

State of Oregon

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.**

Oregon has enjoyed a close and collaborative working relationship between the Oregon Workforce Investment Board (OWIB) and the Employment Department's Workforce and Economic Research Division (hereafter called "the Research Division") since the state's implementation of Workforce Quality Councils in the early 1990s and continuing through the transition to the current Workforce Investment Board structure to the present day. In particular, Oregon's process for OWIB involvement in Research activities includes the following:

1. Regular participation of Oregon's LMI Director and other Research staff at OWIB meetings. This participation generally involves making brief presentations about new research or new proposals for future research activities. Examples in recent years include presentations on economic news (recession / recovery), long-term industry and occupational projections, Oregon's partnership with the U.S. Bureau of the Census Local Employment Dynamics (LED) program, and the results of Oregon's Training and Retention Survey.
2. Monthly meetings with the Governor's workforce policy advisor, who works closely with leadership of the OWIB, and frequent communications with the OWIB executive staff person.
3. A close and long-standing working relationship with the current OWIB Chair, and a strong relationship with the new OWIB Vice-Chair.
4. A reputation for responsiveness to OWIB's information needs and goals. For example, Research staff conducted the first Oregon Employer Survey in the year 2000, directly in response to the information needs of OWIB and the state's local WIBs. This Survey was conducted again in 2002. The 2004 version was modified, focusing specifically on training and retention, as requested by Oregon's state and regional WIBs.
5. OWIB, in particular the Chair, Vice-Chair, executive staff, and Governor's Office representative are involved in the development and review of this grant plan.
6. Oregon's LMI Director attends all OWIB meetings, seeking to further improve the state's already strong reputation for meeting the information needs of OWIB and all other Oregon customers. In the event that the LMI Director is unable to attend an OWIB meeting, an alternate member of the Research Division's senior staff attends.

- **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.**

Important note: While this ETA Workforce Information grant is extremely important and valuable to the Research Division, most of the Division's activities (and most of the Division's services to OWIB and local WIBs) are funded from other sources. When answering general questions such as the above, we will be describing how the overall activities of the Research Division meet the WIB's or other customers' needs, not how the ETA-funded activities meet those needs.

Oregon has developed a new two-year plan for Title 1 of the Workforce Investment Act and the Wagner-Peyser Act. This plan, which will be in effect July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2007, presents three goals relating to system results and four goals relating to workforce system operation. The goals are:

- Improve service delivery and results for customers.
- Provide seamless access for business and job-seeker customers to employment and training services.
- Use resources efficiently and effectively.
- Co-locate Employment Service and Ib offices within two years.
- Co-locate other mandatory partners' services within two years.
- Employment Department will deliver core services at Worksource Oregon centers within two years.
- Business services will be better aligned in two years.

The Research Division provided workforce and economic information and analysis as the above two-year plan was developed, and the Division will support and participate in all of the above goals, even though few of them are, on the surface, specifically workforce information related. (This may accurately be taken as an indication that Oregon's workforce information system is functioning smoothly and successfully – it is not the focus of one of the primary goals of Oregon's WIB in terms of system improvement.)

Some specific examples of how the Research Division supports the goals of the workforce plan follow:

1. Provide performance measurement services, using UI wage record matching, to determine results achieved by customers of the workforce system.
2. Provide workforce information, in-person, with publications, and on-line, at all one-stop locations. Often, we find that the Research Division's staff are among the primary links between the workforce and training systems.
3. Locate workforce information staff in one-stop locations all across Oregon. (Twenty-three LMI staff are currently located in one-stop locations, providing direct, geographically-focused services to the workforce system and its customers.)

4. Provide focused services to businesses. (The Research Division has fourteen workforce analysts, located all across Oregon, whose primary focus is to develop and provide customized workforce information to meet the needs of individual businesses. Oregon has also developed a new *Business Information Center*, which will be added to the OLMIS website in July 2005.)
- **How the grant activities are consistent with the strategic vision of the Governor and the SWIB.**

In Oregon's new two-year plan, the Governor articulates the following vision: All Oregonians, businesses, and residents have the skills, resources, and opportunities to achieve economic prosperity. Oregon's economic prosperity depends on:

- A skilled workforce aligned with expectations and needs of business and industry.
- Clearly articulated education and training pathways.
- An integrated workforce system that is responsive to the needs of businesses and workers.
- Public and private communication and collaboration.

