

WORKFORCE INFORMATION GRANT ~STATEMENT OF WORK~

Program Year 2004

Idaho Commerce and Labor will continue to use grant resources to produce the following Labor Market Information (LMI) products and services. The Research and Analysis Bureau, Public Affairs Bureau, and Information Systems Bureau are responsible for fulfilling all of the following deliverables according to the PY2004 Workforce Information pursuant to the Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 1-04.

**Note ~ Idaho's State WIB will be referred to as the Workforce Development Council (WDC).*

SECTION A ~ Idaho Workforce Information System

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

Idaho Commerce and Labor will continue to fully engage the WDC via customer satisfaction surveys, focus groups, and other collaborative efforts between Commerce and Labor staff, and other partners. Idaho Regional Labor Economists will continue to work closely with State and Local WIBs and their staff in the planning, development, and implementation of all LMI research activities. The implementation of the PY2004 Workforce Information grant occurs at the same time the former Idaho Department of Labor and Idaho Department of Commerce will be merging into Idaho Department of Commerce and Labor. The synergies from this merger will serve to greatly enhance our ability to deliver vital LMI to our customers and stakeholders. With Commerce, Labor, and WIBS cultivating this partnership and working hand in hand, LMI can be planned and developed more effectively, and disseminated to market in a more timely manner.

Commerce and Labor continues to staff the State WDC, and quarterly meetings are held to discuss the vision and direction of Idaho's Workforce Information plan. While Commerce and Labor has always partnered with the Workforce Information Boards to ensure their vision is being met, we continue to cultivate this partnership while developing more formal protocols to ensure the future of Idaho's LMI fulfills the demands of Idaho's ever dynamic workforce and economy. The protocol for such communication is detailed in the Planning and Evaluation Plan found in Appendix A, and portions of the WDC feedback is summarized in Section C.

How the statewide workforce information system supports the goals of the state's WIA/WP five-year strategic plan for state and local workforce development:

All products and services included in this statement of work are derived to support the strategic goals outlined in the Strategic Five-Year Workforce Investment Plan for Title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and Wagner-Peyser Act and its vision.

Specific to Labor Market Information the Idaho Commerce and Labor Five-Year Strategic plan states as follows:

***LABOR MARKET INFORMATION (LMI)** provides a broad variety of data at the state, regional, and local level on past, current, and projected labor market conditions. Statistics on employment and unemployment serve as key economic indicators and are produced in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Activities include:*

- *Developing state and local labor market statistics*
- *Publishing a monthly state and area employment newsletter*
- *Developing information on occupations and wages*
- *Conducting actuarial research for Unemployment Insurance trust fund solvency*
- *Conducting special research projects at the state and local level*
- *Identifying workforce education and skill requirements by industry*

LMI products supported by Workforce Information Grant monies are planned, developed and disseminated to meet the needs of Idaho's WIA/WP/IDOL Five Year Strategic Plan. Commerce and Labor works closely with the WDC and their staff to ensure the language in the Five-year Strategic Plan continues to fulfill the needs of Idaho's dynamic workforce and economy.

How Commerce and Labor activities are consistent with the strategic vision of the Governor and the WDC:

Each product and service funded by the Workforce Information Grant comprise the basis for the state workforce information system. These products and services directly support the strategic vision of the Governor and the WDC. The WDC is responsible for identifying and defining the ultimate vision for Idaho's workforce investment system. The WDC works closely with Commerce and Labor to ensure the implementation of that vision is successful.

The Governor led Workforce Development Council vision states:

Idaho will deliver a highly trained, diverse workforce through partnerships among business, labor, education, and government. This integrated workforce development system will meet the productivity needs of a market-driven economy—improving profitability, increasing global competitiveness, and enhancing Idaho's quality of life.

It further states that *"The workforce system supporting this vision will assure that all customers—employers, job seekers, and students—will have access to streamlined, state-of-the-art, user-friendly employment, education, and training information and services."* All of the core products and services outlined in this document support that statement.

The Goals of the Governor and WDC serve to meet this strategic vision of serving the Labor Market Information needs of the workforce, most specifically meeting Goals I and II:

Goal I ~ Assess the needs of business and industry to enhance economic development, based on market sensitivity.

Goal II ~ Establish a comprehensive workforce development delivery system.

The WDC's strategic vision can be viewed in its entirety at http://www.jobservice.us/wia1/iwdc_vision.pdf.

The strategy of Commerce and Labor and the WDC for consulting with local workforce investment boards and stakeholders in the workforce investment system to determine customer needs for workforce innovation:

In order to ensure that customer needs are being met, Commerce and Labor, the WDC, and State WIBS need to be fully engaged in the planning and implementation of the Workforce Information plan. Commerce and Labor works regularly with the WDC in identifying the LMI needs of the local WIBS. A formal protocol takes place each year with each local WIB being surveyed annually by Commerce and Labor planning and evaluation staff. These data are culled and evaluated for inclusion in Idaho's Workforce Information Annual Plan. A summary of the findings from the most recent survey are displayed in Section C.

Also, the WDC, their staff, and Commerce and Labor's Regional Labor Economists (RLE) continue to meet on a regular basis to ensure that the plan continues to fulfill the Workforce Information needs of Idaho's evolving economy and workforce. Idaho's out-stationed RLEs are the primary messengers of local LMI as well as the major conduit to local WIBs. RLEs attend local WIB meetings and monitor the needs and requests of the local WIBs and immediately act on them, or relay them to those equipped to handle such requests. If these requests/needs can't be answered immediately, they are to be categorized as a full ad-hoc project. Both immediate and ad-hoc requests are culled monthly and documented by planning and evaluation staff to be potentially included as an annual deliverable in the Workforce Information Annual Plan.

RLEs also attend numerous meetings with various associations, colleagues, economic developers, and other business customers to maintain a grasp of the needs and demands for LMI within the various industries, occupations, and business sectors. Requests from these meetings are immediately answered when possible, or for those requiring further research the requests are collected and forwarded to Central Office staff for implementation, and/or consideration for future LMI research projects under the auspices of the Workforce Information Annual Plan, or other leveraged LMI funding.

The local WIB/SWA/WDC partnership is integral to the effectiveness of planning, developing, and implementing a comprehensive Workforce Information Annual Plan that meets the needs and demands of our evolving economy and workforce.

Broad strategic approach for workforce information delivery to principal customers:

Again Idaho's key customer segments of its state workforce investment system continue to include individuals, such as a job seeker or an employer/business, and system intermediaries, such as technical schools. Idaho's broad strategic approach in reaching the principal customers of business/employers, state and local boards, and workforce intermediaries continue to involve utilizing the LMI central nervous system including the 24 local offices, 6 One-Stops, and local WIB's. And more recently due to the Commerce and Labor merger the department has incorporated Economic Development specialists within the workforce investment system. The synergies derived from this merger have already been realized in the development of more effective and timely LMI.

Last years release of *iLMI*, Idaho's Internet Labor Market Information in February of 2003 is Idaho's One-Stop answer to national, state, and most importantly, local Labor Market Information. The One-Stop system is a workforce service environment in which customers can enter in a variety of ways and be served in a variety of ways that best fit their needs.

This broad reaching approach combined with a comprehensive evaluation to measure our success improves our ability to develop and disseminate LMI. Success means that LMI is quickly and accurately delivered to our customers who ultimately leverage LMI so that local communities, businesses, and individuals can prosper.

How workforce information and services are delivered as core services to customers through the state's One-stop service delivery system:

The Planning and Evaluation findings have elicited that key customer segments have diverse and dynamic service and skill development needs. The Idaho system has many organizations that provide a wide variety of services, and most types of workforce and skill development services are available statewide.

Idaho Workforce Investment Act (WIA) system considers its specific primary customer segments as: employers/business, community officials, and workforce development intermediaries; experienced worker job seekers, including dislocated workers; new and returning entrants to the workforce; youth, both in and out of school; and those people who might fit into one of the broad customer segments, but who have additional skill development or service needs. Some examples of these needs and services, and associated LMI products and services that can be addressed through WIA activities include:

For Public Policy Decision Makers (State and Local Boards)

Elected officials, community leaders, workforce intermediaries, and the media needing information on economic and workforce trends and needs. LMI serves the needs of this vital sector for planning, economic development, curriculum development, and other needs of their immediate customers.

For Businesses and Employers, etc.

LMI is vital to the economic needs of business. Businesses and employers needing workers need LMI (such as wage rates, job applicant availability), and business stakeholder information to prosper. Idaho via the direction of the Governor and Workforce Development Council is focusing its attention on serving these vital customers that ultimately impact the prosperity of all LMI customers.

For Experienced Workers

Job seekers, regardless of reason, seeking employment opportunities and labor market information (such as industry and occupational employment, employer listings).

Dislocated workers, especially those needing retraining, intensive job search assistance, or those who need to find suitable jobs out of the local area via statewide and national job bank listings.

For Workforce Intermediaries

Workforce intermediaries, such as labor exchange agents, schools, community-based organizations, career guidance counselors, and teachers are customers of Idaho's workforce investment system. Intermediaries need information and often system partners have that information. Intermediaries need to know how to refer customers to a specific service. Limited financial resources often can be extended through intermediary coordination and joint ventures. All intermediaries need labor market information.

For New Entrants and Returning Workers

New entrants to the labor market or those reentrants needing labor market information (such as occupational employment trends and training requirements), career guidance, or assistance in tailoring their job search.

Public assistance recipients needing job training, career guidance, case management services, transition assistance from welfare to work.

Older workers who often need retraining, skills enhancement, work experience, and job search assistance.

For Youth

Youth and others making career and school decisions that require understanding career possibilities and training requirements, those who need basic work skills, those making the transition from school to work, and youth needing part-time or summer employment.

Youth also need educational services that not only provide academic and social skills, but also prepare students for the workforce. To this end, the Idaho educational system, including substantial support from foundations, has made large investments in multimedia technology for schools, has embraced the School-to-Work program, developed multi-district vocational education centers and programs, created cooperative secondary-to-post-secondary technical education programs, sponsored special studies of how well the schools' curricula meet workforce needs, and refocused attention on those students who do not attend post-secondary schools. LMI is used in not only providing this information to students, but also in planning the programs.

For Persons Needing Other Services

Unemployment Insurance, Workers Compensation, and other program customers who are not necessarily changing jobs, but need prompt and coordinated service during their participation.

Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers needing job information, worker protection, or training.

Persons with disabilities needing specialized workforce training services, work place accommodation, and intensive job search assistance.

Economically disadvantaged persons needing comprehensive workforce training services including basic academic education, basic workplace skills, labor market information, and intensive job search assistance.

Persons with disabilities needing special workplace or training accommodations, who need exposure to and instruction in how to use technologies that mitigate their disabilities, and advocacy in obtaining employment.

Veterans needing job search assistance or supportive services for disabilities.

