

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Program Year 2004 Annual Report

Introduction

South Carolina is pleased to present its Program Year (PY) 2004 Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Annual Report. For PY 2004, South Carolina exceeded the negotiated performance levels on 15 measures and met the negotiated performance levels on the remaining two measures. Such success is attributable to the collaborative efforts of local elected officials, volunteer business leaders, workforce development partners and professional staff who work tirelessly to ensure that South Carolina's One-Stop Workforce System delivers high quality services to its job-seeking and business customers.

Effective July 1, 2005, administrative authority for WIA was shifted to the SC Department of Commerce, the state's lead economic development agency. The Executive Order which effected this realignment noted that WIA is one of the most important tools the state has to tackle workforce problems. Consequently, WIA resources should be used in ways that are tightly coordinated with Commerce's efforts to bring more high-paying jobs to the state and specifically used for training programs that relate to the industries and businesses targeted by Commerce. This enhanced alignment between workforce development and economic development along with the continued commitment of significant stakeholders will foster the continued improvement of South Carolina's One-Stop Workforce System.

Statewide Highlights

WorkKeys®

The question as to how to identify and fill the skills gaps of workforce customers is a major challenge confronting South Carolina. Local Workforce Investment Areas (LWIAs), educational entities, and human resource managers had long searched to find an efficient, flexible and meaningful assessment tool by which workers could be matched to jobs. In Program Year 2004, across the state WorkKeys® emerged as the tool which was capable of meeting the need. WorkKeys® is a multifaceted workforce development product of the American College Testing Program, Inc. (ACT), a nationally-recognized, not-for-profit assessment organization. Driven by customer demand, Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs) and the South Carolina Workforce Investment Board gravitated to WorkKeys®.

The backbone of the system is based upon the competency assessment of job seekers and incumbent workers in the three skills relevant to most jobs: Reading for Information, Applied Math, and Locating Information. Skill tests are designed to be completed in less than one hour; competency scores range from one to a high score of five. A variety of training options are available to remediate deficiencies. A job-readiness credentialing system provides a common competency currency recognized by businesses nationally. Competency measurements of a wider range of skills are available to accommodate more complex jobs.

Analyzing the tasks and skills necessary to perform a job is referred to as "job profiling". While an array of jobs have already been profiled to determine general WorkKeys® tasks and skill

levels, businesses are interested in more customized analysis. At this point, scale efficiencies allow larger employers to realize a more rapid return on their investment. As more jobs are profiled, the cost of customization is reduced, allowing smaller businesses to realize the benefits of WorkKeys®.

The State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) has presently budgeted funds to support WorkKeys® assessment of all WIA registered participants. The Board's most recent strategic plan calls for the creation of "a statewide system for the identification and development of basic workplace skills, providing the business and industry sector with a workforce that meets a recognized standard of employability." Expanding the delivery of WorkKeys® assessments and job profiling through the coordinated efforts of all workforce development partners is critical to accomplishing that mission.

Incumbent Worker Training Program

The popular Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) Program provides resources for employers to train their current employees in an effort to avert lay-offs and keep businesses and workers competitive. State funds were prorated in grants to each of the twelve local workforce areas to enhance the established relationships between local One-Stop partners and the business community. These relationships are expected to encourage business engagement and provide additional job profiling opportunities.

Final reports received during the program year indicate that 5,046 employees completed training and that 49% of them received a credential. Employers also reported that 848 jobs were created and 3,270 jobs were saved as a result of the IWT program. Thirty-seven percent of participating businesses employed less than 50 workers; fifty-four percent of participating businesses were in the manufacturing sector.

