



Seventh Planning District Consortium WORKFORCE INVESTMENT PLAN PY 05- PY 06

G. Activities to be Funded

For each of the programs in your Unified Plan, provide a general description of the activities the LWIA will pursue using the relevant funding.

a. WIA Title I and Wagner-Peyser Act and Veterans Program:

1. One-Stop Service Delivery Strategies:

- a. How will the services provided by WIA Title I Adult/DW, Youth Program, Wagner-Peyser, Veterans, Rapid Response, TAA, and STEP partners be coordinated and made available through the One-Stop system?

The Seventh Planning District Consortium Workforce Investment Board has been granted considerable authority and flexibility in determining how and to what level their required partners can be integrated into the comprehensive one-stop centers. Required partners operate within the one-stop system across Region 7 to provide a full array of services for all populations.

LDOL and the Workforce Commission are working with the WIBs to become more strategic than programmatic by providing assistance to the WIBs to write strategic plans in a similar manner as the state. Following Task

Force on Workforce Competitiveness recommendations, the state will work with the region's WIBs to be more demand driven and responsive to employer needs in the area by integrating and utilizing all one-stop partner services.

Within many of the local areas in Region 7, required partners have representatives assigned to and housed within local one-stop centers on a full-time basis. Staff are fully integrated into operations and are available to service customers. Customers have a myriad of resources available to them through these collaborative partnerships. In other local areas, partners maintain a part-time physical presence on scheduled days or times. In still other circumstances, partners are linked electronically. This is normally determined by customer volume, geographic distance, and availability of space or resources.

Hurricane evacuees are serviced through WIA staff and a Reintegration Counselor currently housed at the Shreveport One-Stop Center who in addition travels to the other One-Stop Centers and satellite offices in Region 7.

The integration of WIA and Wagner-Peyser programs within Region 7 is a work in progress. Our one-stop centers are entering into a new era of cooperation and integration with their partners, working to create a seamless service delivery system.

Efforts are currently under way to consolidate facilities and resolve lease issues. This will allow all of the partners to be housed within the same facility so that they may better integrate their services. In addition, Wagner-Peyser staff is assuming more responsibility for providing core

services across the system in an effort to eliminate duplication of services. Louisiana has submitted a waiver to better coordinate provision of core services. Coordination is now taking place with regard to job fairs and mass recruitment events. There is universal access to job orders, workforce information and training providers through LAVOS.

In an effort to better leverage available resources, the State is developing a Service Guidance Model for all 18 WIA areas. Under this model, the local WIA Directors and /or Wagner-Peyser Regional Managers provide a leadership role within their area. They are responsible for setting the overall policy and vision for the operation of their programs in the one-stop in each local jurisdiction, within WIA and Wagner-Peyser regulations and in cooperation with the State.

Following guidelines from LDOL, based on Federal requirements and regulations and recommendations from the Task Force on Workforce Competitiveness, the WIA Directors/Wagner-Peyser Regional Managers have been granted the flexibility to set the policies regarding integrated operation of LDOL programs. The partnership between WIA Directors and Wagner-Peyser Regional Managers insures that applicable Federal and State guidelines and regulations are met and that the resources available meets the needs of their customers.

One-stop centers, including Wagner-Peyser funded services, will use a triage system to establish a three tiered service strategy. Each one-stop will have a self-help resource center as the central core, thereby encouraging customer empowerment through self-directed activities. Job orders are available on the Internet to enable job seekers to access labor exchange services at the locale most convenient to them.

Through LAVOS, LDOL has developed an online job order form to maximize employer choice by providing them with the ability to directly enter the labor exchange process in the manner best suited to their needs by either self identification or through staff assistance.

The system provides job seekers direct access to employer listings through the self-service component with direct or screened contact as the employer chooses. Customers are able to complete resumes in LDOL's skill-based referral system. Those customers needing assistance accessing services have trained staff available at the one-stop centers to provide help on use of the Internet, software programs, resume' development, etc.

All one-stop staff are trained to recognize customer needs for facilitated self-help in the one-stop centers and will direct customers through the system to intensive services as required.

Those customers needing more intensive services have access to career aptitude/interest assessments and counseling services delivered through a case management system as applicable to each customer. The system encourages customer choice, thereby facilitating a better match to needed services resulting in a more rapid entry into the workforce.

LDOL is developing a Family Income Growth Strategy that will provide staff with the skills, knowledge, and tools to provide customer choice in service delivery and design. This approach helps job seekers first develop a financial plan and then use workforce information to build a career plan.

This will enable them to insure the job/training they choose will match their financial needs and

is part of a career ladder. The plans address the mix of services and delivery strategies in Region 7. The Louisiana Workforce Commission has developed recommendations pertaining to the development of local memoranda of understanding that contains the required elements needed in local MOUs.

The local partners can use it to address coordination of services and insure that the full array of services is available to customers. Business services are coordinated so that employers will not be approached by representatives from multiple one-stop partners.

b. How are WIA Title I youth formula programs integrated in the One-Stop system?

Through use of Wagner-Peyser funds youth have access to the one-stop system career centers. The matrix of services by one-stop partners includes appropriate services available to youth. All WIA youth contractors are required to coordinate their services with one-stop entities in their area to insure that youth can access all appropriate services.

WIA 70 believes that youth, particularly out-of-school youth, should be introduced to the services available through the one-stop system early in their development and encouraged to use the one-stop system as an entry point to obtaining education, training, and job search services.

c. What minimum service delivery requirements does the LWIB mandate in the One-Stop Centers or affiliate sites?

WIA 70 mandates that one-stop centers provide core, intensive, and training services. Where feasible, core services are provided through self-service and informational methods. Core services are universally accessible through the one-stop physical locations and LAVOS.

