

State of Alaska PY 2012 Workforce Information Grant Performance Report



July 1, 2012 to June 30 2013

Description of Program Deliverables

During Program Year 2012, The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Research and Analysis Section (R&A) completed the Workforce Information Grant core deliverables and activities outlined in TEGE No. 27-11. The following are summaries of how R&A met the deliverables.

Populate the Workforce Information Database with state and local data

Alaska updated the Workforce Information Database (WID) core tables with all of the required datasets. The data were also used internally to deliver data in a variety of formats and special reports to the business community, the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), individuals, and workforce development professionals.

The Alaska Career Information System (AKCIS) is an example of an Internet product that uses several WID data fields to turn labor market information into a standalone career information delivery system. The WID provides Alaska wages, employment projections, and licensing information. AKCIS links these state-specific occupational and educational figures in one place, creating an interactive, Web-based education and planning tool for career seekers.

The AKCIS portal is at: <http://akcis.org/>

Produce and disseminate industry and occupational employment projections

Alaska met its short-term and long-term occupational forecast deliverables and submitted them as required.

R&A's statewide and area economists also produced and published a one-year 2013 industry forecast for Alaska and the Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Southeast regions. The forecast was featured in the January 2013 issue of *Alaska Economic Trends*, R&A's monthly economic news magazine. The long-term occupational and industry projections were also the subject of two related *Trends* articles.

Both sets of data – industry and occupational – are also published on R&A's website and have been incorporated into several R&A products including the Alaska Occupational Table, Alaska Occupations Information Web site, the Gasline Occupational Information Web site, Alaska's Gasline Inducement Act Report, the Alaska Career Lattice product, and the Alaska Local and Regional Information Web site.

R&A also created and disseminated Alaska's Top Jobs list, which highlights 54 occupations. To rank as a top job, the occupation must: 1) rank in the top two wage quartiles *and* 2) have projected growth of at least 75 jobs and greater percentage of growth than all occupations combined or be among the 50 occupations with the most projected openings (of those with wages in the top two quartiles).

Description of the Annual Economic Analysis or Special Reports Produced.

One example of the type of economic analysis that R&A conducts is the annual report on the number and percentage of nonresidents working in Alaska. The most recent version, *Residency of Alaska Workers 2011* was published in January of 2013. The report outlines resident hire in Alaska by industry, occupation, and geographic area. Maximizing resident hire remains a high priority among policymakers and Alaska's Workforce Investment Board and one of the key methods for identifying training needs (the assumption being that one of the main reasons employers hire nonresidents is because of a shortage of residents with the requisite skills and experience).

R&A provided printed copies of this publication to the governor, state legislators, and other interested parties. The report is available on R&A's Web site at:

<http://laborstats.alaska.gov/reshire/NONRES.pdf>

To publish three or four articles a month in its monthly economic news magazine, *Alaska Economic Trends*, R&A is constantly working on special projects and economic analyses from industry and geographic profiles to housing and population studies, among others.

In the last two months alone, R&A has published articles: 1) comparing the characteristics of individuals who change jobs frequently (job hoppers), 2) analyzing the rental market price increases, 3) profiling the Kodiak Island Borough economy, 4) comparing population demographics between neighborhoods in Anchorage, 5) analyzing the water transportation industry, and 6) reporting on the occupations and jobs of the Alaska Marine Highway.

Products, information, and reports posted on the Internet

R&A's Web site (<http://laborstats.alaska.gov/>) is the section's primary dissemination tool for its products, reports and data.

Products

1. **Alaska Economic Trends** is R&A's monthly economic news magazine. It has the largest distribution of any printed R&A publication with approximately 33,500 copies produced in PY 2012. Copies of *Alaska Economic Trends* are also available online at:

<http://labor.alaska.gov/trends/>

2. **Alaska Training Clearinghouse** provides information for Alaska training providers and identifies training programs specific to occupations. Each program on the Eligible Training Provider List has an instructional program code that links the program to one or more occupations based on the National Crosswalk Service Center's occupations-to-instructional-programs crosswalk file.