Oregon's Workforce Investment Board articulates this vision: Oregon has a world-class workforce – well-educated, skilled, and working – to keep Oregon's economy competitive in the global marketplace.

The Research Division supports both of these vision statements in the following ways:

1. By developing and maintaining skills information for all Oregon industries and occupations, thereby acting as the conduit for this "alignment" of workforce and business needs.
2. By providing occupational demand and supply information that is at the core of the "career pathways" movement.
3. By bringing all members of the workforce and training system together, as they use workforce information in their planning.
4. By participating in a variety of private and public associations, boards, committees, etc., either as members or as guest presenters.

In short, the Research Division provides the vast majority of the information relating to occupational trends, educational requirements, and businesses' skill needs use by Oregon's workforce and training policy-makers.

- **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.**

The strategy of the Research Division is simple: “Get out of the office; visit the local WIBs; share interesting and relevant information; and listen.” As a result of this strategy, Oregon’s LMI Director and out-stationed Research staff have excellent personal relationships with the leaders and members of Oregon’s local WIBs and the Research Division has implemented product changes or customized research projects in response to the needs of these WIBs. These positive relationships with local WIBs are documented elsewhere, during the discussion of our recent WIB Customer Satisfaction Survey.

In addition, the Research Division’s 20+ out-stationed staff, especially the 14 workforce analysts, are specifically charged with meeting the customized LMI needs of local businesses. This charge, supported by the Division’s Annual Plan, requires that they visit local businesses in individual and group settings (e.g. Chamber of Commerce) to make LMI available to them and to learn about (and respond to) their particular information needs.

The OWIB gathers information on local WIBs and other stakeholders’ workforce information needs in a variety of ways. Most local WIBs are represented at OWIB meetings, either as members of the state Board or as participatory members of the audience. Local WIBs and stakeholders also communicate frequently with OWIB staff and Governor’s Office staff. As a result, key workforce information needs are made known to OWIB leadership and, often at the same time, to leadership of the state’s Research Division.

- **The broad strategic approach for workforce information delivery to principal customers.**

Oregon has embraced three key strategies for the delivery of workforce information:

1. **Personal Contact** – “Get out of the office; visit the customers” is a commitment modeled by the LMI Director and practiced by a wide range of central office and out-stationed staff. Staff of the Research Division gave 452 presentations in 2004, reaching a total audience of roughly 11,200. In addition, staff also attended dozens of meetings and made personal visits to many private sector businesses.
2. **Short, Focused Reports** – The Research Division has made a deliberate decision to move away from long, all-inclusive reports, and instead to move toward short, focused reports that can be easily read within the short timeframes available for most customers. The Division has also made the strategic decision to gradually encourage our customers away from hard copy reports and towards ...
3. **Web-Based and Other Electronic Contacts** – Oregon’s web site has long provided excellent information to our customers. The site is constantly being upgraded and improved. The next improvement, scheduled for soft release in July 2005, is a

“Business Information Center”, geared especially to the LMI needs of small businesses.

- **How workforce information and services are delivered as core services to customers through the state’s One-Stop service delivery system.**
 - The Research Division, working with One-Stop staff and management, identified a selection of Research publications and handouts that would be of particular value to One-Stop customers. The Division then purchased racks to hold these publications and provided them to all One-Stops. Research staff assists One-Stop staff in ensuring that the material on the LMI racks is kept current and re-stocked.
 - The Research Division shares the cost of “reader boards”, which are placed in One-Stop lobbies (by request of the One-Stop manager), with the state’s Business and Employment Services Division. These reader boards present ever-changing ES- and Research-related information to One-Stop customers.
 - The Research web site is available to all One-Stop customers at any location where the internet is accessible, including the lobbies / resource rooms of the One-Stops.
 - The Research Division provides LMI Training to One-Stop staff. This training takes workforce information from being “just numbers” to being relevant, friendly, and usable information, enabling front-line staff, who are the first providers of workforce information in this setting, to provide better service to their customers.

