

# **ANNUAL REPORT**

## **Utah Department of Workforce Services**

Workforce Investment Act  
Program Year 2012

<http://www.jobs.utah.gov>



# WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT ANNUAL REPORT

## Utah Department of Workforce Services

### Program Year 2012

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## INTRODUCTION

Utah Governor Gary R. Herbert's vision is that "Utah will lead the nation as the best performing economy and be recognized as a premier global business destination" (Herbert, 2012). In order to move the vision into a reality, the Governor detailed four priorities. "Education, energy, jobs, and self-determination are at the heart of what has made America great. And they are the four cornerstones of Utah's strengths" (Herbert, 2012).

### Education

For the Education component of his vision, the Governor's goal is that 66 percent of working-age Utahns will have a postsecondary degree or professional certification by the year 2020 (<http://www.utah.gov/governor/priorities/education.html>). Based on research conducted by the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce (2009), two-thirds of all jobs by 2018 will require a post-secondary degree or certificate. As such, a number of initiatives were cultivated and are discussed in further detail below. Further supporting the Education priority are initiatives which are being enhanced and expanded, including UtahFutures and the Utah Cluster Acceleration Partnership.

### Energy

Energy is a priority globally, and Utah plans to be a leader in energy production. The Governor set forth a call to action to, "ensure access to affordable, reliable, and sustainable energy by producing 25 percent more electrical energy than we consume by 2020" (Herbert, 2012). Given Utah's unique ability to produce energy from a multitude of sources, including wind, solar, oil, gas and coal, Utah has an opportunity to grow its energy-related workforce and business base. The State Energy Sector Partnership (SESP), of which the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) is a partner, complements this priority. The grant received from DOL concluded the end of PY12, and the results are discussed later in this report.

### Jobs

To support the jobs component, Governor Herbert initiated the effort to "accelerate private sector job creation of 100,000 jobs in 1,000 days" (Herbert, 2012). The Governor, through the Governor's Office of Economic Development, set forth four objectives to achieve this goal as detailed in Utah's Economic Development Plan.

- Objective 1: Strengthen and grow existing Utah businesses, both rural and urban.
- Objective 2: Increase innovation, entrepreneurship, and investment.
- Objective 3: Increase national and international business.
- Objective 4: Prioritize education to develop the workforce of the future (Herbert, 2012).

DWS supports these objectives in numerous ways, including with the administration of Job Growth Funds, coordination and collaboration of premier youth programs, incorporation of an executive level

position focused solely on employer initiatives, and job-focused veterans' initiatives. These initiatives are discussed in detail in this report.

### Self-Determination

The Governor's final priority is that of Self-Determination. A healthy and sustainable workforce is key to economic success. Under this heading, the Governor detailed objectives in cultivating solutions for health care reform, public lands, and immigration. The broad scope of programs administered by DWS includes Medicaid eligibility, which supports this priority.

### State Workforce Investment Board Activities

The Executive Director of the Utah Department of Veterans and Military Affairs is now a member of the State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB). DWS and the SWIB are actively connecting with veterans' organizations and veterans focused businesses to provide more employment opportunities for those who have served in the U.S. Military. A sub-committee of the SWIB has been formed to specifically address veterans' workforce needs. The SWIB is also examining the potential of Work Ready Communities and WorkKeys to support job seeker and employer needs. In addition, during PY12 the SWIB began focusing on revitalizing collaboration among Utah stakeholders in apprenticeship programs including employers.

### Overarching Goals for the State's Workforce System

As noted, Governor Herbert has created specific, attainable goals that are relevant to the economy of today and tomorrow. In doing so, he created objectives and action items to guide and challenge his Cabinet. The DWS Executive Director and the SWIB are taking leading roles in this call to action. Collaboration and partnership are keys to achieving these goals, and SWIB interactions as well as DWS executives, agency staff, and SWIB members serve on various boards, committees, and workgroups targeting the Governor's goals. DWS also partners and contributes in the Utah Economic Summit, Rural Economic Summit, and quarterly economic meetings. Beyond high-level coordination, the efforts of DWS employment counselors and workforce development specialists in meeting the needs of employers and job seekers also helps create a growing, vibrant economy.