<http://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/atc/>

3. **Alaska Occupations Information** provides a range of data on more than 500 occupations, including WID and non-WID data sets.

<http://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/occ/alloccs.cfm>

4. **ALARI** (Alaska Local and Regional Information) gives customers a snapshot of an area's resident workforce rather than a glimpse of an area's economy. ALARI data are by place of residence: Alaska, region, borough or census area, and community. Residency is established by matching wage record file data with Alaska's unique Permanent Fund Dividend information. ALARI also contains WID tax, property value, rental information, and data on new housing units.

<http://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/alari/>

5. **Alaska Career Lattice** helps career counselors, education administrators, training providers, and other users identify occupations mostly likely to lead to advancement to or from a particular job or lateral movements between jobs. The career lattice is based on real-world analysis of occupation-to-occupation movements of Alaska workers over a five-year period.

<http://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/cl/index.cfm>

Reports

In PY 2012, R&A completed several reports and posted them on its Web site:

1. ***Alaska Population Estimates: 2010 Census and 2011 Estimates***

<http://labor.alaska.gov/research/pop/estimates/pub/popover.pdf>

2. ***Unemployment Insurance Actuarial Study and Financial Handbook, 2011***

http://labor.alaska.gov/research/uiprogram/UI_Actuarial_Study.pdf

3. ***Residency Analysis of Alaska Workers, 2011***

<http://labor.alaska.gov/research/reshire/NONRES.pdf>

4. ***Training Program Performance, 2011***

<http://labor.alaska.gov/research/training/training.pdf>

5. ***Alaska Population Projections: 2010-2035***

<http://labor.alaska.gov/research/pop/projected/pub/popproj.pdf>

6. **A History of Alaska Population Settlement**

This special publication traces Alaska's population settlement, beginning with the indigenous peoples before contact with Europeans through Russian America, the 4 U.S. Purchase, the Gold Rush, World War II, the oil boom and bust, and modern day

<http://laborstats.alaska.gov/pop/estimates/pub/pophistory.pdf>

Information

R&A provides the following information and data sets on its Web site:

Workforce

- Size of the labor force (total number of people employed plus those seeking employment)
- Number and percent of workers unemployed

- Number and percent of the workforce that were not Alaska residents
- Number and percent of new hires
- Number of layoffs
- Fish harvesting employment
- Number and details of work-related injuries, illnesses, and fatalities

Industry

- Monthly estimates of payroll jobs by industry
- Quarterly employment and earnings by industry
- Short-term employment forecasts by industry
- Ten-year employment forecasts by industry
- Number of new hires by industry
- Number of people affected by mass layoffs

Occupation

- Alaska Occupations Information
- Employment and wages by occupation
- Career and occupational information
- Ten-year occupational forecast
- Number of new hires by occupation
- Job-to-job links in a typical career path
- Alaska green jobs information and data

Housing

- Costs related to buying, building, and renting housing in the state

Training

- Alaska training providers and programs information
- Employment and earnings of training program participants

Population and census

- Current and projected population

- Maps
- ACS and decennial census related information
- Migration data and information

R&A's Web site

Nearly every R&A product is available on its Web site, <http://laborstats.alaska.gov/>. On average, nearly 48,000 users visited the site each month in PY 2012. There were 233,600 downloads of R&A publications and products. *Alaska Economic Trends* accounted for about 57 percent of all downloads.

R&A is committed to providing up-to-date data. In Program Year 2012, we added several new resources and improved R&A's Web site functionality.

Workforce Information

The Monthly Employment Statistics, Worker Counts by Occupation, and Occupational Projections were converted to WID database-driven Cold Fusion pages to provide the following interactive functions.

- The Monthly Employment Statistics page features a new interactive graph that allows users to choose the area and industry.
- The Worker Counts by Occupation page allows users to choose the occupation or area to display.
- The Occupational Projections page allows users to choose an occupation from the projection data and display all of its data.

