

***Summary Report of the First Quarter 2015 Advisory Group Meeting
Wage Record Interchange System (WRIS)
Wage Record Interchange System2 (WRIS2)***

Convened by conference call on March 19, 2015 (2:00 p.m. EDT), 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 Office of Policy Development and Research (OPDR) at the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) welcomed the WRIS and WRIS2 Advisory Group representatives to the First Quarter 2015 conference call meeting. She introduced representatives from ETA and Office of the Solicitor as well as from the technical assistance and training contractors, CDS² and Xerox; and gave an overview of the agenda's discussion topics. In place of calling a roll, Ms. Staha requested that meeting attendees send a confirmation e-mail through WRIS@dol.gov, noting their state as well as their affiliation with either the unemployment insurance agency or the performance and accountability agency.

Ms. Staha provided an update on the Secretary of Labor's Congressional testimonies for the proposed FY 2016 budget. On March 17, Secretary Perez testified before the House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations, Sub-Committee on Labor, Health and Human Services Education; and, on March 18, before the House Committee on Education and the Workforce. She indicated Secretary Perez would testify before the Senate Committee on Appropriations the following week and that all Congressional testimony will be available on the Department of Labor's Web site at: <http://www.dol.gov/sec/media/>. Ms. Staha also addressed the status of the Department's Notice of Proposed Rule-Making (NPRM) for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and noted that several Notices had been submitted to the Federal Register for publication. As soon as they become available, each Notice of Proposed Rule-Making will be posted on the Department's Web site as well as being published in the Federal Register. The NPRMs may also be available in advance of publication through the Federal Register's Public Inspection Web site. Ms. Staha reported she was hopeful an informational Webinar could be developed for late spring that would focus on the performance and accountability sections of an NPRM and the related opportunities to provide comment. In compliance with the Administrative Procedures Act (APA), a period for answers by ETA to stakeholder questions cannot be provided during the Webinar.

Ms. Staha also referenced the Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 19-14, *Vision for the Workforce System and Implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014*, issued February 19, 2015. The TEGL lays out the vision for the revitalized, transformed workforce system resulting from implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and provides an overview of upcoming guidance and technical assistance to support effective implementation. TEGL No. 19-14 is available on the

ETA Web site at: http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?docn=7353 and on the Performance site at: <http://www.dol.gov/performance>. The most recently reported state outcomes also are available on the Performance site. In closing, Ms. Staha expressed her appreciation to ETA's Heather Parker for her extensive contributions to the NPRMs for WIOA and continuing consideration for the role of WRIS and WRIS2 under WIOA.

II. Adoption of the Fourth Quarter 2014 Summary Report

Ms. Staha reviewed the Fourth Quarter 2014 Summary Report, which had been previously distributed to the Advisory Group Members for review. No corrections had been received. Following a motion made by Jeanie Meholchick (ID), and seconded by John Glen (OR), the Fourth Quarter 2014 Summary Report, as distributed, was adopted.

III. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Ms. Staha and Heather Parker (ETA Program Officer for WRIS, WRIS2 and CRIS) continued the WIOA-related discussion initiated during the Opening Remarks section of the agenda and indicated that the Department is seeking suggestions and questions through its WIOA e-mail address: DOL.WIOA@dol.gov. Ms. Parker outlined the documents recently made available on the Department's dedicated Web site for WIOA, including the Second Round of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), as well as on the Performance Web site. Links to the Web sites are: <http://www.doleta.gov/wioa/>; <http://www.dol.gov/performance>

During the discussion, Adam Leonard (TX) asked if a mechanism could be developed for WRIS and WRIS2 members to share comments once the Notices of Proposed Rule-Making are published in the Federal Register. Lois Zuckerman (ETLS, Office of the Solicitor) briefly outlined the constraints of the Administrative Procedures Act (APA) and indicated she would review the options. Ms. Staha noted that ETA will be sharing the development of the statistical model in the coming weeks and that ETA is anticipating a late spring publication of the Information Collection Rule that is required under the Paperwork Reduction Act. In closing, several Advisory Group representatives indicated that ETA's outreach regarding performance accountability and related aspects of WRIS and WRIS2 under WIOA had been helpful.

IV. WRIS and WRIS2 Data Sharing Agreements

Ms. Parker provided an update on the required revisions to the WRIS and WRIS2 Data Sharing Agreements. Currently, the Department is reviewing both of the Agreements for alignment and compliance with the Workforce Opportunity and Innovation Act (WIOA). A Work Group is being established to develop the revised WRIS and WRIS2 Agreements and an April kick-off meeting is planned. To date, representatives from the states of Georgia, Minnesota, New York, Oregon, Texas, and Washington State have expressed interest. Additional representatives who would like to participate with the Work Group, or provide input for the discussions, were encouraged to send notification e-mail to WRIS@dol.gov.

