

State of Rhode Island

PY 2005 Workforce Information Grant Plan

June 17, 2005

A. Statewide Workforce Information System

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

Rhode Island's Workforce Investment System has been undergoing some changes over the last year. The membership of the RI Human Resource Investment Council (HRIC), which previously served as the State's Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) under the Workforce Investment Act, was changed by legislation passed last year and by pending legislation this year. As a result, the HRIC is a much smaller board than required by WIA. An expanded HRIC with four additional members has been proposed to serve as the new SWIB. A waiver has been submitted along with our State's Two-Year WIA Strategic Plan for the SWIB to be considered an alternative entity.

The new SWIB will oversee the State's One-Stop System of Local Offices, called *netWORKri*, as well as the products and activities of the State's Workforce Information System. The Director of the Department of Labor and Training (DLT) will also serve as the Executive Director of the SWIB. The State Workforce Investment Office is located within DLT and there are currently two local Workforce Investment Boards, *The Workforce Partnership of Greater Rhode Island* and *Workforce Solutions of Providence-Cranston*.

The Workforce Development Services division at DLT has administrative oversight responsibility for the *netWORKri* offices, while the Labor Market Information (LMI) division has responsibility for the State's Workforce Information system. The heads of both divisions report directly to the Director of DLT. The Director of DLT is also the Executive Director of the State Workforce Investment Board and a member of the Governor's Cabinet. The Labor Market Information division works in conjunction with *netWORKri* staff to ensure that they are receiving the type of information needed to best perform their primary mission of connecting people with jobs.

Due to the transitional status of the SWIB, the Labor Market Information (LMI) work plan was developed in conjunction with SWIB staff to reflect the goals and objectives outlined in the State's recently submitted Two-Year WIA Plan. The work plan was also based on input received from the State Workforce Investment Office as well as the needs expressed by other LMI customers. Since the LMI unit collaborated with SWIB staff on the Economic and Labor Market Analysis section for the State's Two-Year WIA Plan, it also supports the goals outlined in the plan. The work plan was submitted to the Governor for his approval on behalf of the SWIB. The Governor approved the work plan and submitted the same to ETA under his signature.

- **How the statewide workforce information system supports the goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Two-Year Strategic Plan for state and local workforce development.**

Data and analysis from the RI Workforce Information System was used extensively in the drafting of the Economic and Labor Market Analysis section of the State's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Two-Year Strategic Plan for state and local workforce investment. The RI Workforce Investment System will support the state and local workforce development goals by:

- Seeking input and feedback from the WIA Oversight Committee and the State and local WIBs on its products and services.
 - Providing universal access to its products and services through the State's *netWORKri* offices and electronically over the Internet through its LMI web site and through its Internet application, *RI Research and Economic Database (RI RED)*.
 - Working with *netWORKri* staff and Employer Service Representatives to improve existing products and services and to develop new products and services of use to our common customers.
 - Providing information on the local economies down to the city and town level when possible.
 - Providing timely wage, training, education, employment and skills information high demand industries and occupations.
 - Taking advantage of opportunities to implement nationally developed systems and products (i.e. Internet Delivery Systems, Job Vacancy Surveys, Benefits Surveys and the Local Employment Dynamics Program) in RI.
 - Continue to provide training to LMI customers on the availability and proper use of the wide range of information and analysis produced.
- **How the grant activities are consistent with the strategic vision of the Governor and the SWIB.**

Governor Carcieri's vision is to create an environment where our State's workers are among the best trained in the nation and to support value-added job growth. This will be accomplished by developing strategic partnerships and focusing on effective resource allocation by aligning workforce development with the State's economic development vision.

The Governor's vision provides that the State's education and training programs are responsive to the changing skill needs of business and industry as a result of innovation and new technology. His workforce development strategic goals are divided into four broad areas:

1. Economic Development

- To assist companies to improve their capability to compete in today's marketplace.
- To assist employers with their training needs by taking advantage of new technology and helping transpose obsolete skills into profitable competence.

2. Continuous Learning

- To augment traditional learning programs for RI residents.
- To focus on teaching skills directly applicable to the world of work.
- To reach students of all ages, encourage internships, apprenticeships, literacy programs and other innovative educational systems.

3. Resource Utilization

- To maximize spending by reducing duplication and focusing on innovative solutions to today's complex issues.
- To build networks that link scattered organizations into cohesive, intelligent systems.

