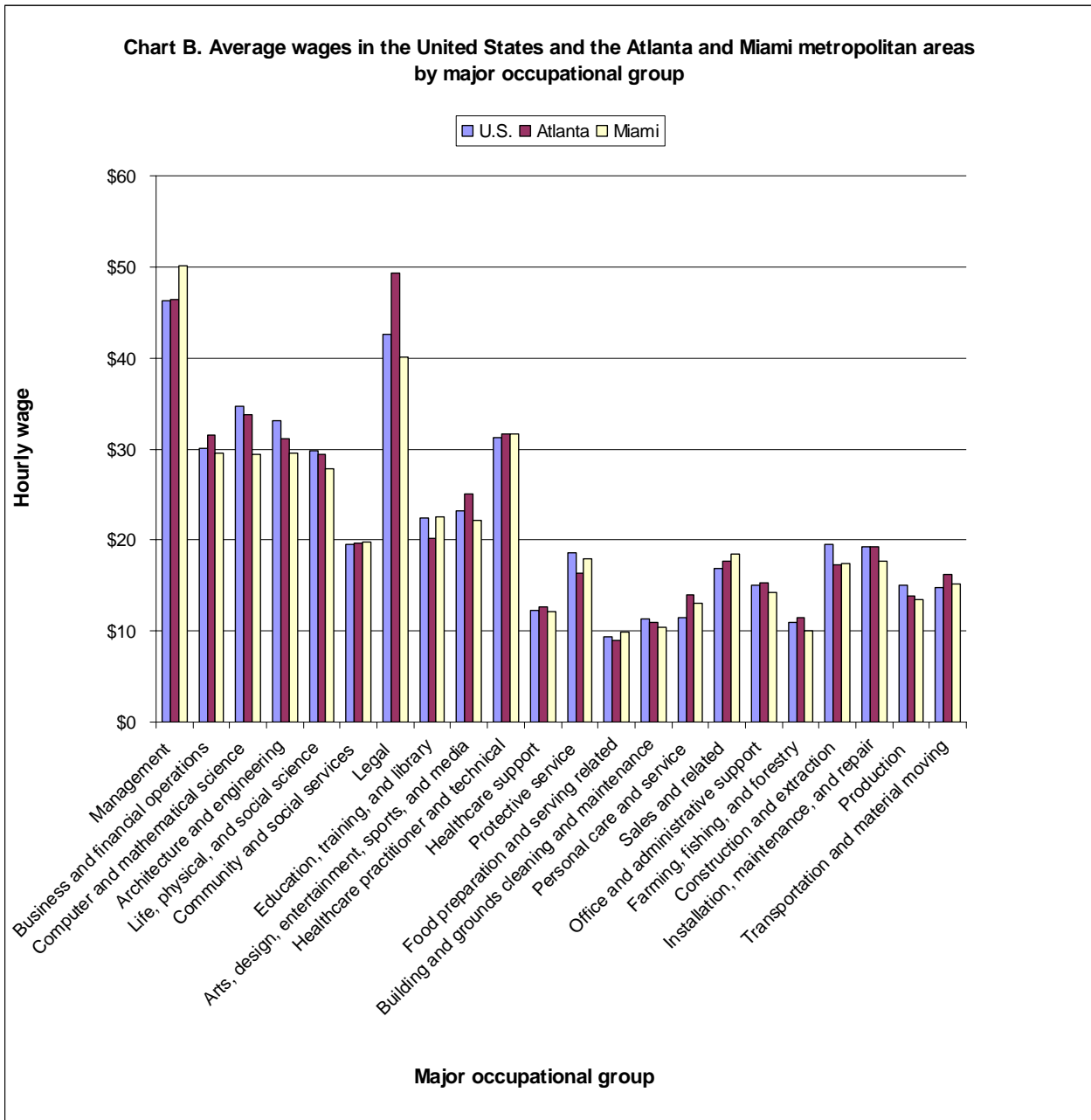
Occupational employment and wages in the Atlanta metropolitan area

The largest occupational group in the Atlanta area was office and administrative support with a total of 459,280 workers representing 19.2 percent of area employment. This group's share of local employment was significantly above the U.S. average of 17.3 percent; nationally, this was also the largest occupational group. Sales and related jobs made up the second-largest major occupational group in the Atlanta area with 266,730 workers and an 11.1-percent share of the local workforce, compared to a national employment share of 10.7 percent. Other occupational groups with above-average employment concentrations included transportation and material moving (8.0 percent), management (6.4 percent), and business and financial operations (5.4 percent). These

local employment shares were significantly higher than the corresponding national shares of 7.2 percent, 4.5 percent and 4.5 percent, respectively. (See chart A.)



