

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

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September 21, 2011

Mr. Richard Trigg
Regional Administrator
U.S. Department of Labor
Employment & Training Administration
90 Seventh Street, Suite 17-300
San Francisco, CA 94103-1516

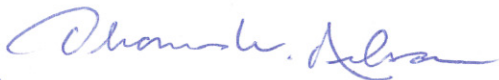
Dear Mr. Trigg:

The Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development respectfully submits our PY10 Workforce Information Core Products and Services grant performance report. During PY10, the Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development's Research and Analysis Section completed work in all five of the core products and services outlined in TEGL 3-10.

- Continue to populate the Workforce Information Database
- Produce and disseminate industry and occupational employment projections
- Conduct and publish relevant economic analyses, special workforce information, and/or economic studies of benefit to the governor and the AWIB
- Post products, information and reports on the Internet
- Partner and consult with the AWIB and key talent development partners and stakeholders

Alaska's detailed performance report is attached.

Sincerely:



for Click Bishop, Commissioner
Alaska Department of Labor
and Workforce Development



Jim Lynch, Chair
Alaska Workforce Investment Board

State of Alaska PY 2010 Workforce Information Grant

Performance Report



JULY 1, 2010 to JUNE 30, 2011

Statewide Workforce Information System

PY 2010 Accomplishments

During Program Year 2010, the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Research and Analysis Section (R&A) supported the Workforce Information Grant core products that are outlined in TEGL No. 3-10. The following are summaries of how R&A met the five objectives.

Populate the Workforce Information Database with state and local data.

Alaska updated the Workforce Information Database core tables with required data sets as established by the Analyst Resource Center. The WID collected and delivered these data and many of Alaska's online products and special reports to the business community, Alaska Workforce Investment Board, individuals, and workforce development professionals. The WID used software version 2.4 in PY 2010, and ran on an MS SQL server.

The Alaska Career Information System (AKCIS) is an example of an Internet product that uses several WID data fields to turn labor market information into a standalone career information delivery system. The WID provides Alaska wages, employment, projections, and licensing information. AKCIS seamlessly links these state-specific occupational and educational figures in one place, creating an interactive, Web-based education and planning tool for career seekers.

The AKCIS portal is <http://akcis.org/>.

Produce and disseminate industry and occupational employment projections.

Alaska sent its short-term occupational forecast for 2009–2011 to North Carolina on Nov. 22, 2010. The 2010–2012 statewide short-term occupational projections were completed at the end of this program year, and R&A provided the electronic file to North Carolina's Employment Security Commission, Labor Market Information Division.

R&A's statewide and area economists produced and published a one-year 2011 industry forecast for Alaska and the Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Southeast regions in late 2010. The forecast was featured in the January 2011 issue of *Alaska Economic Trends*, R&A's monthly economic news magazine.

The state's current long-term occupational projection data are for 2008–2018 and were published in the September 2010 issue of *Alaska Economic Trends*, along with industry forecasts.

Both sets of data — industry and occupational — are also published on R&A's Web site and have been incorporated into several R&A products including the Alaska Occupational Table, Alaska Occupations Information Website, the Gasline Occupations Information Web site, Alaska's Gasline Inducement Act (AGIA) report, the Alaska Career Ladder product, and the Alaska Local and Regional Information Web site.

R&A also created and disseminated Alaska's Top Jobs list, which comprises 63 occupations. To rank as a top job, the occupation must rank in the top two wage quartiles *and* have projected growth of at least 75 jobs and greater percentage growth than all occupations combined; *or* be among the 50 occupations with the most projected openings (of those with wages in the top two quartiles).

Change in methods

Alaska now deviates from Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment Statistics staffing patterns for private sector employment for both long-term and short-term occupational forecasts because:

1. BLS's OES-based staffing patterns are based on small sample sizes.
2. The OES uses a significant amount of imputed data (i.e. replacing nonresponders with data from other firms). This introduces biases of unknown magnitude and direction, which can result in unreliable staffing patterns.
3. OES staffing patterns were unrealistically erratic from year to year with high standard errors, response bias, and unknown imputation bias as mentioned above.
4. Most importantly, the OES-provided staffing patterns, which we used in the past, did not incorporate all of the best available data.