These LMI needs of the broad sets of customers can be fulfilled from the One-stop system's services, information, resources, and coordination. Individuals will be best served through the One-Stop system. Idaho's One-Stop system includes staffed facilities (24 local offices, and 6 One-Stop Centers throughout the Idaho), self-service kiosks, telephonic accessed information and services, publications and other media resources, and information and service access via the Internet. The most recent addition to the One-Stop LMI system was last years release of iLMI, Idaho's Internet Labor Market Information. iLMI was released in February of 2003 and continues to be Idaho's One-Stop answer to national, state, and most importantly, local Labor Market Information. The One-Stop system is a workforce service environment in which customers can enter in a variety of ways and be served in a variety of ways that best fit their needs. Ideas, data, and other LMI are also shared at local WIB meetings between the community and Regional Labor Economists. This comprehensive one-stop approach continues to serve the regional, and local demands for LMI.

A description of the customer consultation and satisfaction assessment methods to be used to collect and interpret customer satisfaction information and the principal customers to be consulted.

Idaho's Strategy to identify and serve customer demand stems from the vision of the Governor in meeting *Goal 1-4. ~ Develop and recommend performance and evaluation methods. Support a system that regularly measures progress toward goals and determines customer satisfaction.* The Department has and will continue to consult and work with the Idaho Workforce Development Council, local Workforce Investment Boards, Career Information Systems, Subject Matter Experts, Focus Groups and the Customer Satisfaction Final Report, in the development of workforce information products and services.

Idaho's Planning and Evaluation Plan designed to elicit feedback from principal customers is fully described Appendix A. To meet the condition set forth in the Workforce Information Act, Idaho assembled a 10-member team representing the data-producing units of R&A, and members of Public Affairs to develop a comprehensive plan to measure the effectiveness and demand of Idaho's LMI products and LMI delivery systems. The focus of this team was to ensure that WIBS, employers, job seekers, and all other stakeholder were able to easily and effectively give feedback on products, services, and LMI gaps. The team was comprised of analysts who are instrumental in producing core LMI products and services and Public Affairs analysts whose responsibility it is for dealing with the customer population. This comprehensive effort combined with the evaluation feedback from Idaho's one-stop UI and job placement service delivery system strengthens Idaho's ability to identify, understand, and address LMI demands. Consultation with businesses, individuals, workforce investment system, and state and local boards via findings from the evaluation component and planning meetings are paramount in the research, development, and submission of this workforce information grant. The cornerstone of this effort involves the department's local Regional Labor Market Economists attendance and participation in their local Workforce Investment Board (WIB). This immediate and personal feedback allows us to better identify, understand, and measure the demands and needs of our regional grassroots customers. Workforce Information Grant funds directly support this invaluable endeavor to evaluate and measure the demands and needs of our LMI customers. For a complete description of this effort see Appendix A.

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 PY2004 including how the plan addresses inadequacies or gaps identified by users.

The planning and evaluation process enhances Idaho's ability to improve upon current products and identify gaps in LMI that must be filled in order to keep up with our dynamic economy and workforce. Focus groups, phone and internet traffic, information requests, and customer satisfaction surveys are examples of metrics efforts in evaluating the effectiveness of LMI products and delivery. A summary of this effort can be seen in Section C, and a full description of this comprehensive effort is displayed in Appendix A.

One example of how this effort has benefited in the delivery of more effective LMI products includes the focus group made up of our one-stop partners in the local office. Research and Analysis staff have been placed in our local offices in a cross-training effort to move our analysts closer to our customer base, to gain a better understanding of our customers needs. This cross-training focus group has identified several products that need to be developed and implemented on an annual basis in order to fill previous research gaps.

Idaho has just recently developed a *Does Education and Training Pay* poster as a direct result of this collaboration. The poster synthesizes Occupational and Employment Statistics (OES) with Current Population Statistics to easily identify the economic value of education in a simple at a glance easy to read manner. This product has been developed and incorporated in the annual plan for annual dissemination.

The determination by the cross-training focus groups that indeed this was a need has been substantiated by recent feedback from customers who have espoused the effectiveness of this product. The PY2004 plan specifically includes this new product and will also include sister products that have also been identified as needs gaps.

Also, as described in the Planning and Evaluation Plan in Appendix A, each publication must include a customer satisfaction survey with a set of core questions with the ability of the developer to add more specific questions to serve the needs of their programs. Response has been surprisingly high with these voluntary surveys. Commerce and Labor LMI is adjusted and enhanced according to the feedback we receive in these surveys.

Several alternative efforts to gain feedback have been employed as well. Following an OES speaking engagement survey questionnaires were handed out to gain feedback on a variety of areas in the OES program. The feedback from this effort was outstanding, and has shaped the future of how OES disseminates its data in Idaho. Idaho has considered curtailing the formats and mediums OES data is disseminated. However, feedback strongly favors maintaining current mediums of publication with slight adjustments in format. For several years Commerce and Labor staff have debated the categories and methods of displaying OES wages (ie. median versus average, percentile categories, and others). We have used this feedback to create an OES publication that best suits customers and stakeholders.

The PY2004 plan will also include wage data via HTML in order to serve the needs of our one-stop customers who need to have Idaho OES wage data housed within its own electronic infrastructure. One example is Local Offices providing self-posting for job listings to employers. Information Specialists have developed a tool that combines the OES wage data with the self job listing application, allowing employers to view the market wage for their particular job listing.

Also, previously we have only updated the HTML delivery of OES annually. However now due to feedback obtained from employers and one-stop customers the PY2004 plan includes dissemination of OES data via HTML on a semi-annual basis.

The examples above are only a few examples of efforts to adopt recommendations and feedback from customers and stakeholders. Idaho is committed to continually gauge our successes and failures pursuant to the Planning and Evaluation Plan, and act upon the feedback in developing a world-class workforce information system in Idaho.

SECTION B ~ Products and Services

LMI Funding and Leveraging

As mentioned earlier Idaho Department of Labor and Idaho Department of Commerce have merged into one Idaho Department of Commerce and Labor. The synergies that can be achieved from such a merger are expected to come to fruition in the coming PY2004 year. It is anticipated that coalescing the Economic Development (ED) and LMI missions will result in synergies in the development and dissemination of LMI. We also expect this collaboration to improve our ability to target and disseminate LMI to customers more effectively. The State Data Center, the cooperating state agency with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the Governor-designated state labor market information agency, are now located adjacent to the LMI team. We are in the process of aligning the objectives as one entity. The ED mission of the former Idaho Department of Commerce was and continues to be mostly supported by state general funds. Naturally the funds allocated to the ED mission contribute to the development and dissemination of LMI. Only after the merger has operated for one year will we be able to fully identify the extent of leveraged general funds towards the LMI program. One thing for sure is that this year and in subsequent years the LMI program will have greater support from state general funds. And as we complete this transition we will be able to better quantify how much outside leverage is responsible in developing and disseminating LMI.

A multitude of LMI products not described in this proposal are funded under the comprehensive Idaho Commerce and Labor umbrella. Commerce and Labor also uses fiscal resources outside of the Workforce Information grant. The Public Affairs Bureau, Idaho's primary window to LMI, utilize extensive resources that are a result of Commerce and Labor's Administration fund.

Many of the products listed below also involve non-fiscal support, such as collaborations in sharing personnel in the form of expertise, mailing lists and the like. An example of such collaborations listed below is the partnership with our Idaho Career Information Systems colleagues in the development of the Business Directory and *Does Education and Training Pay* poster. Significant collaborative efforts that do not include tangible fiscal contributions using time and personnel are imbedded throughout all of the products. In order to understand our customer and stakeholder needs it is paramount these non-fiscal partnerships are developed.

The products listed below are significantly supported by these alternative funding sources. It is the combined effort of these funding and collaborative resources that allows Idaho's LMI program to deliver quality and timely LMI to customers and stakeholders. As the Commerce and Labor merger becomes fully implemented we will develop metrics to evaluate the extent of leveraged funding towards our efforts to develop and disseminate high quality and timely LMI.

1. Continue to populate the ALMIS Database with state data.

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

Idaho's ALMIS Database (v2.2) is accessed via Workforce Informer (*Wi*), the software developed by CIBER to meet the needs of the Workforce Informer consortium for Idaho's LMI internet delivery system (iLMI).

Idaho's ALMIS Database is populated with tables required by the ALMIS workgroup, and is updated throughout the year with weekly, monthly, and quarterly data as it becomes available. All core tables are uploaded and current.

To date, Idaho has emphasized populating the ALMIS Database and making access more user friendly, informative, and accessible. Internal issues regarding data formatting and preparation for input into the ALMIS Database are resolved, and procedures for loading and verifying data by staff are being implemented.

- **Customer support for the product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey findings or other consultations with customers and users of workforce information:**

A major emphasis in states should be the full utilization of this resource in meeting national, state, and local customer information needs.

Customer usage of the ALMIS Database will continue to be monitored through web hits and analysis of web site usage. A web-based survey form has been designed, and will be implemented. The survey addresses not only the ALMIS data extracted by the user, but the 'value added' materials that explain the data and it's significance.

Current customer satisfaction findings indicate the value of a one-stop data location. Idaho's ALMIS database pages get viewed (*Pages viewed indicates the number of pages actually viewed, rather than the use of 'hits' that tends to overestimate actual usage*) over 2,500 times each month according to internet monitoring software, and several more thousand in terms of actual hits.

Other feedback indicates use of the ALMIS database tends to hit both ends of the research spectrum rather than the center. Sophisticated researchers needing to acquire large data files for comprehensive research projects at one extreme, and those less sophisticated research looking for one small data element at the other extreme, seem to use the ALMIS database more frequently. Those in the middle of the spectrum, such as those more familiar with the data tend to use other forms such as spreadsheets loaded as content on Idaho's Labor Market Information (iLMI) website. However, it is at these extremes of the spectrum where **new** or **peripheral** LMI customers reside. These findings indicate the ALMIS database is a previously untapped conduit to new customers that are also in need of up-to-date LMI. Therefore, Idaho is committed to continually update the ALMIS database and always searching for easier mechanisms to display LMI, since ALMIS users tend to be new customers, or those on the periphery of LMI.

Also, the LMI team continuously works with the RLEs to determine if the current ALMIS variables serve the data demands of the state and local WIBs. Changes are then made according to their requests pursuant to the Planning and Evaluation Plan described in Appendix A.

- **How the deliverables support the goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan:**

Specific to Labor Market Information the Idaho Commerce and Labor Five-Year Strategic plan states as follows:

***LABOR MARKET INFORMATION (LMI)** provides a broad variety of data at the state, regional, and local level on past, current, and projected labor market conditions. Statistics on employment and unemployment serve as key economic indicators and are produced in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Activities include:*

- *Developing state and local labor market statistics*
- *Publishing a monthly state and area employment newsletter*
- *Developing information on occupations and wages*
- *Conducting actuarial research for Unemployment Insurance trust fund solvency*
- *Conducting special research projects at the state and local level*
- *Identifying workforce education and skill requirements by industry*

Therefore, the ALMIS database endeavor fully and specifically support the state’s WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan, and is integral to the delivery of vital LMI to our customers and stakeholders.