Rapid Response

The Dislocated Worker Unit (DWU) seeks to minimize the economic impact of employment dislocations by marketing the benefits of prompt layoff/closure notifications to businesses and by providing services that facilitate rapid and suitable reemployment for affected workers. The State DWU is responsible for leading the "Rapid Response" team, which includes staff representatives from the Local Workforce Investment Area/Board and the local Employment Security Commission (includes Unemployment Insurance). Based upon identified needs, and the reemployment barriers of the workforce, additional service providers may be recruited to the team. The experienced team meets with the company's management staff to present a menu of services and to determine an appropriate approach for addressing affected workers before the first layoff is expected. In Program Year 2004, 308 employer and employee meetings were conducted in response to the notification of 17,582 job losses. This effort contributed to the State's WIA Dislocated Worker performance success.

Youth At-risk Focus

The SWIB played an important role in ensuring that programs and services were made available to the state's at-risk youth. Specifically, the SWIB allotted funds for the following programs: Fourteen schools were selected to pilot "Jobs for South Carolina's Graduates", a nationally recognized drop-out prevention program (JAG), which uses mentoring, and work-based learning experiences to supplement classroom instruction. The "Juvenile Employment and Enrichment Program" provides innovative summer and after-school activities for youthful offenders.

Employability/social skills training, tutoring, occupational exposure, community service and work experience are provided to facilitate high school graduation and reduce recidivism. The “High School/High Tech Program” is designed to motivate and prepare disabled high school students for college and high technology careers by providing counseling, college visits, internships, mentoring, corporate site visits and job shadowing.

The following thumbnail sketches of Local Area accomplishments provide a glimpse of the progress of the South Carolina One-Stop Workforce System during Program Year 2004.

Local Workforce Investment Area Highlights

Pendleton

The Pendleton District WIB partnered with the State Dislocated Worker Unit to serve nearly 1,400 employees dislocated by the WestPoint Stevens plant closure in Seneca. WIA staff from throughout the region assisted in providing services at a Transition Center established on-site. Two-dozen employers participated in a Job Fair specifically organized for the affected employees.

The three-county area held its first annual Youth Services Fair to increase awareness of the resources available to youth ages 14 through 21. Over twenty service organizations displayed information and spoke to over 100 attendees. The Fair increased collaboration among providers by spawning networking meetings throughout the year.

Upper Savannah

A grant with the State WIB supported the development of a video and a flyer to market extensive business services offered through the area’s One-Stops. Job Fairs at the Greenwood Mall and increasing skills of existing employees at nine local businesses are two examples of these business services. (<http://www.us1stops.com/employerservices.html>)

New One-Stop Workforce centers opened in Newberry and Saluda Counties. The Saluda Center was a joint project with Saluda County and the Community Development Block Grant Program administered by the Department of Commerce. The eight centers in the seven-county area facilitated 75,303 visits during program year 2004-2005.

The WIA youth program assisted 567 youth including high school students, dropouts, and out-of-school youth; recruitment focused on offenders and children transitioning out of foster care.

Upstate

Through a State WIB supported grant, Upstate marketed registered apprenticeships to local businesses and initiated the establishment of 22 new apprenticeship programs in the area, exceeding the goal of ten apprenticeships in some stage of formal development. The local board expects to continue cultivation of these apprenticeships as seeds are planted in other regions of the State.

The Upstate WIB actively supported WorkKeys® assessment. The Upstate One-Stop Career Center and its satellites were licensed by ACT as Value Added Resource (VAR) sites. The State grant, cited above, funded a staff person to become a certified WorkKeys® job profiler.

The WIB has designated a portion of its staff office space for use as a Business Resource Facility. Businesses may use an office, a conference room and a kitchenette without charge. Two satellites are expected to follow the comprehensive site's lead in the near future. Donations to update available training CDs, books, magazines, and videos will be accepted.

Greenville

Greenville WIA collaborated with local partners to train Aircraft Sheet Metal Technicians. Upon successful completion of 5 weeks of FAA-approved classroom training at Greenville Technical College, Lockheed Martin employed 15 WIA participants for 12 weeks of on-the-job training, earning an average \$13.69 an hour. Recruitment for a 2005 class has begun.