With problems 1 through 3, there was no effective way to *significantly* improve the staffing pattern estimates using only data provided by the OES surveys. Imputed data could be removed and/or replaced by years-old data provided by employers. However, these data may not have reflected the employer's current staffing, and removing the imputed data would have reduced an already-small sample size.

On the other hand, Alaska's Occupational Database (ODB) provided the opportunity to remedy problem 4 and, in the process, alleviate problems 1 and 2 and minimize problem 3. ODB improves on BLS's estimates of industries' staffing patterns, and provides a near-census of all the state's nonfederal, nonmilitary, unemployment insurance-eligible wage and salary employers.

Each employer is required to provide the occupations for each of its wage-and-salary employees, creating a nearly ideal data set to develop industry staffing patterns. However, because ODB does not include federal employment, R&A still uses BLS staffing pattern data for federal employment in Alaska.

Conduct and publish relevant economic analyses, special workforce information, and/or economic studies determined to be of benefit to the governor and the AWIB.

R&A produced and published the economic report *Nonresidents Working in Alaska 2009* in January 2011. This report outlines resident hire in Alaska by industry, occupation, and geographic area. Maximizing resident hire is a continuous high priority among policymakers and Alaska's Workforce Investment Board.

R&A provided printed copies of its *Residency Analysis of Alaska's Workers by Firm— 2009* to state legislators and other interested parties. This report is also available on R&A's Web site at <http://labor.alaska.gov/research/reshire/nonres.pdf>.

Post products, reports, and information on the Internet.

R&A's Web site (<http://laborstats.alaska.gov/>) is the section's primary dissemination tool for its products, reports, and data.

Products

1. **Alaska Economic Trends** is R&A's monthly economic news magazine. It has the largest distribution of any printed R&A publication with more than 36,000 copies produced in PY 2010. *Trends* is also available online at <http://labor.alaska.gov/trends/>.
2. **Alaska Training Clearinghouse** provides information for Alaska training providers and identifies training programs specific to occupations. Each program on the Eligible Training Provider List has an instructional program code that links the program to one or more occupations based on the National Crosswalk Service Center's occupations-to-instructional-programs crosswalk file. <http://labor.alaska.gov/research/training/atc/>
3. **Alaska Occupations Information** provides a range of data on more than 500 occupations, including WID and non-WID data sets. <http://labor.alaska.gov/research/occs/alaskaoccs/home.htm>
4. **ALARI** (Alaska Local and Regional Information) gives customers a snapshot of an area's resident workforce rather than a glimpse of an area's economy. ALARI data are by place of residence: Alaska, region, borough or census area, and community. Residency is established by matching wage record file data with Alaska's unique Permanent Fund Dividend information. A year ago, R&A added WID tax and property values to ALARI. <http://labor.alaska.gov/research/alari/>

5. **Alaska Career Ladder** helps career counselors, education administrators, training providers, and other users identify occupations most likely to lead to advancement to or from a particular job. The career ladder is based on real-world analysis of occupation-to-occupation movements of Alaska workers over a five-year period.

<http://labor.alaska.gov/research/careerladder/>

Reports

In PY 2010, R&A completed several reports and posted them on its Web site:

1. **Alaska Population Digest: 2009 Estimates**

Published August 2010: <http://labor.alaska.gov/research/pop/estimates/pub/PopDigest.pdf>

2. **Unemployment Insurance Actuarial Study and Financial Handbook, 2009**

Published December 2010: <http://labor.alaska.gov/research/uiprogram/uipub.pdf>

3. **Residency Analysis of Alaska Workers—2009**

Published January 2011: <http://labor.alaska.gov/research/reshire/reshire.pdf>

4. **Training Program Performance, 2009**

Published February 2011: <http://labor.alaska.gov/research/training/training.pdf>

5. **Alaska Population Projections 2010–2034**

Published February 2011: <http://labor.alaska.gov/research/pop/projected/pub/popproj.pdf>

