

# *State of Montana*

## **PY 2005 Workforce Information Grant Plan**

### **A. Statewide Workforce Information System**

- **The process used to ensure that the SWIB can exercise its responsibility for ensuring that state workforce information policy is responsive to the needs of the state and local workforce investment system.**

Montana's State Workforce Investment Board has had a long, successful partnership with the Department of Labor and Industry's Research and Analysis Bureau. Staff from the bureau regularly attend meetings of the State Board and its committees, and in the past year, the bureau has actively sought feedback from the board on several projects customized to meet the needs of the state and local workforce investment system.

For the past three years, the bureau has presented its annual Labor Day Report to the Governor at the fall meeting of the State Workforce Investment Board. Board members actively engage in the presentation and provide feedback and commentary to the presenters and evaluate the usefulness and effectiveness of the presentation upon conclusion.

Looking ahead to 2006, current members of the board will most likely be replaced by Governor Brian Schweitzer (elected in 2004) during the upcoming year. As the board takes its new shape, the bureau will continue working with committees and members of the board to continuously improve the awareness and availability of the state's workforce information.

- **How the statewide workforce information system supports the goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan for state and local workforce development.**

The goals for the workforce information system provide a strategic approach to build on the existing strengths of the system while introducing critical improvements. Montana's Governor was elected in 2004, and has yet to appoint his State Workforce Investment Board. As he prepares to appoint new board members, his priorities, as stated in the Two Years of Montana's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan, are:

- PRIORITY 1: Expand Montana's One-Stop System
- PRIORITY 2: Collaboration of Partners and Integration of Services
- PRIORITY 3: Improved development and delivery of workforce information

- **How the grant activities are consistent with the strategic vision of the Governor and the SWIB.**

Our department staffs the Statewide Workforce Investment Board. Along with the State Workforce Investment Board, we participated in and contributed to the development of the

most current Two Years of the Strategic 5-Year Plan for Workforce Investment, which was approved by the Governor.

- **The strategy of the SWA and the SWIB for consulting with local workforce investment boards and stakeholders in the workforce investment system to determine customer needs for workforce information.**

Staff of the Research & Analysis Bureau will be attending the Accountability Sub-committee meetings, the Economic Development Sub-committee meetings and the full State Workforce Investment Board meetings. The purpose of participating in these particular committees is to determine the labor market information needs, give expert advice and gather input. We include our workforce investment board members and stakeholders as a part of our customer needs and satisfaction surveys. The staff of the Research & Analysis Bureau will continue to work closely with local workforce investment boards and other stakeholders to determine customer needs for workforce information. Additionally, the Bureau will continue to present timely and relevant presentations to the SWIB, on an annual basis at a minimum.

Specific data to be considered and presented to the SWIB includes:

- employment projections, to include the identification of high-demand, high-growth employment;
  - analysis of current workforce to identify skills gaps;
  - detailed analysis/comparison of education and wage data for the current and projected workforce; and
  - detailed analysis of employment projections at the local level for selected counties/urban areas.
- **The broad strategic approach for workforce information delivery to principal customers.**

Montana's electronic delivery system is the Workforce Informer and the major delivery mechanism of labor market information. As part of the 2003-2004 grant plan, Montana contracted with Workforce Informer for a 3-year contract. Training was conducted with Informer personnel and our bureau staff in the spring of 2004. Roll out of the Montana Workforce Informer occurred on August 2, 2004. We have a full time staff person dedicated to maintaining and enhancing this website.

Montana will populate the ALMIS database with the most current data available. The ALMIS database is the basic foundation of our electronic delivery system. We have a full-time staff person dedicated to managing the ALMIS database to provide the most accurate and current data.

Monthly press releases and special reports are released via e-mail, website, and fax. We will be releasing some labor market information in printed format where appropriate.

We also will continue to train customers on the use of labor market information and make special presentations to stakeholders and customers.

- **How workforce information and services are delivered as core services to customers through the state’s One-Stop service delivery system.**

One of the ways these goals will be accomplished will be to provide the priority core products and services as discussed below. Electronic delivery through the Montana Workforce Informer System will be the main mechanism in providing workforce information through the State’s Workforce Investment System. This information is available to anyone with Internet access.

- **A description of the customer consultation and satisfaction assessment method(s) to be used to collect and interpret customer satisfaction information and the principal customers to be consulted.**

We have developed a survey instrument that was sent to our mailing list in the summer of 2004 to determine our baseline customer needs and satisfaction. That information was compiled and used to develop the core product priorities listed in this grant. We will continue to survey our customer list to help prioritize future recommendations of workforce information products and services. We have a link on our website ([ourfactsyourfuture.org](http://ourfactsyourfuture.org)) for customers to contact us directly with comments and questions. We have a staff person who is responsible for checking this e-mail daily and directing the questions to the appropriate staff person for response. Our responses to questions typically are handled well under 24-hour turnaround. In our monthly Economy at a Glance, we often have an “Ask an R&A Expert” column where we address customer questions, and we also use customer questions as the basis for the articles we publish in the Economy at a Glance.

In addition, bureau staff is embarking on a continuous round of outreach visits to local communities. The purpose of these visits is to open dialogue between potential/current users of workforce information and the Research & Analysis Bureau. This dialogue will further participants’ knowledge of bureau functions and availability of data, in addition to identifying and clarifying customer needs and satisfaction.

Outreach visits across the State of Montana started in December 2004 and have been ongoing throughout the year. The entire western and south central portions of the state have been covered during this program year. These areas contain a vast majority of the state’s population and economic activity. In total 12 Outreach presentations were given to 188 participants and a LMI Boot Camp was conducted for 29 participants. Follow up surveys were sent to all Outreach participants. Of those returning surveys, 100% rated themselves as satisfied with the products and services of the Research & Analysis Bureau and 100% stated they were able to receive the information in a useful format. The following shows what products and services were of value to the participants.