Responding to the needs of rural customers, isolated by rising energy costs and a lack of public transportation, the Greenville WIB implemented a One-Stop Extension program. Community and faith-based sites equipped with telephones and internet-connected computers allow citizens virtual access to the resources available at the area's One-Stops.

Midlands

The Midlands Workforce Development Board (MWDB) successfully initiated a WorkKeys® assessment system in its three-county area that includes the following key elements: job profiling; administration of WorkKeys® assessments; and, basic skills training through *Workforce Interactive Network Career Solutions (WIN)*.

Midlands joined the Pee Dee local area in launching the SCJobReady! Credential card. The portable card immediately identifies a job seeker's competency on the three skills most sought by employers.

The MWDB hosted an Employer Appreciation Luncheon at which businesses were recognized for their commitment to workforce development. Nearly 200 Midlands-area employers were apprised of the beneficial business services made available by the board.

Trident

The Trident One-Stop Career System (TOSCS) was selected as the 2004 One-Stop of the Year by the South Carolina Chapter of the International Association of Workforce Professionals. The Community Healthcare Training program and the CARTA discount bus pass program were included in the public-private partnership programs that were cited.

Several manufacturers, Charleston County government, and the Trident Workforce Investment Board joined to sponsor a pilot certification training course through the Lowcountry Manufacturers Council and Trident Technical College. Each of the 22 enrolled students completed the course successfully and received a certificate.

Pee Dee

The Pee Dee local area was responsible for developing and promoting the SCJobReady! Certification Program. The program was initiated in the six-county Pee Dee area and the concept was presented to the eleven other local areas with marketing funds from the State WIB.

The Pee Dee area also developed the SCJobReady! web site (<http://www.scjobready.com/>) and database. The database stores assessment results and ultimately job profiles that will facilitate matching workers with certified skills to jobs of high quality. A Department of Labor grant funded promotion of the program across the state.

In developing its WIA strategic plan, Pee Dee tapped into the power of E³ concept. The task of strengthening the engagement of education, economic development and employers was respectively assigned to three committees. Each group determined a strategy for accomplishing results, which will be realized within the next two years.

Lower Savannah

Lower Savannah implemented the Personalized Employability Profile Portfolio (PEPP) system to enhance the participant's job search skills. The professional portfolio includes a resume, copies of credentials, recommendations, and other documents that enable participants to better present themselves and exhibit the workforce developer's commitment to his/her customers.

The region implemented the WorkKeys® Assessment System as its primary assessment tool for WIA registrants, while continuing to use other assessment tools as needed.

Catawba

Due to the outreach efforts of the Business and Industry Liaison and the sponsorship of local business solutions summits in each of the area's three counties, Catawba has affected a 36% increase in on-site employer interviews during PY 2004, as compared to PY 2003.

Over the past three years, Catawba's Pre-Employment Occupational Certification (PEOC) program has been refined to meet customers' needs. The base of the program now consists of WorkKeys® competency assessment followed by 90 hours of classroom instruction to upgrade the academic, basic employability and work skills necessary for more technological occupations.

Applying PEOC concepts to youth services has dramatically improved youth outcomes.

Santee-Lynches

At Santee-Lynches Youth Council's recommendation, the Career Development Facilitator career counseling class became a foundation component of all youth provider curricula. This initiative complemented the South Carolina Education and Economic Development Act.

Santee-Lynches WIB joined the Pee Dee & Trident WIBs to sponsor the first ever eight-state Southeastern WorkKeys® Conference. Over 360 attendees participated in one of three workshop tracks: business, education, or profiling. The Santee-Lynches WIB has provided leadership in promoting a statewide WorkKeys® system.

Waccamaw

Waccamaw LWIA coordinated academic remediation and occupational skills training for 22 former Georgetown Steel workers who possessed mechanical skills and expressed an interest in a Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning career; 18 earned a credential.