- **Principal ALMIS customers include:**

Out-stationed labor analysts
 City and county planning organizations
 Employers
 Employees and prospective employees
 Job changers
 Students
 Career counselors and educators

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

ALMIS database will reduce staff time needed to answer requests for data and information. Both printing and mailing costs can be reduced once users realize that they can tailor data to meet their needs via the iLMI internet delivery system. The more we can persuade data gatherers to obtain their data via the ALMIS data browser, the more cost savings can be realized. Cost savings are a result of the universal properties of the ALMIS database, making development and maintenance effective, timely, and accurate. Also, 24/7 availability of information allows customers to access information outside of regular work hours and without LMI staff assistance.

Again, as mentioned earlier the ALMIS users tend to reside on the periphery of the customer continuum. These customers often are not familiar with LMI and are new visitors to iLMI. This creates an opportunity for increasing the outreach of LMI.

- **Planned milestones for completion of the deliverable:**

Core tables will be updated according to the following schedule:

Table Name/Content	Update Frequency	Appx. Update
CES--Current Employment Statistics	Monthly	Monday following second Tuesday of month
LAUS--Local Area Unemployment Statistics	Monthly	Monday following first Friday
Income	Annually	June 2005
INDPROJ		
Long-term Industry Projections—Statewide	Bi-Annually	August 2004
Long-term Industry Projections—Sub-State	Bi-Annually	September 2004
Short-term Industry Projections—Statewide	Annually	December 2004
Short-term Industry Projections—Sub-state	Annually	January 2005
IOMATRIX	Bi-Annually	February and June 2005
OES--Occupational Employment Statistics	Semi-Annually	January and June 2005
QCEW--Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages)	Quarterly	8 months following close of quarter
LICAUTH, LICENSE, & LICHIST—Professional Licensing Information	Bi-Annually	June 2006
Population	Annual	June 2005
URL	Sporadically	As needed
URLLINKS	Sporadically	As needed

- **Estimated Costs:**

An estimated **\$31,000** is allocated towards on the ALMIS Database with \$30,000 on management and maintenance (staff /personnel - ALMIS Database Administrator, and associated Information Systems tasks, and ALMIS data providers), and \$1,000 towards travel/training (ALMIS related training not yet scheduled).

2. Produce and disseminate industry and occupational employment projections.

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

Using methodology, software, guidelines from Projections Workgroup & Projections Managing Partnership, Idaho will:

- Produce and disseminate sub-state long-term 2002-2012 (biannual) industry employment projections
- Produce and disseminate sub-state long-term 2002-2012 (biannual) occupational employment projections
- Produce and disseminate state-level short-term 2004-2006 (annual) industry employment projections
- Produce and disseminate state-level short-term 2004-2006 (annual) occupational employment projections
- Submit data for public dissemination pursuant to Projections Workgroup & Projections Managing Partnership procedures

Populate ALMIS Database with long-term projections data bi-annually in even-numbered years, and short-term projections annually.

- **Customer support for the product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey findings or other consultations with customers and users of workforce information:**

The LMI team works closely with the six Regional Labor Economists (RLEs) stationed geographically throughout the state. These RLEs attend and contribute to their region's local Workforce Investment Board (WIB). During these formal meetings they work with the WIBs to develop strategies to serve the LMI needs of their regions and the customers they serve. Via this relationship with the WIBs and the community they serve, the RLEs receive numerous requests from employers and workforce intermediaries, such as labor exchange agents, schools, community-based organizations, career guidance counselors, and teachers. These requests are completed, categorized, and analyzed to be included in the Workforce Information Annual Strategic Plan.

The input gained for the RLEs/State and local boards have prompted the LMI team to focus on the development of local change factor and replacement rate algorithms to produce more sub-state data. The local algorithms will go a long way to ensure the sub-state data is robust and valid. The LMI team will continue to work with state and local boards in the development of our LMI products.

In PY 2004, Idaho will create and disseminate publications containing and explaining both Long-Term and Short-Term projections in conjunction with other workforce information. The publications will be constructed in order to answer some of the most frequently asked questions that have been received from customers over the past 12 months.

One of the most significant changes due to customer feedback from the planning and evaluation process involves adjusting the delivery dates for Short-term Projections. Feedback from stakeholders, most notably our State Legislatures has made it necessary to move projections towards a December release. Therefore we will be completing the PMP deliverable eight months ahead of schedule to appease customer demand.

Feedback from the Workforce Development Council indicates that information on short-term demand would be useful if packaged in an easily accessible and understandable way. To meet those needs, we will "test market" products which combine projections with wage information, educational data, and

job openings. Included with the publication(s) will be a customer feedback form that will allow us to refine the document(s) and tailor the data to meet the needs of special customer groups.

- **How the deliverables support the goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan:**

Specific to Labor Market Information the Idaho Commerce and Labor Five-Year Strategic plan states as follows:

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- *Conducting actuarial research for Unemployment Insurance trust fund solvency*
- *Conducting special research projects at the state and local level*
- *Identifying workforce education and skill requirements by industry*

Therefore Short-Term and Long-Term Industry and Occupational projections database fully and specifically support the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan, and is integral to the delivery of vital LMI to our customers and stakeholders. Commerce and Labor work closely with the WDC and their staff to ensure the language in the Five-year Strategic Plan continues to fulfill the needs of Idaho's dynamic workforce and economy.

- **Principal customers include:**

State Legislature
Out-stationed labor analysts
City and county planning organizations
Employers
Employees and prospective employees
Job changers
Students
Career counselors and educators
Career Information System (CIS)

- **The outcome(s) and system impact(s) projected:**

Short- and Long-Term projections will be completed according to schedule and the PY2004 plan calls for the both the Short- and Long-Term projections to be developed in tandem and integrated. Also as mentioned earlier the Short-Term projections will be moved up for a December release to accommodate the 2005 legislative session.

To date customer feedback suggests projections data are one of the most sought after forms of LMI and tend to be more highly visible than other LMI. In PY2004 Idaho Commerce and Labor will be spending significant resources on the synthesizing, packaging, and marketing of projections LMI as previously mentioned. This effort is expected to generate even a greater demand in the coming years. As the data is distributed, customers will be asked if the data meets their data needs, and how it can be improved pursuant to the Planning and Evaluation Plan described in Appendix A.

Staff received training for Short- and Long-Term Industry Projections in PY 2003. Additional staff will attend training in PY 2004 as training becomes available to insure that qualified staff are in place to acquire redundancies should personnel changes occur.

- **Planned milestones for completion of the deliverable:**

Industry and occupational projections will be delivered in accordance to the schedule provided by the Projections Management Partnership template using the methodology, software tools and guidelines developed by the Projections Workgroup and the Projections Managing Partnership.

In addition, sub-state long-term projections will be made and released to the public in **September 2004**. Short-Term Industry projections will also be released in **July 2004** and **December 2004**. All future releases of Short-Term Projections will occur annually in **December**, due to customer feedback.

Idaho has a standing demand for short-term projection data each **December**. To that end, historic QCEW data will be analyzed in **September 2004** to meet that data request, then in March to insure that data used in the 2005 Short-Term projections are as current as possible for full release in **December 2004**.

Ideally, we would like to have a “projections awareness” campaign in place for the beginning of the 2004-2005 school year since students and education professionals appear to be the largest pool of potential users. This project will commence in the **first quarter of 2005**. Projections data will be used in conjunction with other Labor Market Information to illustrate the link between education, earnings, and employability.

- **Estimated Costs:**

An estimated **\$67,000** will be allocated towards Projections. \$52,000 towards personnel, \$11,000 publication and dissemination costs, and \$4,000 travel for Long-Term/Short-Term projections training as prescribed by the PMP. (Training dates locations to be determined later by PMP).

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

- **Description of the core product, service, or other demand activity:**
 - A) **OES Wage publication, and SOC/OES Glossary** ~ Commerce and Labor will continue to OES Wage and Employment LMI, our top requested LMI product. This includes both wages and employment estimates at the state, and sub-state level. A hardcopy publication will be published annually, while semi-annual data will be available in PDF, excel, and HTML via iLMI. Idaho will also continue to attend EDS training in order to stay current on updates and improve redundancies.
 - B) **Fringe Benefit Survey** ~ Idaho will conduct a Fringe Benefit Survey in response to repeated requests for fringe benefit information from both public and private sector customers. Idaho has been a participating member of the Fringe Benefit Consortium since it's beginning, and will use the methodology and survey instrument developed by the consortium. The workforce information grant will only support the portions of the survey that fall outside the consortium guidelines. Workforce Information monies will be used to augment the sample in order to gain better statistics at the sub-state level. The grant will also be used to collect fringe benefit data for the government sector since it falls outside the parameters of the pilot effort. And lastly the grant will support the development, materials, and dissemination of the Fringe Benefit Survey publication.
 - C) **Does Education & Training Pay Poster** ~ Idaho has and will continue to develop the annual *Does Education & Training Pay* poster. This product is an illustration that combines Occupational and Employment Statistics with education codes developed by Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Current Population Survey.
 - D) **Projections Publication** ~ Idaho will develop a Projections publication that synthesizes OES data with long-term projections data. This product will display the fastest growing, most proliferate, and most abundant occupations, by educational/training category. Projections in its entirety are published via the ALMIS database and projections web page in iLMI, Idaho's LMI electronic delivery system.
 - E) **Employer Databases** ~ Idaho will continue to augment the Idaho Business Directory via new Idaho business registrations for which a release is given.
- **Customer support for the product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey findings or other consultations with customers and users of workforce information:**
 - A) **OES Wage publication, and SOC/OES Glossary** ~ As described in the Planning and Evaluation plan in Appendix A, each publication must include a customer satisfaction survey with a set of core questions with the ability of the developer to add more specific questions to serve the needs of their programs. Also several alternative efforts to gain feedback have been employed as well. Following an OES speaking engagement survey questionnaires were handed out to gain feedback on a variety of areas in the OES program. The feedback from this effort was outstanding, and has shaped the future of how OES disseminates data in Idaho. Idaho has considered curtailing the formats and mediums OES data is disseminated. However, feedback strongly favors maintaining current mediums of publication with slight adjustments in format and layout. For several years Commerce and Labor staff have debated the categories and methods to display OES wages (ie. median versus average, percentile categories, and others). We have used this feedback to create an OES publication that best suits customers and stakeholders. The PY2004 plan will include wage

data via HTML in order to serve the needs of our one-stop customers who need to have Idaho OES wage data housed within their electronic infrastructure, providing employers a tool to assist in their efforts to attach the most accurate wage to their job listings. Previously we have only updated the HTML delivery of OES annually. However now due to feedback obtained from employers and one-stop customers the PY2004 plan includes dissemination of OES data via HTML on a semi-annual basis.