Through efforts described in this report as well as future initiatives, DWS will meet the needs of an ever growing and changing economy. Governor Herbert emphasized, "The four cornerstones I have outlined are straightforward. But none are easy. All will require strength and discipline, adherence to principles of frugality and common sense, and a spirit of collaboration, partnership, and leadership. We are Utahns and we are up to the challenge" (Herbert, 2012).

## **A. PROGRAM YEAR 2012 HIGHLIGHTS**

DWS is recognized nationally and internationally for its use of Operational Excellence in refining business practices and streamlining government. Using the Theory of Constraints (TOC) model, DWS identifies levers to DWS success as well as potential constraints within the process in order to refine and improve services. We have achieved great success using the TOC model to increase throughput, reduce costs, and improve quality.

DWS continues to use TOC as a management tool to determine the initiatives on which to focus. In 2012 DWS refined four key levers and, in turn, the projects on which the agency will concentrate:

- *Connect Employers with Qualified Job Seekers:* Using the Workforce Innovation Grant, DWS is expanding its employer and labor exchange services. This project is called Next Generation Labor Exchange (See Section F. below).
- *Job Growth:* DWS utilizes funding from the Job Growth Fund to help create jobs in rural and urban communities. DWS uses these funds to partner with employers, educational institutions, community partners, and the Governor’s Office of Economic Development. Working with the State Workforce Investment Board, DWS supports initiatives and activities that create jobs for Utah workers.
- *Provide World-Class Economic Data and Tools to Support Workforce, Education, and Job Creation Activities:* The DWS Internet site ([jobs.utah.gov](http://jobs.utah.gov)) was redesigned to meet the needs of job seekers and employers.
- *DWS is four cornerstones strong:* 1) Operational Excellence: we will deliver the highest quality services, with innovative methods, at the most efficient cost; 2) Exceptional Customer Service: we will meet the needs of our customers with responsive, respectful and accurate service; 3) Employee Success: we will provide an environment that fosters professional growth and personal fulfillment; 4) Community Connection: we will actively participate with and engage our community partners to strengthen the quality of life for Utahans.

## **B. STRATEGIES FOR BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT**

DWS is enhancing one of its most important partnerships, that of Governor’s Office of Economic Development (GOED). Through an executive-level position, DWS works closely with GOED to assist in identifying skills gaps, business recruiting, and educating companies about the current skills available in Utah. Providing valuable data and collaborating closely with GOED, DWS hopes to serve as an integral team member in growing Utah’s economy in both urban and rural areas.

### WorkReady Communities

The ACT Certified WorkReady Communities infrastructure is a strategic investment by the state in response to industries asking for a “soft skills” assessment tool and skill building curriculum. The three soft skills areas include applied mathematics, reading for information, and locating information. The infrastructure adds value on three fronts; individuals entering the workforce can earn certificates demonstrating their “soft skills”, companies can reduce turnover and costs by "profiling" hard to fill jobs for a specific soft skills level that candidate employees must attain, and communities can be Certified as “Workready” when the numbers of certified workers reaches a critical mass, which assists with local economic development and Site Selection. Additionally, ACT provides remediation tools and curricula to raise the soft skills levels of any individual, including those entering the workforce for the first time through career changers, who wishes to improve. The infrastructure is currently being deployed

throughout the state through a GOED, DWS, and Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) partnership at the county level through local economic development leaders, through the education partners such as the Applied Technical Colleges and to businesses Human Resources Departments. This ACT program directly impacts the goal of post-secondary certificate and degree attainment of 6 percent of the workforce by 2020.

### Job Growth Fund

The Job Growth Fund (JGF) is a strategic revenue source that funds employer initiative programs. This revenue comes from the Unemployment Insurance Special Administration Fund. JGF helps to fund training, education and job creation programs. Projects using JGF are discussed throughout this report.

### Small Business Bridge Grant Pilot Program

The Small Business Bridge Grant Pilot Program (Bridge Program) produced significant results during its first year and was extended into PY12. The Bridge Program provides a limited reimbursement for small businesses that are willing to add new jobs to their workforce and, in so doing, bolster the economy. This program also provides funding for a recruitment program that will work in conjunction with GOED programs. Recruitment funds target small businesses that are considering locating to Utah or expanding their current business within Utah. During the first year the Bridge Program approved applications from more than 200 small businesses, which are scheduled to create more than 900 new jobs. In 2013, the Bridge program is helping over 200 businesses create 1,342 new jobs. This program has received accolades from around the state for helping small businesses.