6. **Alaska Green Jobs Report**

Published June 2011: <http://labor.alaska.gov/research/greenjobs/greenreport.pdf>

Information

R&A provides the following information and data sets on its Web site:

Workforce:

- Size of the labor force (total number of people employed plus those seeking employment)
- Number and percent of workers unemployed
- Number and percent of the workforce that were not Alaska residents
- Number and percent of new hires
- Number of layoffs
- Fish harvesting employment
- Number and details of work-related injuries, illnesses, and fatalities

Industry:

- Monthly estimate of payroll jobs by industry
- Quarterly employment and earnings by industry
- Short-term employment forecast by industry
- Ten-year employment forecast by industry
- Number of new hires by industry

Occupational:

- Alaska Occupations Information
- Employment and wages by occupation
- Career and occupational information
- Ten-year occupational forecast
- Number of new hires by occupation
- Job-to-job links in a typical career path
- Alaska green jobs information and data

Housing:

- Costs related to buying, building, and renting housing in the state

Training:

- Alaska Training Clearinghouse (contains Alaska training providers and programs information and identifies training programs specific to occupations)
- Employment and earnings of those who exit training programs

Population and Census:

- Current and future populations
- Maps
- Decennial census information

R&A's Web site

Nearly every R&A product is available on its Web site, <http://laborstats.alaska.gov/>. The site was visited by nearly 48,000 users on average each month in PY 2010, and downloads of R&A publications and products reached 1.2 million. *Alaska Economic Trends* accounted for about 35 percent of downloads, at about 447,000.

For several years, R&A and several other states contracted with CIBER, Inc., to provide and manage labor market information through the nationally marketed Workforce Information

system. The original contract was with NSR, an information technology firm, which was purchased by CIBER in 2002.

This consortium of states created WI to deliver labor market information over the Web. For eight years, it was the model for the state's Web sites. In early 2010, CIBER disengaged from the WI system on very short notice.

During PY 2010, R&A successfully developed and transitioned to its own Web site. After considering several options, R&A decided to build and host its own site. R&A was fortunate to have staff with the knowledge and ability to build and manage a new site, and to work with the department's data processing staff to secure hosting. The total project was finished on a small budget in just seven months, and the site went live on March 1, 2011.

Partner and consult on a continuing basis with the AWIB and other key workforce and economic development partners and stakeholders.

During PY 2010, R&A worked with the Alaska Workforce Investment Board staff and committee members to provide products and services that support AWIB's strategies. Alaska's workforce board has been uniformly supportive of R&A's workforce products and services.

Alaska's research chief and staff participated in the following AWIB meetings during this program year:

- Sept 14, 2010: AWIB subcommittee teleconference
- Oct 25–26, 2010: AWIB meeting/presentation in Fairbanks
- Oct 27, 2010: AWIB gasline steering committee meeting in Fairbanks
- Feb 22–23, 2011: AWIB meeting/presentation in Juneau
- Feb 24, 2011: AWIB gasline steering committee meeting in Juneau
- May 24–25, 2011: AWIB committee meeting in Seward

R&A provided data, analyses, and printed copies of its reports to the AWIB as needed.

Customer Satisfaction Assessment

Alaska used several methods collect and interpret customer needs and satisfaction:

- **Customer satisfaction survey:** R&A maintained a Web-based user survey on its site. Customers who completed the survey were mostly satisfied with the products and services that R&A offers. Of those who were familiar with the data they were seeking or using, all expressed satisfaction with the Web site.
- **Informal discussions and collaboration:** R&A worked closely with its primary user groups — including the AWIB, employers, and the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Employment Security and Business Partnerships divisions — to meet data needs. Alaska's principal customers expressed strong support for R&A and its services and products.
- **Information requests:** R&A tracked information requests for data. Staff who responded maintained an electronic log of the customer types, what they requested, and what R&A provided. Staff also met directly with several customers and provided tailored reports to meet their needs.

Though Alaska's primary customers didn't request any specific improvements, R&A will continue to work with them to align the section's products and services with their needs.