- B) **Fringe Benefit Survey** ~ Idaho will be conducting its Fringe Benefit Survey as a direct result of feedback from the WDC and the Local WIBS. Fringe Benefit Research ranks at the top according to WIB feedback as a missing component in our ability to develop a comprehensive Labor Assessment. Therefore, Idaho's pilot effort in the Fringe Benefit Consortium will serve to bridge this gap in our efforts of delivering a comprehensive labor assessment to our customers.
 - C) **Does Education & Training Pay Poster** ~ As mentioned in Section A, The *Does Education & Training Pay* poster was a direct result of customer feedback from our most leveraged partner Idaho Commerce & Labor Local Offices during our local office cross-training effort. This publication also stems from the demand of our partners in the educational sector. We work closely with Idaho Career Information Systems in developing, maintaining, and disseminating the *Does Education & Training Pay* poster. This publication is gradually becoming one of our most requested sources of LMI.
 - D) **Projections Publication** ~ Projections data continue to be one of our most sought after LMI products from the WDC and local WIBS. These data are extremely valuable to forecasting and economic development endeavors. Increased demand to develop projections data at a sub-state level continues. Projections are vital to the top requested LMI by local WIBS where projections are the cornerstone to comprehensive Labor Assessment research.
 - E) **Employer Databases** ~ Idaho continues to augment and maintain Idaho's Business Directory (IBD), as well as displaying the *InfoUSA* product. We continue to fulfill a request from Career Information Systems (CIS) of Idaho in developing a compatible interface of the IBD to the CIS internet system. LMI Data provided by the IBD continuously fulfills a host of local WIB requests.
- **How the deliverables support the goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan:**

Each of the five research projects (A-E) identified above directly support the goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan outlined below:

LABOR MARKET INFORMATION (LMI) provides a broad variety of data at the state, regional, and local level on past, current, and projected labor market conditions. Statistics on employment and unemployment serve as key economic indicators and are produced in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Activities include:

- Developing state and local labor market statistics
- Publishing a monthly state and area employment newsletter
- Developing information on occupations and wages
- Conducting actuarial research for Unemployment Insurance trust fund solvency
- Conducting special research projects at the state and local level
- Identifying workforce education and skill requirements by industry

The LMI team works closely with all six Regional Labor Economists (RLEs) stationed geographically throughout the state. These RLEs attend and contribute to their region's local Workforce Investment Board (WIB). During these formal meetings they work with the WIBs to develop strategies to serve the LMI needs of their regions and the customers they serve. Via this relationship with the WIBs and the community they serve, the RLEs receive numerous requests from employers and workforce intermediaries, such as labor exchange agents, schools, community-based organizations, career

guidance counselors, and teachers. These requests are completed, categorized, and analyzed to be included in the Workforce Information Annual Strategic Plan.

- **Principal customers include:**

The host of products developed and disseminated in this category covers the entire spectrum of LMI customers and stakeholders.

State Legislature
Out-stationed labor analysts
City and county planning organizations
Employers
Employees and prospective employees
Job changers
Job seekers
Students
Career counselors and educators

- **The outcome(s) and system impact(s) projected:**

There has been a sustained demand for fringe benefit information in Idaho for a number of years. Having the information available, and stratified by size and industry of employer, will fill that need, and will have the added bonus of providing a wealth of information for research and industry comparing by industry.

- A) **OES Wage publication, and SOC/OES Glossary** ~ Commerce and Labor will continue to publish 1,200 hardcopies of the OES Wage publication annually. Commerce and Labor's efforts in housing LMI within the electronic products of our one-stop system partners allows for the development of new tools to assist employers in their evaluation of the labor force. Our efforts to continually work with our colleagues and partners in availing Idaho LMI, not only on our terms, but on their terms has a significant impact of diffusing LMI to the appropriate markets in a timely and effective manner.
- B) **Fringe Benefit Survey** ~ As mentioned above, Idaho will conduct a Fringe Benefit Survey in response to repeated requests for fringe benefit information from both public and private sector customers. As previously mentioned the Fringe Benefit Survey is a significant component to developing a comprehensive labor assessment. Idaho has not conducted a Fringe Benefit Survey since 2002 making much of the information we have outdated.
- C) **Does Education & Training Pay Poster** ~ Idaho has and will continue to develop the annual *Does Education & Training Pay* poster. This product is an illustration that combines Occupational and Employment Statistics with education codes developed by Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Current Population Survey. The first poster was disseminated in hardcopy format July 2004, and published via iLMI. During the school year the impact has been fantastic in that we have been receiving 5 or 6 requests for the poster a day, following the start of the school year. It is hypothesized that the November release will have an even a greater impact since the release is during the school year, and OES data used to augment this graphic will have recently been updated. The partnership we have with CIS has increased our LMI umbrella significantly, and we able to impact a larger continuum of customers from grassroots students to high profile employers.
- D) **Projections Publication** ~ Idaho will develop a Projections publication that synthesizes OES data with long-term projections data. This product will display the fastest growing, most proliferate, and most abundant occupations, by educational/training category. Projections in its entirety are published via the ALMIS database and projections web page in iLMI, Idaho's LMI electronic

delivery system. Also as mentioned, in PY 2004 Idaho will publish the high profile projections LMI via hardcopy.

We anticipate the impact will be similar to that we have experienced in our *Does Education & Training Pay* poster. The hardcopy outreach approach tends to cover a broader spectrum of customers and stakeholders from the grassroots, such as a student to human resource divisions of high profile employers all the way to legislators pondering high impact legislation. Commerce and Labor is eager to utilize the Planning and Evaluation Plan identified in Appendix A to measure the success of this marketing and dissemination approach that seems to have been highly successful in other states. We also anticipate the November projection's release date will enhance the decision making abilities of our legislators, since decision making is at a high priority for planning and budgeting during the fiscal season.

- E) **Employer Databases** ~ Idaho will continue to augment the Idaho Business Directory via new Idaho business registrations for which a release is given. Currently Idaho's Business Directory includes 19,696 businesses to date, and it is estimated Idaho will populate approximately another 1,000 over the next program year. Via the iLMI internet portal and the CIS interface the employer databases are more widely available and integrated into ancillary systems that compliment LMI.

- **Planned milestones for completion of the deliverables:**

- A) **OES Wage Publication and SOC/OES Glossary** ~ Commerce and Labor will continue to publish approximately 1,200 hardcopies of the OES Wage publication with the next date set for **September 2004**. This effort is planned to include both wages and employment estimates at the state and sub-state level. Hardcopy publications will only be published on an annual basis, while semi-annual data will be available in PDF, excel, and HTML via iLMI. These second panel updates will be available semi-annually **September 2004** and **March 2005**. Initially 400 hardcopies of **SOC/OES Glossaries** will be produced in **July 2004**. Any further print jobs will be on a per request basis.
- B) **Fringe Benefit Survey** ~The Fringe Benefit Survey will be conducted from **October** to **December 2004**, with the final analysis effort to be completed from January to **March 2005**. The government sample will be drawn along with the consortium supported sample in **September 2004**. The data collection effort will be conducted from **October** to **December 2004**. Analysis supported by Workforce Information grant money, to determine appropriate sample size to include statistically significant sub-state findings will occur in **September 2004**. Public release of survey findings is planned for **March 2005**.
- C) **Does Education & Training Pay Poster** ~ Idaho's *Does Education & Training Pay* Poster will be produced annually each November of each year following the release of the May Panel OES data. For PY2004 the poster will be developed (**October 2004**) and disseminated by the end of **November 2004**.
- D) **Projections Publications** ~ Projection publications will be produced biannually following the completion of Long-Term Industry and Occupational Projections at the state and sub-state level. Much of PY2004 will be dedicated to publishing, and disseminating findings for 2002-2012 Industry and Occupational projections. Long-term Projections research will be released in **July 2004**, and published in hardcopy in **October 2004** at both the state and sub-state level. PY2004 will be devoted to collecting, culling, and winnowing data in preparation for analyses. Also significant anecdotal and qualitative data is collected and developed in the development year. Short-Term Industry projections will be available in **July 2004**, however, Idaho plans on developing Short-Term Industry and Occupational projects eight months in advance of the PMP deliverable. Idaho will develop (**September - October 2004**) and release Short-Term projections in **November 2004**.

E) **Employer Databases** ~ Idaho will continue to augment the Idaho Business Directory via new Idaho business registrations for which a release is given. Idaho currently has releases for 19,963 employers in Idaho. It is expected that another 1,000 employers will be added during the PY2004 (**on-going**). Idaho will also work closely with Career Information Systems team in updating, and maintaining the interface with the Career Information Systems internet delivery system in **October 2004**, and as needed.

- **Estimated Costs:**

A) **OES Wage Publication and SOC/OES Glossary** ~ A total of **\$12,000** will be allocated towards OES Wage Publications, \$7,000 Personnel, \$3,500 Materials and Printing, \$1,500 Travel and Training (EDS training, dates and location to be announced by the PMP).

B) **Fringe Benefit Survey** ~ Total allocation towards the Workforce Information grant is estimated at **\$11,000**. \$4,000 to include government as part of the Fringe Benefit project, such as developing the sample frame, sample draw, data entry, data analysis, and data dissemination and publication. Idaho is also considering adding to the sample size in order to improve statistical significance at the sub-state level. \$6,000 is allocated toward the development of the presentation, dissemination, and publication of findings. \$1,000 towards state-wide travel in marketing and presenting this research to our local customers. **All other costs will be paid for by the Fringe Benefit consortium pursuant to the contractual agreement.*

C) **Does Education & Training Pay Poster** ~ Total cost of this deliverable is estimated at \$11,500. \$4,000 will go to personnel in the development of the product. \$7,000 will be allocated towards materials, printing and dissemination of the final product. \$500 is allocated for statewide travel in the marketing and dissemination of this product.

D) **Projections Publication** ~ A total cost of \$14,500 is estimated for the Projection's publication product. \$7,000 will be allocated towards the personnel for the design, development, and analysis. \$7,000 will be allocated towards the materials, printing, and dissemination of the final product. \$500 will be allocated towards in-state travel for marketing, dissemination, and presentation.

E) **Employer Databases** ~ A total of \$5,000 is allocated towards providing, updating, and maintaining employer databases. \$4,000 will be allocated towards the personnel for maintaining and updating new disclosable business registration forms to the Idaho Business Directory. \$750 will be allocated to the materials to maintain the Idaho Business Directory. \$250 will be allocated towards the purchase of the InfoUSA database.