Intensive services are provided to individuals who are unemployed or underemployed and having difficulty securing appropriate employment through core services.

The individual must demonstrate difficulty overcoming obstacles that prevent him/her from retaining or securing employment leading to self-sufficiency. Intensive services include, but are not limited to: comprehensive and specialized assessment, diagnostic testing, identification of employment barriers through in-depth evaluation, individual employment plan, group and individual counseling, career planning, case management, and short-term pre-vocational services. Additional intensive services may include out-of-area job search, relocation, literacy, internships, and work experience.

Training services may be provided to individuals who are unemployed or underemployed and having difficulty securing appropriate employment through intensive services. The individual must demonstrate difficulty in overcoming obstacles that prevent him/her from retaining or securing employment that leads to self-sufficiency. Training services include, but are not limited to: occupational skills, On-the-Job Training, cooperative education programs, private sector upgrading,

apprenticeships, entrepreneurial training, job readiness, adult education combined with other training, and customized training. In most cases, training is obtained through the use of Individual Training Accounts.

- d. What tools and products are used to support service delivery in the One-Stop Centers in the LWIA?

In 2001 Louisiana implemented the Louisiana Virtual One-Stop System (LAVOS), an Internet-based system providing job seekers, businesses, and workforce development staff with access to workforce information, job openings, and training providers, O'Net data, resumes, transferable skill matching, assessment tools, and other features 24/7, helping them make informed career decisions.

Job seekers can become members of LAVOS from home or any Internet accessible location. This allows faith-based community-based organizations to utilize one-stop services for their clients onsite.

Job seekers can build their resume' and attach it to specific job openings for employers to view. They can search for jobs using eight (8) different search criteria ranging from key word search to skill matching to industry or specific employer searches. Job seekers can also match their WorkKeys scores to specific job openings. Employers can manage their entire recruitment process on-line, entering their own job orders, determining referral methods, and viewing resumes on-line and record hires. Staff uses LAVOS to document and manage job seeker and program participant activities as well as business services. The system can spider employer websites as well as other job banks, providing one-stop system customers with access to most on-line resources in the state.

- e. Does the One-Stop(s) have a uniform method of organizing service delivery to businesses? Is there a common individualized assessment process utilized? Does the One-Stop(s) have a uniform method of developing services to job seekers in the resource room?

A new approach to business services is being developed to create seamless service delivery to employers. The state is creating a training package aimed at providing business resource staff from all partners with the skills to market the one-stop system to employers. Several WIBs in the state are developing one-stop business centers. LDOL is working with the Ouachita and Jefferson WIAs to model these centers for replication in other parts of the state.

WIA 70 utilizes its On-the-Job Training (OJT) and Work Experience (WE) components in conjunction with the LDOL's Business Service Representatives (BSRs) as the methods of service delivery to local businesses. The OJT component addresses the need of businesses for short-term, experiential training. WIA 70 also offers Customized Training tailored to specific industry requirements.

The Work Experience component is also very helpful to businesses seeking short-term, on-site training through the WIA program. The LDOL's Business Service Representatives are in frequent contact with local businesses and are very familiar

with the services offered through WIA 70.

The BSR's are an excellent source of referral for WIA clients for the OJT or WE components. WIA 70 will seek a closer and better coordinated relationship with the local BSR's. WIA 70 utilizes the ACT/Workkeys and other interest and aptitude assessments as the common assessment instruments for WIA clients. WIA 70 has attempted to make the assessment process as customer-friendly as possible by offering the assessment every day as needed. This allows the client to fit the process to their schedule thus making for an efficient and streamlined assessment. WIA 70 requires all job seekers to sign-in before utilizing the Resource Room.

However a minimum of information is gathered on the sign-in form. Job seekers are initially greeted and asked if they need assistance, if not, they are allowed to use Resource Room facilities at their own pace. They may, however, seek assistance at any time. All rules of use for the Resource Room are posted at each workstation.

2. Workforce Information - a fundamental component of a demand driven workforce investment system is the integration and application of the best available state and local workforce information including, but not limited to economic data, labor market information, census data, educational data, job vacancy surveys, job order information, and information obtained directly from businesses.

- a. Describe how the LWIA will integrate workforce information into its planning and decision making by the LWIB, One-Stop operations and case manager guidance.

WIA 70's WIB has developed a number of strategies to assure that its work is responsive to a wide variety of economic data, labor market information, census data, input from key trade and professional associations, studies and recommendations from community business organizations, and employers. Of primary importance to the work of Workforce Board 70 is the flow of information and data from LDOL. Communication among all internal partners is essential to program planning, implementation, and continuous improvement.

- b. Describe the approach the LWIA will use to disseminate accurate and timely workforce information to businesses, job seekers, and employment counselors, schools, libraries, etc.

Region 7, uses the information from the Labor Market Information Unit (LMI) of the Louisiana Department of Labor (LDOL), and strives to provide workforce information to all the citizens of the region that need information to gain job readiness skills, provide training, search for jobs, find employees, and provide career options. This is accomplished by continuing to maintain and improve the electronic delivery of labor market information and by providing paper copies, where appropriate, to the following customers: employers, job seekers, libraries, employment counselors, and schools. Also through the use of job fairs and seminars, accurate and timely workforce information is provided.

3. Adult and Dislocated Workers

a. Core Services

- i. Describe LWIA strategies to insure adults and dislocated workers have universal access to the minimum required services described in 134 (d)(2).

Louisiana's and America's Labor Market Information System (ALMIS) data base, can be accessed through LOIS and LAVOS. In addition, LDOL provides data in Excel format based on updated North America Industry Classification System (NAICS) & Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) codes. The data base is available to the general public 24/7, to the business community, job seekers including youth, workforce development centers, and counselors.