### Workforce Development Specialists

Each service area has knowledgeable workforce development specialists who work directly with employers to provide industry specific labor market information and occupational wage information to employers. The workforce development specialists focus on building relationships with employers, education and training partners. Together they identify and resolve issues that impede the development of an adequate supply of qualified workers for identified industries and occupations. Strategies include increasing training opportunities, developing worksite learning opportunities such as OJT and youth internships, and promoting DWS employment exchange services based on the needs and demands of the employer.

The workforce development specialists share employer demand information with the service area director, employment counselors, job developers, and connection team staff. This sharing of information influences customer training, career counseling, job development, worksite learning, labor market information publications, and service area projects to enhance the economy and shape workforce development efforts. Each service area has an economist assigned to provide consultative support for strategic planning, partnerships, and SWIB initiatives. Targeting specific occupations and industries that are relevant to service areas provides the greatest opportunity for job seekers. Jobs are created by businesses, and the best way to support job seekers is by preparing them for and connecting them with the jobs that businesses demand.

During PY12 performance goals and baselines for workforce development specialists were set for PY13 and include increasing job orders posed online and improving current percentage of self-directed job orders.

## **C. VETERANS INITIATIVES**

The programs, initiatives, and services for serving veterans are all encompassed in DWS Veterans Employment Services. During PY12 the Veterans Employment Services was refocused and reorganized under the leadership of new Chief of Veterans Services.

The Chief identified four strategies that DWS is using to provide employment services to veterans: Employment, Employer, Outreach and Military Networks, and Education.

### Employment Strategies

The goal of this strategy is to increase employment for veterans. The key measurement is the number of veteran job placements per quarter with a target of 4,700 veteran job placements per quarter. For PY12, 4,318 placements were achieved.

At the initial point of contact with all job seekers, veterans and their spouses are given the opportunity to identify themselves as a covered person. Staff and signage in the one-stops encourages military service members and spouses to self-identify. During January through April 2013, over 300 DWS staff were trained on how to identify a covered person and how to provide these covered persons with priority of service.

Gold Card services are provided to any veteran job seekers presenting themselves as eligible for these services. Veterans' Representatives provide case management services including the 6 month follow up services, when needed. Since inception of Gold Card Services DWS has provided Gold Card services to 3 veterans to date.

DWS employs 18 Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists, or Veterans' Representatives, to provide intensive services to targeted veteran populations with barriers to gaining and retaining employment. The Veterans' Representatives are funded by the U.S. Department of Labor Veterans' Employment & Training Service (VETS) Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG).

Veterans' Representatives are located in Employment Centers throughout the state, and every Employment Center has an assigned Veterans' Representative to provide services. DWS has identified the following targeted veterans populations for services from the Veterans' Representatives: veterans with service-connected disabilities, homeless veterans, recently separated veterans, veterans receiving Unemployment Insurance, SNAP/Food Stamps, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, or Medicaid, or referrals from the local Veterans Justice Outreach Program (a local Veterans' Court program).

### Employer Strategies

The goal of this strategy is to increase the number of employers hiring veterans and posting job orders in DWS' labor exchange system. This is measured by the number of employers participating in the Utah Patriot Partnership and the number of employers participating in veteran job fair events.

In 2010, Governor Herbert and DWS implemented an employer recognition program called the Utah Patriot Partnership (UPP). UPP allows employers to pledge that they will hire qualified veterans for their job openings. In return they receive a certificate signed by the Governor that can be posted in their place of business, and a star symbol is placed next to their job orders in the labor exchange system at jobs.utah.gov.

As of October 1, 2012, there were 247 employers participating in UPP. By September 30, 2013, an additional 292 employers had pledged to participate.

Five Hiring Our Heroes Job Fairs were conducted this past year in collaboration with the U. S. Chamber of Commerce and the Utah Veteran and Military Employment Coalition. Over 300 employers participated in these events. This is a significant increase over the prior year, when two Hiring Our Heroes Job Fairs were held and only 140 employers participated.