4. Target Populations

- To address the distinct needs of those at risk of not being adequately served due to barriers to employment, particularly those with limited English proficiency.
- To implement inventive solutions via creative partnerships with all of the State's cabinet agencies and other organizations.

The goals are summarized by the tag line of the *netWORKri* offices - *To connect people with jobs*. The purpose of the grant activities is to support this goal by providing the workforce information needed to help make that connection between people and jobs. The LMI unit will actively participate in the various partnerships that are created to fulfill the Governor's workforce development strategic goals. The grant activities will provide a wide array of workforce information on both a state and local level. They will give policy makers information on which to base their decisions for job training, to employers on how competitive their wage and benefit structures are, to job seekers on what jobs will be most in demand and what the educational and training requirements are, and to workforce professionals as they try to advise workers about the job market.

- **The strategy of the SWA and the SWIB for consulting with local workforce investment boards and stakeholders in the workforce investment system to determine customer needs for workforce information.**

The State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) will lead the effort to collaborate relationships with other key State departments, underscoring the important connections between all State agencies in fostering workforce and economic development. The members of the SWIB will serve as the Governor's advisors and will articulate and advocate for the entire "workforce system" and direct the role of the system in regard to the State's economic development goals. The Director of DLT, while also serving as the Executive Director of the SWIB, has made a commitment to helping our partners make data driven decisions. She has and will continue to include representatives of the Labor Market Information (LMI) unit at the table with our various partners to help provide information as important workforce development decisions are made.

The LMI unit has also designated an employee to act as a liaison to work with the *netWORKri* managers, Employer Service Representatives and WIB staff to get direct

feedback on LMI products and services. This person plays a central role in measuring customer satisfaction with our products and services.

- **The broad strategic approach for workforce information delivery to principal customers.**

Workforce information will be made available to our customers in both hard copy and electronic format. The LMI unit maintains its own web site that includes the full extent of labor market information collected through its contracts with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Employment and Training Administration, and the US Department of Education. In addition to the web page, the LMI unit has contracted with an outside vendor to provide an interactive workforce information delivery system (called the *RI Research and Economic Database*).

The LMI unit provides training to the *netWORKri* staff and to other members of the State workforce development system who have need of this information. The services of our State Workforce Information Office, which is also part of DLT, will be enlisted to align our activities with the needs of the local WIBs. We will address the needs of our employer community by working with the State's Employer Service Representatives.

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

Universal access is ensured through the LMI web site and interactive Internet delivery system (the *RI Research and Economic Database*). In addition, copies of our products are provided to all *netWORKri* offices and local WIBs for display and use by walk-in customers. Specific products have been developed for the *netWORKri* offices based on feedback from center managers.

- **A description of the customer consultation and satisfaction assessment method(s) to be used to collect and interpret customer satisfaction information and the principal customers to be consulted.**

Customer consultation and satisfaction assessment begin with the contact LMI staff has with the *netWORKri* staff, the State Workforce Investment Office and the State's Employer Service Representatives. They will be used to obtain valuable feedback and advice on usefulness of our products and services and the need for additional products/services. Finally, customer satisfaction forms will be included with our hard copy publications for direct feedback from customers. We also intend to follow up with recipients of our LMI products/services to gauge their satisfaction.

- **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 PY 2004 including how the plan addresses inadequacies or gaps identified by users.**

The feedback we have received from our customers indicates satisfaction with the products that have been produced to date and the training provided in the use of our *RI RED* system. There have been some suggestions for improvements and new products that were included in last year's plan and this year's proposed plan. A recent survey of our Employer Service Representatives provided us with very positive responses on our products and services, and suggestions for new products. One example is a brochure and posters requested for a meeting with representatives of the State's Marine/Boating Consortium. We've also produced similar products for the Dental Association and the Green Industry at their request.

At the request of our One-Stop Career Centers (*netWORKri*), we developed a four-page pamphlet, "*Opportunities in Jobs Requiring On-the-Job or Vocational Training*," that was used in dealing with customers on our state welfare rolls. The positive response we received to that publication has led to plans to follow up this year with two additional pamphlets. One will be on jobs requiring long-term on-the-job training and the other on jobs requiring higher education.

Past customer requests for employee benefit information led to our current Employee Benefits Survey. This survey has been completed and results are being tabulated.