4. Ensure that Workforce Information and Support Required by State and Local Workforce Investment Boards are Provided.

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

The Evaluation and Planning team conducted a WIB survey as outlined in Section C of this proposal. As can be seen in the summary of the findings below, the (A) LED application, (B) Labor Assessment and Skills Survey endeavor, as well as (B) all other ad-hoc efforts to answer WIB questions in real time, are at the top of the WIB survey list. You will also notice many of the products listed in other categories would also fit in Category 4, supporting State and Local WIBs See Section C for greater detail of the evaluation and planning effort to provide support for the State and Local WIBS:

Subject Areas Ranked by Average Score	Avg. Score
Labor market assessment – available labor pool, skills, wages demanded, wages offered, age, gender, underemployment, not in the labor force, education, turnover rates by area and industry, benefits,	2
Skills – what employers are looking for (soft and technical)	4
Projections - Employment & Industry	5
Labor Force Demographics – age, gender, race/ethnicity	5
Population Demographics – age, gender, race/ethnicity	6
Wages by occupation	7
Underemployment – wage, hours, and education	8
Income – median, per capita, personal	8
Covered Employment and wages by industry	9
Poverty – number in poverty and age	9
Drop outs – age, school or location	9
Applicants – age, gender, education, occupation, race/ethnic, veteran, migrant, disabilities, skills, by area not just JS office	10
UI – age, gender, race/ethnic, education, industry, occupation, reason, duration	13
Languages – types and whether primary or secondary	13
Foster Children – age and placement type	14
Veterans – total, age, gender, period of service	15

A) **LED Program** ~ In 2002, Idaho Commerce and Labor partnered with the U.S. Census Bureau's Local Employment Dynamics (LED) program. The LED program (formerly LEHD) is an innovative collaboration between state partners and the U.S. Census Bureau. This partnership works to fill critical data gaps and provide economic indicators and information to participating states, helping to enhance the decision-making process for state and local authorities. As part of the agenda, various administrative record files (e.g., UI wage files and ES202 data) are sent to the U.S. Census Bureau, after which each state is provided with Quarterly Workforce Indicators (QWI) data. The state of Idaho received its first round of historically weighted QWI data in June 2003. Just as national economic indicators measure the performance of the overall economy, the QWI measure the performance of the local economy, addressing issues such as where jobs are, for what kind of workers, and how much workers can expect to make in any given area within the state. The QWI are provided at a detailed industry level within sub-state areas, such as counties and the jurisdictions of Workforce Investment Boards. The receipt of this data marks the beginning of a unique partnership with the U.S. Census Bureau that will provide the Idaho Commerce and Labor and the state of Idaho with a valuable resource for research and publication opportunities.

B) **WIB Ad-hoc support / Labor Assessment / Skills Survey** ~ LMI includes data developed by the Research & Analysis Bureau in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Bureau of the Census data, Bureau of Economic Analysis, and data from any other source that would provide

information on Idaho's labor market. The data is compiled and made available to its many users. The Idaho Commerce and Labor's Public Affairs and Research & Analysis Bureaus provide a central location for labor market information (LMI) that is used by Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) as well as other economic development organizations, educational institutions, government agencies, etc.

The purpose of a labor assessment survey is to fill the data gaps in the labor market information that is requested by the WIBs and economic development groups. A survey will be designed to obtain one of the major gaps in Labor Assessment, skills data. The Department will partner with six colleges/universities across the state in the process of conducting this survey.

Using the above-mentioned endeavor as a prototype, we would like to create a similar effort for job-changers and other adults who need information about occupations, wages, and education. A third area that we would like to address, and will as time allows, is the information needs of employers regarding future supply of workers by occupation. Customer input will figure heavily in the design and content of this publication, and input from WIBs will be gathered using a prototype prior to release to the public.

- C) **Job Vacancy Needs Assessment** ~ Idaho will commence a small research, planning and evaluation effort in developing a needs assessment for a Job Vacancy Survey to potentially be conducted during the PY2005 grant period. The Planning and Evaluation team will conduct a brief survey with the WDC, local WIBs, and customers to evaluate the demand for job vacancy information.

- **Customer support for the product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey findings or other consultations with customers and users of workforce information:**

- A) **LED Program** ~ The Public Affairs Division will continue to expand uses of the Local Employment Dynamics program to respond to the need for labor, economic, and demographic data at the community level. Idaho Commerce & Labor has been selected as a pilot state for the LED mapping application tool. Organizationally, Idaho offers an integrated structure among WIB, economic development, labor market information, census entities, and data users. The mapping application will bring a new planning and analytical tool to the state. It will help a variety of entities that are faced with the challenges of improving the economic viability of their communities. The mapping tool, along with the comprehensive socio-economic, geographic-based database that will be enhanced by the labor assessment survey, will be an enhancement to local WIBs and economic development officials.

The LED component provides excellent tool to respond to the needs of the state and local boards. The Public Affairs Division will be utilizing the LED program to respond to the need for labor, economic, and demographic data at the community level. This program provides the tools necessary to measure, correlate, and analyze these related data sets not only in tabular formats but also now with mapping.

- B) **WIB Ad-hoc support / Labor Assessment / Skills Survey** ~ The WIBs have requested that additional labor market information. Each Board ranked the data elements by importance to their organization. Other data users, especially economic development groups, also frequently request these same data items. The data items are ranked in order of importance. The labor assessment coupled with skills will be a major focus during this program year. The Department will involve the colleges and universities in the state with the designing and conducting a survey to obtain area specific data that is comparable from region to region.

- Labor assessment
- Skills – what employers are looking for (soft and technical)
- Projections - occupation & industry employment – a mandated deliverable
- Labor force demographics – age, gender, race/ethnic

- Wages by occupation– a mandated deliverable
- Underemployment – wage, hours, and education

In our efforts to provide continual, periodic, and ad-hoc data to the state and local boards, we have gained immense feedback from the continual, periodic, and ad-hoc data and findings provided by the LMI Unit. In the last year the Research and Analysis Bureau and the Public Affairs Bureau are aligned within the same Division. This allows for immediate, ‘on the fly’ responses to data and research. The LMI Unit will continue to immediately respond to these requests. Within the Evaluation Component the LMI Unit will determine the subsequent demand and continue to include high impact requests in subsequent plans.

The purpose of a labor assessment survey is to fill the data gaps in the labor market information that is requested by the WIBs and economic development groups. A survey will be designed to obtain one of the major gaps in Labor Assessment, skills data. The Department will partner with six colleges/universities across the state in the process conducting this survey.

Idaho Commerce & Labor’s Public Affairs Division iLMI website has been very well received by the Department and other customers. Feedback provided by both WIBs and other customers has indicated support for data provided both on the website and via e-mail as well as the variety of data available. The Public Affairs Division will continue to utilize the iLMI technology to expand the scope of available labor market information. Idaho continues to aggressively pursue the use of electronic and digital media to more efficiently and effectively publish and disseminate LMI.

- C) **Job Vacancy Needs Assessment** ~ Idaho will commence a small research, planning and evaluation effort in developing a needs assessment for a Job Vacancy Survey to potentially be conducted during the PY2005 grant period. The Planning and Evaluation team will conduct a brief survey with the WDC, local WIBs, and customers to evaluate the demand for job vacancy information. The needs assessment will be developed by April 2005.

• **How the deliverables support the goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan:**

Each of the four research projects (A-C) described above directly support the goals of the state’s WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan outlined below:

***LABOR MARKET INFORMATION (LMI)** provides a broad variety of data at the state, regional, and local level on past, current, and projected labor market conditions. Statistics on employment and unemployment serve as key economic indicators and are produced in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics. Activities include:*

- Developing state and local labor market statistics
- Publishing a monthly state and area employment newsletter
- Developing information on occupations and wages
- Conducting actuarial research for Unemployment Insurance trust fund solvency
- Conducting special research projects at the state and local level
- Identifying workforce education and skill requirements by industry

The LMI team works closely with the six Regional Labor Economists (RLEs) stationed geographically throughout the state. These RLEs attend and contribute to their region’s local Workforce Investment Board (WIB). During these formal meetings they work with the WIBs to develop strategies to serve the LMI needs of their regions and the customers they serve. Via this relationship with the WIBs and the community they serve, the RLEs receive numerous requests from employers and workforce intermediaries, such as labor exchange agents, schools, community-based organizations, career guidance counselors, and teachers. These requests are

completed, categorized, and analyzed to be included in the Workforce Information annual strategic plan described in Section A of this proposal.

- **Principal customers include:**

For this broad category the variety of LMI customers knows no limit. We know that our customers include people both from the public and the private sectors, students, job seekers, and the media. They are WIBs, the Legislature, schools, CIS, planners, employers, job seekers, and all other end users. Local government agencies, politicians, and the media are some of the most frequent repeat consumers of LMI, among others:

- State Legislature
- Out-stationed labor analysts
- City and county planning organizations
- Employees and prospective employees
- Job changers
- Students
- Career counselors and educators

- **The outcome(s) and system impact(s) projected:**

The LED portal in iLMI data will present yet another innovative way to present LMI information to customers, thus increasing the usage and reliance on Idaho's iLMI website. The new LED mapping tool will allow local users to create maps. Commute and labor shed maps, with full explanations of how to use them, will be used in oral and written presentations to LMI customers.

The projected outcomes and system impact will be directly affected by the results of the Department's effort to market iLMI not only to staff and WIBs, but also to other customers. As more customers become aware of iLMI, an increased reliance on the electronic form of delivering state LMI will develop. The iLMI use is tracked and measured by site usage statistics. The projected increase in usage is at least 25 percent for the year.

The projected outcomes and system impact in WIB support will be the development of a labor assessment template with data sources identified. The template will provide for a quick response to information requests. Due to the increased significance of our economic development mission as a result of the Commerce and Labor merger information requests have multiplied substantially. Having a full comprehensive labor assessment available will assist us in meeting this increased demand. Below is an example of what a labor assessment will entail:

LABOR ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

Listed below are the data elements that are necessary to a labor assessment template. These elements have been identified from surveys to the local WIBs and requests from economic development groups and businesses.