V. WRIS2 Membership Report

John Glen (OR), WRIS2 Work Group Chairman and Heather Parker (ETA) outlined the status of the voluntary, opt-in WRIS2 expanded data sharing initiative. The 36 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. Two additional states have advised ETA of their interest in membership. In support of the programs and purposes approved in the WRIS2 Data Sharing Agreement, the WRIS2 initiative allows aggregate data to be shared with designated Third Party Entities (TPE) to meet reporting and performance requirements under Federal or state legislation or regulation. Third Party Entities (TPE) are defined in the WRIS2 Data Sharing 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. Mr. Glen provided the example of the grantees for the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCT) program and encouraged the Advisory Group representatives to visit ETA's WRIS2 Web site (http://www.doleta.gov/performance/wris_2.cfm) for additional key information or to contact ETA. In closing, Ms. Parker thanked Clinton Flowers (MO), Adam Leonard (TX), Drew Maxfield (UT) and John Glen for their continuing support on behalf of the WRIS2 exchange and invited states interested in the initiative to send questions to her through WRIS@dol.gov.

VI. WRIS and WRIS2 PACIA and SUIA Training Opportunities

Ms. Parker outlined the WRIS trainings held in February and March and the third planned for mid-April. A WRIS-WRIS2 Town Hall was convened on February 19, and, in response to state requests, included presentations on data element validation processes and issues, assessment of eligible training providers, data quality issues, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and WRIS2. Denise Dombek, the Regional Performance Specialist based in the ETA San Francisco Regional Office, presented "WRIS and Data Element Validation" and responded to questions. "The New Jersey Eligible Training Provider List (EPTL) & Consumer Report Card (CRC)" was presented by Robert Grimmie, Executive Director at the Center for Occupational Employment Information, and Tiffany Smith, Principal Managing Analyst, Division of Workforce Research and Analytics, of the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development. The Town Hall presentations were distributed by e-mail to the Advisory Group representatives and also can be received through an e-mail request to WRIS@dol.gov. Ms. Parker asked that members suggest discussion topics for the next WRIS-WRIS2 Town Hall. At South Carolina's request, a WRIS2 "101"/Refresher WebEx was presented to its staff on March 17. Ms. Parker noted that a similar WRIS or WRIS2 Refresher WebEx could be arranged for new or current staff members in any state by request to ETA. The 2015 *Confidentiality Compliance and Incident Response* WebEx is planned for April 16, and Ms. Parker encouraged SUIA, PACIA and IT staff members to participate.

VII. Quarterly Report: WRIS and WRIS2 Technical Operations

Ms. Parker introduced Amanda Gohl, Xerox Account Manager, who discussed the quarterly WRIS and WRIS2 Technical Operations Reviews, which had been distributed by e-mail on March 16. Ms. Gohl outlined the approved 2015 Distributed Database Index (DDBI) schedule and noted that SUIA data for the 4th Quarter 2014 DDBI was due at the Clearinghouse on April 6 and would be available for PACIA staff requests on April 13. She briefly discussed the system

performance metrics and reported that the volumes had been trending up, a positive indicator of the usefulness of the information. Ms. Gohl also reviewed several of the security measures in place for WRIS and WRIS2, including numerous audits, and emphasized that passcode-protected accounts are issued specifically to individual state employees and any sharing of passcodes is a security violation. Ms. Gohl also briefly discussed the requirements within the WRIS and WRIS2 Data Sharing Agreements for acknowledgement signature documents and indicated that the contractors engaged by PACIAs and SUIAs are included in those provisions. In closing, Ms. Gohl encouraged technical as well as general questions and requested that additional questions be forwarded through WRIS@dol.gov.

VIII. Additional Business and Discussion

Ms. Staha invited additional discussion topics from the participants. For the Second Quarter 2015 Advisory Group meeting, she suggested Thursday, June 4 at 2:00 p.m. (EDT) and requested that Advisory Group representatives with state or conference conflicts on the proposed date let ETA know so that an alternate could be considered. Ms. Staha noted she was hopeful that additional representatives from the WRIS SUIAs (unemployment insurance or tax agencies) would participate in the June meeting as their perspective is very important to the continuing operations of the exchange system. In closing, she thanked the attendees for their participation in the discussions and adjourned the First Quarter 2015 Advisory Group meeting at 2:55 pm.