LAVOS and LOIS delivery systems are continually being updated and enhanced as new data becomes available. Questions regarding LMI products come directly to the LMI Unit and are responded to promptly. Data is populated in this system as soon as it is available. Also, as a result of co-location, WIA partners, adults, and dislocated workers have access to the minimum required services described in Section 134 (d)(2) of the Act.

In order to enhance and promote the concept of an integrated service delivery system in Region 7, the Local Workforce Investment Boards have agreed to work with the Louisiana Department of Labor Office of Workforce Development on a redesign project initiative that provides a single staff structure for Wagner-Peyser staff and WIA staff through the Local Workforce Investment Boards, thus creating a more efficient, streamlined system.

Additionally, with the Unemployment Insurance service removed from the field, One-Stops can concentrate more on employment and training services. The Local Workforce Investment Boards will have functional authority over the Wagner-Peyser staff, including Veterans service staff who work in or Career Solutions Centers. The realignment of staff functions will help to reduce multiple layers of supervision and eliminate duplication of efforts.

The redesign structure will provide a standardized framework for how customers enter the system; how they are assessed for service need; how they access services, including placement, and how offices are designed and staffed to meet the needs of the job seekers and employers.

- ii. Describe how the LWIA will insure the three tiered service delivery strategy for labor exchange services for job seekers and employers authorized by Wagner-Peyser Act includes: (1) self service, (2) facilitated self help services, and (3) staff assisted services will be available to all customers.

Core services in WIA 70 are informational. They are available to anyone or any business requesting them. These are essentially designed as self-help services and include the Resource Room, computer Internet access to job banks (for individuals), and resume' banks (for employers), general information on labor-market trends, brochures and catalogs of local schools and training providers, and self-guided resume'-writing programs. Staff will help job seekers with the

self-service core activities until they are able to work unassisted. A friendly and competent staff person at the front desk greets the customer and directs him/her to a staff person who will help him/her navigate LAVOS and the Resource Room.

The customer is asked to give information about him/herself. This information is entered into LAVOS.

The following Universal Level I Core Services are available to the customer. Everyone has access to these services; there are no eligibility requirements.

- ✓ Staff assistance to help acquire services.
- ✓ Individual counseling promoting higher learning and the role that aspirations play in career decision-making.
- ✓ Referrals to partner programs not operated at the one-stop.
- ✓ Performance information about one-stop programs.
- ✓ Information about Louisiana Labor Laws.
- ✓ Information about the availability of, and how to access, supportive services, intensive and training services, at all one-stops.
- ✓ Computer applications for personal and career development such as keyboarding, self assessment, and career decision- making programs.
- ✓ Internet access.
- ✓ Initial assessment to help customers link their vocational aptitudes and abilities to jobs.
- ✓ General counseling unrelated to developing individual employment plans.
- ✓ Information about post-secondary financial aid.
- ✓ Job listings and job-referral services through LAVOS.
- ✓ Information in printed format concerning career decision-making, career planning, labor markets, self-employment, job searches, basic educational skills, and job-skill training options including information about financial aid.
- ✓ Tools required for training or job searches (i.e., telephones, fax machines, photocopiers, computers, scanners, paper, envelopes, and workstations).

Staff assistance for the activities listed above will depend on the level of skill the customer has with a computer. Eventually, the customer will be able to create and modify his/her profile information via the Internet. One-stop staff will educate

the customer about the labor market and his/her employment strengths, weaknesses, and the range of services appropriate to him/her. Staff will help him/her with “self-service” activities until he/she is able to use them unassisted. The goal is for him/her to use the Resource Room in order to identify and pursue his/her employment and training goals.

Based on the customer’s need for core services, the staff will become aware of his/her needs. This may result in him/her being invited to meet individually with a staff member to discuss his/her needs. The one-stop staff will initiate the contact.

At this point a case manager/interviewer will be assigned to him/her and will assist him/her with the following:

- ✓ Job search in placement assistance, including career counseling.
- ✓ Job referrals including arranging for testing and background checks.
- ✓ Job development (the case manager/interviewer with both the employer and job seekers).
- ✓ Workshops and other activities.

The case manager/interviewer assigned to him/her will be the primary point of contact to coordinate core services, recommend and arrange for further assessment and testing, and work with the customer to develop a job search strategy. If the customer has greater needs than can be met by one-stop services, her/she will be referred to other agencies or organizations for more intensive services.

- iii. Describe how the LWIA will integrate resources provided under the Wagner-Peyser Act and WIA Title I for adults and dislocated workers as well as resources provided by required One-Stop partner agencies to deliver core services.

Louisiana is committed to providing seamless service delivery to all job seekers through the one-stop system. Through LAVOS all job seekers have self-service access to jobs, training opportunities, and workforce information at any location that has Internet access.

Job seekers can access staff facilitated services through the one-stop center Resource Room.

One-on-one staff services are available for those job seekers, including veterans who need additional assistance. LDOL is working to provide services based on customer need not program delivery. To better integrate services and avoid duplication, Louisiana is requesting a waiver of the requirement that WIA Title I provide core services separate from and duplicative of those provided by Wagner-Peyser.

This will streamline delivery of adult/dislocated worker services through the one-stop system by enrolling participants in WIA Title I at the point of receiving intensive services and enrolling all participants receiving core services in Wagner-Peyser. Numerous activities are defined as both Wagner-Peyser staff assisted/staff facilitated services and WIA core services.

Determining which one-stop customers are registered as participants and included in Wagner-Peyser performance standards and which customers receive WIA core services and are enrolled and included in WIA performance standards, cannot be clearly differentiated. As a result, often which program a participant is enrolled in becomes a matter of chance and results in a duplication of services.