- **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.**
 - Starting in March 2005, the Research Division instituted a formal customer satisfaction survey of all WIBs. Results of this survey are described elsewhere.
 - The Research Division places a customer satisfaction survey on the OLMIS web site every other quarter.
 - The Division also places a customer satisfaction survey in each publication or report that is distributed (once each year for monthly publications; every time for annual or special publications).
 - Research Division staff frequently visit with customers all across the state, both individually and in groups, gathering information on customer satisfaction.
 - The Division has conducted focus groups of small businesses for the new web-based business information and will conduct more focus groups prior to releasing the tool.
 - Early in the development phase of a new publication or report (or once-yearly for ongoing monthly publications), a planning session is held, involving four

senior and key Research staff, as well as the staff who will have responsibility for the particular publication. As part of this planning session, the State Employment Economist (who is the overall lead person for Research customer satisfaction efforts) reports on the results of the customer satisfaction survey regarding the prior edition of the particular publication or similar publications.

- The principal customers to be consulted vary widely, depending on the particular focus of the services or publications being considered. But principle customer groups in general clearly include businesses; One-Stop customers; WIBs, Governor's Office, and other elected officials; and education, workforce, and economic development entities.

- **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.**

Our most recent customer satisfaction survey was our March 2005 survey of 17 workforce investment boards: one statewide board, 15 regional boards, and one consortium of boards. Key findings included the following:

- All 17 boards responded to the survey.
- Overall, 13 were totally satisfied with our information, guidance, and service. Three were mostly satisfied, one was somewhat satisfied, and none were "not at all" satisfied.
- Thirteen were totally satisfied with our timely responses, and 15 were totally satisfied with our knowledgeable answers to questions or concerns.
- We received fewer "totally" satisfied responses for the relevance (9 responses), ease of understanding (7), and helpfulness (8) of our information, guidance, or service. In each case, two were "somewhat" satisfied and none said "not at all."
- These findings have alerted us to the need to work harder at making our responses not only timely and knowledgeable but also more relevant to the requestor's underlying question, easier to understand, and more helpful.

These findings are presented as an example of the types of customer feedback we are receiving; they did not have a significant impact on the planned products and services proposed in this grant application, but will impact the way we present our information and services in the future.

In another customer service-related effort, Oregon regularly collects customer satisfaction feedback from the LMI web site, *OLMIS*. Of the 85 responses received from the most recent survey, 56 percent came from job seekers; almost 51 percent were using *OLMIS* for job search or career planning; 75 percent were able to easily find what they were looking for; 86 percent understood the information; 76 percent found that *OLMIS* helped resolve their problem or answer their question; 74 percent found the information timely enough for their needs; and 80 percent found sufficient

geographic detail to meet their needs. All things considered, 75 percent of the respondents gave OLMIS an “A” or a “B”, while 8 percent gave a “C”.

In addition, a change was made to the way some of the occupational information is displayed within the Occupational Information Center, based on feedback obtained from the OLMIS customer satisfaction survey.

As discussed earlier, customer feedback comes from a variety of sources. For the purpose of products and services relating to this particular grant, most of that feedback comes from ongoing conversations and relationships with key customer groups; their input is constantly being fed into the Research Division’s planning and development efforts.

This grant plan does not specifically address many inadequacies or gaps identified by users because none (of any significant or serious nature) have been identified. For example, the previously discussed “Two-Year Plan” sets goals within the workforce development system, but none of these specifically pertain to the provision of workforce information in Oregon. That said, we are constantly striving to improve our products and services (as evidenced by the continual enhancements to the already award-winning OLMIS web site), and these improvements are consistently fueled by comments and ideas received from our key customer groups.

- **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.**

Thanks to the collaborative and supportive environment for LMI in Oregon, the Research Division uses a variety of other state and federal funding sources to significantly increase the amount of workforce information available to customers in Oregon, far beyond the capacity which would be achievable based only on the ETA funds. The Division receives funding from other state agencies, a state administrative fund, and several federal funding sources.

The Research Division has given consideration to charging for certain types of products and services, including customized survey work. However, at this time, the Division has been able to serve the needs of varied customer groups using existing funds made available to us. However, this model for funding special studies will likely not be sustainable in the future, so matched funding remains a likely probability.

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**

The ALMIS Database provides a basis for information delivery, labor market research, and product development. It is invisible to customers, but essential to customer-focused products such as OLMIS. ALMIS also provides a nationwide database that includes consistent and comparable economic and workforce information across all states.

Oregon will implement and maintain the most current version of the ALMIS Database and will populate all core data tables in accordance with ALMIS Database Workgroup guidelines.

