

***Summary Report: Fourth Quarter 2014
Combined Advisory Group Meeting
Wage Record Interchange System (WRIS)
and
Wage Record Interchange System2 (WRIS2)***

Convened by conference call on December 11, 2014 (2:00 p.m. EST), from the Employment and Training Administration (ETA), U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, DC.

I. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Karen A. Staha, Chief of the Division of Strategic Planning and Performance for the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration Office of Policy Development and Research (OPDR), welcomed the WRIS and WRIS2 Advisory Group representatives to the combined Fourth Quarter 2014 conference call meeting. Ms. Staha introduced participating staff members from OPDR, the Office of Unemployment Insurance (OUI) and the Office of the Solicitor, Employment and Training Legal Services Division (ETLS) as well as the technical assistance contractors from Xerox and CDS², and briefly reviewed the discussion agenda previously circulated. In the interest of ensuring adequate time for discussion, in place of calling a roll Ms. Staha requested that attendees confirm participation through an e-mail to WRIS@dol.gov.

Ms. Staha provided a brief update on implementation progress for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Public Law 113-128, which was enacted in July 2014. The Department currently is drafting the required Notice of Proposed Rule-Making (NPRM) to implement WIOA and anticipates an early 2015 publication date. Ms. Staha encouraged Advisory Group representatives to provide comments once the NPRM is issued. ETA is continuing to conduct extensive consultations and outreach activities to gather information from states, local areas and representatives of partner programs on how best to craft the direction of WIOA implementation.

Ms. Staha also provided an update on the guidance for transitional authorities and flexibilities that states can use for WIOA implementation planning. Although the performance accountability provisions do not become fully implemented until 2016, one provision under transitional authority allows the use of monies for upgrading management information systems. The related Training and Employment Guidance Letter, TEGl No. 12-14, "Allowable Uses and Funding Limits of Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Program Year 2014 Funds for WIOA Transitional Activities," including Frequently Asked Questions, was issued on October 28, 2014 and is available on the ETA WIOA Web site at: <http://www.doleta.gov/WIOA/>.

The TEGL is also available at: <http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/>. In early October, ETA also issued TEGL 09-14, “Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Program Year (PY) 2013 Annual Report Narrative. Ms. Staha thanked those who had participated and reported that the documents would soon be available on the Division’s Web site: <http://www.doleta.gov/performance/>

II. Adoption of the Third Quarter 2014 Summary Report

Ms. Staha reviewed the Summary Report of the Third Quarter 2014 WRIS and WRIS2 Advisory Group conference call held on September 18, and reported that a total of 41 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico were represented for the discussions. The Summary Report had been distributed previously to the Advisory Group members for review and no corrections had been received. Following a motion to approve the Summary Report made by Jo Doyal (AL), and seconded by Mary Findlay (NE), the Third Quarter 2014 Summary Report, as distributed, was adopted.

III. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

During the September Advisory Group conference call, an overview presentation was made on the basic provisions of WIOA. For further information, Ms. Staha encouraged participants to view the webinar “WIOA 101,” which provides an overview and descriptions of the provisions and can be accessed through: <http://doleta.gov/WIOA/>. She also noted that two webinars related to provisions for Eligible Training Providers and Integrated Management Information Systems would be presented on December 15 and 16th and that both webinars also would be archived through ETA’s WIOA resource Web site. As indicated during the September discussions, revisions to the WRIS and WRIS2 Data Sharing Agreements will be needed. Ms. Staha thanked Alan Carson (GA) for volunteering to participate in that initiative and encouraged others to notify ETA of their interest through an e-mail to WRIS@dol.gov.

In discussions regarding general performance accountability provisions for WIOA, observations were shared by Adam Leonard (TX), Clinton Flowers (MO), Tom Meyer (SD), and Jeff Sorensen (NY) related to the “next generation” of WRIS-WRIS2, FERPA requirements, case management systems, reporting requirements for eligible training providers, and reporting templates. Participants indicated an interest in state presentations on emerging and best practices for eligible training provider reports during a Town Hall or a quarterly Advisory Group meeting. Ms. Staha encouraged participants to continue to share comments and ideas through WRIS@dol.gov following the meeting.