Georgetown Memorial Hospital and Horry-Georgetown Technical College approached Waccamaw LWIA in response to a local need for more licensed and registered nurses. With the additional support of a Duke Foundation grant, 35 participants have, thus far, entered training; nine have been licensed and employed while 23 remain in training.

When the Tupperware Manufacturing plant downsized, the Waccamaw LWIA was able to establish an on-site transition center to facilitate the re-employment of nearly 250 displaced workers. The center provided a full menu of re-employment services, including two job fairs with near-by manufacturers and 50 occupational training opportunities.

Lowcountry

The Lowcountry Workforce Investment Board conducted a workforce assessment survey among businesses to discover, among other sentiments, that a high work ethic and a commitment to customer service were critical to employee advancement. In response to this survey, the Board produced a series of videos reflecting survey sentiments while highlighting career opportunities (http://www.beaufortgazette.com/local_news/story/4114272p-3880587c.html).

The Board directed its educational/promotional efforts to three target groups: the employed, the unemployed and the emerging workforce. One such campaign sought to direct the emerging workforce toward high-demand well-compensated healthcare careers. The information included links to the post-secondary campuses and five local hospitals in the four-county area.

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

Cost Analysis

The following table represents program dollars expended between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005 divided by the number of participants that were reported to have received services during that time period.

<i>Cost Effectiveness</i>	<i>Expenditures per Participant Served</i>
Adult Program	\$2,000
Dislocated Worker Program	\$1,990
Youth Program	\$2,790

Program Year 2004 Performance Summary

For the outcomes reported in PY 2004, State WIA programs met or exceeded all negotiated performance goals.

Of the seventeen mandated performance goals negotiated with the DOL, the state achieved:

- 100% of the goal or higher on each of fifteen measures and
- 80% of the goal or higher on the two other measures.

The State worked closely with Local Area Boards and their administrative staff, providing ongoing oversight/guidance, as well as technical assistance to address more focused needs. The State is encouraged by the performance progress that virtually all of the Local Areas are exhibiting. The State is also pleased that both participant and employer customers remain satisfied with the services provided throughout the State's One-Stop Workforce System.

EVALUATION OF ACTIVITIES

Customer Satisfaction Surveys

The South Carolina One-Stop Workforce System is meeting the needs of businesses for skilled workers by providing an extensive array of job training, education, and employment services to job seekers and employers at a single point of contact. In the continuing effort to improve services and service delivery, WIA participants and employers who use services offered by our One-Stop system are surveyed on a monthly basis. The surveys are conducted via telephone and administered by trained interviewers who are skilled in delivering customer satisfaction surveys.

The American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) methodology consists of three DOL mandated questions which measure overall satisfaction, overall expectations and the customer's ideal of a program. The PY 2004 surveys yielded an ACSI score of 80.4 for service to participants and 77.0 for employers. Both the participant and employer goals were exceeded for PY 2004. While this methodology does provide a measure of the satisfaction level of customers, it provides no direction for actions to improve our customer satisfaction. Consequently, the State WIB authorized funding for the statewide Secret Shopper Program.

Continuous Improvement

The Secret Shopper Program has been contracted in order to directly assess the quality of services provided to job seekers and employers in the State's One-Stop Workforce System. In addition, the program delivers "hands on" technical assistance in response to that assessment. The components of the program include a continuous improvement plan, system reviews, mystery shopping, technical assistance, staff training, and business services support. While technical assistance to the local workforce areas is very important; quarterly staff training is the anchor to achieving continuous improvement.

A training-needs assessment is administered during the first quarter to identify gaps in staff capacity and to develop a responsive curriculum. The workshop curriculum is based directly on the results from the needs assessment of frontline staff. The quarterly Secret Shopper Reports provide additional information by which technical assistance can be customized to meet specific needs within each Local Area. All Local Area staff and partners are eligible to participate in these special training programs. This process seeks to promote continuous improvement and enhance program performance by recognizing and encouraging improved customer service.