As a part of this move toward full integration into a single process, Louisiana is requesting that all one-stop customers who receive staff assisted/staff facilitated core services in the one-stop be included in the Wagner-Peyser performance measures and only those individuals who can not find employment following initial assessment, workforce information, and placement assistance be referred for enrollment in WIA intensive/training services.

All participants will be tracked through the common measures (core through Wagner-Peyser and intensive training through WIA). This will insure participant process uniformity throughout the state. This approach matches the data collection process outlined in EMILE and the goals outlined in WIA re-authorization.

In addition, it will assist Wagner-Peyser and WIA in coordinating and integrating services to all customers, avoiding duplication, streamlining costs, and providing all job seekers in the one-stop system a clearer path toward training in high growth/high demand occupations.

b. Intensive Services

- I. Describe Local Board strategies and policies to insure adults and dislocated workers who meet the criteria in §134(d)(3)(A) receive intensive services.

Intensive services may be provided to adults and dislocated workers who are unemployed and unable to obtain employment through core services, if the one-stop operator determines that the individual is in need of more intensive services.

Adults and dislocated workers who are employed, but who are determined to be in need of intensive services to obtain and retain employment that allows for self-sufficiency, are also eligible for services. An individual must receive a core service in order to receive intensive services.

Intensive services include, but are not limited to:

- Intensive assessment (beyond initial) of knowledge, skills and abilities.

Generally these involve non self-service tools including O'Net Skills Profiler to determine job seekers aptitudes, skill matches, development of career ladders, etc;

- Development of an individual employment plan;
- Group counseling;
- Individual career planning;
- Case management;
- Short-term pre-vocational services such as basic skills upgrade, GED, English as a second language, soft skills, job readiness and pre-employment training and basic computer literacy.

Transitioning between the services is intended to be smooth and quick, and it depends on customer needs and availability of funds. No time limit exists before applicants can move to intensive services. One-stop center staff have developed a process that assures the identification and addressing of individual needs. In the event that the customer needs additional assistance after core services, he/she will be asked to provide information to document his/her eligibility for WIA Title I, then he/she will receive additional, in-depth academic and/or aptitude testing.

A meeting will be arranged between the customer and his/her Account Executive to discuss testing results and to determine needed assistance. The Account Executive will then develop an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) with him/her.

The following intensive services are available to prepare customers for successful participation in the labor market and will be provided in either group or individual settings:

- ✓ Comprehensive and specialized vocational assessments;
- ✓ Development of employment plans;
- ✓ Testing and counseling;
- ✓ Career decision-making advice;
- ✓ Case management for people seeking training services;
- ✓ Short-term pre-vocational services such as: job getting; "life-work" management assistance; employer expectations of new employees (punctuality, personal maintenance, professional conduct, performance quality; labor laws); learning skills development;
- ✓ Communication skills;

- ✓ Out-of-area job search assistance;
- ✓ Relocation assistance
- ✓ Work experience;
- ✓ Internships;
- ✓ Basic literacy and adult basic-education training not related to specific occupational skills; and
- ✓ Supportive services identified and addressed.

The customer will continue to receive job-getting services in the one-stop center, but he/she will also meet regularly with his/her Account Executive to review progress made toward achieving the objectives outlined in his/her employment plan.

Intensive services are delivered in a smooth way that integrates staff and resources from the WIA adult and dislocated worker programs and the Wagner-Peyser program for any eligible customer who demonstrates an employment need beyond core services.

If appropriate, these customers are enrolled in WIA intensive services and are case-managed for the proper tracking of WIA funding.

Fully developed ISS's are carefully documented to include all activities and supportive services necessary for the customer to successfully complete this level of service and any additional training services.

c. Training Services

- I. Describe the LWIB's vision for increasing training access and opportunities for individuals including the Investment of WIA Title I funds and the leveraging of other funds and resources.

The WIB's vision for increasing training access and opportunities for individuals, is to provide services to a universal population addressing the individual's needs and choice of options as they arise.

Training programs will continue to focus on several targeted populations, including the economically disadvantaged, individuals with disabilities, dislocated workers, individuals receiving Food Stamps and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), at-risk youth, veterans, older workers, and other segments of the population.

One of the best ways to leverage federal, state, and local resources to insure a skilled workforce is to make the most of the dollars going to education and training in our region.

Depending on availability of WIA Title I funds, WIA 70 will leverage their dollars with Adult Education Programs, TAA, (Trade Adjustment Assistance), TOPS, (Louisiana's Tuition Opportunity Program), PELL, Louisiana Rehabilitation Services, and economic development programs.

d. Eligible Training Provider List

- I. Describe the LWIA's process for providing broad customer access to the statewide list of eligible training providers and their performance information.

The provider list is maintained by LDOL and is available in all one-stops via the Internet through LAVOS. The system currently displays information on all public training providers and many of the proprietary schools, apprenticeship programs, and community-based organizations in the state.

Performance data on programs are available as part of the program information for all schools that provide student data for the purposes of the State Scorecard or WIA program eligibility. The most recent performance data are displayed for programs that are placed on the ETPL, while programs that are not on the ETPL, but part of the Scorecard database, have a detailed report available for prior years.

e. On-the-Job Training and Customized Training

- I. Describe the LWIB's vision for increasing training opportunities to individuals through the specific delivery vehicles of OJT and Customized Training.

On-the-Job and Customized Training are two (2) important tools that WIAs 70 and 71 uses to support its demand-driven workforce investment system. Both strategies begin with the employer's workforce needs and are built with significant employer involvement at all stages. The employer identifies the criteria for selecting appropriate trainees, assists in the development of training outlines and curricula, and commits to hire and retain the individuals upon successful training completion.