- **Identify funds leveraged or matched from funding sources other than these grant funds and how these funds will enhance delivery of products and services as part of the state's workforce information system.**

With the ongoing reconfiguration of the RI Human Resource Investment Council (HRIC) and the SWIB, funding decisions have been put on hold. To date no funds have been sought for specific purposes during this program year. However, the HRIC and SWIB are open to future proposals depending on the specific purpose, funding requested, and availability of state funds. Much will depend on the partnerships that are developed as we move forward.

B. Core Products and Services

STATE WORKFORCE AGENCY DELIVERABLES

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

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

This will be an ongoing task throughout the program year. We are currently using version 2.2 of the ALMIS database. We will upgrade to version 2.3 when it is made available by the ALMIS Database Consortium. The next version (7.0) of our *RI Research and Economic Database (RI RED)* will also incorporate version 2.3 of the ALMIS Database.

The ALMIS Resource Center (ARC) web site refers to ETA designated "core tables" for the ALMIS database. We maintain/update these tables in accordance with guidelines

issued by the ARC. Database content is timely as data are updated on a weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual basis depending on the data type and frequency of the data.

We have also maintained occupational license files for inclusion in America's Career Information Network site and are in the process of updating these files, which were last updated in 2002. The license files, license.dbf and licauth.dbf. are updated every two years. We will continue to work with the National Crosswalk Service Center (NCSC) to assist in coding the files to O*Net SOC taxonomy. Funds will be used for personnel costs associated with the collection, review and entering of data.

We have sent an individual to both the basic and advanced ALMIS Database Training courses offered by the LMI Institute in previous years. We plan to send an individual to the ALMIS Database Seminar scheduled to be held in San Diego, CA this August.

- **Customer support for product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations**

This is a required work item specified by ETA. It provides the backbone of information for our Internet delivery system, *RI Research and Economic Database (RI RED)*, which continues to be well received by our *netWORKri* centers and other workforce development system users. Last year, one of our *netWORKri* managers sent the following e-mail message: "*Congratulations on this new web site. I am beginning to use it and am telling others in the office about it. Tremendous job!!!!*"

- **Support goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Two-Year Strategic Plan**

It provides the means for universal access of our workforce information by our customers. Information is provided down to the city and town level whenever possible and also aggregated for our two WIB areas. The information is kept up-to-date so that the latest information is always available electronically for our customers. We have found that many more of our customers are accessing our data electronically at their own convenience and appreciate its availability.

- **Principal Customers**

The principal beneficiary of this activity will be the *netWORKri* One-Stop Career Centers and their front-line employment counselors as they help the unemployed search for work. The local WIBs are also important customers for this information. Since this database is the backbone of our Internet delivery product, the *RI Research and Economic Database*, it will also benefit other customers who have access to the Internet - students and their parents, teachers and career counselors, job seekers, employers, and labor market professionals.

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

It will allow us to continue to provide our data electronically to our customers on a timely and cost-efficient basis. It increases our customer base and allows them to access the latest information when they need it.

- **Planned milestones**

Files will continue to be updated on a weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual basis depending on the availability of data. We plan to upgrade to version 2.3 of the ALMIS database as soon as possible.

- **Estimated costs (identify equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost)**

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.41
Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$ 41,166
Estimated travel/training costs:	\$ 2,000

2. Produce and disseminate industry and occupational employment projections.

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

a) We will begin work on our industry and occupational projections with calendar year 2004 as the base year and 2014 as the projected year, in coordination with the BLS National Projections for the same time period. We used the methodology, software tools and guidelines developed by the Projections Workgroup and the Projections Managing Partnership, using the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) in consultation with BLS and ETA. This data will be used to populate the ALMIS database and be submitted for public dissemination following procedures established by the Projections Managing Partnership in consultation with BLS and ETA.

Rhode Island does not plan to produce sub-state, long-term projections. Our State's small size negates the need and usability of such data for RI. Since RI is essentially one large labor market, it makes little sense to try and break the projections down into smaller areas. Every resident is within easy commuting distance of any employer within the state.

b) We will produce and disseminate State-level, short-term industry and occupational employment forecasts using the methodology, software tools and guidelines developed by the Projections Workgroup and the Projections Managing Partnership, in consultation with ETA. We plan to use the fourth quarter 2005 as the base quarter and forecast to the fourth quarter 2007. We will submit the forecast data for public dissemination in accordance with procedures developed by the Projections Managing Partnership in consultation with ETA.

As with the long-term projections, Rhode Island does not plan to produce sub-state, short-term forecasts. The State's small size negates the need and usability of such data for RI. Every resident is within easy commuting distance of any employer in the state.