### Outreach and Military Networks Strategies

The goal of this strategy is to identify and reach more military personnel and veterans. DWS made great strides in developing relationships with key partners in providing services to veterans in PY12. The Chief of Veteran Services' previously served as the Command Sergeant Major for the Utah National Guard. His connections in the Utah National Guard and Reserve units have proven valuable in connecting these units with the services provided by DWS.

### Education Strategies

The goal with this strategy is to increase the number of veterans obtaining credentials, certificates, and/or licenses that lead to employment. In PY12 we began the efforts to establish baseline measurements for this strategy.

DWS implemented the Accelerated Credentialing to Employment (ACE) Program in July 2012 to connect veterans, military spouses, and currently serving Utah National Guard and Reserve members with credentialing entities. ACE outcomes in PY12 demonstrated our ability to provide outreach to targeted job seekers and was funded for a second year with JGF.

Additionally, DWS is a participant in a Veterans Education Coordination Group that is exploring methods of standardizing the school credits given for military training. The Veteran Education Coordination Group is comprised of representatives from the Utah System of Higher Education, the Utah College of Applied Technology, the Utah Department of Veteran and Military Affairs, and DWS.

## **D. WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES**

Utah's PY12 Workforce Investment Act Annual Report reflects the state's commitment to strengthen the state's workforce development system. The state met or exceeded all WIA Program Year 2012 common measure performance standards with the exception of Youth Placement, which was still well within 80 percent of the negotiated level. All required elements are reported uniformly based on guidance from the Department of Labor so that a state-by-state comparison can be made.

<b>Utah Department of Workforce Services Program Year 2012 Common Measure Performance Outcomes</b>				
<b>Common Measure Element</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Percent of Goal Attained</b>	<b>Measure Results</b>
<b>Adult Program</b>				
Entered Employment	61.0%	63.9%	104.8%	Exceeded
Employment Retention	85.0%	85.0%	99.9%	Met
Six Month Average Earnings	\$13,600	\$14,748	108.4%	Exceeded
<b>Dislocated Worker Program</b>				
Entered Employment	82.0%	82.5%	100.6%	Exceeded
Employment Retention	90.0%	91.0%	101.9%	Exceeded
Six Month Average Earnings	\$15,000	\$16,310	108.7%	Exceeded
<b>Youth Program</b>				
Placement	60.0%	59.0%	98.3%	Met
Degree Attainment	52.0%	54.0%	103.8%	Exceeded
Literacy & Numeracy	33.0%	35.0%	106.1%	Exceeded

<b>Participants Served and Exited by Program</b>			
<b>Program</b>	<b>Participants Served</b>	<b>Participants Exited</b>	<b>Exited to Served</b>
Adult	368,017	307,336	83.5%
Dislocated Worker	2,323	1,119	48.2%
Youth	2,967	1,096	36.9%

<b>WIA Youth Performance Outcomes</b>			
<b>Total Youth Participants</b>		<b>In-School Youth Participants</b>	
Served	2,967	Served	1,230
Exited	1,096	Exited	391
<b>Age 14-18 Served</b>		<b>Out-of-School Youth Participants</b>	
Age 14-18 Served	1,971	Served	1,737
Age 14-18 Exited	687	Exited	705
Age 19-21 Served	996		
Age 19-21 Exited	409		

## **E. STATE DISCRETIONARY (FIVE PERCENT) FUND USAGE**

In the past, Utah has used one-third of the previous 15 percent set-aside for administrative costs such as case edits/monitoring, finance, audit, human resources, communications, executive management, and legal costs. The remaining two-thirds were used to pay for program costs, such as state program staff, DWS' case management system (UWORKS), Workforce Information staff, Worker's Compensation, and statewide activities. By centralizing these functions DWS reduced overhead costs, allowing more funds to be spent on training for customers.

With set-aside funding being maintained at five percent, DWS was forced to shift certain costs to the service areas, namely the costs associated with UWORKS and the Performance Review Team (case edits/monitoring), which are two of the higher cost items. As such, there will be reduced availability of funds to use toward customer training programs. Additionally, DWS has not been able to initiate any statewide activities, such as an Incumbent Worker Program. DWS is able to maintain other program costs this year as a result of set-aside funds carried-over from the previous year. If the 15 percent set-aside is not restored, DWS will need to shift other program costs, further reducing the amount of funding available to support customer training programs.