<b><u>Information</u></b>	<b><u>Very Important</u></b>	<b><u>Somewhat Important</u></b>	<b><u>Not Important</u></b>
Wages	91%	6%	2%
Projections	76%	20%	2%
Unemployment	47%	47%	9%

Articles	32%	59%	6%
Training Providers	32%	56%	6%
Occupations	68%	32%	0%
Industry Info	71%	26%	6%
Employer Info	68%	26%	2%
County Profiles	56%	32%	12%
Economy at a Glance	56%	35%	6%
Career Information	53%	35%	9%

**According to our web statistics the following products were among the top twenty downloaded publications:**

<b><u>Publication</u></b>	<b><u>Downloads</u></b>
Montana Fact Sheet	22,856
Economy at a Glance	9,721
Prevailing Wage (combined)	8,391
2000 Wages	4,150
Statewide Flier	2,823
Profile of the Montana Worker	1,594
Inside Edition Job Hunting Guide for Montanans With Criminal Records	1,031
Job Hunting Guide for Montanans with Disabilities	767

**The publications listed below were some of our most-frequently requested hard-copy publications:**

<b><u>Printed Publications</u></b>	<b><u># Printed</u></b>
Economy at a Glance	33,600
Who Needs Math and Science	16
Job Hunting Guide for Montanans with Disabilities	75
Inside Edition Job Hunting Guide for Montanans With Criminal Records	150
Montana Career Information System Bookmarks	5,000
Montana Career Resource Network Newsletters	2,400
County Fliers (combined #)	2,831
R&A Brochures	67
LMI Boot Camp Field Guides	35
Projection Brochure	488
Labor Force Trends (back issues)	16

After reviewing the survey results and looking at the printing request and download statistics, we will be reviewing to determine if an updated wage publication (in conjunction with the Workforce Informer Data Analysis) should be prioritized for completion.

## WebTrend Statistics on the Increased Usage of LMI via the Internet

<u>Year</u>	<u>Hits</u>
2000	598,610
2001	1,273,476
2002	1,442,171
2003	1,520,000
2004	3,064,273
2005	3,261,675

### Other web statistics

Visits: 112,157

Unique Visitors: 47,070

### Other statistics

Customer inquiries via toll-free phone number: 3,583

Customer contact method as a percentage of contacts:

- Email – 30%
- Phone – 60%
- Visits – 3%
- Other – 7%

Customer inquiries by program as a percentage of contacts:

- One-Stop – 32% (Includes projections, website, etc)
- Career Information – 9%
- CES – 2%
- QCEW – 8%
- LAUS – 3%
- OES – 11%
- OSH/CFOI – 6%
- Prevailing Wage – 2%
- Benefits – 1%
- Other – 26%

- **A concise summary of customer satisfaction findings for the most recent survey of products and services and the effect those findings had on the planned products and services for PY 2005 including how the plan addresses inadequacies or gaps identified by users.**

### LMI Outreach Evaluation Scores

188 individuals attended 12 LMI Outreach sessions during PY2005. The following is the result of the evaluations (evaluated on a 5 point scale, 1 being poor to 5 being excellent):

Session presenter	4.5
Overall session rating	4.3
Topics covered thoroughly	4.2
Training relevant to participant	3.8

Rating of their understanding of R&A	
Before presentation	2.4
After presentation	4.0
Did they learn something new that was helpful to them	4.4
Would the training be beneficial to colleagues	4.1

### **LMI Boot Camp Evaluation Scores**

LMI Boot Camp was a two and a half day intensive LMI training for Job Service Business Advocates. Using the same 5-point scale, the rating for the Boot Camp was 3.8. The range of scores was 3.3 (length) to 4.8 (staff directory).

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- **Identify funds leveraged or matched from funding sources other than these grant funds and how these funds will enhance delivery of products and services as part of the state’s workforce information system.**

We leverage funds from several different sources to produce information that is disseminated throughout the Workforce Information System. We use Section 118 of Carl Perkins (Career Resource Network) funds to produce our career-related products: The Montana Career Information System, Montana Career Guide, Job-Hunting Guide for Montanans with Disabilities, Inside Edition (job hunting guide for individuals who have been incarcerated), Licensed and Apprenticeable Occupations, Montana Career Resource Network Newsletter etc. We have a contract with the Montana Student Assistance Foundation (SAF) to provide support for the Montana Career Information System. We have also leveraged funds from the Reed Act to help with the license for the Workforce Informer electronic information delivery system.

## **B. Core Products and Services**

### *State Workforce Agency Deliverables*

1. **Continue to populate the ALMIS Database with state data.**
  - **Description of core product, service or other demand activity**

Montana will continue to update the core tables in the ALMIS database with state and sub-state data, upgrade software, populate additional tables, and test data integrity. This allows customers access to clean and accurate information, no matter how it is extracted, and serves as a cornerstone for information delivery, research, and product development. As our ALMIS database delivery mechanism, Workforce Informer provides a standard electronic delivery system that can be assessed 24 hours a day, seven days a week via the Internet. Through this system, customers can access the information that meets their needs, including wages, projections, commuting patterns, employer name and address database, occupations by skills, unemployment rates and other labor market information. The Workforce Informer officially debuted on August 2, 2004.

- **Customer support for product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations**

Customer support is measured by feedback obtained through telephone calls, emails, and survey responses. The bureau is also tracking questions and information requests submitted through our website and by telephone. These requests cover the entire spectrum of labor market information, indicating there are customers for all the information being produced. The data from the ALMIS database is not readily apparent to our customers as it is the “warehouse” where data is stored for display on our website, therefore, customer satisfaction cannot be adequately measured on this component of the plan. However, indirectly its importance to our customers is apparent from the heavy usage of our website for the data stored in the ALMIS database.

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• **Support goals of the state’s WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan**

Montana’s Governor was elected in 2004, and has yet to appoint his State Workforce Investment Board. As he prepares to appoint new board members, his priorities, as stated in the Two Years of Montana’s WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan, are:



- PRIORITY 1: Expand Montana’s One-Stop System
- PRIORITY 2: Collaboration of Partners and Integration of Services
- PRIORITY 3: Improved development and delivery of workforce information

The Research and Analysis Bureau will continue to work to support goals outlined by the State Workforce Investment Board, based on the following approach:

The success of the one-stop system mandated by the Workforce Investment Act, as well as other workforce development services, rests on the timely delivery of information about the labor market, using media and formats that are accessible to customers who have varying levels of expertise and access to technology. These customers must also have access to technical assistance in using workforce information. Achieving this requires providing tools to simplify and speed up the delivery of data, developing customer-focused delivery systems using the Internet and other emerging technologies, and providing a variety of innovative approaches for universal access to workforce information.

Additionally, the skills of the staff who develop, analyze, and deliver workforce information must be maintained and improved through training in data collection methods, analysis, use of technology, and customer support. Training and assistance must be provided to customers in the uses and limitations of workforce information. Achieving this requires expanding the system’s capacity and better coordinating existing resources.

To support this approach, the workforce information system must have at its core high-quality local, state, and national data. “High quality” means data that meet statistical standards, and are timely, comparable across states and areas, and relevant to customer needs. The data must be organized in standard database formats to facilitate analysis and delivery. Achieving this goal requires building on the current Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) federal/state cooperative statistical programs and the Employment and Training Administration funded products and systems, and establishing new data collection programs in key areas.