We will also take advantage of the various training opportunities provided by the Projections Workgroup and the Projections Managing Partnership.

- **Customer support for product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations**

These two items are required ETA work items. Our long-term projections data are essential in identifying the high-growth occupations and industries for our customers.

- **Support goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Two-Year Strategic Plan**

This grant activity provides information that is necessary for planners and policy-makers to make decisions on where to spend job training dollars and what occupations are appropriate for job seekers to be trained in. It will allow our customers to focus in on high demand industries and occupations. This information is also extremely helpful to the educational community in assisting students in making future career decisions.

- **Principal Customers**

The principal customers for the long-term industry and occupational projections include career counselors, students and their parents, teachers, training providers, state and local planners, employers and economic development professionals.

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

This information will be available for users to review and update their training plans with the latest projections.

- **Planned milestones**

We expect to complete our long-term 2014 projections by the end of the third quarter of the program year and begin disseminating the information through electronic methods and hard-copy publications. The new short-term projections based on the fourth quarter 2005 data and projecting through the fourth quarter 2007, will be completed by the end of June 2006.

- **Estimated costs (identify equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost)**

Long-Term Projections:

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.50
Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$ 50,000
Estimated cost of Annual Projections Publication:	\$ 3,000
Estimated cost of Industry-Specific Projections Pamphlets:	\$ 1,582
Estimated travel/training costs:	\$ 2,000

Short-Term Projections:

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.20
Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$20,000
Estimated travel/training costs:	\$ 2,000

STATE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD (SWIB)/STATE WORKFORCE AGENCY (SWA) DELIVERABLES

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

- **Description of core product, service or other demand activity**
 - a) Since our LMI unit also has responsibility for the Career Resource Network in RI, we work in conjunction with Career Resource staff to produce various occupational and career information products. During the last program year, LMI staff and CRN staff collaborated in producing the *RI Career Anchor*. The publication was completed in the second half of the last program year and 40,000 copies were produced. Most of these copies were distributed to high schools throughout the State. This is one of our most popular products for students, their parents and teachers and is in great demand by the educational community. During this year, LMI staff will again assist CRN staff to produce a product similar to the *RI Career Anchor* geared towards the middle schools in the State, the *RI Career Navigator*.
 - b) We have also been producing and will continue to produce a series of nine occupational information brochures and pamphlets with wage data and occupational projections data. They include *Opportunities in Construction*; *Opportunities in Educational Services*; *Opportunities in Finance & Insurance*; *Opportunities in Information*; *Opportunities in Health Care*; *Opportunities in Leisure & Hospitality*; *Opportunities in Transportation & Warehousing*; *Opportunities in Retail Trade*; and *Opportunities in Professional, Scientific & Technical Services*. This program year we will update these brochures to reflect the new 2004 to 2014 occupational projections and the latest occupational wage data.

Following the good reviews we received on another pamphlet, "*Opportunities in Jobs Requiring On-the-Job or Vocational Training*," we will produce two other versions, "*Opportunities in Jobs Requiring Long-Term On-the-Job Training*" and "*Opportunities in Jobs Requiring Higher Education*."

We plan to update a booklet we did last year, *Health Services in the Ocean State*, which proved to be very popular with those working to address staffing shortages in the industry. We will do a similar booklet for *Leisure & Hospitality*, which has been requested by our Tourism industry.

We also recently distributed a news release on "Women's Earnings in the Ocean State." Media response was good and others have indicated interest in pay equity information. We plan on producing a brochure highlighting male/female dominated occupations from the 2000 Census and providing wage information from our Occupational Employment Statistics survey.

- c) We are in the process of completing our latest Job Vacancy Survey, which was started in the last Program Year. We will publish the results in brochure and pamphlet format in August 2005. We will also list these publications on our web site (www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi/) and send out a news release in September 2005. We used the tools developed by the National Job Vacancy Survey Workgroup. We also maintained the required Base SAS software as part of this effort and will continue to maintain it through the payment of the annual maintenance fee. We will use funds from this year's grant to do a follow-up survey of our first statewide Job Vacancy Survey beginning in spring of 2006 with an expected completion date of July 2006.

Most of these materials will be printed in-house on our color copier/printer and made available on our LMI web site. Grant funds will be used to pay the associated costs.