Production and construction and extraction jobs were also among the larger occupational groups in Atlanta, accounting for 6.0 percent and 4.3 percent of employment, respectively. However, employment shares for both of these groups were significantly lower in Atlanta than nationally. Atlanta also posted lower employment shares than the nation in a number of other occupational groups, including healthcare practitioner and technical, building and grounds cleaning and maintenance, architecture and engineering, and healthcare support.



Legal and management occupations were the two highest-paying occupational groups in the Atlanta area, with legal positions averaging \$49.31 an hour and management, \$46.42. Nationwide, these were also the highest-paying occupational groups, with average earnings of \$46.22 in management and \$42.53 in legal occupations. Of these two occupational groups, only legal had an average wage that was significantly higher in the Atlanta area than for the nation. (See chart B.)

Computer and mathematical science (\$33.81), business and financial operations (\$31.51), and architecture and engineering (\$31.17) were also among the better-paid occupational groups in Atlanta. Computer and mathematical science and architecture and engineering occupations had average wages that were below their national counterparts, while the business and financial operations group had an average wage that was above the national average for this group. At the

other end of the wage spectrum, food preparation and serving related workers were the lowest-paid occupational group in the Atlanta area at \$8.99 an hour; this wage was also significantly lower than the national average of \$9.35.

Occupational employment and wages in the Miami metropolitan area

As in the Atlanta area, as well as the nation, the largest occupational group in Miami was office and administrative support, with 473,930 workers representing 20.0 percent of area employment, compared to the national average of 17.3 percent. Sales and related jobs were the second-largest major occupational group in the Miami metropolitan area, with employment of 315,160. This represented a 13.3-percent share of local employment, measurably higher than the national share of 10.7 percent for this group. Other occupational groups with above-average employment shares included business and financial operations (5.3 percent), construction and extraction (5.2 percent), building and grounds cleaning and maintenance (3.7), and protective service (3.3).

Transportation and material moving and education, training, and library jobs were among the larger occupational groups in Miami, accounting for 6.3 percent and 5.0 percent of employment, respectively. However, local employment shares were significantly lower than national employment shares for both of these groups.

As in Atlanta, management and legal occupations were the two highest-paying occupational groups in the Miami area, with average wages of \$50.08 and \$40.15, respectively. The average wage for the management group in the Miami area was higher than that for the nation, while the average wage for the legal group was similar to the national average.

Architecture and engineering (\$29.56); computer and mathematical science (\$29.39); life, physical, and social science (\$27.77); and arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media (\$22.19) occupations were among the better-paid groups in Miami; however, average wages for all four occupational groups were significantly below those for the nation. Similar to Atlanta, food preparation and serving related workers were the lowest-paid occupational group in the Miami area at \$9.90 an hour. Unlike Atlanta, the wages for these workers were significantly higher than the national average.

The OES wage and employment data for the 22 major occupational groups in the Atlanta and Miami metropolitan areas were compared to their respective national averages based on statistical significance testing. Only those occupations with wages or employment shares above or below the national wage or share after testing for significance at the 90-percent confidence level meet the criteria.

NOTE: A value that is statistically different from another does not necessarily mean that the difference has economic or practical significance. Statistical significance is concerned with the ability to make confident statements about a universe based on a sample. It is entirely possible that a large difference between two values is not significantly different statistically, while a small difference is, since both the size and heterogeneity of the sample affect the relative error of the data being tested.

Technical Note

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is a semiannual mail survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands also are surveyed, but their data are not included in this release. OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Forms are mailed to approximately 200,000 establishments in May and November of each year for a 3-year period. The nationwide response rate for the May 2007 survey was 77.9 percent based on establishments and 73.5 percent based on employment. The survey included establishments sampled in the May 2007, November 2006, May 2006, November 2005, May 2005, and November 2004 semiannual panels.