Oregon will ensure that all licensing information is current.

Oregon has long been using the ALMIS Database to serve national, state, and local customers. This practice will continue, as the OLMIS web site uses the ALMIS Database and as the OLMIS site continues to be improved and enhanced with new information tools. (e.g. A business information tool is currently under development and will use data contained in the ALMIS database.)

No staff training for this deliverable is anticipated at this time.

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

Most customers would have no idea what the ALMIS Database is. However, customer support for Oregon's OLMIS web site is very strong. Formal customer satisfaction survey results have produced limited information (due to limited response rates) on customer satisfaction with OLMIS, but other customer consultations – at conferences, presentations, One-Stop visits, etc. – consistently demonstrate a high level of support and appreciation for the site. So while customers may not strongly support the ALMIS Database, they are unwittingly benefiting from that Database, without which the OLMIS site would not be possible.

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

The ALMIS Database should be viewed as a part of the underlying infrastructure that supports the entire workforce information system in Oregon. As such, it

plays a role in supporting the goals of the state's workforce plan, particularly in connection with the occupational / career information components of OLMIS.

- **Principal Customers**

All Research customers, and especially those who use the OLMIS web site, benefit from an updated and accurate ALMIS Database. These customers include businesses; workforce development system policy-makers, staff, and customers; economic development entities; educational program planners; and any individuals seeking career information.

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

The ALMIS Database is part of the underlying infrastructure of Oregon's workforce information system. The primary outcomes and system impacts of the Database are that the national, state, and local workforce information systems have an updated and accurate Database on which to build customer-focused tools.

- **Planned milestones**

1. Implement and maintain the most current version of the ALMIS Database; populate all core tables – ongoing, in accordance with the ALMIS Database Workgroup's timelines.
2. Populate the ALMIS Database with specific licensing files – biennially, at the end of each legislative session, probably Dec. 2005 or January 2006.
3. Fully utilize the ALMIS Database in meeting national, state, and local customer information needs – already complete.
4. In addition, Oregon will continue contributing to the success of the ALMIS initiatives by participating in the ALMIS Resource Center and the ALMIS consortia – ongoing.

- **Estimated costs (See attachment 1)**

Total costs associated with this component of the grant = \$35,917,

2. Produce and disseminate industry and occupational employment projections.

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

Long-term industry and occupational projections (looking ten years into the future) are essential components of career information, demand/supply gap analyses, and educational program planning. Short-term projections (looking two years into the future) may be useful for the planning of short-term programs of training, as well as business economic planning.

Oregon will produce sub-state industry and occupational employment projections for 2004-2014. Previous projections have been released to the public and are widely used by WIBs, the Governor's Office, and other workforce, education, and economic development entities in decision-making and planning. They are already available on OLMIS and are essential components of two occupational tools within OLMIS.

Oregon will produce statewide short-term industry and occupational projections for the 2005-2007 period. Using methodology, software and guidelines from the Projections Partnership, Oregon will also incorporate the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) 2005-2007 industry employment forecast as an input into our own projections. The DAS forecast is the official state economic forecast and must be considered when producing other short term projections.

- Oregon has already submitted 2002-2012 and 2004-2006 employment projections as required by the Projections Consortium and this grant.

Oregon will continue developing appropriate long-term employment series based on the North American Industry Classification System. These series are being used for the 2004-2014 industry employment projections, which will be complete during the summer and fall of 2005.

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

Oregon customers are highly supportive of the state's long-term projections efforts, which have for many years produced projections at the statewide, workforce region, and in some cases, county levels. The projections are presented to state and local WIBs, and to a wide variety of other customer groups. They are also disseminated in hard copy publications and on-line. The projections also form the backbone of numerous on-line analysis tools, particularly in relation to occupational and career information (e.g. Occupational Information Center, Occupational Explorer).

Oregon customers have shown less interest in short-term projections, perhaps due to the sensible concern that such projections, particularly for small local areas, are fraught with technical difficulty and potentially significant inaccuracy. The Oregon Department of Administrative Services (DAS) uses Research Division data as the basis for preparing the state's official short-term employment forecast (required as part of the state's legislative budgeting cycle); any Research Division short-term forecasts will be linked in some way to the DAS forecast, to ensure consistency, efficiency, coordination, and a lack of duplication within Oregon's state government.