- **Customer support for product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations**

- a) The *Career Anchor* is one of our most popular products with the educational community and with the *netWORKri* One-Stop Centers.
- b) The "*Opportunities in...*" brochures have been well received by *netWORKri* staff and customers. They provide the basic information needed on occupations and wages in specific industries and can be given out to jobseekers to be used as a handy reference. Past feedback from school-based coordinators led to the development of the new pamphlet that includes the educational and training requirements for the occupations in demand based on our long-term projections. These brochures received the 2004 NASWA LMI Communications Publication Award in the category of Product or Service for One-Stops.

The booklet we did last year, *Health Services in the Ocean State* proved to be very popular and led to a request for a similar booklet by representatives of our Tourism industry for one on *Leisure & Hospitality*.

- c) Our initial Job Vacancy Survey spurred interest last year by the Health Care industry in our state for one targeted to that specific industry. We completed that specialized survey in the last program year and now intend to go back to the general one to provide some comparative data on the change in Job Vacancy rates over the last two years in RI.

- **Support goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Two-Year Strategic Plan**

- a) The *Career Anchor* and the *Career Navigator* are mainly geared to our educational customers: students, parents and teachers. These products support the goals of the State's plan by providing information on growing industries and occupations with data on educational requirements and potential earnings.
- b) These products support the goals of the State's plan by providing information on training needs, identifying educational and training requirements for demand occupations to facilitate development of training programs, and by informing students of what they need to do to qualify for certain careers.
- c) The Job Vacancy Survey will provide the State and local WIBs with information on which industries and which jobs have the greatest need for workers, and how this compares to our previous survey to gauge how the economy is performing. It is part of the larger picture on statewide and local area progress.

- **Principal Customers**

- a) The *Career Anchor* is targeted and used primarily by the educational community, students, parents, teachers and counselors. This product is funded primarily through our Career Resource Network grant.
- b) The series of "*Opportunities in...*" brochures are used extensively in our *netWORKri* One-Stop Career Centers and by various industry groups as they discuss the progress and needs of their members. They are also used in our LMI training sessions.

The *Leisure & Hospitality* and *Health Services in the Ocean State* booklets are geared toward policy makers and employers involved in the respective industries.

- c) The Job Vacancy Survey will be used as an economic indicator by state economists, planners and our State and local WIBs. Other interested parties include our Economic Policy Council and the RI Economic Development Corporation.

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

The projected outcome is a more informed community of service providers and a better-informed work force on the educational and training requirements for various jobs. The products developed and distributed under this section will raise awareness among high school students, teachers and parents on the local job market and enable them to make more informed career decisions. This should also lead to better decisions being made by those involved in making decisions on the best training opportunities.

- **Planned milestones**

- a) The *Career Anchor*, which targets high school students, will be completed in the fall of 2005 while the *RI Career Navigator*, which targets our middle schools, is expected to be completed in the summer of 2005.
- b) The series "*Opportunities in...*" pamphlets will be updated with the new projections and wage data during the last quarter of the program year. The two booklets, *Leisure & Hospitality* and *Health Services in the Ocean State*, will be completed during the first half of the program year.
- c) Our latest Job Vacancy Survey will be started during the fourth quarter of the program year with planned completion during the summer of 2006.

- **Estimated costs (identify equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost)**

- a) The majority of the cost of the *RI Career Anchor* and the *RI Career Navigator* will be borne by our Career Resource Network grant. Some minor costs for assembling data and providing analysis will fall under this grant.

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.05
Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$ 5,000

- b) ***"Opportunities in..." Pamphlets and Various Booklets***

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.25
Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$25,000
Estimated Printing Costs	\$ 3,000

- c) ***Job Vacancy Survey***

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.25
Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$25,000
Maintenance Fee for the Base SAS software:	\$ 1,306
Estimated Printing Costs	\$ 1,000

4. Ensure that workforce information and support required by state and local workforce investment boards are provided.

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

- a) The LMI unit will continue to provide staff support for the State Workforce Investment Board (also known as the RI Human Resource Investment Council) and our two local Workforce Information Boards on labor market information. This will include attending meetings of the SWIB and local WIBS, as appropriate, and consulting with these entities on our products and services.

LMI staff have taken the opportunity to expand their participation and membership in various committees and work groups to help the State WIB, the local WIBs and other industry/private groups assemble needed data on which to base their investment decisions. Staff currently are involved with a Strategic Planning Committee that is developing a strategy to better inform the employer community of the services available to them. We are also involved in "high growth" industry partnerships that are working on grant applications: Health, Education and Hospitality is the first and involves collaboration with the Hospital Association of RI, the RI Community College and Women & Infants Hospital. A Biotechnology partnership is expected to follow.