The occupational coding system

The OES survey uses the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) occupational classification system, the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system. The SOC system is the first OMB-required occupational classification system for federal agencies. The OES survey categorizes workers in 1 of 801 detailed occupations. Together, these detailed occupations make up 23 major occupational groups, 22 of which are covered in this release. The one exception is military specific occupations which are not included in the OES survey.

For more information about the SOC system, please see the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Web site at <http://www.bls.gov/soc/>.

The industry coding system

The OES survey uses the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). For more information about NAICS, see the BLS Web site at <http://www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm>.

Survey sample

BLS funds the survey and provides the procedures and technical support, while the State Workforce Agencies (SWAs) collect most of the data. BLS produces cross-industry and industry-specific estimates for the nation, states, metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), metropolitan divisions and nonmetropolitan areas. Industry-specific estimates are produced at the NAICS sector, 3-digit, 4-digit, and selected 5-digit industry levels. BLS releases all cross-industry and national estimates; the SWAs release industry-specific estimates at the state and MSA levels.

State Unemployment Insurance (UI) files provide the universe from which the OES survey draws its sample. Employment benchmarks are obtained from reports submitted by employers to the UI program. The OES survey sample is stratified by metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas and industry. Samples selected in panels prior to May 2005 were stratified using MSA definitions based on the 1990 Metropolitan Statistical Area standards. Beginning with the May 2005 panel, the sample was stratified using new MSA definitions based on the 2000 Metropolitan Statistical Area standards.

Concepts

Occupational employment is the estimate of total wage and salary employment in an occupation across the industries surveyed. The OES survey defines employment as the number of workers who can be classified as full- or part-time employees, including workers on paid vacations or other types of paid leave; workers on unpaid short-term absences; salaried officers, executives, and staff members of incorporated firms; employees temporarily assigned to other

units; and employees for whom the reporting unit is their permanent duty station regardless of whether that unit prepares their paycheck.

Wages for the OES survey are straight-time, gross pay, exclusive of premium pay. Base rate, cost-of-living allowances, guaranteed pay, hazardous-duty pay, incentive pay including commissions and production bonuses, tips, and on-call pay are included. Excluded are: back pay, jury duty pay, overtime pay, severance pay, shift differentials, non-production bonuses, employer cost for supplementary benefits, and tuition reimbursements.

Mean hourly wage. The mean hourly wage rate for an occupation is the total wages that all workers in the occupation earn in an hour divided by the total employment of the occupation. To calculate the mean hourly wage of each occupation, total weighted hourly wages are summed across all intervals and divided by the occupation's weighted survey employment. The mean wage for each interval is based on occupational wage data collected by the BLS Office of Compensation and Working Conditions for the National Compensation Survey (NCS).

Annual Wage. Many employees are paid at an hourly rate by their employers and may work more than or less than 40 hours per week. Annual wage estimates for most occupations in this release are calculated by multiplying the mean hourly wage by a "year-round, full-time" figure of 2,080 hours (52 weeks by 40 hours). Thus, annual wage estimates may not represent the actual annual pay received by the employee if they work more or less than 2,080 hours per year. Some workers typically work less than fulltime, year round. For these occupations, the OES survey collects and reports either the annual salary or the hourly wage rate, depending on how the occupation is typically paid, but not both. For example, teachers, flight attendants, and pilots may be paid an annual salary, but do not work the usual 2,080 hours per year. In this case, an annual salary is reported. Other workers, such as entertainment workers, are paid hourly rates, but generally do not work full time, year round. For these workers, only an hourly wage is reported.

Hourly versus Annual Wage Reporting. For each occupation, respondents are asked to report the number of employees paid within specific wage intervals. The intervals are defined both as hourly rates and the corresponding annual rates, where the annual rate for an occupation is calculated by multiplying the hourly wage rate by a typical work year of 2,080 hours. The responding establishment can reference either the hourly or the annual rate for full-time workers, but they are instructed to report the hourly rate for part-time workers.