## **F. INITIATIVES AND ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE**

### GED Attainment

DWS continues to work with multiple school districts, educational providers, and the Utah State Office of Education Adult Education Program to develop strategies to assist individuals in obtaining their high school diplomas or GEDs and slow the drop-out rate of current students. Specialized programs have been developed for specific sub-populations such as out of school youth and financial assistance customers.

### Utah Cluster Acceleration Partnership

The Utah Cluster Acceleration Partnership (UCAP) is a collaborative partnership among the Department of Workforce Services (DWS), the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) and the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED).

The UCAP program provides funding to public educational institutions to develop, implement or enhance educational programs that are responsive to regional and statewide industry needs. The primary functions of UCAP are to accelerate industry clusters in Utah and to strengthen the alignment between industry and education. UCAP has been a successful model for collaboration in cluster industries and has demonstrated success in developing new educational programs that support industry growth.

Previous UCAP projects were convened by one or more of the colleges or universities in the state. Projects focused on the following economic clusters: aerospace, healthcare, life sciences, energy, manufacturing, entrepreneurship and Chinese business. In PY12 the life science working group successfully developed a Regulatory Affairs certificate program, which is currently offered at Utah Valley University with plans to expand institutional reach in the future. The program is a direct result of the life

science industry request for Regulatory Affairs talent development and is just one example of programs that have been developed as a result of a UCAP project.

During PY12 the UCAP program was revised and beginning in PY13 was changed to a grant opportunity. There are now two application pathways available, one for public institutions of higher education and one for GOED cluster directors/industry recognized non-profit organizations (501c3s).

The primary outcome measurement for UCAP moving forward will be the annual amount of new capacity created to award certificates and degrees that meet the Governor’s 66 percent by 2020 initiative, with specific relevance towards educational programs that serve cluster industries in the State (<http://www.business.utah.gov/targeted-industries/economic-clusters/>).

<b>Utah Cluster Acceleration Partnership – PY13</b>				
<b>Approved Applications and Outcomes Summary</b>				
Institution:	Certificate/Degree:	New Annual Graduates*:	Funding Awarded:	Industry Supporting:
Utah Valley University	Various IT Certificates	100	\$157,000	IT
Uintah Basin ATC	LPN, MA, CNA, etc	9	\$100,000	Healthcare
Dixie State University	IT Degree Programs	24	\$188,400	IT
Mountainland ATC	Advanced Manufacturing	30	\$200,000	Manufacturing
USU - Eastern	Welding	15	\$55,000	Manufacturing
USU - Eastern	Medical Assistant	20	\$86,850	Manufacturing
Dixie ATC	Information Technology	30	\$45,000	IT
Energy Research Triangle (BYU, U of U, USU)	Outcome: New Energy Research Grants Given		\$200,000	Energy
	Totals:	228	\$1,032,250	
*These numbers are estimated by the respective institutions				

The link between education and employers is crucial for developing a qualified workforce and so the UCAP metrics reflect business engagement activities. UCAP applicants are required to engage local industry to gain support for their projects as well as local DWS representatives to promote collaborative workforce development efforts.

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

DWS continues to coordinate with the State’s Senior Community Service Employment Program and incorporated their State Plan within DWS’ Five-Year WIA and Wagner-Peyser State Plan for PY12.

### State Energy Sector Partnership

Given the ever-growing green job market, DWS has encouraged and supported workforce and economic development in renewable energy and energy efficiency. As such, DWS sought and was awarded the State Energy Sector Partnership (SESP) Grant. This \$4.6 million grant focused on developing the workforce and creating jobs for green construction, alternative fuels, energy management and efficiency, and renewable energy and transmission. Although the grant has concluded, DWS and the partners continue to collaborate.