- b) In order to provide more detailed information on the characteristics of the local workforce for our WIBs, we plan to participate in the Local Employment Dynamics program with the Census Bureau during this Program Year. We are awaiting passage of legislation we drafted to change our state confidentiality law to allow our participation in this program. In preparation for our participation in the program, we sent a staff member to the September 2004 training offered for analysts on Quarterly Workforce Indicators. We are currently working internally on the Memorandum of Understanding necessary for our participation. Once the authorizing legislation passes, we will begin working on providing data to the Census Bureau.
- c) We will also use some funds to pay our prorated share of the Agency's membership in the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA). Our annual membership provides us with valuable information and provides support for our LMI efforts. We estimate our LMI share of the membership cost to be about \$3,000. We will also use some funds to support our LMI Director's participation on the NASWA LMI Committee as the Region One representative.
- d) This activity will include the cost of our monthly Employment Bulletin, our annual Employment Trends pamphlets, our *State of the State* booklet and our pamphlets describing our Internet products and web site. Based on customer feedback, we continually update our products and web sites to provide the latest, most useful data available.

We have also been producing a monthly Labor Force Brief that goes to the Governor, his staff, the members of the Governor's cabinet and the Economic Policy Council. This report summarizes a number of labor market indicators to provide a timely update on the RI economy. It is distributed on the same day as our monthly News Release on the employment/unemployment situation. The feedback we have received on this product has been very positive. We will look at expanding the distribution list to include the SWIB and local WIBs.

- **Customer support for product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations**

- a) Our Director has taken the lead in helping to forge partnerships to help solve the most pressing workforce issues in RI. She has included LMI in many of these partnerships so that data driven decisions can be made.
- b) The popularity of the Local Employment Dynamics program across thirty states has demonstrated its usefulness to local Workforce Investment Boards. We expect that our participation will provide the same useful data for our local WIBs as other WIBs have realized. The demand for the Local Employment Dynamics program nationally and ETA's desire for more states to participate and provide this data to their local WIBs caused us to include this in this year's priorities.
- c) NASWA has proven to be a valuable resource for information, technical advice and national workforce system coordination. The continuation of our membership and the LMI Director's participation on the LMI Directors' Committee will allow us to keep up with changes taking place nationally (such as the LED program).
- d) Our current Employment Bulletin mailing list includes only those who have expressed a desire to receive this monthly information in hard copy. However the newsletter is also available on our LMI web site. We also continue to get requests for our *State of the State* booklet.

- **Support goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Two-Year Strategic Plan**

All of these products support the State's goals by providing useful and timely information on the condition of the State's workforce and the current demand for workers. They will help the workforce development professionals make decisions on training and employment needs. We are taking advantage of nationally developed systems to acquire local information. The Local Employment Dynamics survey will provide additional data not previously available to our State WIB and our local WIBs on the local workforce indicators. It will provide planners with another analysis tool as they make local workforce decisions.

- **Principal Customers**

- a) The principal customer or beneficiary of our work with the State Workforce Information Board and the two local WIBs are the organizations themselves and the *netWORKri* system as we get feedback and suggestions for improvements to LMI data and products. This is one of the ways we learn what the WIBs and other workforce development system partners need in the way of workforce information.
- b) We expect that the Quarterly Workforce Indicators produced under the Local Employment Dynamics will be of great interest to the State WIB and our two local WIBs. It will provide them with greater detail on the characteristics of the local workforce.
- c) The principal beneficiary of our participation in NASWA will be the State's entire Workforce System since we will be better able to keep abreast of national programs and improvements to the system. The national venue provide us with the opportunity to learn more about new programs being developed, such as the Local Employment Dynamics program, and to see more clearly how our customers will benefit from our participation. It also gives us access to the information and support provided by NASWA to the agency on a broad range of workforce development issues.
- d) Our principal customers for these products are the employers, workforce professionals in the *netWORKri* system, and State and local government personnel involved in economic planning.