Therefore, for this grant year, the Research & Analysis Bureau proposes to support the Governor’s priorities and the State Workforce Investment Boards goals through:

- Continued programmed outreach visits to individuals and entities within the Workforce Investment System. These visits will provide training to local staff and officials on the kinds and availability of information maintained and/or accessed by the Bureau, and allow feedback on the types of issues and information needs local staff and officials dealt with during the course of their duties. Based on the feedback gained from initial outreach visits, the Bureau has developed customized training for individuals and entities within the Workforce Investment System whose primary duties are to facilitate information gathering and decision making by local businesses and developers. The training provides practical, hands-on knowledge of workforce information, to include:

- how to determine what information your customer specifically needs;
  - how to find and access that information; and
  - how to identify the need for further research by workforce information professionals.
- Continued Development and Refinement of Workforce Information materials. During the grant year, the Bureau will continue to use outreach visits and customer feedback to develop and improve outreach and education materials which describe services and products to be provided to workforce information system customers. These materials will be designed to enhance use of the Research and Analysis Bureau's website, the Workforce Informer. The end goal of these efforts is to place relevant, localized, and timely data at the fingertips of decision-makers and other users of workforce information. Timely, relevant, and localized data is a critical piece of a demand-driven approach. The Bureau will also make use of a customer service database which is used to log and track customer requests. Compilation and analysis of this data will also be used to identify high-demand information and the customer base for that information, and allow the Bureau to respond accordingly. Additionally, the Bureau will use an internal committee to identify, research, and implement continued improvements to the Workforce Informer website. The committee will use customer feedback, current state- and national-level topics, and other forms of input to ensure the website remains timely and relevant to our customers.

The Research & Analysis Bureau's education and outreach efforts will continue to develop awareness among users of available labor market information, as well as tap into that awareness to help define priorities for products and services during the upcoming year. The Bureau will work with labor market information users to provide the necessary data at the appropriate level of detail, including employment projections for future years. Additionally, the Bureau will continue to present timely and relevant presentations to the State Board, on an annual basis at a minimum.

Specific data to be considered and presented to the SWIB includes:

- employment projections, to include the identification of high-demand, high-growth employment;
  - analysis of current workforce to identify skills gaps;
  - detailed analysis/comparison of education and wage data for the current and projected workforce; and
  - detailed analysis of employment projections at the local level for selected counties/urban areas.
- Continued participation in policy councils and consortia that support and recommend improvements to the workforce information system, to include support of and participation in the LMI Training Institute.

- **Principal Customers**

The principal customers of the ALMIS database and related delivery system are comprised of almost any agency and person that needs this data. Be it information for expanding an existing business, relocating, finding occupations by skill level, comparing wages, or job hunting, this system has the greatest customer base of all of our products.

- **Projected outcome(s) and system impact(s)**

Montana will populate the ALMIS database with the most current data available. We have a full-time staff person dedicated to managing the ALMIS database to provide the most accurate and current data. With the release of the Montana Workforce Informer, the impact to our customers was immediate with a much easier interface for accessing the data that resides in the ALMIS database. Our new delivery system improves our customers' ability to find the data they are looking for and allows them more flexibility in building reports that meet their unique information needs.

- **Planned milestones**

*October 2006:*

- Complete total transition of ALMIS Database from version 2.2 to version 2.3.
- Use the most current ALMIS Database version to supply data for the production website.
- Populate ALMIS Database with statewide 2005-2007 short term and 2004-2014 long-term projections data.
- Help with the three-day **Making Connections! ALMIS Database Seminar 2005** for ALMIS Database Administrators.

*Ongoing During 2005-2006:*

- Populate and update ALMIS core tables with state and sub-state data, populate additional tables, and test data integrity.
  - Update ALMIS with licensed occupations information and provide same to National Crosswalk Service Center.
  - Continue updating with historical data.
  - Continue membership in and attendance at ALMIS Resource Center Consortium activities.
  - Monitor performance of Workforce Informer system and correct problems.
  - Work as member of the Workforce Informer sub-committees to provide improved delivery of occupational licensing data and an improved Industry Explorer module for the web delivery system.
  - InfoUSA Employer database loaded into ALMIS.
- **Estimated costs (identify equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost)**

\$64,757 – no equipment purchases over \$5,000 are projected.

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

- **Description of core product, service or other demand activity**

Montana will produce: 1) long-term, state-wide industry and occupational employment projections, using calendar year 2004 as the base year and 2014 as the projected year in coordination with BLS national projections for the same time period; and 2) short-term, state-wide employment forecasts using second quarter in calendar year 2005 as the base and forecast through the last quarter of calendar year 2007. The industry projections will be NAICS based. Statewide 2005-2007 short-term projections and 2004-2014 long-term projections data will be added into the ALMIS database. All projections will be done and disseminated using the methodology, software tools and guidelines developed by the Projections Workgroup and the Projections Managing Partnership.

- **Customer support for product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations**

We get a large number of requests each year for this data, which follows the national trend for information on projections.

<b>Printed Publications</b>	<b># Printed</b>
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- PRIORITY 1: Expand Montana's One-Stop System
- PRIORITY 2: Collaboration of Partners and Integration of Services
- PRIORITY 3: Improved development and delivery of workforce information

The Research and Analysis Bureau will continue to work to support goals outlined by the State Workforce Investment Board, based on the following approach:

The success of the one-stop system mandated by the Workforce Investment Act, as well as other workforce development services, rests on the timely delivery of information about the labor market, using media and formats that are accessible to customers who have varying levels of expertise and access to technology. These customers must also have access to technical assistance in using workforce information. Achieving this requires providing tools to simplify and speed up the delivery of data, developing customer-focused delivery systems using the Internet and other emerging technologies, and providing a variety of innovative approaches for universal access to workforce information.

Additionally, the skills of the staff who develop, analyze, and deliver workforce information must be maintained and improved through training in data collection methods, analysis, use of technology, and customer support. Training and assistance must be provided to customers in the uses and limitations of workforce information. Achieving this requires expanding the system's capacity and better coordinating existing resources.

To support this approach, the workforce information system must have at its core high-quality local, state, and national data. "High quality" means data that meet statistical standards, and are timely, comparable across states and areas, and relevant to customer needs. The data must be organized in standard database formats to facilitate analysis and delivery. Achieving this goal requires building on the current Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) federal/state cooperative statistical programs and the Employment and Training Administration funded products and systems, and establishing new data collection programs in key areas.