SESP Outcomes included:

<b>Outcome Category</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Result</b>
Total Participants Served	1,400	1,977
Total Beginning Training	1,400	1,744
Total Credentials	982	2,279
Total Completed Training	1,206	1,466
Total Placed in Non-Subsidized Employment	1,206	1,054
Total Retaining Employment for 2 Quarters	1,108	991
Total Entering an Apprenticeship	225	397
Total Impacted by Auto Restructuring	300	386
Total Completing Work Keys Certificates	700	776
Incumbents Served		777

### National Emergency Grant

DWS is a recipient of a National Emergency Grant (NEG). These funds provide training, re-employment services, and support services to customers dislocated from Alliant Techsystems (ATK) from April 2009 through March 2012. ATK has laid-off approximately 2,700 employees within this timeframe. The grant was modified in PY12 to include additional layoff groups and was extended through March 31, 2014. The approval of the extension allows us to continue to provide training and supportive services to eligible individuals and assist them in reattaching to the workforce.

### Labor Exchange System

DWS collaborated with the Montana Department of Labor and Industry to submit a grant application, proposing the Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF) be used to re-write their states' labor exchange systems, incorporating innovative technology to improve outcomes for job seekers and employers. The proposal, known as the Next Generation Labor Exchange, was approved and awarded at \$4,637,238.

The Next Generation Labor Exchange project will occur over the course of three years. A contractor has been secured to evaluate the status and outcomes of the grant. Baseline data is being collected on Utah's current labor exchange system prior to the Year One grant changes being implemented in November

2013. Data will then be collected over the course of the next year before any additional changes are made for Year Two in September 2014. The process will then be repeated prior to the final Year Three changes being made in September 2015. Year One changes have been designed, developed, tested, and are ready for November 2013 implementation. A new online application for training services, including WIA, will be included with the November implementation.

### Utah Futures

UtahFutures is Utah's premier career information system for students, job seekers, employment service providers, educational institutions, and more. It is provided free of charge to all Utah residents and features cutting-edge career planning tools, leading labor market information, job search success skills, education and training options, and direct links to Utah employment opportunities. One exciting component of the system is that it is available anytime, anywhere with new applications available for iPhone, iPad, and Android.

UtahFutures is utilized in all Utah public schools and is offered to private and charter schools. Portfolios within the system continue to be available to students as they transition to post-secondary education or the workforce. DWS, Adult Education, Higher Education, and Vocational Rehabilitation also utilize UtahFutures as an employment counseling tool. An Executive Steering Committee, appointed by the Governor, oversees the project. Members of this committee include: DWS, Utah Higher Education Assistance Authority, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation, Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP), and Utah State Office of Education. DWS has taken the lead on this initiative and is currently working on system enhancements, including the addition of a user profile driven concept and service oriented architecture with many of the major components being purchased from external vendors. The release of the new system is scheduled for January 2015. Until that time, UtahFutures will continue to utilize the intoCareers system, maintained by a non-profit company at the University of Oregon.

### Work Readiness Evaluation

For many job seekers getting a job is an overwhelming prospect for even the most skilled individual. To assist job seekers at any level, the Work Readiness Evaluation process was developed to help both job seekers and staff members have a focused approach for job preparation activities.

The process consists of evaluating a job seeker in specific areas: job search techniques, resume/master application, interviewing skills, and professional image. Based on this evaluation, staff members can educate and provide resources to assist the job seeker to become well versed in job search best practices in each of those areas. Ensuring quality and consistency is an important factor, so validation criteria in each area were established to provide the seeker as well as staff member specific goals to work toward.

The information DWS provides to job seekers and all of the quality components of the Work Readiness Evaluation are continually being reviewed with employers. This ensures DWS is effectively preparing job seekers to meet employer needs. Since beginning the Work Readiness Evaluation process, employers have responded positively and noted that applicants who have been assisted through this process are

better prepared for interviews with a higher quality resume and professionalism than other candidates who have not utilized this process. The Work Readiness Evaluation is provided through mediated services or online.

### Labor Market Information

The DWS Workforce Research & Analysis Division (WRA) gathers economic and labor market information. The mission of WRA is to, “generate accurate, timely, and understandable data and analyses to provide knowledge of ever-changing workforce environments that inform sound planning and decision-making.” WRA collects information describing the Utah labor market, including wages; employment projections by industry, occupation, and area; cost of living; employment and unemployment; labor force characteristics; career trends; and industry trends.

DWS, the SWIB, and outside entities utilize the workforce information collected in planning and decision-making to determine job growth areas, skills gap, income and wage data, migration, demographics, cost of living, and career exploration opportunities. This information is critical in determining what industries and occupations to target while working with partners in business and education to ensure skills training availability. Additionally, information collected is also used to assist customers while providing core, intensive, and training services, allowing the customer to make informed career choices.