The employer also invests resources to support 50% of the training costs for On-the-Job Training. To provide more coordinated services to businesses, WIAs 70 and 71 are developing regional OJT and Customized Training contracts and processes. This will decrease administrative costs and provide an incentive to businesses to use these services. In addition, where feasible, WIAs 70 and 71 link WIA Title I On-the-Job Training with the State's Incumbent Worker Training Program.

- ii. Describe how the LWIA identifies OJT and customized training opportunities.

The WIB, along with the one-stop centers have the primary responsibility to encourage the development and marketing of OJT and Customized Training as a tool for promoting skills attainment within high growth/high wage industries.

Other local partners such as economic development agencies, business and

trade associations, business advisory groups, chambers, educational institutions and other collaboratives will be encouraged to work with the WIB and one-stop centers to support and promote demand-side training to meet business needs through OJT and Customized Training.

- iii. Describe how the LWIA markets OJT and customized training as incentives to untapped employer pools including new businesses to the state and employer groups.

WIAs 70 and 71 markets OJT and Customized Training as incentives to untapped employer pools and new businesses through presentations to employer and business advisory groups, such as local chambers of commerce, local elected officials, educational institutions, and economic development agencies. Working closely with LDOL Business Service Representatives (BSRs), OJT brochures are distributed to new businesses and employer groups.

- iv. Describe how the LWIA partners with high growth, high demand industries and economically vital industries to develop potential OJT and customized training strategies.

The WIB will be identifying and targeting other high-growth/ high demand, and vital industries to the local economy to develop potential OJT and Customized Training strategies.

The WIB will continue to support the Louisiana Health Works Commission in its efforts to promote high-growth/high demand occupations in the health care industry. Labor market information and industry-specific surveys/studies will continue to be used for supporting information in determining targeted services and industries.

- v. Describe how the LWIA involved business partners to help drive the strategy through joint planning, competency development; and determining appropriate lengths of training.

Specific business needs will be determined by individual businesses, business sector forums, business and trade associations involvement, economic development information and educational institution recommendations, and will be used to drive the demand-driven strategy through joint planning, competency and curriculum development, and determine appropriate lengths of training.

- vi. Describe how the LWIA leverages other resources and education, economic development, and industry associations to support OJT and customized training ventures.

The WIB will utilize state technical assistance to expand the use of OJT and Customized Training. To the extent possible, WIAs 70 and 71 Title I funds will be used to leverage other funds that are available to support worker training such as TAA, (Trade Adjustment Assistance), Incumbent Worker Training Program, AYUDA, and Senior Employment funds. Additional policies and collaborations between workforce and economic development will be developed

throughout the implementation of this plan to expand these training options.

The WIB will recommend that service providers utilize resources from economic development, trade associations, educational institutions, and other WIA partners, to enhance OJT and Customized Training ventures.

- f. What policies and strategies does the LWIA have in place to insure that, pursuant to the Jobs for Veterans Act, priority of service is provided to veterans and certain spouses who otherwise meet the eligibility requirements for all employment and training programs funded by USDOL in accordance with TEGL 5-03?

Pursuant to the Jobs for Veterans Act of 2002, Veterans and certain spouses will continue to receive priority of service in accordance with USDOL TEGL 5-03, for all employment and training programs funded by USDOL in WIAs 70 and 71. Priority of service delivery will be provided by the one-stops centers and point of contact career centers in WIAs 70 and 71, including counseling/vocational guidance, referral to training, referral to jobs, job development, and referral to supportive services.

- g. Rapid Response - Describe how the LWIA participates in the delivery of Rapid Response services.

- i. How does the LWIA coordinate with the LDOL Rapid Response Unit?

Coordination is primarily accomplished in three ways:

- a. An invitation is extended by the Rapid Response Coordinator to the WIAs to all rapid response events.
- b. Just prior to a new company hiring a former laid-off worker, the WIAs and Rapid Response leader coordinate on potential OJT opportunities for the new company.
- c. When feasible, candidates are co-enrolled into both TAA(Trade Adjustment Assistance) and WIA programs.

- ii. Describe the process involved in carrying out Rapid Response activities.

Once the Rapid Response Coordinator gets word that a company is laying off, and verifies it, they communicate with the company by fax, e-mail or face-to-face meeting to determine their exact needs. Then an orientation meeting with the employees is set up. Afterwards, customized workshops are set up. Lastly, workforce transition centers are set up if needed. Then follow-up and tracking are provided.

- iii. What efforts does the Rapid Response team make to insure that Rapid Response services are provided, whenever possible, prior to layoff date, onsite at the company, and on company time?

The Rapid Response efforts along these lines are quite assertive because it is a statistical fact that the earlier the intervention, the shorter the transitional

period is for the affected employee. However, we work in tandem with the company, getting their approval first. By doing so, we avoid those work-release time issues.

If the employer agrees to meet with Rapid Response to discuss service delivery to affected workers, a coordination meeting is scheduled. During the coordination meeting Rapid Response will request an orientation with the affected workers on-site and on company time.

If the employer denies the request, the orientation meeting will be held at a convenient location off site. In an effort to increase participation, orientation meetings are frequently held after business hours. Orientation meetings are usually advertised in the local paper to insure that all affected workers are informed.

- iv. What services are included in Rapid Response activities? Does the Rapid Response team provide workshops or other activities in addition to general informational services to affected workers? How do you determine what services will be provided for a particular layoff (including layoffs that are trade affected)?