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

- a) It is expected that LMI staff support on workforce information to the State WIB and to the local WIBS will lead to better workforce policy decisions based on the best data available.
- b) The Quarterly Workforce Indicators will give the local WIBs better-localized information on the characteristics of the workforce. It will give them greater insight as to the economic needs and makeup of their constituency.
- c) Our participation in NASWA should allow DLT to keep up-to-date on many workforce development issues. Our Assistant Director for Labor Market Information's participation on the NASWA LMI Committee will allow us to have a voice in national decisions on workforce information and allow us to benefit from products developed in other states.
- d) Our Employment Bulletin is meant to keep the employer community informed about the current employment trends both locally and statewide. It is a good vehicle for maintaining contact with interested employers and other interested users. Our *State of the State* booklet provides a good summary of recent statewide employment trends.

- **Planned milestones**

- a) Staff support for the State WIB and local WIBS on workforce information and our participation in various partnerships will be an ongoing activity during the program year.
- b) We expect authorizing legislation to be in place by the end of June 2005. During the first quarter of the new program year, we will complete the Memorandum of Understanding with the Bureau of the Census. This will be followed by our assembling historical data for sharing with the Census Bureau during the second quarter of the program year. We hope to review the first quarterly Workforce Indicators for RI during the second half of the program year.
- c) This will be a continuous activity throughout the Program Year.
- d) This will be a continuous activity throughout the Program Year.

- **Estimated costs (identify equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost)**

- a) ***LMI Support to SWIB and Partnerships:***

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.20
Estimated Personnel-Related cost	\$ 20,000

- b) ***Local Employment Dynamics Program:***

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.35
Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$ 33,060
Estimated Travel/training costs:	\$ 1,000
Estimated cost of Publication and Pamphlets:	\$ 1,000

- c) ***NASWA membership and participation:***

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.10
Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$ 10,000
Annual Membership Prorated Fee for NASWA:	\$ 3,000
Estimated travel costs:	\$ 5,000

- d) ***Employment Bulletin, Employment Trends and other products:***

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.10
Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$ 10,000
Estimated cost of Publication and Pamphlets:	\$ 5,000

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

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

- a) LMI staff will continue to maintain our LMI web site and ensure that the latest information is always available on-line once it has been released. This includes all of our economic data series as well as our products produced under this contract. Links to other useful economic web sites will also be updated on a regular basis.
- b) LMI staff will continue to provide e-mail notification of the availability of new products/information to users who have requested it through *LMI Stat Track*. To date we have over one thousand names on this e-mail list.
- c) LMI staff will work with our vendor to upgrade our *RI Research and Economic Database (RI RED)* Internet application that replaced our former Job Seeker and Analyzer applications. One of the new features on this application is a direct link from an occupation to actual job openings on America's Job Bank and several private job banks. We are currently operating on version 6.0 and are updating to version 6.1 that includes a major enhancement to the web content publishing tool. This enhancement will allow us to customize the home page and add links to other services on pages two levels deep into the system.

The vendor also plans to begin building version 7.0 of the system that will incorporate version 2.3 of the ALMIS database and the 2.3 structure for the employer database. Version 7.0 will also include a CIP to SOC crosswalk and a license to multiple occupations crosswalk.

- **Customer support for product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations**

- a) Customer feedback on our newly designed LMI web site has been very positive. Usage of the web site (measured by hits on various pages) has been increasing.
- b) The *LMI Stat Track* e-mail notification system has been well received with about one thousand recipients signed up to date. Last year, we had only 700 recipients on board.
- c) Preliminary feedback we have received from those piloting the new *RI Research and Economic Database* has been very positive. Staff in our *netWORKri* Career Centers continue to indicate that they find this system very useful in working with their customers.

- **Support goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Two-Year Strategic Plan**

All of the above activities are means to provide universal access to our LMI products and services. The web files are updated in a timely manner to ensure that the latest

information is always available on-line. The *RI Research and Economic Database (RI RED)* provides an interactive means to find workforce information. One key feature is the capability to let a jobseeker access actual job openings from America's Job Bank and several private job banks related to his/her specific occupation. This is also a useful tool for job counselors in the *netWORKri* Career Centers as they work with job seekers. The *RI RED* application was developed as part of a national consortium.

- **Principal Customers**

These applications are geared to all users who have computer access. Information for all groups - employers, job seekers, job counselors, economic development professionals, educators, planners and policy makers - is provided through these systems.

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

These applications make self-service a viable alternative for the customer. The information is available at all times and can be accessed from the convenience of their home or office. These systems help cut down on the number of routine phone calls received and allow staff to focus on the more complex questions.