LABOR ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

- **LABOR FORCE DEMOGRAPHICS**
 - Growth or decline
 - Unemployment rate
 - Ability to recruit
 - Not in the labor force
 - Underemployment
 - Multiple job holders
 - Retired
 - Demand
- **LABOR FORCE QUALITY**
 - Age
 - Educational attainment
 - Skills

- o Basic
 - o Computer/technological
 - Work ethic/productivity
 - o Absenteeism
 - o Turnover
 - LABOR FORCE TRAINING
 - Quality of schools
 - o High schools Prof/tech programs
 - o Technical/short term skills training availability
 - o Colleges and universities
 - LABOR FORCE COST
 - Average earnings
 - Average wages by occupation
 - Average wage by industry
 - Benefits
 - LABOR FORCE ASSESSMENT
 - Conclusions
 - o Strengths
 - o Weaknesses
- **Planned milestones for completion of the deliverables:**
 - A) **LED Program**
 - Local Economic Dynamics data – online **September 2004**
 - LED training to RLEs – **October 2004**
 - LED training to WIBs – **Winter 2004**
 - Develop LED templates for WIBs – **Winter 2004**
 - LED Mapping goals include developing labor and commuter shed maps – **Spring/Summer 2004**
 - Modifications and enhancements to iLMI as updates to the ALMIS database are received
 - Articles in the monthly newsletter *Idaho Employment* that would add information to the data and also highlight specific links in iLMI
 - Adding the LED portal to the Idaho iLMI website in **September 2004**
 - Training Regional Labor Economist in data retrieval and analysis – **October 2004**
 - Regional Labor Economist will training local WIB staff in data availability through LED, basic retrieval, analysis, and what is available through special requests
 - Obtain feedback from local WIBs via the RLE training on data needs from LED data.
 - Producing in-house and community requests for evaluation findings from the LED data.
 - Maintaining the LED production schedule as outlined by the U.S. Census Bureau.
 - Sending individual(s) to the annual LED State Partners Workshop, tentatively scheduled for **January 2004** in Washington, D.C.
 - B) **WIB Ad-hoc support / Labor Assessment / Skills Survey**
 - Data sources identified using the following questions via a small focus group – **November 2004**
 - Survey instrument designed, sample selected, and survey conducted – **Spring 2005**
 - Template completed - **July 2005**.
 - GIS mapping training ~ Collaboration with state of California, dates and locations to be announced at a later date. Attendance to a national training for our most experienced analyst, one of the annual GIS-LMI trainings offered by the LMI Institute.
 - C) **Job Vacancy Survey Needs Assessment** ~ Idaho will commence a small research, planning and evaluation effort in developing a needs assessment for a Job Vacancy Survey to potentially be conducted during the PY2005 grant period. The Planning and Evaluation team will conduct a brief survey with the WDC, local WIBs, and customers to evaluate the demand for job vacancy information. The needs assessment will be developed by **April 2005**.

- **Estimated Costs:**

- A) **LED Program** ~ A total of **\$43,600** will be allocated towards LED endeavors, \$32,000 towards personnel, \$5,000 for printing and materials, and \$6,600 for travel and training (Three training/meetings are scheduled, two are scheduled for LED State Partners Workshop, tentatively scheduled for **September 2004**, **November 2004**, and **January 2004** all in Washington, D.C. at \$2,200 per travel (\$6,600)).
- C) **WIB Ad-hoc support Labor Assessment / Skills Survey** ~ A total of **\$96,343** of personnel is estimated to be allocated for this project. \$83,000 is estimated to for personnel, \$5,343 for printing and materials, and \$8,000 for travel and training. A three person GIS team will undertake four separate trainings. All three individuals will participate in a training that is a result of a collaboration with the state of California and the Bureau of Labor Statistics, estimated to cost (3) * \$1,500 per person. Also attendance to one national training conducted by the LMI Institute with the dates and locations to be announced at an estimated cost of \$2,500 for travel and training. And \$1,000 of travel for WIB support (in-state).
- D) **Job Vacancy Needs Assessment** ~ A total of **\$1,000** of personnel is estimated to be allocated for this project.

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

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

Idaho's internet delivery system for dissemination of LMI was deployed in February 2003,, a Workforce *informer* (*Wi*) product developed by a private vendor in conjunction with a national consortium made up of 22 member states. Idaho's version of this product has coined the acronym *iLMI* standing for Idaho's *internet* Labor Market Information. *iLMI* is Idaho's electronic one-stop center for acquiring Idaho Labor Market Information.

- **Customer support for the product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey findings or other consultations with customers and users of workforce information:**

Most importantly we gain feedback from online user surveys that can be accessed on each and every web page. As will be mentioned in the following section the LMI team gains perhaps the most intelligent feedback for improvements to our internet delivery system via hands-on training sessions. These venues allow immediate 'on the fly' feedback to trainers. Often these improvements or enhancements from these suggestions are made within 24 hours.

As previously mentioned LMI team works closely with the six Regional Labor Economists (RLEs) stationed geographically throughout the state. These RLEs attend and contribute to their region's local Workforce Investment Board (WIB). During these formal meetings they work with the WIBs to develop strategies to serve the LMI needs of their regions and the customers they serve. Via this relationship with the WIBs and the community they serve, the RLEs obtain a myriad of requests from employers and workforce intermediaries, such as labor exchange agents, schools, community-based organizations, career guidance counselors, and teachers. These requests are completed, categorized, and analyzed to be included in the Workforce Information Annual Strategic Plan described in Section A of this proposal.

As mentioned earlier, feedback from the state and local boards continues to focus on the need for dynamic *electronic* and analytical products. The LMI Unit will continue to utilize the *Wi* (technology to fulfill this need that exists throughout the state. Idaho continues to aggressively pursue the use of electronic and digital media to more efficiently and effectively publish and disseminate LMI.

- **How the deliverables support the goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan:**

Idaho's internet Labor Market Information (*iLMI*) electronic delivery system not only supports the goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan, but is the catalyst to putting LMI to work for our state and local economy that our workforce supports.

LABOR MARKET INFORMATION (LMI) provides a broad variety of data at the state, regional, and local level on past, current, and projected labor market conditions. Statistics on employment and unemployment serve as key economic indicators and are produced in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Activities include:

- Developing state and local labor market statistics
- Publishing a monthly state and area employment newsletter
- Developing information on occupations and wages
- Conducting actuarial research for Unemployment Insurance trust fund solvency
- Conducting special research projects at the state and local level
- Identifying workforce education and skill requirements by industry

- **The principal customers include:**

Virtually everyone is a potential customer to iLMI. Even those without internet access can gain access for free through a public library or at one of our 24 commerce and labor local offices throughout the state of Idaho. As we continue to move through the 21st century we will continue to rely more and more on iLMI, and other electronic delivery technology.

- State Legislature
- Out-stationed labor analysts
- City and county planning organizations
- Employers
- Employees and prospective employees
- Job changers
- Students
- Career counselors and educators
- Idaho Department of Commerce & Labor staff

- **The outcome(s) and system impact(s) projected**

Simple search engines and website links are included to facilitate rapid, user-friendly browsing of numerous LMI sources. It allows analysts to update and load information quickly, allows for historic data to be retained, and provides links to related topics, articles, and publications.

The capabilities of iLMI include allowing R&A to create and link data into formats required by different user groups— state data, county data, data by WIB area. Regional pages are now available for the state, local office area, and county. The initial set-up has been extremely cumbersome and laborious. However, this up-front effort is now providing us the capability for disseminating data and information at a rapid and efficient rate, at the county level.

Updating these services is an ongoing, full-time activity. Costs of this activity are essentially included in all projects involving electronic service delivery. Grant funds will be used to fund system enhancements endorsed by the Workforce Informer Consortium as well as for initial development and deployment of the full internet version (iLMI).

The iLMI application will make timely and accurate state, regional, and local labor market information readily available and easily accessible to internal and external users.

Specific to iLMI technology anticipate outcomes and future enhancements are:

- New Website Administrator Tools ~ Integrated User Stats which allow administrators to track number of downloads of publications articles, and excel files. To date the task is tenable but cumbersome and labor intensive
- User ~ Enhancements to Industry Explorer, a more user friendly report system based on industry data. User stats will be available to email articles, publications, and excel files directly from the site.
- Article and Publication rating ~ A one-to-seven point range of rating the item, displaying the most popular articles and publications.
- Advanced Search Tool ~ A search engine which hits on all aspects of written content based on a keyword search.

- Dynamic Tables within content that update with data analysis.
- Database enhancements, ~ Populate non-core tables such as, schools, programs, completer tables as well as economic indicator tables such as building permits.

- **Planned milestones for completion of the deliverable**

Idaho will pursue a new maintenance agreement for iLMI and upgrade to Workforce Informer (*Wi*) version 2.3 in PY2004. Idaho's current maintenance contract will expire in Dec 2004. Idaho will renew the maintenance agreement in **December 2004** with the software developer CIBER, ensuring future upgrades and enhancements.

- **Estimated Costs:**

A total of **\$55,000** is allocated towards Idaho's internet Labor Market Information internet delivery system. \$31,000 is to be allocated towards Personnel in supporting, maintaining, and uploading content, as well as time spent supporting workforce informer informer meeting and support networks. \$1,000 is allocated towards Popcharts software to augment the iLMI internet delivery system. **\$20,000 (December 2004) is allocated towards the maintenance agreement with the Workforce Informer product vendor (CIBER)**. \$3,000 is allocated towards travel, one individual for LMI Forum and one other for both LMI Forum and the Workforce Informer Network Support meeting scheduled for Portland, in October 2004.

6. Support state workforce information training activities.

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

In PY2003, the RLEs provided the LMI module in the Career Development Facilitator (CDF) program to interested Idaho Commerce & Labor staff. The half-day training was delivered across the state. Anticipated additional CDF/LMI training will be provided in 2005 for new staff and/or as a follow-up to the initial presentations. Also iLMI training will be provided to local WIBs, the WDC, and other partners.

- **Customer support for the product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey findings or other consultations with customers and users of workforce information:**

The LMI team gains perhaps the most intelligent and superfluous feedback for improvements to our internet delivery system via training sessions. These venues allow immediate 'on the fly' feedback to trainers. Often these improvements or enhancements from these suggestions are made within 24 hours. It is these power users that understand how to leverage LMI so their feedback on iLMI is integral to its success.

- **How the deliverables support the goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan:**

As just mentioned, while Idaho's internet Labor Market Information (iLMI) is the catalyst to putting LMI to work for our workforce and the economy it supports. The ability to train grassroots, secondary, and power users on iLMI is integral to leveraging the power and significance of LMI to our workforce and the economy it supports. The Workforce Information training plan above clearly supports the goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan described below:

***LABOR MARKET INFORMATION (LMI)** provides a broad variety of data at the state, regional, and local level on past, current, and projected labor market conditions. Statistics on employment and unemployment serve as key economic indicators and are produced in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Activities include:*

- *Developing state and local labor market statistics*
- *Publishing a monthly state and area employment newsletter*
- *Developing information on occupations and wages*
- *Conducting actuarial research for Unemployment Insurance trust fund solvency*
- *Conducting special research projects at the state and local level*
- *Identifying workforce education and skill requirements by industry*

- **The principal customers of the deliverable.**

State and local workforce development system staff will be our primary customer of various LMI training activities that will occur throughout the year. The opportunity to train these primary, or power users ultimately allow the diffusion of LMI their customers, constituents, and stakeholders.