Services are determined by meeting with the company's management team and ascertaining the information. Our Rapid Response Program includes the following:

- a. Layoff Coordination Meetings - as requested/desired by the employer.
- b. On-Site Worker Orientations-On-site/Off-site, approximately two hours, topics covered:

- Unemployment Insurance Benefits Information
 - Job Placement Assistance Information
 - WIA Training Information
 - Pension and Health Care Coverage Information
 - Job Search Workshop Scheduling

- c. On-site Job Search Workshops(LHRDI) - On-site/Off-site, customized, two to eight hours, choice of topics:

- Resume' Writing
 - Interviewing Skills(including taped role playing)
 - Stress Management
 - Internet Job Hunting
 - Job Search for Professionals
 - Older Worker Workshop
 - Limited Experience/Youth Workshop
 - Budget Management
 - Who Moved My Cheese

- d. Job Fairs - On-site/Off-site, size varies, coordinated by Job Center.

e. Education Fairs - On-site/Off-site, local schools, colleges, coordinated by WIA.

f. Additional/Partner Agency Workshops - Scheduled as needed, on-site or off-site.

TAA/NAFTA/TRA

Social Security Information

Investment Counseling

Starting Your Own Business - Dept. Of Economic Development/SCORE

Debt Counseling

Veterans Workshop

Vocational Rehabilitation

Social Services(for physically disabled)

Other topics as requested

g. On-site Workforce Transition Centers - Including any or all of the following:

Rapid Response Wireless Laptops(provided by LDOL)

On-site LDOL Computer Connectivity

On-site U. I claims

On-site Career/Skills Testing/WorkKeys Assessment

On-site Job Referrals

On-site Resume Assistance

Job counseling

Vocational Training Information(Intake, Enrollment, Curriculum, etc)

Traditional(technical colleges, universities, private schools)

Customized Training

On-the-Job Training

Relocation Assistance Information(TAA-NAFTA, WIA) Labor Market Information/Community Resource Information

h. Workforce Adjustment Committees.

i. Other services available as needed or requested.

j. All services are offered and provided to all employers regardless of the number of workers affected by the layoff.

v. How does the LWIA insure a seamless transition between Rapid Response services and One-Stop activities for affected workers?

The Rapid Response Coordinator is housed at the Shreveport One-Stop Center and there is a representative from the WIA present at most rapid response events.

vi. Describe how Rapid Response functions as a business service. Include whether Rapid Response partners with economic development agencies to connect employees from companies undergoing layoffs to similar companies

that are growing and need skilled workers. How does the LWIA promote Rapid Response as a positive, proactive, business-friendly service, not only a negative, reactive service?

Rapid Response is a stakeholder in these types of matching efforts. Its role is primarily a coordinator, or liaison, between the Department of Labor's Business Service Representatives, and the companies that have needs. Rapid Response provides the detailed list of laid-off workers to the One-Stop BSR's who then in turn proceed with the matching process.

4. Youth-ETA's strategic vision identifies youth most in need, such as out-of-school youth and those at-risk, youth in foster care, youth aging out of foster care, youth offenders, children of incarcerated parents, homeless youth, and migrant and seasonal farm worker youth as those most in need of services.

LWIA programs and services should take a comprehensive approach to serving these youth, including basic skill remediation, helping youth stay in or return to school, employment, internships, help with attaining a high school diploma or GED, post-secondary vocational training, apprenticeships, and enrollment in community and four-year colleges.

- a. Describe your LWIA's strategy for providing comprehensive, integrated services to eligible youth, including those most in need as described above. Include any activities to assist youth who have special needs or barriers to employment including those who are pregnant, parenting, or have disabilities. Include how the LWIA will coordinate with other agencies responsible for workforce investment, foster care, education, human services, juvenile justice, and other relevant resources as part of the strategy.

WIA 70 provides comprehensive, integrated services to eligible youth by using appropriate assessment strategies, jointly developing individual service strategies, and enrolling youth in appropriate activities which include the availability of the "Ten Elements".

Account Executives and youth providers will assess youth needs using a variety of tools such as structured interviews and standardized testing instruments.

WIA's staff and youth providers work with youth to develop an individualized service strategy to address the needs or barriers identified in the assessment process. Youth participate in an appropriate mix of services from the WIA "Ten Elements" to achieve their educational or employment goals. Account Executives and youth providers staff develop and maintain good working relationships with local businesses, public and private agencies, education providers, and community resource providers to coordinate service for our participants.

WIA 70 continues to build a system to provide comprehensive services to eligible youth who are recognized as having significant barriers to employment especially out-of-school youth, school dropouts, and other youth facing serious barriers to employment. The youth council includes representatives with expertise in addressing these population groups.

As the WIB designs programs for youth, we encourage our staff and youth providers to maximize resources dedicated to meeting the needs of youth with significant barriers to employment, including linking to and coordinating with current programs in their area addressing these population groups.

WIA 70 defines youth requiring additional assistance to complete an educational program as one who is experiencing difficulty in passing the Louisiana Education Assessment Program (LEAP), or who is failing one or more courses, or is one or more grade levels behind in reading and math.

To meet the accessibility needs of youth with disabilities who access the one-stop centers for services, WIA 70 is committed to providing reasonable accommodation to all programs, services, and facilities.

WIA 70's youth vision is predicated on providing "just in time" service interventions, training, and supportive services. The strategy is to provide youth with positive interactions with knowledgeable, caring adults in success-oriented environments which foster holistic educational, leadership, and employment skill development.

LDOL is working with the Louisiana Workforce Commission's interagency workgroup on youth, local workforce boards, youth councils, and community-based organizations to continue development of the systems needed to provide these comprehensive services to eligible youth, including coordination with Job Corps and other youth programs within each local workforce investment area.

WIA 70, TANF, and vocational rehabilitation are involved in the development of these service strategies to insure that youth with special needs, including those who are pregnant, parenting, have disabilities or other barriers to employment are included in the comprehensive service strategy.

Programs are designed to meet the individual needs of each youth. The special needs or barriers to employment of youth, including pregnant or parenting youth and disabled youth will be identified during the objective assessment and service strategy design .

These youth may be jointly case managed with other appropriate one-stop partners or community-based organizations. Communication and collaboration between the various funding sources identified in the service strategy are critical for a successful outcome. This is a critical function of the local WIB's and youth councils.