DWS also delivers this high-quality employment statistical information to customers through the labor market information page located on the [DWS website](#). Analysis of data collected and published for the Bureau of Labor Statistics state and federal cooperative statistical program is in demand-driven formats. DWS works closely with customers, employers, and partners to make the information meaningful and practical for end-users. DWS publishes a [directory](#) describing the various workforce information products available.

### WOOD tool

Labor Market Information (LMI) can be daunting to job seekers, but it is one of the most essential tools to a successful job search and career planning. In an effort to make LMI more accessible and understandable to job seekers, DWS created the Wages and Occupational Openings Data (WOOD) tool.

The WOOD tool allows job seekers to search for LMI in multiple ways. A basic search allows for keyword, occupational title, or occupational group searches. Another search method allows job seekers to explore occupations based on criteria most important to them, including wage range, education level, geographic location, and interests based on Holland code categories. Any combination of these criterions can be used to help job seekers identify occupations to meet their needs.

The results of the search are displayed in an easy to understand table with comparisons of transferable jobs, hourly or annual wages, annual openings, employment projections, education level, licensure requirements, current job orders in the labor exchange system, and employers/industries who hire for that position. Using the WOOD tool, job seekers can also view additional information such as skills needed and education providers and can apply for open jobs with just a few clicks.

## Performance Accountability

DWS formed a statewide team responsible for editing case files and monitoring programs in PY09. The Performance Review Team (PRT) provides rapid feedback to employment counselors, prevention of errors and disallowed costs, and alignment of federal program audits (monitoring requirements) and case management reviews. The PRT developed Compliance Review Tools that are program specific to adult or youth customers. The tool is refined to address various programs and services, including requirements for WIA Adult, WIA Dislocated Worker, WIA Youth, TANF, Trade Act, etc. The PRT works in conjunction with the annual Single State Audit in an effort to ensure consistency in compliance review.

DWS utilizes PRT to ensure that cases remain in compliance with department policy and procedure. At minimum each employment counselor has ten percent of his or her cases reviewed by PRT each month. All aspects of eligibility and case management are reviewed to ensure policy is followed. When a case review is completed by the PRT, the results are forwarded to the employment counselor and their supervisor with the expectation that issues will be corrected and appropriate action taken. Individual PRT results are used to identify training needs on an individual basis. PRT reviews are done within the UWORKS system. Results from an individual level to a statewide level are available real-time through DWS' dashboard reporting system eReports.

During PY12 DWS implemented an immediate case review process for all WIA cases after eligibility is determined but before a customer is enrolled in a program and funds are obligated. This process, referred to as "Second Set of Eyes," ensures eligibility has been correctly determined before funds are expended.

The Utah State Auditor performs annual reviews of all DWS programs, including WIA. After performing a review of a select number of cases statewide, the State Auditor meets with state level program staff and a PRT representative to review the audit results. Process, pathway, and policy modifications are discussed as well as potential system enhancements to avoid similar errors in the future. The State Auditor works with the DWS Division of Internal Audit to prepare the final report to the appropriate federal agencies.

The Division of Internal Audit's contract monitoring team assists DWS in fulfilling its responsibilities as a pass-through entity of federal awards and to provide feedback to various contract management teams based on the contractors' fiscal and programmatic contract requirements.

## **G. UTAH USAGE OF WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT WAIVERS**

DWS recognizes the importance and flexibility waivers afford the workforce development system. In conjunction with the State Workforce Investment Board, the following waivers are in operation:

- Individual Training Accounts for WIA Eligible Youth

DWS is currently operating under an approved waiver to the exclusion and prohibition of using Individual Training Accounts for youth. The benefit of this waiver is flexibility in youth program delivery. Youth learn responsibility by making informed decisions, and the waiver allows participants to choose their post-secondary education provider.

- Youth Procurement

WIA law and regulations allow the WIA grant recipient to deliver the “framework” of WIA Youth services (outreach, intake, assessment, and creating individual service strategies) and Summer Youth Employment Opportunities. In addition to the elements allowed by law and regulation, DWS is currently operating under an approved waiver allowing the state to deliver supportive services, work experience, and follow-up. DWS selects the providers of other WIA Youth services by competitive bids based on fee-for-service contracts. This model results in increased efficiency as shown in the ability to serve 33 percent more youth than in prior years.