- **Planned milestones**

The information on the LMI web site is updated as new data become available. The *RI RED* system is currently being upgraded and will continue to be a main focus of training for local office staff during the Program Year. Both of these systems will be part of training provided by LMI staff to its customers.

- **Estimated costs (identify equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost)**

- a) LMI web site:

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.15
Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$ 15,000

- b) LMI Stat Track:

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.02
Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$ 2,000

c) RI Research and Economic Database:

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.20
Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$ 20,000
Est. cost of Annual Maintenance Contract for RI RED	\$ 25,604
Estimated cost of pamphlets for RI RED and LMI web site	\$ 1,000
Estimated travel/training costs:	\$ 1,245

6. Support state workforce information training activities.

• **Description of core product, service or other demand activity**

- a) LMI staff will continue to offer training on its products and services to our workforce development system partners. As we update our *RI Research and Economic Database*, we will train One-Stop Career Center (*netWORKri*) staff and Employer Service Representatives (ESRs) on the system changes. This system has proven to be popular with employment counselors as they work with unemployed individuals. We also provide these groups with training on the use of our LMI web site.

We anticipate that approximately 75 *netWORKri* Career Center staff and 12 ESRs will receive this type of training during the next program year. We will offer similar training to other interested parties including staff of the two local WIBs.

We have also been asked to provide up to three presentations to graduate students in the field of counseling on our LMI web systems and our products and services. There will be an estimated 25 graduate students in each session.

Other training sessions will be scheduled as the need arises during the Program Year.

- b) In addition to providing training to our customers, we will use a portion of our funds to ensure that our own LMI staff is properly trained and up-to-date in their analytical and presentation skills. Training will include courses offered through the LMI Institute such as Advanced Analyst Training, ALMIS Database Training, GIS training and Advanced GIS training. We plan to send representatives to the LMI Forum and to the annual Geographic Solutions Users Group meeting. We also plan to upgrade our staff publishing skills by providing Adobe InDesign training to those currently using PageMaker for publications.

In recognition of the LMI Institute's value as a training resource, we will support the LMI Institute by contributing the requested 0.5% of our FY 2005 grant. We will also take advantage of any other training opportunities offered by other groups for staff as well.

- **Customer support for product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations**

Feedback from the three-year LMI Training project and our contact with the *netWORKri* managers and our Employer Service Representatives indicate that there is an ongoing need and interest in LMI training.

- **Support goals of the state’s WIA/Wagner-Peyser Two-Year Strategic Plan**

Training in the use and application of LMI products and services for *netWORKri* staff, other employment counselors and other customers provides them with the ability to access and properly use the latest available data, and allows them to make better informed training and employment decisions.

- **Principal Customers**

Employment counselors in *netWORKri* offices and from other workforce system partners, and guidance counselors.

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

A better-informed group of employment and career counselors will provide better guidance to their customers.

- **Planned milestones**

This will be an ongoing activity throughout the Program Year.

- **Estimated costs (identify equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost)**

- a) Provision of training to outside customers:

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.10
Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$10,000

- b) Training for LMI staff and support of LMI Institute:

Estimated FTE's for this activity:	0.08
Estimated Personnel-Related cost:	\$ 8,000
Estimated travel/training costs:	\$ 8,000
Cost of Vendor Training (Adobe InDesign)	\$ 1,500
Estimated LMI Institute Support (0.5% of grant):	\$ 1,821

C. Consultation and Customer Satisfaction Assessment

Our customer satisfaction efforts will focus on feedback from *netWORKri* managers and our State's Employer Service Representatives (ESRs). We have designated an LMI staff person to act as a liaison to this group and to the local workforce boards to solicit feedback on the products and services we provide and to get input into additional products/services they feel are needed.

When training is provided by staff we will solicit feedback via a training evaluation form provided at the end of the training to be completed by the participants. In addition, an evaluation form will be included with our publications for feedback on its usefulness from the participants.

As for our web site, we have been using Web Trends to track activity (# of hits on various pages, etc.) and will continue to employ this method. We have been investigating the possibility of adding a customer comment button on our web site but have not made any final decisions on this method yet. We are looking at whether these have been found to be useful by other states.

We will use our participation in various partnerships in our planning and feedback system, and for ideas on any new products/services we develop during the Program Year.

We will also continue to keep track of comments received via e-mails, letters, or in-person meetings with individuals or groups on our products and services. During this program year, we began to keep an LMI Request Log, tracking each request for information, what was provided and how much time was spent on the request response.