Coordination with all entities serving youth, including foster care, education, and welfare, occurs on many levels. Such coordination may include but not be limited to: membership on the youth council or local WIB, sharing documentation for eligibility determination, sharing assessment and case management notes on joint clients; joint service provision and joint technical assistance sessions and staff training.

- b. Describe how coordination with Job Corps, Job Challenge, and other youth programs will occur.

Coordination occurs among WIA youth programs, Job Corps apprenticeship programs, grantees operating Youth Opportunity Grants, and other youth programs

operated through community and faith-based organizations.

Such coordination may include joint marketing to youth for all programs. The local Shreveport Job Corps is a member of the consortium for the administration of the local one-stop centers and is also represented on WIA 70's youth council.

The Louisiana National Guard Youth Challenge Program at Camp Minden, in Minden, LA. is another entity where we can coordinate youth activities. The program is designed to assist young people age 16-18 who have dropped out of school. This parallels the emphasis on out-of-school youth under the new WIA common measures. We are focusing on those youth who return to WIA 70 for possible work experience activities in the private sector.

- c. Describe in general, how the LWIA will meet the Act's provisions regarding youth program design (112(b)(18) and 12(c).

WIA 70 has developed strategies to implement the youth program designs bulleted below.

WIA 70 will continue working with the local workforce board, the State Workforce Commission, youth council, youth providers, and the interagency youth workgroup (Tech Prep, secondary and post-secondary Perkins III, adult education, TANF, juvenile justice, employers, organized labor, community and faith-based organizations) to further develop guidelines, coordination strategies, and specific guidance.

WIA 70 is committed to a fully integrated system of education, training, skill development and employment opportunities for all youth. This commitment is based on its vision of creating a statewide system that provides that right intervention at the right time, insuring youth acquire the necessary skills for success in education and employment, and businesses gain a skilled workforce.

The required following ten (10) elements are offered through our youth service providers:

- Tutoring, study-skills training, and instruction leading to completion of secondary school, including dropout prevention strategies;
- Alternative secondary school services;
- Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social behaviors during non-school hours;
- Adult mentoring for not less than 12 months;
- Substance abuse and/or mental health counseling and referral as appropriate;
- Summer employment opportunities directly linked to academic and

occupational learning;

- Paid and unpaid work experiences, including internships and job shadowing;
- Occupational skill training;
- Supportive services; and
- Follow-up services;

The goals of the youth program include:

- Increased long-term employability;
- Enhanced educational, occupational, and citizenship skills;
- Encourage school completion or enrollment in alternative programs;
- Enhanced job seeking skills;
- Increased employment and earnings;
- Reduced welfare dependency;
- Assist young people to address problems impairing their ability to make successful transitions from school to work, apprenticeship, the military, or post-secondary training.

5. Business Services

- a. Describe how the needs of employers will be determined both in the LWIA and on a regional basis.

On the local level, focus groups will be used in conjunction with Regional Rapid Response Teams. These two (2) methods, will provide the system with up-to-date information on job requirements, skill shortages, and training needs. Economic development agencies and local Chambers of Commerce will work with the regional teams and assist in providing information on the employment and training needs of their members.

We will also, when feasible, conduct promotional activities aimed at employers that will inform them of our services and how their needs can be met.

WIAs 70 and 71 are seeking employers who would provide work experience training for adults 18 and over in their workplace at no cost to the employer. Interested agencies could contact our office for further details. Additionally, the redesign effort will develop a Business Services Team in the One-Stop Center which will plan, coordinate, standardize, and deliver services to business customers. This team will collect and analyze industry and company data, develop on-going relationships with businesses, and solicit hiring information and current/future employment needs.

The team will also initiate a business account management strategy and seek to deliver appropriate business services based on identified need.

- b. Describe how the integrated business services, including Wagner-Peyser Act services, will be delivered to employers through the One-Stop system on a regional basis.

An integrated employer account system, accessible by all local partner entities through LAVOS, provides a comprehensive data base of employers needs. This allows the system to build a portfolio of employer services that match business needs.

This system assists Region 7's WIB's and LDOL in working with training providers to insure that skills training, work place literacy skills training, and employability enhancements provided to job seekers, meet employer requirements. Wagner-Peyser traditional employer relations programs have been integrated into the LDOL Regional Workforce Response Teams using BSR's assigned to the local one-stop centers, thus broadening their employer contact capabilities.

- c. Describe how the LWIA will coordinate the delivery of services to businesses with other entities in the region including economic development, chambers of commerce, education, etc. and insure nonduplication of services.

WIA 70 will coordinate the delivery of services to businesses and other entities in the region through the use of non-traditional methods to generate a quicker turn-around and broader exposure for high-demand occupations including unsanitized job openings, employers listing job openings directly on the Internet, and exposure and access to these job openings in non-traditional locations such as housing authority developments (in coordination with HUD), TANF office waiting rooms, community-based and faith-based organizations, etc.

All partner agency staff will share job information that will provide employers with access to a broader range of possible employees.

- d. How will the system use the Federal tax credit programs within the One-Stop system to maximize employer participation?

Administration of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) program will be streamlined by localizing the methods of document input, simplifying the forms and instructions, and integrating the program into the integrated intake process.

WOTC will be a part of the portfolio used by the regional teams, which will broaden exposure in the business community. Team members and one-stop staff will provide assistance to employers to complete the forms. In addition it will be part of the referral process in the one-stop system.

6. Innovative Services Delivery

- a. Describe innovative service delivery strategies that the LWIA has/or is planning to undertake to maximize resources, increase service levels, improve service quality,

achieve better integration or meet other key State goals.