- Subsequent Eligibility Determination of Training Providers

DWS operates under an approved waiver to postpone the implementation of the subsequent eligibility process for eligible training providers. The benefit of this waiver is to allow Utah a larger pool of training providers for customer choice that will foster increased customer engagement. The result is more skilled customers entering the labor market with increased earnings and retention.

- Fifty Percent Transferability of WIA Adult and WIA Dislocated Worker Funds

DWS operates under an approved waiver to grant the SWIB the ability to transfer up to 50 percent of each program year allocation between the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker funding streams. This additional transfer allowance is beneficial in local planning and in meeting service needs of the community. It also enhances Utah’s ability to address workforce needs. The waiver allows the State to increase the number of dislocated workers when current funding levels were unable to support the increase in demand.

- Requirement for Reporting Performance Outcome Measures

DWS operates under an approved waiver to enable Utah’s workforce development partners to implement the six common performance measures (three adult and three youth) and waive the requirement to report on the 17 (15 core and two customer satisfaction) indicators of performance for employment and training activities. The waiver allows the State to simplify and streamline the performance accountability system as it stretches across multiple programs and funding streams. By allowing this waiver, the case managers can directly focus on the common measures versus the additional 17 performance measures. The ability to focus only on the common measures ensures a greater probability of success.

DWS anticipates the performance outcome levels will continue to remain steady under the fee-for-service contracting model and that each of these waivers enhances the Department’s ability to meet negotiated performance outcomes.

## **H. STATUS OF STATE EVALUATION ACTIVITIES**

### eReports

DWS a high-level dashboard reporting system known as eReports for the review of performance outcomes for customers and employment counselors in real-time. These comprehensive reports allow management to identify strengths and weaknesses, discuss best practices, and create strategic plans as well as create consistent statewide deliverables for all program types; assisting DWS in meeting the negotiated performance outcomes for common measures.

### WIA Internal Improvement

During PY12 the state program team along with a representative from PRT completed an internal improvement project and as a result revised and simplified all training policy including WIA, TANF and Trade. Decisions were based on Single State Audit findings as well as PRT edit results. In addition to the regular PRT reviews described in section F. above, the PRT reviewed the majority of WIA cases statewide. In total approximately 98 percent of WIA cases were reviewed during PY12. The data were used to identify error-prone areas and to ensure case accuracy for current cases.

The evaluation findings highlighted error prone areas such as; 1) income calculation, 2) determining household composition and, 3) ensuring selective service registration. Best practices identified through the evaluation included; 1) methods for customers to return receipts for supportive services more timely, such as shortening the time period they are due or allowing the customer to submit a picture of a receipt taken with a smartphone and email it to their counselor, 2) monitoring progress more frequently than policy required resulting in better outcomes and, 3) a verification checklist that was formalized and implemented statewide. Feedback from DWS management and staff was incorporated throughout the policy simplification process. System enhancements streamlined the entire case management process and combat against error-prone areas. The policy and system enhancements were effective October 7, 2013. DWS anticipates these changes will continue to improve quality and accuracy of case management as well as provide better service and outcomes for WIA recipients.

## **I. COSTS OF WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES**

<b>Cost of Program Activities PY 2012 / FFY 2013 As of 06/30/13</b>		
<b>Program Activity</b>	<b>WIA Federal Spending</b>	
<b>Local Adults*</b>	\$4,045,838	
<b>Local Dislocated Workers*</b>	\$4,505,536	
<b>Local Youth*</b>	\$4,887,868	
<b>Rapid Response</b> (up to 25%) Sect. 134(a)(2)(A)	\$138,967	
<b>Statewide Required Activities</b> (up to 15%) Sect. 134(a)(2)(B)	\$354,903	
<b>Statewide Allowable Activities</b>	<b>Program Activity Description</b>	
Sect. 134(a)(3)	Miscellaneous Allowable Activities	\$828,106

	(Including Technical Assistance)	
<b>Total of All Federal Spending Listed Above</b>		<b>\$14,761,217</b>

\*WIA Federal Spending includes Local Administration expenses.