Therefore, for this grant year, the Research & Analysis Bureau proposes to support the Governor's priorities and the State Workforce Investment Boards goals through:

- Continued programmed outreach visits to individuals and entities within the Workforce Investment System. These visits will provide training to local staff and officials on the kinds and availability of information maintained and/or accessed by the Bureau, and allow feedback on the types of issues and information needs local staff and officials dealt with during the course of their duties. Based on the feedback gained from initial outreach visits, the Bureau has developed customized training for individuals and entities within the Workforce Investment System whose primary duties are to facilitate information gathering and decision making by local businesses and developers. The training provides practical, hands-on knowledge of workforce information, to include:
  - how to determine what information your customer specifically needs;
  - how to find and access that information; and
  - how to identify the need for further research by workforce information professionals.
- Continued Development and Refinement of Workforce Information materials. During the grant year, the Bureau will continue to use outreach visits and customer

feedback to develop and improve outreach and education materials which describe services and products to be provided to workforce information system customers. These materials will be designed to enhance use of the Research and Analysis Bureau's website, the Workforce Informer. The end goal of these efforts is to place relevant, localized, and timely data at the fingertips of decision-makers and other users of workforce information. Timely, relevant, and localized data is a critical piece of a demand-driven approach. The Bureau will also make use of a customer service database which is used to log and track customer requests. Compilation and analysis of this data will also be used to identify high-demand information and the customer base for that information, and allow the Bureau to respond accordingly. Additionally, the Bureau will use an internal committee to identify, research, and implement continued improvements to the Workforce Informer website. The committee will use customer feedback, current state- and national-level topics, and other forms of input to ensure the website remains timely and relevant to our customers.

The Research & Analysis Bureau's education and outreach efforts will continue to develop awareness among users of available labor market information, as well as tap into that awareness to help define priorities for products and services during the upcoming year. The Bureau will work with labor market information users to provide the necessary data at the appropriate level of detail, including employment projections for future years. Additionally, the Bureau will continue to present timely and relevant presentations to the State Board, on an annual basis at a minimum.

Specific data to be considered and presented to the SWIB includes:

- employment projections, to include the identification of high-demand, high-growth employment;
  - analysis of current workforce to identify skills gaps;
  - detailed analysis/comparison of education and wage data for the current and projected workforce; and
  - detailed analysis of employment projections at the local level for selected counties/urban areas.
- Continued participation in policy councils and consortia that support and recommend improvements to the workforce information system, to include support of and participation in the LMI Training Institute.

- **Principal Customers**

All individuals and entities within the Workforce Investment System are considered principle customers of this deliverable.

- **Projected outcome(s) and system impact(s)**

Projections are one of the most sought after data series we produce. Workforce development planning hinges on having an accurate picture of the future labor force demands. With current short-term and long-term projections, educational programs can

be created to train for demand high-growth occupations, legislators can devise policies that meet the future needs of people in the state, businesses can project future employment needs and students and job-seekers can prepare for jobs of the future. With the high quality and timely projections provided with this grant, better decisions can be made for the future of individuals in the state. During the 2004 grant year, we mailed out over 630 requests for our hard-copy projections publication. However, the bulk of our customers access this information from our website. We use WebTrends statistical software to evaluate an array of customer information including hits, page views and visits. These statistics also include information on browsers, platforms, referrers, top visitors and top pages. Statistics are compiled on a monthly basis and calculated for yearly measurements. Estimates are made for increased usage of sites and monitored to view progress toward meeting specific goals. Our websites contain e-mail accounts for comment, contact with regard to our publications, general information requests and reporting of website problems. We also include the use of feedback forms on our websites.

- **Planned milestones**

**Long-term projections:**

- Create a NAICS industry database – October 2005
- Forecast jobs by NAICS sector & self-employed. – December 2005
- Analyze/document industry forecast results. – January 2006
- Produce occupational forecasts. – March 2006
- Populate the ALMIS database with projections data. – June 2006

**Short-term projections:**

- Review NAICS-based historical series. – December 2005
- Forecast industry sectors. – February 2006
- Analyze and document results. – March 2006
- Produce occupational short-term projections for the state. – May 2006
- Populate the ALMIS Database with the short-term projections and submit data for public dissemination. – June 2006

- **Estimated costs (identify equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost)**

Long-term projections - \$40,000

Short-term projections - \$35,000

No equipment purchases over \$5,000 are projected.

***State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB)/State Workforce Agency (SWA) Deliverables***

**3. Provide occupational and career information products for public use.**

- **Description of core product, service or other demand activity**

Using the results of our customer service and satisfaction survey it has been determined that our wide variety of customers require occupational and career information in multiple formats. The results show that printed publications and Internet delivery are equally popular. Due to a variation in the statistical knowledge between information users, it appears that multiple levels of information are equally desirable.

We have determined our occupational and career information products will be delivered in printed form and on our Workforce Informer site when it is cost effective. We have leveraged support for some of our career-related materials through a grant with the Student Assistance Foundation. Leveraging other funds we will be producing the Montana Career Guide using funds from Section 118 of Carl Perkins (Career Resource Network). We will also have written analysis in a reading level appropriate for our intended audience. Data tables that can be downloaded and sorted will be provided in our Workforce Informer system to accommodate the data needs of our more sophisticated customers.

In 2004, the Research and Analysis Bureau reached an agreement with the Department of Health and Human Services that gives R&A access to licensing microdata on health professionals. R&A can merge this data with existing U.I. data to create a very rich data set on the state of health professionals in Montana. The data permits R&A to address issues that have attracted great interest from the healthcare industry and other stakeholders. R&A can now look at the age distribution of nurses, doctors, and other licensed healthcare workers. These age distributions will allow interested stakeholders to assess to what extent the general concerns associated with the aging baby-boomers in the workforce will apply to healthcare professionals in particular. R&A can produce very accurate wage data for healthcare professionals. For example, R&A can compare wages of nurses in rural vs. urban settings in Montana, track how wages differ in different healthcare settings (hospitals vs. ambulatory care) or see how wages differ among different ages of healthcare workers. R&A can now assess the difference between the number of licenses healthcare professionals and the number actually earning wages, and this permits R&A to look at the demographic and wage characteristics of these professionals which should shed some light on why they left the industry. This data source has the potential to produce several high quality studies if given the proper allotment of resources. We are planning at the least a series of three or four articles for our monthly publication and the Workforce Informer website.