On January 12, 2005, Governor Kathleen Babineaux Blanco created the Louisiana Task Force on Workforce Competitiveness to address the needs of employers in the workforce development system. Full integration of services is being developed through a redesign initiative.

The goal of the Task Force is “to align, coordinate, and leverage the resources, goals and ideas of the private, public, and non-profit sectors for the benefit of Louisiana’s workforce and economy and to identify the gaps between the skills sets and education possessed by our citizens.” The Task Force’s vision is that the quality and quantity of our workforce is a competitive advantage for Louisiana business. Their mission is to produce a more effective statewide workforce development system that is responsive to employer needs.

As WIA 70 moves our current system toward the vision of developing a workforce development system that responds to industry demand and that maximizes and streamlines services to its customers, the priority is to create a new system guided by the principles of universal access, increased accountability, individual choice, and comprehensive service delivery for all Northwest Louisiana citizens. This new system will have as its goals:

- Create a demand-driven workforce development system that connects employers to a well-educated and highly skilled workforce;
- Develop a labor market system that provides employers, job seekers, incumbent workers, future workers including out-of-school youth and other at-risk and special populations with the labor market information, training, and supportive services they need;
- Implement a governance system focused on unified planning, eliminating duplication, maximizing resources, continuous improvement, and accountability for results;
- Continue development of an effective, high-quality network of one-stop career centers that serve as the “front door” to Northwest Louisiana’s workforce development system, driven by accurate, timely labor market information;
- Utilize a common intake/assessment system that is customer focused and streamlines workforce education and training programs by eliminating duplication.
- In order to overcome our high youth dropout rate and low attachment to the workforce, we must develop better linkages between the education, training and business sectors.

7. Strategies for Faith-Based and Community Organizations

- a. Describe those activities to be undertaken to : (1) increase the opportunities for

participation of faith-based and community organizations as committed and active partners in the one-stop delivery system; and (2) expand the access of the faith-based and community organizations' clients and customers to the services offered by the One-Stops in the LWIA.

WIA 70 is fully committed to providing employment and training services for all citizens; however, many of our most venerable citizens do not access these services. Many faith-based and community-based organizations have developed relationships with these individuals and can provide the needed connections to help link them with the workforce development system.

Since the Community Services Block Grant Program (CSBG) is administered through LDOL, this enables WIA 70 to directly involve the community action agencies with the WIA and Wagner-Peyser workforce development strategies in Northwest Louisiana. These agencies are being integrated into LDOL's MIS system. This will provide their clients with direct access to jobs, workforce information, career guidance and other on-line services. Community-based organizations sit on the workforce investment boards.

Statewide, community-based organizations that provide occupational specific skills training were contacted for possible inclusion on the statewide Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).

Solicitation efforts resulted in several community-based organizations being added to the ETPL.

b. TANF and STEP

1. Describe how the WIA coordinates services with TANF to provide assistance to needy families with (or expecting) children and provide parents with job preparation, work, and support services to enable them to leave TANF and become self-sufficient.

The WIA manages the job readiness program for Bienville, Bossier, Claiborne, DeSoto, Natchitoches, and Lincoln, Red River, Sabine, and Webster Parishes' TANF recipients. This program is STEP Job Readiness Program.

This program provides four (4) weeks of structured curriculum and activities for job preparation and job search. The program Facilitator advises the OFS TANF case workers of any employment and/or support services needs of the TANF participants while they are in the program.

2. Describe how the LWIA coordinates WIA Title I and Wagner-Peyser Services with the STEP program. Include how the LWIA provides Wagner-Peyser Act services to job ready STEP participants referred to the One-Stop by TANF. Discuss how the LWIA coordinates the Job Readiness program with One-Stop activities, including WIA Title I service.

There is a referral process for STEP program participants to apply for WIA program services. Also, a designated Employment Specialist at the one-stop center provides job referrals, job development and job counseling for STEP participants.

c. Title V of the Older Americans Act (SCSEP)

1. Describe the One-Stop system collaboration efforts to maximize opportunities for SCSEP participants.

SCSEP staff and one-stop staff and partners work closely to coordinate services to SCSEP participants. SCSEP staff regularly attend partner and WIB meetings. They serve on committees when requested and some are WIB members. Training offered through the SCSEP is largely based on demand driven occupations as documented by the one-stops.

All SCSEP applicants are referred to the one-stops for registration and all participant training openings and staff vacancies are listed with the one-stop. These include but are not limited to use of the resource room, use of computers to job search, work on resumes and applications. When SCSEP staff are conducting outreach activities or they are providing services outside of the one-stop, information is provided to all applicants regarding the services available in the one-stops and how to access these services.

MOUs are negotiated with the local WIBs in all areas served. Staff and/or participants who are assigned to the SCSEP provide on-site SCSEP services as feasible. The staff/participant is stationed on-site in the one-stop itself and in other areas, staff/participants come in on a rotating basis to provide on-site services as needed.

One-Stop and SCSEP staff jointly coordinate the application process, the referral process between partners, how services are to be accessed and the sharing of job leads and job placement information.

Additionally, the one-stop itself and partners serves as a community service training site for SCSEP participants. SCSEP participants are assigned directly to the one-stops or the partners for training and to provide assistance in various capacities when such assignment is warranted and the training to be provided matches the needs of the participants. When this occurs, the wages paid these participants are considered in-kind contributions and are applied toward any cost incurred by Experience Works for providing services in the one-stop.

One-stop staff or partners actually train and supervise these participants in positions such as receptionist, greeter, resource room assistant, data entry clerk, custodian, job search, or basic computer training facilitators, etc.

2. Describe how the LWIA will integrate and coordinate WIA Title I and Wagner-Peyser services with services offered through the Older Worker Programs.

Applicants and participants are referred to services that are available and appropriate for the older worker.