

## **Summary Report of the Conference Call of the Wage Record Interchange System (WRIS) Advisory Group**

First Quarter 2010 Conference Call: March 25, 2010

*The First Quarter 2010 Conference Call Meeting of the Advisory Group of the Wage Record Interchange System (WRIS) was convened on March 25, 2010 (EST) from the Employment and Training Administration (ETA), U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, DC*

### **Welcome and Remarks**

- Karen Staha welcomed everyone to the call and reminded them to always submit their questions and comments to [WRIS@dol.gov](mailto:WRIS@dol.gov)
- Karen also announced the departure of John Beverly to the Office of Disability, as well as the transfer of the Division of System Accountability into the Office of Policy Development and Research.

### **Adoption of Minutes from Advisory Group Meeting of December 18, 2009**

- The minutes were approved as submitted.

### **WRIS II Initiative**

- The workgroup has recently met to discuss the drafting of the WRIS II data sharing agreement. John Glen, Oregon, as chairman of the workgroup, briefed the Advisory Group about the next steps.
- Several members, including Clinton Flowers (MO) Adam Leonard (TX) and Rick Little (UT) were developing a protocol and conceptual models for how WRIS could work in the future. Documents will be available for review at the next meeting.

### **Third Round Amendments**

Greg Wilson presented the six proposals; number 10-15 which are posted on the **Website** at: <http://www.doleta.gov/performance/wris.cfm>

- Proposal Number 10 – Expanded Definition of “Aggregate Data”  
Following review of the comments received, it was determined that the proposed deposition for Amendment 15 addresses the issue of NAICS codes and higher levels of aggregation.
- Proposal Number 11 – Prohibiting Wage Data Storage on Devices That Can Be Compromised  
Following review of the comments received during the 60-day comment period, the State of Massachusetts agreed to revise the language of its amendment proposal to address the issues raised.
- Proposal Number 12 – Legal Authority of Data Sharing Agreement  
No changes to this proposal (the sole comment received was withdrawn).
- Proposal Number 13 – WRIS Meetings and Distribution of Minutes

A comment was received during the 60-day comment period that Advisory Group members receive 10 rather than 20 business days to comment on the draft Advisory Group meeting report after its release by ETA. This comment was incorporated in this amendment proposal.

- Proposal Number 14 – Expand the Data Sharing Agreement to include U.S. DOL ETA programs and grants funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 in the Programs Specified as Allowable for Wage Data Exchange. The new proposed language address the comments received by clarifying that the proposal applies only to ETA programs and ETA grants funded under the Recovery Act.
- Proposal Number 15 – Inclusion of NAICS Codes in the Definition of Wage Data  
The new proposed language includes: Wage data also includes industry sectors in which employees work, as identified by NAICS codes. States provide the 6-digit NAICS code associated with the wage data unless an individual employer can be identified. In such cases, states provide the NAICS code at a higher level of aggregation (i.e. 4 or 2 digit level).

These amendments to the WRIS agreement have been sent back to WRIS Contacts and the Advisory Group to initiate the final 30-day comment period. Prior to the conclusion of this comment period, ETA will host a conference call in which any party to the agreement can participate to further express their concerns. No discussion on this Advisory Group call was intended; however, ETA will provide an email soon with the date and time for the conference call. If no objections to the proposed amendments are raised during the 30-day comment period, ETA will arrange to obtain the necessary signatures from the parties.

### **WRIS On-Site Confidentiality Reviews**

- To ensure the integrity of the information processed through the WRIS, the data sharing agreement includes a third-party review process referred to as Confidentiality Compliance Reviews. As directed by ETA, the Confidentiality Reviews are being conducted with states to learn about their approach to data security, observe how they are meeting their obligations under the data sharing agreement, and provide technical assistance where requested. These reviews are also intended to highlight innovative policies and practices that might be of interest to WRIS members.
- The Annual Report recently posted on the WRIS website ([www.doleta.gov/performance/wris.cfm](http://www.doleta.gov/performance/wris.cfm)), summarizes the observations from 15 on-site Confidentiality Reviews conducted in 2009 and the first quarter of 2010.
- ETA would once again like to take this opportunity to thank the participating states for their cooperation and support in this process. The states that participated include Montana, Delaware, Oklahoma, North Dakota, Illinois, West Virginia, Idaho, Washington, Arkansas, Maryland, California, Florida, Kansas, New Mexico, and Arizona.
- Through this process, it was found that each participating state had developed its own customized approach to serve the information management needs of its respective workforce system. Members were encouraged to read, at a minimum, the observation and highlight section at the beginning of the report.
- Send any comments about this process to the WRIS account at: [WRIS@dol.gov](mailto:WRIS@dol.gov)

## **Quarterly Technical Report of WRIS Operations**

Karen Staha invited Amanda Gohl and Martha Stephens from ACS to update the group on the technical operations. This presentation was sent in an e-mail to the group on 3-24-09. For another copy, please e-mail [swanson.william@dol.gov](mailto:swanson.william@dol.gov).

### **Additional Business**

The next call will be to wrap up the amendments' 30-day comment period, and the next quarterly call will be in June.

### **VII. Adjournment**

Receiving no further items for discussion, Ms. Staha thanked members for their participation in the First Quarter Advisory Group meeting and invited them to e-mail any follow-up questions to [WRIS@dol.gov](mailto:WRIS@dol.gov).