- **Customer support for product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations.**

Outreach visits across the State of Montana started in December 2004 and have been ongoing throughout the year. The entire western and south central portions of the state have been covered during this program year. These areas contain a vast majority of the state's population and economic activity. In total 12 Outreach presentations were given to 188 participants and a LMI Boot Camp was conducted for 29 participants. Follow up surveys were sent to all Outreach participants. Of those returning surveys, 100% rated



themselves as satisfied with the products and services of the Research & Analysis Bureau and 100% stated they were able to receive the information in a useful format. The following shows what products and services were of value to the participants.

<b>Information</b>	<b>Very Important</b>	<b>Somewhat Important</b>	<b>Not Important</b>
Wages	91%	6%	2%
Projections	76%	20%	2%
Unemployment	47%	47%	9%
Articles	32%	59%	6%
Training Providers	32%	56%	6%
Occupations	68%	32%	0%
Industry Info	71%	26%	6%
Employer Info	68%	26%	2%
County Profiles	56%	32%	12%
Economy at a Glance	56%	35%	6%
Career Information	53%	35%	9%

**According to our web statistics the following products were among the top twenty downloaded publications:**

<b>Publication</b>	<b>Downloads</b>
Montana Fact Sheet	22,856
Economy at a Glance	9,721
Prevailing Wage (combined)	8,391
2000 Wages	4,150
Statewide Flier	2,823
Profile of the Montana Worker	1,594
Inside Edition Job Hunting Guide for Montanans with Criminal Records	1,031
Job Hunting Guide for Montanans with Disabilities	767

**The publications listed below were some of our most-frequently requested hard-copy publications:**

<b>Printed Publications</b>	<b># Printed</b>
Economy at a Glance	33,600
Who Needs Math and Science	16
Job Hunting Guide for Montanans with Disabilities	75
Inside Edition Job Hunting Guide for Montanans With Criminal Records	150
Montana Career Information System Bookmarks	5,000
Montana Career Resource Network Newsletters	2,400
County Fliers (combined #)	2,831
R&A Brochures	67
LMI Boot Camp Field Guides	35
Projection Brochure	488

After reviewing the survey results and looking at the printing request and download statistics, we will be reviewing to determine if an updated wage publication (in conjunction with the Workforce Informer Data Analysis) should be prioritized for completion.

### **WebTrend Statistics on the Increased Usage of LMI via the Internet**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Hits</u>
2000	598,610
2001	1,273,476
2002	1,442,171
2003	1,520,000
2004	3,064,273
2005	3,261,675

### **Other web statistics**

Visits: 112,157

Unique Visitors: 47,070

### **Other statistics**

Customer inquiries via toll-free phone number: 3,583

Customer contact method as a percentage of contacts:

- Email – 30%
- Phone – 60%
- Visits – 3%
- Other – 7%

Customer inquiries by program as a percentage of contacts:

- One-Stop – 32% (Includes projections, website, etc)
- Career Information – 9%
- CES – 2%
- QCEW – 8%
- LAUS – 3%
- OES – 11%
- OSH/CFOI – 6%
- Prevailing Wage – 2%
- Benefits – 1%
- Other – 26%

- **Support goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan**

Montana's Governor was elected in 2004, and has yet to appoint his State Workforce Investment Board. As he prepares to appoint new board members, his priorities, as stated in the Two Years of Montana's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan, are:

- PRIORITY 1: Expand Montana's One-Stop System
- PRIORITY 2: Collaboration of Partners and Integration of Services

- PRIORITY 3: Improved development and delivery of workforce information

The Research and Analysis Bureau will continue to work to support goals outlined by the State Workforce Investment Board, based on the following approach:

The success of the one-stop system mandated by the Workforce Investment Act, as well as other workforce development services, rests on the timely delivery of information about the labor market, using media and formats that are accessible to customers who have varying levels of expertise and access to technology. These customers must also have access to technical assistance in using workforce information. Achieving this requires providing tools to simplify and speed up the delivery of data, developing customer-focused delivery systems using the Internet and other emerging technologies, and providing a variety of innovative approaches for universal access to workforce information.

Additionally, the skills of the staff who develop, analyze, and deliver workforce information must be maintained and improved through training in data collection methods, analysis, use of technology, and customer support. Training and assistance must be provided to customers in the uses and limitations of workforce information. Achieving this requires expanding the system's capacity and better coordinating existing resources.

To support this approach, the workforce information system must have at its core high-quality local, state, and national data. "High quality" means data that meet statistical standards, and are timely, comparable across states and areas, and relevant to customer needs. The data must be organized in standard database formats to facilitate analysis and delivery. Achieving this goal requires building on the current Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) federal/state cooperative statistical programs and the Employment and Training Administration funded products and systems, and establishing new data collection programs in key areas.

Therefore, for this grant year, the Research & Analysis Bureau proposes to support the Governor's priorities and the State Workforce Investment Boards goals through:

- Continued programmed outreach visits to individuals and entities within the Workforce Investment System. These visits will provide training to local staff and officials on the kinds and availability of information maintained and/or accessed by the Bureau, and allow feedback on the types of issues and information needs local staff and officials dealt with during the course of their duties. Based on the feedback gained from initial outreach visits, the Bureau has developed customized training for individuals and entities within the Workforce Investment System whose primary duties are to facilitate information gathering and decision making by local businesses and developers. The training provides practical, hands-on knowledge of workforce information, to include:
  - how to determine what information your customer specifically needs;
  - how to find and access that information; and

- how to identify the need for further research by workforce information professionals.
- Continued Development and Refinement of Workforce Information materials. During the grant year, the Bureau will continue to use outreach visits and customer feedback to develop and improve outreach and education materials which describe services and products to be provided to workforce information system customers. These materials will be designed to enhance use of the Research and Analysis Bureau's website, the Workforce Informer. The end goal of these efforts is to place relevant, localized, and timely data at the fingertips of decision-makers and other users of workforce information. Timely, relevant, and localized data is a critical piece of a demand-driven approach. The Bureau will also make use of a customer service database which is used to log and track customer requests. Compilation and analysis of this data will also be used to identify high-demand information and the customer base for that information, and allow the Bureau to respond accordingly. Additionally, the Bureau will use an internal committee to identify, research, and implement continued improvements to the Workforce Informer website. The committee will use customer feedback, current state- and national-level topics, and other forms of input to ensure the website remains timely and relevant to our customers.

The Research & Analysis Bureau's education and outreach efforts will continue to develop awareness among users of available labor market information, as well as tap into that awareness to help define priorities for products and services during the upcoming year. The Bureau will work with labor market information users to provide the necessary data at the appropriate level of detail, including employment projections for future years. Additionally, the Bureau will continue to present timely and relevant presentations to the State Board, on an annual basis at a minimum.