The primary customer concern expressed over the years is one common to any projections effort – will the projections turn out to be accurate? Oregon has

conducted research into this concern, and published the results in the *Oregon Labor Trends* publication. That research suggested that the accuracy of our long-term projections is satisfactory in terms of predicting overall employment trends for the total economy and for broad industry and occupational groups. Our projections also give reasonable guidance as to which specific occupations will experience rapid growth in coming years. However, long-term projections will also be subject to unexpected, unusual, or even unique situations which come upon a state. In Oregon's case, an example in the 1990s was the incredible boom in high tech employment, which far exceeded any previous expectations ... and some of which subsequently disappeared during the 2001 recession.

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

Long-term projections, at the state and local levels, are an essential component of Oregon's workforce plan. These projections are key to the biennial demand/supply gap analysis and to the provision of career information to youths and adults.

- **Principal Customers**

The customer list for industry and occupational projections is lengthy. Major customer groups include WIBs and other workforce policy-makers; job seekers and individuals needing career information; educational planners and policy-makers; elected officials; businesses.

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

Oregon policy-makers and decision-makers, including individuals making career choices, will have access to reliable and localized employment information looking out ten years.

The workforce system will have reliable projections at hand when funding and other prioritization decisions are made, regarding education and workforce training.

- **Planned milestones**

Produce sub-state long-term industry and occupational employment projections for 2004-2014 - November 2005.

Produce statewide short-term industry and occupational employment projections for 2005-2007 – June 2006.

Populate the ALMIS Database with sub-state projections for 2004-2014 – November 2005.

Populate the ALMIS Database with statewide projections for 2005-2007 – June 2006.

Ensure that NAICS-based historical series are ready for 2004-2014 employment projections – already complete

If appropriate, send staff to employment projections training – January-June 2006.

- **Estimated costs (see attachment 2)**

Costs associated with this component of the grant = \$34,348 (plus funding from other sources).

***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**

Oregon offers (and continues to develop) a wide variety of occupational and career information products and services. These include:

- *Occupational Information Center* and *Occupational Explorer* on OLMIS;
- *Skills Explorer* on OLMIS;
- *Educational Information Center* on OLMIS;
- *Oregon Wage Information* – compendium of average and other wage measures, for a wide variety of occupations and all workforce regions. Available by hard copy and on OLMIS.
- *CAREERS* (English and Spanish versions) – an annual newspaper distributed to high schools, junior high schools, community colleges, one-stops, career and vocational counselors, libraries, and others. Also available on OLMIS.
- *Oregon Licensed Occupations* – a complete listing of all occupations which require licenses by the State of Oregon.

In order to accomplish the above, Research Division staff develop previously-mentioned occupational employment projections; add analysis of wages, educational requirements, and skills; and estimate the supply of workers into each occupation.

In addition, the Research Division leads Oregon's Partnership for Occupational and Career Information (POCI), a partnership of producers and customers of occupational and career information, focused on ensuring coordination and avoiding duplication. This Partnership includes representatives of Oregon's

Career Information System, Community Colleges, and Department of Education. During the partnership's quarterly meetings, other guests such as the Oregon Student Assistance Commission are frequently invited, POCI has brought together key individuals from different entities, seeking to improve both customer service and quality relating to career and occupational information tools.

All products and analyses are based on the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system.

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

Customer support for occupational and career information products and services is high. This support is demonstrated in newly available customer satisfaction survey results (see earlier discussion) and in less formal customer conversations which take place during presentations, conferences, summits, and visits to WIBs.

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

These occupational and career information products and services directly support both the goals and vision expressed in Oregon's workforce plan. Without these information items, alignment between the employment and training systems would be extremely difficult, and as noted above, the Research Division's occupational information (including occupational projections, education and skills information) is a key component of Oregon's efforts in regard to career and educational pathways,

The Research Division's leadership of the Partnership for Occupational and Career Information also contributes to the vision of a fully integrated workforce system.

- **Principal Customers**

The customer list for occupational and career information products and services is lengthy. Major customer groups include job seekers and individuals needing career information; workforce boards and related entities; educational planners and policy-makers; career counselors; elected officials; businesses.