Population and Census Information

R&A added the following to the Population and Census pages:

- Maps for new census tracts, urban areas, legislative districts, school districts, Alaska Native Corporations, proportion of statewide population by borough and census area, and total population by borough and census area
- Historical census data for 1890, 1900, 1920, and 1930
- A new Web page that provides all migration-related data. This page includes links to Alaska PFD, IRS, and ACS migration data.
- An interactive PFD migration page where users can choose an area for displaying migration between boroughs and census areas from 2001 to 2012.

Explanation for Why a Grant Deliverable was not Accomplished, and an Explanation of What will be Done to Ensure Completion of the Deliverable

All grant deliverables were accomplished.

Description of Outcomes Compared to the Grant Statement of Work Deliverables

Outcomes matched with grant statement of work deliverables.

Summary of the Customer Consultations Regarding State Workforce Information Products and Services

Alaska used several methods to collect and interpret customer needs and satisfaction.

- **Customer satisfaction survey:** R&A maintains a web-based user survey on its site. Customers who completed the survey were mostly satisfied with the products and services that R&A offers. Of those who were familiar with the data they were seeking or using, all expressed satisfaction with the Web site.
- **Informal discussions and collaboration:** R&A worked closely with its primary user groups – including AWIB, employers, and the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development’s Employment Security and Business Partnerships divisions – to meet data needs. Alaska’s principal customers expressed strong support for R&A and its services and products.
- **Information requests:** R&A tracked information requests for data. Staff who responded maintained an electronic log of the customer types, what they requested, and what R&A provided. Staff also met directly with several customers and provided tailored reports to meet their needs.

Though Alaska’s primary customers didn’t request any specific improvements, R&A will continue to work with them to align the section’s products and services with their needs. R&A will also continue to assess its own products and services and constantly be on the lookout for ways to improve, expand, and simplify them.

Summary of Activities to be Undertaken to Add Customer Value, Where Needs for Improvements Are Indicated

As noted above, no specific requests were made for improvements overall although there was substantial communication between users and R&A to make sure users were able to find the information they were looking for. Often in response to those exchanges, R&A's Web pages were modified or simplified. One specific example of that relates to the American Community Survey. Because the U.S. Census's site was confusing to users and difficult for users to navigate, R&A developed a custom interface that made extracting ACS data more intuitive and user friendly.

R&A's core values are to provide accurate, objective, and clear data and analysis and the section is always looking for ways to improve in those three areas in particular, whether in response to issues raised by users or to problems that are identified internally.

Description of Efforts to Create and Support Partnerships and Collaborations

Alaska collaborates with several entities to provide products and services that are of value to the end users.

- R&A collaborates with AWIB to provide products and services that meet AWIB needs. R&A supports the continuation of this partnership by attending and conducting presentations at AWIB meetings and responding to requests for information or analyses from AWIB.
- R&A participates in state/federal partnerships with the Bureau of Labor Statistics to produce monthly economic information about Alaska's labor market.
- R&A collaborates with Alaska Housing Finance Corporation to produce data on housing prices, rental statistics, construction costs and new home building.
- R&A partners with various state agencies to conduct surveys and analyses. In the last year, R&A has worked on a health care vacancy survey and a health care benefit survey.
- R&A works regularly on an individual basis with various organizations (state agencies, economic consultants, the state's university system, etc.) to prepare data products that are specific to organizations' needs.

Description of New Tools or Resources Developed in PY 2012

R&A developed a search tool that allows users to locate by title, date, author, or text any of the hundreds of articles it has published since 1978 in its monthly economic publication *Alaska Economic Trends*:

<http://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/trends/>

R&A also continued to improve two of its newer tools first developed in previous years, ALARI (Alaska Local and Regional Information) and the Alaska Career Lattice:

<http://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/alari/>

<http://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/cl/index.cfm>

Recommendations to the ETA for Changes and Improvements to WIGS Requirements

One recommendation would be to build a permanent funding stream for the Estimates Delivery System (EDS). This is the only source of information available in Alaska for research related to minimum wage workers and we are concerned about its viability without a regular and somewhat predictable source of operating funds.