Specific data to be considered and presented to the SWIB includes:

- employment projections, to include the identification of high-demand, high-growth employment;
- analysis of current workforce to identify skills gaps;
- detailed analysis/comparison of education and wage data for the current and projected workforce; and
- detailed analysis of employment projections at the local level for selected counties/urban areas.
- Continued participation in policy councils and consortia that support and recommend improvements to the workforce information system, to include support of and participation in the LMI Training Institute.
- **Principal Customers**

All individuals and entities within the Workforce Investment System are considered principle customers of this deliverable.

- **Projected outcome(s) and system impact(s)**

One of our largest customer groups for career and occupational information is K-16 schools throughout the state. We provide approximately 16,000 sophomores each fall with the Montana Career Guide publication. This career guide provides information on each step of the career development process, occupational wage and projection information, all 2- and 4-year schools (public, private and proprietary) in the state, financial aid, writing resumes, interviewing and keeping a job. This year’s career guide will be updated with a fresh new look to make it even more appealing to high school students.

The Montana Career Information System is available in all Job Service Workforce Center offices for public access, in 160 schools (70,166 students), and 53 other agencies for use with the public. Through our grant with the Montana Student Assistance Foundation, we have opened up free access to parents and students at home. There are 366,000 households in Montana with 68,000 students age 13 through 17 that can be reached with this resource through these leveraged funds.

**MCIS Impact Statistics**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Agency Sites</b>	<b>Web Hits</b>	<b>Home Users (SAF grant)</b>
2000	308	NA	NA
2001	308	NA	NA
2002	257	NA	NA
2003	224	43,532	6,656
2004	257	64,618	10,618
2005	213	73,226	12,668

- **Planned milestones**

- October, 2005: Release of Montana Career Information System for 2005-2006 (home and agency use).
- October, 2005: Mail out of Montana Career Guide for 2005 to all high school Sophomores.
- October, 2005: Career Cluster Workbook for grades 4-6.
- November 2005: Update of Licensed Occupations and Apprenticeshipable Occupations publications published to website.
- April, 2006: Update Handbook for Finding Jobs for People with Disabilities posted to Workforce Informer.
- May, 2006: Completion of Parent Guide.
- 3 times per year: Montana Career Resource Newsletter.

- **Estimated costs (identify equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost)**

\$67,624 - No equipment purchases over \$5,000 are projected.

**4. Ensure that workforce information and support required by state and local workforce investment boards are provided.**

- **Description of core product, service or other demand activity**
  - Labor Day Report: Profile of the Montana Worker: Presented to the State Workforce Investment Board at their annual fall meeting.
  - Replication of economic impact studies of key industries in Montana, using the 2004 study of the economic impact of health care in Montana as a model.
- **Customer support for product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations**

State Workforce Investment Board members and staff have increasingly become the greatest consumers of data and information from the Research and Analysis Bureau. The Economic Development and Accountability sub-committees both have been actively involved in working with the bureau on specific information needs.

- **Support goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan**

Montana's Governor was elected in 2004, and has yet to appoint his State Workforce Investment Board. As he prepares to appoint new board members, his priorities, as stated in the Two Years of Montana's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan, are:

- PRIORITY 1: Expand Montana's One-Stop System
- PRIORITY 2: Collaboration of Partners and Integration of Services
- PRIORITY 3: Improved development and delivery of workforce information

The Research and Analysis Bureau will continue to work to support goals outlined by the State Workforce Investment Board, based on the following approach:

The success of the one-stop system mandated by the Workforce Investment Act, as well as other workforce development services, rests on the timely delivery of information about the labor market, using media and formats that are accessible to customers who have varying levels of expertise and access to technology. These customers must also have access to technical assistance in using workforce information. Achieving this requires providing tools to simplify and speed up the delivery of data, developing customer-focused delivery systems using the Internet and other emerging technologies, and providing a variety of innovative approaches for universal access to workforce information.

Additionally, the skills of the staff who develop, analyze, and deliver workforce information must be maintained and improved through training in data collection methods, analysis, use of technology, and customer support. Training and assistance must be provided to customers in the uses and limitations of workforce information. Achieving this requires expanding the system's capacity and better coordinating existing resources.

To support this approach, the workforce information system must have at its core high-quality local, state, and national data. “High quality” means data that meet statistical standards, and are timely, comparable across states and areas, and relevant to customer needs. The data must be organized in standard database formats to facilitate analysis and delivery. Achieving this goal requires building on the current Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) federal/state cooperative statistical programs and the Employment and Training Administration funded products and systems, and establishing new data collection programs in key areas.

Therefore, for this grant year, the Research & Analysis Bureau proposes to support the Governor’s priorities and the State Workforce Investment Boards goals through:

- Continued programmed outreach visits to individuals and entities within the Workforce Investment System. These visits will provide training to local staff and officials on the kinds and availability of information maintained and/or accessed by the Bureau, and allow feedback on the types of issues and information needs local staff and officials dealt with during the course of their duties. Based on the feedback gained from initial outreach visits, the Bureau has developed customized training for individuals and entities within the Workforce Investment System whose primary duties are to facilitate information gathering and decision making by local businesses and developers. The training provides practical, hands-on knowledge of workforce information, to include:
  - how to determine what information your customer specifically needs;
  - how to find and access that information; and
  - how to identify the need for further research by workforce information professionals.
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The Research & Analysis Bureau’s education and outreach efforts will continue to develop awareness among users of available labor market information, as well as tap

into that awareness to help define priorities for products and services during the upcoming year. The Bureau will work with labor market information users to provide the necessary data at the appropriate level of detail, including employment projections for future years. Additionally, the Bureau will continue to present timely and relevant presentations to the State Board, on an annual basis at a minimum.

Specific data to be considered and presented to the SWIB includes:

- employment projections, to include the identification of high-demand, high-growth employment;
  - analysis of current workforce to identify skills gaps;
  - detailed analysis/comparison of education and wage data for the current and projected workforce; and
  - detailed analysis of employment projections at the local level for selected counties/urban areas.
- Continued participation in policy councils and consortia that support and recommend improvements to the workforce information system, to include support of and participation in the LMI Training Institute.

- **Principal Customers**

Workforce Investment Boards (State and Local)

- **Projected outcome(s) and system impact(s)**

The State Workforce Investment Board has historically engaged in meaningful and productive interaction with the Research & Analysis Bureau. The Research and Analysis Bureau and State Board participated in ongoing discussions involving uses and application of labor market information for the strategic vision for the workforce system. This grant process strengthens the day-to-day interactions and relationship with the Board. The State Workforce Investment Board will be able to affect the workforce system by ensuring that labor market information is available to help them make meaningful and strategic decisions. With accurate, timely and local information, the workforce system dollars, training, and efforts will be more likely to be efficiently administered and participants in the system will have more success in the labor market.