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

High quality occupational and career information products and services result in individuals making better-informed career choices. This in turn leads to individuals being better able to attain the skills in demand by businesses and eventually, to move to higher-skilled, higher-paying, and/or, perhaps more importantly, more satisfying jobs and careers.

- **Planned milestones**

Maintain and improve occupational exploration tools on OLMIS – ongoing.

Develop and publish *CAREERS* and *Careers Activity Guide* (in English) – December 2005.

Develop and publish *CAREERS* and *Careers Activity Guide* (in Spanish) – February 2006.

Develop and publish *Oregon Wage Information* – May 2006.

Develop and publish *Oregon Licensed Occupations* – dependent on the length of Oregon’s Legislative Session; estimated publication date will be December 2005.

- **Estimated costs (See attachment 3)**

Costs associated with this component of the grant = \$42,846 (plus funding from other sources).

Note: *Oregon Wage Information*, *CAREERS* and the *Careers Activity Guide*, and *Oregon Licensed Occupations* are developed with funding outside of this grant.

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**

The Workforce Investment Act makes it clear that a state’s designated “employment statistics agency” has responsibility to consult with (i.e. seek input from) the state and local Workforce Investment Board(s). The Research Division has taken this responsibility seriously since the earliest days of WIA. The primary method of seeking input from state and local WIBs has involved personal visits by Research Division staff, attending formal WIB meetings and participating in other WIB-related work groups and projects. A secondary method has involved e-mail communications, providing updates on new and valuable products, and seeking input into future special projects.

Examples of support provided to WIBs in Oregon include:

- Implementation of a biennial Oregon Employer Survey, specifically designed to answer the workforce questions being asked by WIBs. For the completed 2004 survey, state and local WIBs were given the opportunity to select the primary focus(es) of the survey, and to propose specific questions they would like asked. As a result, the survey focused specifically on training and retention.

- Improvements in timeliness of selected information products (e.g. wage information).
- Presentations of new and/or interesting information (e.g. projections, recession/recovery, Census LED products).
- Special surveys done for two workforce regions; a special report for Oregon's largest workforce region; and collaboration in a "contracted out" special study in a third region.
- Provision of cluster-based economic information at the statewide and regional levels.
- The Research Division's Workforce Analysts were named as key resource persons for Oregon's Workforce Response Teams, economic and workforce development-focused teams which work closely with the local WIBs.

During the coming grant period, Oregon will continue to provide high levels of service and responsiveness to the state and local WIBs and, in addition, will undertake the following specific actions:

1. Oregon's LMI Director will continue his practice of personally visiting local and regional WIBs, refreshing their opportunity to communicate needs regarding information or support.
 2. Oregon's LMI Director will attend all OWIB meetings, or if that is impossible, send a high-level staff person in his place.
 3. Out-stationed Research Division staff will personally visit every local WIB at least once; will pro-actively seek to present new information and/or products; and, in collaboration with appropriate One-Stop managers, will pro-actively review upcoming WIB agendas, seeking opportunities to contribute relevant and useful information to the Board's discussions.
 4. Oregon will continue its participation and leadership role in the Census Local Employment Dynamics (LED) project, and will provide LED data (including new mapping tools) to OWIB and other Boards as soon as the information becomes available.
- **Customer support for product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations**
 - Since the inception of WIA (and in fact, since the early 1990s, when Oregon introduced a system of Workforce Quality Councils), the Research Division has enjoyed strong support from WIB customers. As mentioned above, Oregon conducted a WIB customer satisfaction survey in March 2005. Based on this input, Oregon will more make responses to WIB information requests relevant to the requestor's underlying question, easier to understand, and more helpful.
 - We will continue to developing high quality, timely, and localized information and products; a strong reputation for customer service and responsiveness; and strong personal relationships between key Research staff and WIB members.

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

The above-described activities support all goals of the strategic plan; all goals require timely and reliable information about the economy, industries, occupations, wages, or other components of labor market information.

- **Principal Customers**

Workforce Investment Boards; those they serve; those for whom they set policy and direction.

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

High quality labor market information should be considered as a basic infrastructure requirement of a successful Workforce Investment Board. The projected outcomes of the Research Division providing excellent service to the state and local WIBs will be a). Content and satisfied WIB members and b). Well-informed decisions made by those WIBs.

- **Planned milestones**

Oregon's LMI Director will continue visiting regional and local WIBs – July 2005-June 2006.