Estimation methodology

Each OES panel includes approximately 200,000 establishments. The OES survey is designed to produce estimates using six panels (3 years) of data. The full six-panel sample of 1.2 million establishments allows the production of estimates at detailed levels of geography, industry, and occupation.

Wage Updating. Significant reductions in sampling errors are obtained by combining six panels of data, particularly for small geographic areas and occupations. Wages for the current panel need no adjustment. However, wages in the five previous panels need to be updated to the current panel's reference period.

The OES program uses the BLS Employment Cost Index (ECI) to adjust survey data from prior panels before combining them with the current panel's data. The wage updating procedure adjusts each detailed occupation's wage rate, as measured in the earlier panel, according to the average movement of its broader occupational division. The procedure assumes that there are no major differences by geography, industry, or detailed occupation within the occupational division.

May 2007 OES survey estimates. The May 2007 OES survey estimates are based on all

data collected from establishments in the May 2007, November 2006, May 2006, November 2005, May 2005, November 2004 semiannual samples.

Reliability of the estimates. Estimates calculated from a sample survey are subject to two types of error: sampling and nonsampling. Sampling error occurs when estimates are calculated from a subset (that is, a sample) of the population instead of the full population. When a sample of the population is surveyed, there is a chance that the sample estimate of the characteristic of interest may differ from the population value of that characteristic. Differences between the sample estimate and the population value will vary depending on the sample selected. This variability can be estimated by calculating the standard error (SE) of the sample estimate. If we were to repeat the sampling and estimation process countless times using the same survey design, approximately 90 percent of the intervals created by adding and subtracting 1.645 SEs from the sample estimate would include the population value. These intervals are called 90-percent confidence intervals. The OES survey, however, usually uses the relative standard error (RSE) of a sample estimate instead of its SE to measure sampling error. RSE is defined as the SE of a sample estimate divided by the sample estimate itself. This statistic provides the user with a measure of the relative precision of the sample estimate. RSEs are calculated for both occupational employment and mean wage rate estimates. Occupational employment RSEs are calculated using a subsample, random group replication technique called the jackknife. Mean wage rate RSEs are calculated using a variance components model that accounts for both the observed and unobserved components of the wage data. The variances of the unobserved components are estimated using wage data from the BLS National Compensation Survey. In general, estimates based on many establishments have lower RSEs than estimates based on few establishments. If the distributional assumptions of the models are violated, the resulting confidence intervals may not reflect the prescribed level of confidence.

Nonsampling error occurs for a variety of reasons, none of which are directly connected to sampling. Examples of nonsampling error include: nonresponse, data incorrectly reported by the respondent, mistakes made in entering collected data into the database, and mistakes made in editing and processing the collected data.

Additional information

The May 2007 OES national data for all occupations are available on the BLS Web site at <http://www.bls.gov/oes/>. Users may also access each occupation's definition and percentile wages. The May 2007 cross-industry data for states, metropolitan areas, metropolitan divisions, and nonmetropolitan areas are also available on the BLS Web site, as are the industry staffing patterns at the sector, 3-, 4-, and selected 5-digit NAICS levels. These data include industry-specific occupational employment and wage data. A more detailed technical note for OES is available at <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm>. OES data are available on our regional web page at <http://www.bls.gov/ro4/home.htm>.

If you have additional questions, contact the BLS Southeast Economic Analysis and Information Office at (404) 893-4222, 9:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M. and 1:00 P.M.-4:00 P.M., ET.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; TDD message referral phone number: 1-800-877-8339.

Upcoming Reduction in Sample Size of Occupational Employment Statistics Survey

Due to budget constraints, Occupational Employment Statistics has reduced the sample size of the May 2008 panel by 20 percent. Because OES estimates are produced from 3 years of pooled data, this one-time sample reduction will affect estimates for May 2008, May 2009, and May 2010. This reduction is expected to decrease the number of published employment estimates by at least 5 percent, or about 25,000 estimates, and will decrease the accuracy of the remaining estimates. The number and quality of wage estimates also are expected to decline. These cutbacks are being implemented in response to a reduction in funding to the BLS that resulted from The 2008 Consolidated Appropriations Act enacted on December 26, 2007.