- **Planned milestones**

August 4, 2005	Executive subcommittee meets to discuss grant plan with R&A staff.
August 30, 2005	R&A presents the Labor Day Report to Governor Schweitzer and members of the SWIB Executive Committee.
TBD	Assist in SWIB orientation for new board members.

- **Estimated costs (identify equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost)**



\$9,827 - No equipment purchases over \$5,000 are projected.

**5. Maintain and enhance electronic state workforce information delivery systems.**

- **Description of core product, service or other demand activity**

Montana's electronic delivery system is the Workforce Informer. As part of the 2003-2004 grant plan, Montana contracted with Workforce Informer for a 3-year contract. Training was conducted with Informer personnel and our bureau staff in the spring of 2004. Roll out of the Montana Workforce Informer occurred on August 2, 2004. We have a full time staff person dedicated to maintaining and enhancing this website. Montana will populate the ALMIS database with the most current data available. The ALMIS database is the basic foundation of our electronic delivery system. We have a full-time staff person dedicated to managing the ALMIS database to provide the most accurate and current data. We have leveraged Reed Act funds to help provide this valuable electronic delivery system.

- **Customer support for product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations**

With the release of the Montana Workforce Informer, the impact to our customers was immediate, with a much easier interface for accessing the data that resides in the ALMIS database. Our new delivery system improves our customers' ability to find the data they are looking for and allows them more flexibility in building reports that meet their unique information needs. The Bureau will use an internal committee to identify, research, and implement continued improvements to the Workforce Informer website. The committee will use customer feedback, current state- and national-level topics, and other forms of input to ensure the website remains timely and relevant to our customers.

Outreach visits across the State of Montana started in December 2004 and have been ongoing throughout the year. The entire western and south central portions of the state have been covered during this program year. These areas contain a vast majority of the state's population and economic activity. In total 12 Outreach presentations were given to 188 participants and a LMI Boot Camp was conducted for 29 participants. Follow up surveys were sent to all Outreach participants. Of those returning surveys, 100% rated themselves as satisfied with the products and services of the Research & Analysis Bureau and 100% stated they were able to receive the information in a useful format. The following shows what products and services were of value to the participants.

<b>Information</b>	<b>Very Important</b>	<b>Somewhat Important</b>	<b>Not Important</b>
Wages	91%	6%	2%
Projections	76%	20%	2%
Unemployment	47%	47%	9%
Articles	32%	59%	6%
Training Providers	32%	56%	6%
Occupations	68%	32%	0%

Industry Info	71%	26%	6%
Employer Info	68%	26%	2%
County Profiles	56%	32%	12%
Economy at a Glance	56%	35%	6%
Career Information	53%	35%	9%

**According to our web statistics the following products were among the top twenty downloaded publications:**

<b><u>Publication</u></b>	<b><u>Downloads</u></b>
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**WebTrend Statistics on the Increased Usage of LMI via the Internet**

<b><u>Year</u></b>	<b><u>Hits</u></b>
2000	598,610
2001	1,273,476
2002	1,442,171
2003	1,520,000
2004	3,064,273
2005	3,261,675

**Other web statistics**

Visits: 112,157  
Unique Visitors: 47,070

**Other statistics**

Customer inquiries via toll-free phone number: 3,583  
Customer contact method as a percentage of contacts:

- o Email – 30%
- o Phone – 60%
- o Visits – 3%
- o Other – 7%

Customer inquiries by program as a percentage of contacts:

- o One-Stop – 32% (Includes projections, website, etc)
- o Career Information – 9%
- o CES – 2%
- o QCEW – 8%
- o LAUS – 3%

- OES – 11%
- OSH/CFOI – 6%
- Prevailing Wage – 2%
- Benefits – 1%
- Other – 26%

- **Support goals of the state’s WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan**

Montana’s Governor was elected in 2004, and has yet to appoint his State Workforce Investment Board. As he prepares to appoint new board members, his priorities, as stated in the Two Years of Montana’s WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan, are:

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Specific data to be considered and presented to the SWIB includes:

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- analysis of current workforce to identify skills gaps;

- detailed analysis/comparison of education and wage data for the current and projected workforce; and
  - detailed analysis of employment projections at the local level for selected counties/urban areas.
- Continued participation in policy councils and consortia that support and recommend improvements to the workforce information system, to include support of and participation in the LMI Training Institute.

- **Principal Customers**

All individuals and entities within the Workforce Investment System are considered principle customers of this deliverable.

- **Projected outcome(s) and system impact(s)**

Increasing the number of users to the Workforce Informer System as measured by WebTrends. The following chart shows a steady increase since 2000:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Hits</u>
2000	598,610
2001	1,273,476
2002	1,442,171
2003	1,520,000
2004	3,064,273
2005	3,261,675
2006	3,375,000 (projected)
2007	3,500,000 (projected)

- **Planned milestones**

Monthly: Each month the latest LAUS and CES data will be posted to the Workforce Informer. Economy at a Glance and County Profiles to be updated.

Quarterly: Quarterly Current Employment and Wages will be posted to the Workforce Informer.

Ongoing: Special reports released as written.

August 2005: OSH publication posted to the Workforce Informer.

September 2005: CFOI publication posted to the Workforce Informer.

October 2005: Benefits survey data report posted to the Workforce Informer.

November 2005: Completer data will be posted to the Workforce Informer.

- **Estimated costs (identify equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost)**

\$58,962 - No equipment purchases over \$5,000 are projected.

## **6. Support state workforce information training activities.**

- **Description of core product, service or other demand activity**

A major component of training activities is training staff on the collection and analysis of labor market information and data series. Montana will be using \$4,000 of our grant for membership in the LMI Training Institute and for ongoing LMI training of our staff. Leveraging funds from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Cooperative Agreement, we will be sending the appropriate staff to BLS conferences and training to maintain a highly trained and qualified staff who produce the data that is used in analysis, publications, the ALMIS database, and the Workforce Informer website.

The bureau will be making presentations at State and Local Workforce Investment Board meetings, conferences and subcommittees throughout the grant year. We will be presenting at economic development, education, SHRM (Society of Human Resource Managers), and workforce development conferences and meetings. We will be sending expert staff across the state to present specific LMI training to customers. We will be working directly with our diverse customer groups to tailor our training to meet their needs.