Oregon's LMI Director will personally attend all OWIB meetings – ongoing.

Research Division out-stationed staff will attend at least one local WIB meeting and pro-actively make themselves available to present relevant information at all local WIB meetings –July 2005 – June 2006/ ongoing.

The Research Division will conduct a new Oregon Employer Survey by in the spring of 2006. The specific subject matter of this survey is not yet known, as it will be determined following consultation with WIBs – spring 2006.

The Research Division will conduct a Benefits Survey, in collaboration with the Washington Labor Market Information Division – summer 2005.

Oregon will continue its leadership role with Census LED and provide new LED products to WIBs – ongoing / unknown dates throughout 2005.

Estimated costs (See attachment 4)

Costs associated with this component of the grant = \$101,109 (plus funding from other sources).

Note: Almost all activities in this category will be funded outside of this grant.

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

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

This core product has two existing main components;

- OLMIS – the Research Division’s customer-focused, award-winning web site.
- Geographic Information Systems – the Research Division’s development of a system allowing workforce, economic, and workforce development system analysis at a variety of extremely localized, varied jurisdictional levels.

By carefully and strategically balancing funding received from a number of different sources, the Research Division has historically been able to dedicate most of the Workforce Information grant funds to development of these electronic tools. It is our intention to continue this practice in the future.

During the coming grant period, Oregon will undertake the following:

- Ensure that all components of OLMIS are maintained in a timely and accurate way, ensuring that customers always have access to the most current and reliable information about Oregon’s economy and workforce.
- Complete and implement a new *Business Information Center* as another tool within OLMIS. This tool has been under development by a team of workforce analysts (staff whose primary focus is providing labor market information to businesses) and LMI systems development staff.
- Continue working on the next evolution of OLMIS (OLMIS 3.0), moving all of OLMIS to a reusable Java Server Page (JSP) and Cascading Style Sheet (CSS) environment.
- Include GIS based Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) data in tabular format as a tool within OLMIS.
- Continue development of a skills analysis system, providing real-time analysis and reporting based on data from Oregon’s iMatchSkills job match product. Link this skills analysis system with other OLMIS tools, including the *Skills Explorer*.

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

As discussed previously, customer support for OLMIS has been extremely high. In many situations, when customer groups are asked about their familiarity with Oregon LMI products, OLMIS and *CAREERS* are the most well-known. Responses from the OLMIS customer survey use phrases like, “Your site is very easy to use,” and “it’s a very good internet site that you can find information easily on.”

In addition, it is worth noting that OLMIS had 2,198 visitors during October 1999, when it was released, compared to the 28,294 visitors per month OLMIS averaged during 2004 and the 34,556 visitors OLMIS has averaged in the first five months of 2005. These 2005 visitors have accessed over one and a half million pages of information as they browsed the various tools, information centers, and publications available on-line.

Even though customers do not yet have on-line access to the Research Division's GIS, support has been high. Our GIS system has allowed us to answer employment and planning information requests at a much more granular and local level than previously possible. Many customers have been amazed and delighted at the customized research results that can be made available to them. Historical examples relate not only to economic variables such as unemployment and employment growth, but also to program-related decision-making involving ES, UI, Child Care, and economic development activities.

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

Both OLMIS and GIS provide underlying support to all the work of Oregon's workforce boards and the workforce system. OLMIS offers perhaps the best example of "seamless service" and collaboration within the workforce system. Not only is it available to all staff and customers of the system, but specific training is offered to one-stop staff, to ensure that they can use OLMIS successfully as they serve job seekers and other customers.

The planned skills analysis system will support the Governor's and the Board's desires to implement "pathways" type thinking into Oregon's workforce and educational planning.

- **Principal Customers**

Almost all users of workforce and economic information are customers of OLMIS. Particularly important customers include businesses; workforce development staff, policy-makers, and customers; education policy-makers, planners, and participants (e.g. students); media; elected officials; career counselors, and job seekers.

Elected officials, workforce development policy-makers, county and city planners, and economic development entities have been particularly strong customers of GIS.

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

The outcome of a continued high-quality web site is that all customers, from the highest policy makers to the youngest career information seeker, are able to easily

access quality workforce information, allowing them to make more informed decisions.