- **The outcome(s) and system impact(s) projected**

LMI and LED training will be provided to Idaho Commerce & Labor staff, WIB staff, educators, economic developers, employer groups, chambers of commerce, and a variety of other customers during the program year. The training will introduce the website – iLMI – to these entities and orient the users to its many services. We anticipate this effort will significantly increase iLMI visits due to the multitude of users who seek LMI support through WIB channels.

- **Planned milestones for completion of the deliverable**

Idaho Commerce & Labor staff training – **Ongoing**
Central Office staff training – **Fall/Winter 2004**
Workforce Investment Boards training – **January to March 2005**
Training for other customers – **Spring 2005**

- **Estimated Costs:**

An estimated **\$30,000** will be used to support Workforce Information Training Activities for iLMI and related LMI. \$25,000 is estimated for personnel, \$3,000 printing and materials, and \$2,000 for in-state travel to various locations throughout the state).

SECTION C ~ Consultation and Customer Satisfaction Assessment

- **Customer consultation and satisfaction assessment strategy**

In PY 2003, Idaho implemented a comprehensive customer satisfaction plan (Appendix A) where all publications produced would contain a survey addressing the publication content and layout, how the publication was being used, and requesting comments and suggestions for improvement. The survey also asked, “if the same information were available on the internet, would your need for a hard copy of the publication be eliminated?”

During PY 2003 survey response has been strong, and has indicated that there is a portion of the audience who is not interested in electronic distribution of the publication requiring that a variety of mediums of dissemination must continue to be provided.

However, use of the Internet has vastly reduced the volume of hardcopy publications R&A produces and disseminates. Idaho’s portal to labor market information on the World Wide Web is iLMI. The past two years have seen iLMI initial introduction, data population, and page design. Now that iLMI has been operational for over a year, a further refinement process can begin, where customer input is sought on content, navigation, and usage. To that end, a user survey asking about why the customer accessed iLMI, how the site was discovered, and opinions of general content and navigation. Now that we are comfortable with how the software provides data, we can include surveys specific to each program’s page. There are also plans to ask users to rate individual articles, as upgrades become available.

- **Method to collect and interpret customer satisfaction information**

The collection of customer input for hard copy publications will be from the survey form that accompanies each publication (see Appendix A).

The collection of input from iLMI users will be as described above—customers will be asked, via a link on the web page, to provide information about who they are, how they are using data from the page they have accessed, layout, and format, and asked to suggest changes for improvement. Use of iLMI to access ALMIS data will also be surveyed.

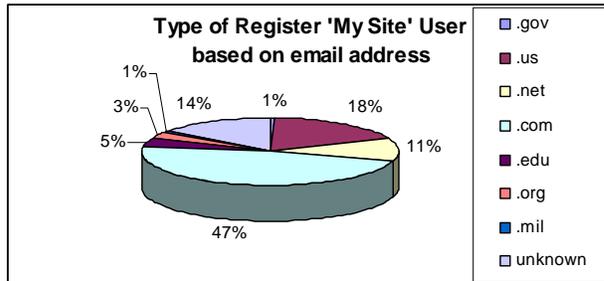
On each survey will also be the opportunity for customers to indicate when they were unable to find information they were looking for. While it will be difficult to “quantify” this data, comments and suggestions will provide very telling information as to accessibility of Labor Market Information to our users.

- **Quantitative measures to document assessment of return on investment of grant funds (when possible)**

Idaho Labor Market Information website (iLMI) has strived to meet the information needs of its consumers. iLMI web site has tracked elements of usage over throughout the first half of calendar year 2004. Using DeepMetrix Web Analytics, Idaho can now track, unique usage, downloads, type of downloads, and keyword searches. A brief summarized example of the typical statistics we monitor are listed below:

- ❖ iLMI received nearly 70,000 visits in the first half of 2004.
- ❖ Unique visitors to iLMI counted up to almost 20,000.

- ❖ On average unique visits to iLMI average just under 3,500 per month.
- ❖ Downloads of the Occupation Employment Survey increased 68 percent during the second quarter of 2004. This increase includes downloads in Excel and PDF formats.
- ❖ iLMI my site has a total of 443 registered users. External users account for 85 percent of those registered. My site allows the user to save articles, publications, and data for easy retrieval. See chart below for a breakdown of user types.



- ❖ Keywords to finding iLMI through external search engines such as Google, Yahoo, and MSN, maintain in consistency throughout the search engines. *Idaho, County, Wages, and Jobs* remain at the top of all search engines for most used for successful searches in connecting to iLMI.

- ⇒ **PY2004 Goals, Tangibles:** For PY2004 and subsequent years Idaho will be using a growth with decreasing returns model for tangible (visits, hits, pages viewed, downloads, registrations, and the like) iLMI internet traffic. Our goal is to attain at the very least a 25% increase in all tangible traffic measures in the first year, with decreasing returns of a 20% growth in the second year, following this pattern until we reach growth of 10% in the fourth year, and 10% of all subsequent years. Therefore for the PY2004 year the model yields our efforts to attain at least a **20%** increase in tangible iLMI internet traffic. These metrics may be adjusted to fit new opportunities for growth or challenges for growth.
- ⇒ **Intangibles:** The Evaluation and Planning component has now been implemented for one year allowing for a baseline to be developed in evaluating the intangibles (qualitative customer satisfaction findings) of our effort to deliver high quality iLMI in subsequent years. In order to appropriately measure the qualitative success of Idaho's LMI program it is essential that two complete years need to be established. That being said the Planning and Evaluation team is excited about the opportunity for evaluating the satisfaction of our LMI customers and stakeholders during the PY2004 year.

As we measure iLMI "hits" and "pages viewed", these metrics do not elicit information about how our customers feel about using iLMI to collect their Labor Market Information. By asking customers if they have used iLMI in the past, we will have much better data on the accessibility and usefulness to customers, and their willingness to use iLMI as part of the Labor Market Information library. This kind of valuable information is uncovered from customer surveys.

While web usage, downloads, and internet traffic are valuable sources for evaluating LMI impact. Direct surveys to WIBs and their stakeholders is perhaps the most valuable source for identifying research projects providing the largest return on investment. WIBs have significant leverage in the business community therefore, due to their economic impact, WIB feedback is extremely valuable to the success of targeting specific LMI research. Below (next page) is our priority list derived from direct WIB customer satisfaction surveys:

Subject Areas Ranked by Average Score **Avg. Score**

Labor market assessment – available labor pool, skills, wages demanded, wages offered, age, gender, underemployment, not in the labor force, education, turnover rates by area and industry, benefits,	2
Skills – what employers are looking for (soft and technical)	4
Projections - Employment & Industry	5
Labor Force Demographics – age, gender, race/ethnicity	5
Population Demographics – age, gender, race/ethnicity	6
Wages by occupation	7
Underemployment – wage, hours, and education	8
Income – median, per capita, personal	8
Covered Employment and wages by industry	9
Poverty – number in poverty and age	9
Drop outs – age, school or location	9
Applicants – age, gender, education, occupation, race/ethnic, veteran, migrant, disabilities, skills, by area not just JS office	10
UI – age, gender, race/ethnic, education, industry, occupation, reason, duration	13
Languages – types and whether primary or secondary	13
Foster Children – age and placement type	14
Veterans – total, age, gender, period of service	15

- **Estimated cost:**

It is estimated **\$8,200** will be allocated towards evaluation and planning, \$5,000 towards personnel, \$1,000 towards printing and materials, and \$2,200 for travel to the LMI Director’s conference, dates and location to be announced.

Appendix A

Appendix A: Planning and Evaluation Plan

Purpose

A condition for receiving the PY 2004 Workforce Information Core Products and Services grant is a state assessment of customer satisfaction with selected grant deliverables or with the larger statewide workforce information system. Section 15 of the Wagner-Peyser Act (WIA Section 309) requires state agencies to consult with customers about the usefulness of the information disseminated through the statewide workforce information system. Consultation with the workforce development system, combined with the customers' feedback on their satisfaction with workforce information, provides the basis for formulating continuous improvement strategies for the system.

The grant plan must include a description of the customer consultation and satisfaction assessment strategy to be employed and the method(s) to be used to collect and interpret customer satisfaction information. Satisfaction must be assessed in some manner for each of the system's principal customers, e.g., businesses, individuals and the workforce development system.

To meet the condition set forth in the WIA, Idaho assembled a 10-member team representing the data-producing units of Research & Analysis (R&A), and members of Public Affairs to develop a comprehensive plan to measure the effectiveness of Idaho's LMI products and LMI delivery systems. The team was comprised of analysts who are instrumental in producing core Labor Market Information (LMI) products and services and Public Affairs analysts whose responsibility it is for distributing LMI to the customer population.

States might find usage indicators to be a starting point for assessing satisfaction. Samples of possible indicators are: Web Metrics' demand information for a product or service, such as number of publication or listserv subscriptions; number of requests for assistance by customer organizations; or number of individuals served by an activity, such as individuals trained by course offerings or counseled using an O*NET-based occupational analysis product.

The grant plan must include a description of the customer consultation and satisfaction assessment strategy to be employed and the method(s) to be used to collect and interpret customer satisfaction information. Satisfaction must be assessed in some manner for each of the system's principal customers, e.g., businesses, individuals and the workforce development system.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Planning and Evaluation Plan is to develop qualitative and quantitative protocol for analyzing the value and effectiveness of the LMI products and services provided by IDOL

Goal	Objective
☑ Identify who uses Idaho's LMI product and information-providing services and how those products and services are accessed	Evaluate the current mail, fax, and internet distribution in order to quantify the usage.
☑ Determine customer satisfaction with current LMI products/services	Establish baselines and benchmarks for measuring acceptability of current LMI products/services by asking current customers why they like/use or don't like/use our LMI products/services
☑ Improve existing LMI products/services where needed	Provide feedback from customers to R&A and Public Affairs so that they may refine LMI products and services
☑ Identify data voids that new LMI products can fill	Ask current customers what Labor Market Information they would like/need Develop new customer groups
☑ Devise a system for continual evaluation of the effectiveness of our service/products	Include survey and feedback options with every point of use/customer contact

Current situation

Idaho's Labor Market Information (LMI) products consist of weekly, monthly, and annual data, and publications accessible through the Internet, available in hard copy, or given over the phone when requested.

Responses to phone data requests and publications are dealt with by support staff. The Public Affairs Bureau staff fields questions for non-standard or technical data, ad hoc data requests, or requests made by state government officials. Public Affairs also produces a monthly newsletter containing current labor market developments and data. In-depth responses to questions are answered by the program Research Analyst who produces the data, and in most cases, format and publish historic data series.

When calls are forwarded to a Research Analyst, previously there was no requirement to keep information about the request, the answer, or the requestor. Analysts who have worked in their program for a number of years have a good feel for the kinds of information requests that come in, but that knowledge is anecdotal, and informally passed from one analyst to another. While this informal approach is a valuable means of evaluating our effectiveness for delivering LMI, a more sophisticated approach is desired for optimal customer satisfaction measurement.