IV. WRIS2 Membership and Operations Status

John Glen (OR), WRIS2 Work Group Chairman, and Heather Parker (ETA Program Officer for WRIS, WRIS2 and CRIS), discussed the current status of the voluntary, opt-in WRIS2 expanded data sharing initiative and noted that the

membership stands at 36. The states and commonwealths that have signed the WRIS2 Data Sharing Agreement are: Arkansas, Arizona, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. Mr. Glen and Ms. Parker indicated that two additional states are actively considering membership and have had exploratory conference calls with ETA.

Mr. Glen noted that the WRIS2 Data Sharing Agreement provides the approved programs and limitations in Section 7. Operation of WRIS2 (page 8), and the related definitions in Section 4 (page 3). For the approved purposes and programs, the WRIS2 initiative allows aggregate data to be shared with Third Party Entities (TPE), which are defined in the Agreement as any public body, agency, or private career school required by law to meet state and/or Federal performance measures. A PACIA, or its agent or consultant, cannot be designated as a TPE. Ms. Parker encouraged participants to raise questions through WRIS@dol.gov; and, to access ETA's WRIS2 Web site for key documents and the status map: http://www.doleta.gov/performance/wris_2.cfm.

V. WRIS and WRIS2 PACIA and SUIA Training Opportunities

Ms. Parker provided an overview of recent and upcoming WRIS training events. The initial 2015 *Confidentiality Compliance and Incident Response Review* training webinar will be presented during the first quarter, and PACIA, SUIA and IT staff members are requested to attend. The previously scheduled WRIS-WRIS2 Town Hall had been postponed due to conflicting WIOA-related webinars as well as national and regional Town Halls. The WRIS-WRIS2 Town Hall is being rescheduled and includes a presentation on data validation and related issues by Denise Dombek, ETA Region 6 Performance Specialist who is based in San Francisco. PACIA and SUIA members were encouraged to submit additional agenda discussion topics through WRIS@dol.gov. Ms. Parker noted that a WRIS or WRIS2 "101"/Refresher training could be offered to any state, for newly appointed or current staff members, by request to ETA. The next refresher training will be presented for South Carolina staff members within the next few weeks.

VI. Quarterly Report of WRIS and WRIS2 Technical Operations

Ms. Parker introduced Amanda Gohl of Xerox, the technical operations contractor for WRIS-WRIS2. Ms. Gohl outlined the WRIS and WRIS2 Quarterly Technical Reviews, distributed to the Advisory Group representatives on December 5. She noted that all 52 SUIAs of WRIS members currently are sharing data. For the WRIS2 exchange system, all SUIAs are sharing data with the exceptions of Connecticut and South Carolina, which are completing their ICON-interface testing processes. In discussing the 3rd Quarter 2014 Distributed Database Index (DDBI), Ms. Gohl indicated that data is due from SUIAs by January 5, and the updated

DDBI will be available for PACIA use on January 12, 2015.

Ms. Gohl also outlined Xerox's recent annual FISMA/NIST Audit and the positive results. She indicated the audit was conducted against NIST Special Publication 800-53 Revision 4, "Security and Privacy Controls for Federal Information Systems and Organizations." Additional information regarding Special Publication 800-53 Revision 4 is available at: <http://csrc.nist.gov/publications/PubsSPs.html#800-53> In closing, Ms. Gohl reminded representatives that passcode requests to permit PACIA staff to access the WRIS and WRIS2 portals are approved and granted only to individual staff members and that sharing of a passcode by any individual constitutes a security violation. Ms. Gohl advised that members could e-mail questions at any time regarding WRIS or WRIS2 technical operations through WRIS.support@xerox.com or WRIS@dol.gov.

VII. Additional Business and Discussion

After concluding the scheduled agenda topics, Ms. Staha encouraged Advisory Group members to raise questions or issues for discussion during the remainder of the meeting or by follow-on e-mail through WRIS@dol.gov.

Ms. Staha suggested March 19, Thursday, at 2:00 EDT as the tentative date for the First Quarter 2015 WRIS and WRIS2 Advisory Group meeting. She requested that any state conflicts, due to conferences or other professional activities, be e-mailed to WRIS@dol.gov so that ETA can consider an alternative meeting date convenient for the majority of the Advisory Group members.

ETA adjourned the WRIS and WRIS2 Fourth Quarter 2014 conference call meeting at 2:45 p.m.