The outcome of Oregon's GIS efforts is the ability to provide information and analysis (and contribute to decision-making) at much more localized geographic levels (e.g. legislative districts, school districts, enterprise zones, urban growth boundaries) than previously possible.

The outcome of a skills analysis system will be the ability to communicate to education and training entities, policy-makers, students, and job seekers the actual skills being sought after by businesses in Oregon at the current time.

- **Planned milestones**

Ensure that all components of OLMIS are maintained in a timely and accurate way – ongoing

Complete and implement a new *Business Information Center* on OLMIS – Soft release July 2005, with full release in November 2005

Continue database, JSP, and user interface work on OLMIS 3.0 – ongoing with a tentative completion date of December 2006.

Continue development of Oregon's GIS capability from an intranet-based tool for internal staff to an internet-based tool for all customers – June 2006.

Develop a skills analysis system, providing real-time analysis and reporting based on Oregon's iMatchSkills job match product – February 2006.

- **Estimated costs (See attachment 5)**

Costs associated with this component of the grant = \$261,738

6. Support state workforce information training activities.

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

In the early 1990s, the Research Division established a position whose primary focus was the provision of labor market information-related training to Employment Department and other workforce partner agency staff, particularly those on "the front line". This position continues to this day, focusing partly on training activities and partly on customer service efforts relating to the OLMIS web site.

In recent years, this position has provided dozens of training sessions to front-line workforce development partner staff, as well as customized training to specific groups (e.g. Unemployment Insurance adjudicators, One-Stop managers). The

position has also been asked to provide customized training to employees of companies heading toward significant layoffs.

During the coming grant period, the Research Division will undertake the following:

1. Continue modifying and improving our LMI training modules based on feedback from the training evaluation completed by trainees.
2. Offer at least one, if not several, LMI training sessions in all workforce regions of the state.
3. Develop and offer customized LMI training sessions to any audiences that request them.
4. Continue maintenance and development of on-line workforce information training tools.

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

Customer support for previous LMI training efforts has been high, based on evaluations completed at the end of each training session. Customer participation sometimes provides challenges, based on geographic distances of travel and high workload in One-Stop offices, thereby limiting staff's ability to attend training.

Customer support for customized training has been extremely high.

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

Workforce information training directly supports goals relating to co-location and seamless service, improving Oregon's ability to have all partners in the workforce system using high quality information and using that information to direct customers to appropriate resources and services.

- **Principal Customers**

Primary customers of workforce information training are workforce development professionals, including both Employment Department staff and our workforce partners. Other customers, particularly for more customized training, include private sector businesses and their employees, policy makers, and internal Research Division staff.

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

When front-line workforce system staff are educated and skilled in the use of workforce information, customers of the workforce system directly benefit from assisted access to information tools to making informed and career decisions.

- **Planned milestones**

Offer at least one LMI training sessions in all workforce regions of the state – July 2005-June 2006.

Develop and offer customized LMI training sessions to any audiences that request them – ongoing.

- **Estimated costs (See attachment 6)**

Costs associated with this component of the grant = \$78,453.

C. Consultation and Customer Satisfaction Assessment

During the coming grant period, the Research Division will undertake the following consultation and customer satisfaction activities, some of which have already been described above:

1. Visit with each WIB, providing updates on key workforce information activities and seeking input on future priorities and needs.
2. Include customer satisfaction surveys in all annual and special publications that are distributed; review results of those surveys before the next publication is developed.
3. Conduct annual customer satisfaction surveys for all publications which are produced on a monthly or more frequent basis; incorporate results of those surveys into annual publication reviews.
4. Continually review and follow up on customer satisfaction responses to the OLMIS web site survey.
5. Provide evaluation forms for all workforce information training sessions; review results of those evaluations before developing the next training session.
6. Conduct a detailed customer tracking and satisfaction study in October of each year, documenting all customer contacts and following up with a customer satisfaction survey to a random sample of customers.
7. Conduct an annual customer satisfaction survey of Oregon's WIBs, in March 2006.

In combination, these activities will ensure that the Research Division is responsive to the needs and priorities of key customers (WIBs) and responsive to the opinions and satisfaction of all customers.

Oregon does not have specific performance measures or targets in terms of customer satisfaction. Current consultation and customer satisfaction efforts are geared more at inclusion and continuous improvement, and less at specific numerical values that purport to quantify these very difficult areas.