A significant drawback to this system is the relatively short time most of the LMI-producing analysts have been working in R&A, or at least with BLS programs; over half of the Senior Research Analysts have fewer than five years with their programs.

A customer satisfaction survey for the monthly newsletter was last conducted in 1996. User response was used to modify the newsletter. The usability of other products could only be estimated by the number of users who wanted to remain on the publications' mailing lists.

In February 2003, the Idaho Department of Labor unveiled a website that allows for downloading data series, current information and data and most of the LMI-related publications. The Internet product, iLMI, is still in its infancy, and emphasis is/has been on formatting and posting data to the site.

The Challenge

Customer analysis has been more an attempt at deflecting time-consuming data requests than responding to customer needs. Although it has served the public well, there is room for improvement. The initial action will require R&A to step off the well-beaten path that we've trod for years and to step onto a new path where we will encounter customers with needs we haven't met before.

Goal: Identify who uses Idaho's LMI product and information-providing services and how those products and services are accessed

The Labor Market Information Planning and Evaluation Team (hereafter referred to as the Team) identified four user groups:

- ◆ Users who call for information periodically
Initial contact by phone, follow-up by US mail or e-mail
- ◆ Users who are on mailing or fax distribution lists for various publications
Those who utilize iLMI to retrieve data and information
- ◆ Users who register on iLMI—the internet website for Idaho Department of Labor's Labor Market Information
- ◆ Users of iLMI who don't register on the web site

LMI users who call for information

To date, there is no formal method for collecting information from data users who call for information or want a single copy of a publication. If data can be supplied easily, it is simply relayed over the phone. If a single copy of a publication is requested, names and mailing addresses (if not a pick-up) aren't necessarily kept. If the calls are referred to a Research Analyst, the analyst deals with the call as he/she sees fit, and there is no 'formal' method of tracking how the customer was dealt with, what was requested, or contact information file.

- The Team recommended that Research & Analysis (R&A) clerical staff—the initial point of contact for most calls, should collect the information request by type (CPI, labor force, etc) whether it be read over the phone, mailed, faxed, or e-mailed, or if it was referred to an analyst. Call tracking to be expanded to include analysts.
- Furthermore, it was decided that, without universal use of a call tracking system, the data would not be complete. Therefore, the team requested that the six Regional Labor Economists join R&A analysts in tracking information requests.

Publication Mailing Lists and Fax Lists

R&A and Public Affairs maintain mailing and fax lists for dispersal of data.

R&A periodically includes surveys in our publications asking whether a recipient wishes to continue receiving the publication, but little information regarding how the publication is used or how it could be improved has been asked.

- The Team recommends that with or following each publication's mailing, a survey as to how the publication is used, how it is circulated, and improvements that could be made be sent to those on the mailing list.
- An added use of the survey would be to promote iLMI as an alternative source of the information, resulting in decreased production and mailing costs, and offsetting the cost of a mail survey.

Users who register on iLMI

This group is essentially a captive audience, comprised of users who will take the time to dig through a web site until they find what they want. They should prove to be a valuable source of information on data format, availability, and usability. We will be able to contact them by e-mail.

Users of iLMI who don't register on the web site

This mercurial user group is the largest constituent of iLMI. They are probably the most important group in terms of service and accessibility. They are not willing to spend time searching through a web site or entering numerous parameters to retrieve data.

Casual users will be the hardest group to get information from since we don't know who they are, why they need the information they are looking for, and how they found iLMI. Yet they are probably the most important user group—the lowest common denominator in terms of LMI sophistication. If we succeed in meeting their needs, we have achieved the pinnacle of customer satisfaction.

To get information from these users, a voluntary, on-line survey needs to be designed.

Having identified who our customers are and the way we would like to address them, the Team then discussed *what* we would need to know in order to assess customer satisfaction.

Due to the varying nature of data delivery, the core questions are the most basic elements we believe we need to accurately determine customer satisfaction. Each data-producing unit is encouraged to add questions they feel could gather insight into how their products/services are used and what improvements or changes would enhance their usability. Therefore, on the following page is a template of core question that are mandatory full publications or comprehensive iLMI outreach.

All surveys will have this standard set of questions:

How did you know about this publication/website

For publications:

I've used it in the past

It was in the library/resource room

I happened on a copy and wanted one for my own

I read about it in the *Idaho Employment* newsletter

Other

Are you aware that this publication is available on the Internet?

Y/N

OR

For web site:

I've used it in the past

I found it using a search engine (Yahoo, AltaVista, Google, etc)

What words did you search for?

It was linked on another website

http:// _____

I read about it in an Idaho Commerce and Labor publication

Which one?

Which of the following best describes you

Expand this area

HR administrator/personnel

Student

Library personnel

Educator

Legal Professional

Job Seeker

Other

How do/will you use this publication? /Why did you access this website?

Expand this area

Library/resource room

Economic research

School-related research

Career-related research

Business planning (move to Idaho, expand, marketing, etc)

Pay Administration

Grant writing/proposals

File

Other

If you found the information you were looking for, please rate how you found the following

	Easy					Hard
Ease with which you found what						
you were looking for	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Layout/headings	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Poor explanations/ hard to understand	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Graphic elements	1	2	3	4	5	n/a

Corollary to this goal: Ask WIBS to evaluate products and services

- The Team recommends R&A be active addressing the WIBS through the regional economists. Rather than ask general questions about what WIB members' experience that with a product or service has been, ask that a product be presented at a meeting and a survey be returned. In this way, we will be able to respond directly to their needs and concerns about data and information issues. LMI team will have monthly contact with the RLEs monthly during their staff conference calls, and meet annually to discuss issues pertinent to data distribution and dissemination. A formal customer satisfaction survey will be conducted towards all local WIBs on the topics and effectiveness of current LMI research endeavors.

At this point, the directive given to this group, "[To] develop a comprehensive Planning and Evaluation Plan to include qualitative and quantitative approaches to measure the effectiveness and impact of Idaho's LMI products and delivery systems" has been accomplished. The framework for conducting measurements of customer satisfaction for Research & Analysis' publications and services has been constructed and data collection activity and analyses has been conducted and will be ongoing.

What remains is implementation of the procedures that have been designed, the outcome evaluated, and the process repeated until an "acceptable level" of customer satisfaction for each product and service is attained.

Recommendations

Although data are distributed in different ways by different bureaus in the Idaho Commerce and Labor, the need to assess their value to data users is constant. So is a need for an easy-to-access format, and when possible, an attractive layout. The type of questions which need answered remain consistent, and so allows a standard set of questions to be asked of all data users. Addition of questions by each data-producing unit to assess whether the data should be provided in a different format, or at all, will be encouraged.

Short-term

- A.** Gather all information, formal and informal, that exists for each product or service offered by R&A.

Improve by formalizing information collection procedures by Research & Analysis and the Regional Labor Economists.

- B.** Identify customers, and when possible, classify into a user group based on how the product/service is used: HR administrator/personnel, student, Library personnel, Educator, Legal Professional, Job Seeker, Other

Improve by surveying customers about:

- 1) How data/information in the publication is used
- 2) How the publication is circulated after receipt
- 3) What improvements could be made to the publication
- 4) If they are aware that the publication is available on iLMI,

- C.** Formalize communication between Research & Analysis and WIB members (via the Regional Labor Economists) as to their knowledge of R&A products and services, and as to their LMI needs.

Improve by familiarizing WIBs with current products and services available, and request specific suggestions on changes, additions, and improvements based on their needs.

- D.** Add a user survey to iLMI asking what was being sought, how the data/information was to be used, and what improvements or changes would enhance the web site's usability.

Improve by making changes where possible.

Long-Term

- A. Make product/service evaluation a standard operating procedure.

Implementation Protocol

Orient LMI staff as to the WIA customer survey requirements and outline the Team's process framework that will be used for information collection

Explanation of what the WIA requires and how we are part of the plan, how the plan affects us, and what we would like to accomplish.

Help data-producing units clarify their goals for surveying their data users

The team identified three methods of data dissemination (internet, phone, and hard copy) and challenges each posed in surveying data users.

The team developed a core set of questions that will be asked of all data users, regardless of the method of data delivery. To accommodate the differences in the data, each data producer will be encouraged to augment the core questions with questions that data users believe would improve the delivery and quality of the product.

The team identified three methods of data dissemination (internet, phone, and hard copy) and challenges each posed in surveying data users.

The team developed a core set of questions that will be asked of all data users, regardless of the method of data delivery. To accommodate the differences in the data, each data producer will be encouraged to augment the core questions with questions that data users believe would improve the delivery and quality of the product.

Help data-producing units augment the base list of questions

It is important to note that the customer satisfaction survey instruments need to ask some demographic information about the person or entity filling out the survey. The survey should ask if the person is a member of a local workforce board, a job seeker, an education provider, etc. This will allow the survey to aggregate responses by customer group to identify the scope customers assessed.

Develop plans for how survey results will be used by each data-producing unit

Establish a baseline and benchmarks for measuring programs

Analyze survey results to determine if key customer groups are being served

After assessing survey results, assist with refining and enhancing survey to maintain quality of data products and access to products by key customer groups.

LMI Workforce Information PY 2004 Budget

Cat. Num.	Del. Num.	Deliverable Title	Personnel	PM&C	Travel	Total
1	1	ALMIS Database	\$ 30,000		\$ 1,000	\$ 31,000
2	2	LT Projections (Dev)	\$ 20,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 26,000
2	2	ST Projections (annual) (Dev, prod, and diss)	\$ 32,000	\$ 7,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 41,000
3	A	OES/SOC Products	\$ 7,000	\$ 3,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 12,000
3	B	Fringe Benefit Survey	\$ 4,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 11,000
3	C	Education & Training Poster	\$ 4,000	\$ 7,000	\$ 500	\$ 11,500
3	D	Projections Publications	\$ 7,000	\$ 7,000	\$ 500	\$ 14,500
3	E	Employer Databases	\$ 4,000	\$ 1,000		\$ 5,000
4	A	LED	\$ 32,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 6,600	\$ 43,600
4	B	WIB Ad-hoc Support/Labor Assessment/Skills Survey	\$ 83,000	\$ 5,343	\$ 8,000	\$ 96,343
4	C	Job Vacancy Survey Needs Assessment	\$ 1,000			\$ 1,000
5	A	iLMI ~ Internet Delivery System/Workforce Informer	\$ 31,000	\$ 21,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 55,000
6		Training/Marketing Initiatives	\$ 25,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 30,000
		A & C ~ Planning & Evaluation Component	\$ 5,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 2,200	\$ 8,200
Total for all Deliverables			\$ 285,000	\$ 70,843	\$ 30,300	\$ 386,143