We will continue to develop and train our Job Service Business Advocates and other individuals working in a similar capacity to be local workforce information liaisons. Our local Job Service Office Workforce Centers are active participants as business consultants and work with economic development agencies. They field many local labor market questions and compile information for use by businesses and economic development agencies. Our plan is to provide for the training of their business advocates and other individuals working in a similar capacity in detailed workforce information and our website and publications to better assist them in their ability to help these specific customers of the workforce development system. One such training session has occurred in May of 2005, with subsequent follow-on and ancillary training sessions to take place during the grant year.

- **Customer support for product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations**

The workforce development system has conducted focus groups and customer surveys and a major reoccurring request is for more training on labor market information. We will be working directly with our diverse customer groups to tailor our training to meet their needs.

- **Support goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan**

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The Research and Analysis Bureau will continue to work to support goals outlined by the State Workforce Investment Board, based on the following approach:

The success of the one-stop system mandated by the Workforce Investment Act, as well as other workforce development services, rests on the timely delivery of information about the labor market, using media and formats that are accessible to customers who have varying levels of expertise and access to technology. These customers must also have access to technical assistance in using workforce information. Achieving this requires providing tools to simplify and speed up the delivery of data, developing customer-focused delivery systems using the Internet and other emerging technologies, and providing a variety of innovative approaches for universal access to workforce information.

Additionally, the skills of the staff who develop, analyze, and deliver workforce information must be maintained and improved through training in data collection methods, analysis, use of technology, and customer support. Training and assistance must be provided to customers in the uses and limitations of workforce information. Achieving this requires expanding the system's capacity and better coordinating existing resources.

To support this approach, the workforce information system must have at its core high-quality local, state, and national data. "High quality" means data that meet statistical standards, and are timely, comparable across states and areas, and relevant to customer needs. The data must be organized in standard database formats to facilitate analysis and delivery. Achieving this goal requires building on the current Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) federal/state cooperative statistical programs and the Employment and Training Administration funded products and systems, and establishing new data collection programs in key areas.

Therefore, for this grant year, the Research & Analysis Bureau proposes to support the Governor's priorities and the State Workforce Investment Boards goals through:

- Continued programmed outreach visits to individuals and entities within the Workforce Investment System. These visits will provide training to local staff and officials on the kinds and availability of information maintained and/or accessed by the Bureau, and allow feedback on the types of issues and information needs local staff and officials dealt with during the course of their duties. Based on the feedback gained from initial outreach visits, the Bureau has developed customized training for individuals and entities within the Workforce Investment System whose primary duties are to facilitate information gathering and decision making by local businesses and developers. The training provides practical, hands-on knowledge of workforce information, to include:
  - how to determine what information your customer specifically needs;

- how to find and access that information; and
  - how to identify the need for further research by workforce information professionals.
- Continued Development and Refinement of Workforce Information materials. During the grant year, the Bureau will continue to use outreach visits and customer feedback to develop and improve outreach and education materials which describe services and products to be provided to workforce information system customers. These materials will be designed to enhance use of the Research and Analysis Bureau's website, the Workforce Informer. The end goal of these efforts is to place relevant, localized, and timely data at the fingertips of decision-makers and other users of workforce information. Timely, relevant, and localized data is a critical piece of a demand-driven approach. The Bureau will also make use of a customer service database which is used to log and track customer requests. Compilation and analysis of this data will also be used to identify high-demand information and the customer base for that information, and allow the Bureau to respond accordingly. Additionally, the Bureau will use an internal committee to identify, research, and implement continued improvements to the Workforce Informer website. The committee will use customer feedback, current state- and national-level topics, and other forms of input to ensure the website remains timely and relevant to our customers.

The Research & Analysis Bureau's education and outreach efforts will continue to develop awareness among users of available labor market information, as well as tap into that awareness to help define priorities for products and services during the upcoming year. The Bureau will work with labor market information users to provide the necessary data at the appropriate level of detail, including employment projections for future years. Additionally, the Bureau will continue to present timely and relevant presentations to the State Board, on an annual basis at a minimum.

Specific data to be considered and presented to the SWIB includes:

- employment projections, to include the identification of high-demand, high-growth employment;
  - analysis of current workforce to identify skills gaps;
  - detailed analysis/comparison of education and wage data for the current and projected workforce; and
  - detailed analysis of employment projections at the local level for selected counties/urban areas.
- Continued participation in policy councils and consortia that support and recommend improvements to the workforce information system, to include support of and participation in the LMI Training Institute.

- **Principal Customers**

All individuals and entities within the Workforce Investment System are considered principle customers of this deliverable.



- **Projected outcome(s) and system impact(s)**

Each Research and Analysis research specialist will attend specialized training and conferences in their area of expertise as well as related areas as appropriate. Our most intensive training will happen with the Business Advocates attached to our local Job Service Workforce Center Offices and other individuals working in a similar capacity. After this intensive training, these Business Advocates will be able to handle the requests of business customers and economic development groups more quickly and in more depth. This should assist these groups in making better business and planning decisions. By the end of the fiscal year, our customers will see a higher visibility of workforce information, be better trained in accessing and using that information, and will know how to contact the appropriate staff when they need more information. Our partnerships will increase to include economic development agencies, education and human resource groups.

- **Planned milestones**

Ongoing:	Bureau staff attend training and conferences put on by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, ETA, and the LMI Institute as they become available.
August 4, 2005	Executive subcommittee meets to discuss grant plan with R&A staff.
August 30, 2005	R&A presents the Labor Day Report to Governor Schweitzer and members of the SWIB Executive Committee.
TBD	Assist in SWIB orientation for new board members.
February 2006:	Curriculum is updated for training staff, including business advocates.
April 2006:	LMI Training at all-staff conference.
Ongoing:	Specialized presentations to conferences and other groups as they come up.

- **Estimated costs (identify equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost)**

\$60,187 - No equipment purchases over \$5,000 are projected.

## **C. Consultation and Customer Satisfaction Assessment**

The Research and Analysis Bureau will continue to survey their customers to assess customer satisfaction as well as customer needs. These results will be used to determine how well this year's plan worked and what changes and /or additions need to be made for next year. Assessment plans include:

- Online customer satisfaction survey
- Mail out customer satisfaction survey

- Continuation of customer satisfaction database for survey compilation and customer contacts
- Focus groups

The Research and Analysis Bureau will provide expert assistance to the State Workforce Investment Board's Accountability Sub-committee and Economic Development Sub-committee. These are the committees that make the most use of workforce information for SWIB activities.

- **Estimated costs (identify equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost)**

\$14,741 - No equipment purchases over \$5,000 are projected.

**Total Grant Plan: \$351,098**