

## Draft Summary Report of the WRIS Advisory Group First Quarter 2013 Conference Call Meeting: March 21, 2013

The First Quarter 2013 meeting of the Advisory Group of the Wage Record Interchange System (WRIS) was convened by conference call on March 21, 2013 (2:00 p.m. EDT) from the Employment and Training Administration (ETA), U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C.

### I. Welcome and Remarks

Karen A. Staha, Chief of the Division of Strategic Planning and Performance for ETA's Office of Policy Development and Research (OPDR), welcomed the WRIS Advisory Group to the First Quarter 2013 conference call meeting, introduced participants from ETA, ETLs, Xerox and CDS<sup>2</sup>, and briefly discussed the agenda items. In place of a state-by-state roll, Ms. Staha asked Advisory Group representatives to confirm attendance through e-mail to [WRIS@dol.gov](mailto:WRIS@dol.gov), and note any additional state staff members who participated with them.

Ms. Staha announced that Kate Louton, Federal Program Officer (FPO), for WRIS and WRIS 2, had accepted a new position within DOL's Office of Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), effective March 25. Ms. Staha thanked Ms. Louton for her excellent work with WRIS and WRIS2, as well as with the Workforce Data Quality Initiative, and said that she will be very much missed. Ms. Staha introduced Heather Parker who will serve as the FPO for WRIS and WRIS2 until Ms. Louton's replacement is named. Ms. Parker, an experienced member of the Division of Strategic Planning and Performance, has participated in WRIS and WRIS 2 leadership conference calls and trainings and is knowledgeable about many of the issues addressed by the members.

Ms. Staha briefly reported on the status of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act of 2013 and the SKILLS Act (H.R. 803). Although the immediate and long term effects of the Budget Control Act of 2011 are not clear at this time, DOL has prepared several guidance documents that are available on the DOL Web site at: <http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/lastSixMonths.cfm>.

Included among the recent reference documents posted are:

- Training and Employment Notice No. 27-12 (March 20, 2013) which outlines impacts on Workforce and Investment Act (WIA) Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Activities Programs, Wagner-Peyser Employment Services Program (ES), and Workforce Information Grants to States, and
- Unemployment Insurance (UI) Program Letter No. 13-13 (March 8, 2013) which defines the implementation of sequestration under the Budget Control Act of 2011 for the Unemployment Insurance Programs for Fiscal Year 2013.

Ms. Staha encouraged the Advisory Group PACIA and SUJA representatives to monitor the guidance materials for UI and Workforce programs to ensure they are aware how their state may be affected.

Ms. Staha closed by advising that the solicitation for the third round of Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) grant applications was issued on March 11, 2013. The closing date for receipt of applications is April 25. Ms. Staha advised that states interested submitting an application must meet the eligibility requirements that include membership in WRIS2. Additional information regarding WDQI and the grant opportunity is available on the WDQI Web site at:

<http://www.doleta.gov/performance/workforcedatagrants09.cfm>.

Specific WDQI grant information is available at:

[http://www.doleta.gov/grants/pdf/SGA\\_DFA\\_PY\\_12\\_07.pdf](http://www.doleta.gov/grants/pdf/SGA_DFA_PY_12_07.pdf)

## II. Adoption of Summary Report for Third Quarter 2012 Meeting

Ms. Staha provided a brief review of the Draft Summary Report of the Fourth Quarter 2012 Advisory Group meeting held November 27, 2012. Sixty-eight staff members from 40 WRIS members (states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia) participated in the conference call meeting. The Draft Summary Report was e-mailed to the Advisory Group on December 3, 2012. Rick Little (Utah) made the motion to adopt and Jon Eller (Oklahoma) seconded. The Summary Report was adopted unanimously.

## III. WRIS2 Status

John Glen (Oregon), WRIS2 Work Group Chairman, and Kate Louton, ETA/OPDR, reported on the current status of the voluntary, opt-in WRIS2 expanded data sharing initiative and provided a summary of its purpose for newer Advisory Group representatives and staff members. Since the last quarterly meeting in 2012, three states have joined WRIS2 – Arizona, Florida, and Delaware -- bringing the membership in the exchange to 26.

WRIS2 allows aggregate data to be shared with Third Party Entities (TPEs), which are defined in the WRIS2 Data Sharing Agreement as any public body, agency, or private career school required by law to meet state and/or Federal performance measures. Any Advisory Group representative who wishes more detailed information on the WRIS2 initiative is encouraged to send an e-mail to [WRIS@dol.gov](mailto:WRIS@dol.gov) or visit the recently developed WRIS2 section within ETA's Performance and Results Web site:

[http://www.doleta.gov/performance/wris\\_2.cfm](http://www.doleta.gov/performance/wris_2.cfm). In closing, Ms. Louton expressed her appreciation to the WRIS2 Work Group members: Clinton Flowers (Missouri), Adam Leonard (Texas), Rick Little (Utah) and John Glen.

#### IV. WRIS PACIA and SUIA Training Opportunities

Ms. Louton provided an overview of upcoming WRIS training opportunities as follows:

- WRIS Town Hall WebEx: April 18, Thursday (2:00 pm EDT). Topics and presenters are welcomed and should be e-mailed to: [WRIS@dol.gov](mailto:WRIS@dol.gov).
- State Orientation WebEx: By request, an Orientation WebEx can be scheduled for any WRIS member at a date convenient for its staff members. Orientations have been provided for Maine, Maryland, Puerto Rico, and Wyoming.
- Confidentiality Compliance and Incident Response WebEx: The training will be offered again in June 2013 for state participants who could not participate in the January WebEx. Seventy-nine staff members from 34 states plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico attended on January 9, 2013.

The autumn WRIS Town Hall, held November 8, 2012, included presentations from Minnesota, Oregon, Tennessee and Texas. State staff members who were unable to attend can receive the Town Hall presentations by sending an e-mail request to [WRIS@dol.gov](mailto:WRIS@dol.gov). Ms. Louton encouraged states to make presentations at the April 18 Town Hall and requested that Advisory Group representatives let ETA know of their interest. Ms. Louton reiterated that ETA also hosts state-specific orientation trainings by WebEx. Topics can be customized based on the state's technical or policy needs. She reported that ETA had provided an Orientation for Puerto Rico staff members earlier in the day. In ending her remarks, Ms. Louton thanked everyone for the assistance provided to her with WRIS and WRIS2, as well as WDQI, during her time serving within ETA/OPDR.

#### V. Quarterly Technical Report of WRIS Operations

Amanda Gohl (Xerox) discussed the quarterly Technical Operations Review, e-mailed to Advisory Group representatives in advance of the meeting. Ms. Gohl provided an overview of participants, noting that 49 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia had submitted data for the current quarter's Distributed Data Base Index (DDBI). Ms. Gohl reported that Hawaii's SUIA is in the testing phase and that the Virgin Islands is not a member of WRIS. Referencing charts in the Technical Operations Review, Ms. Gohl noted that current WRIS volume tracking has remained consistent with historical trends since WRIS began in 2004. She emphasized that the reported numbers are based strictly on the monthly traffic reports of how many requests for participant wage data are submitted to the Clearinghouse and do not take into account whether or not the requests are repeated.

Ms. Gohl directed the group to the DBBI submittal schedule for 2013. Data for the Third Quarter 2012 has been available since January 14. Based on the next submittal deadline of April 8, the updated DDBI will be available on April 15. Ms. Gohl noted that in response to state requests, the DBBI schedule had been adjusted to accommodate quarters that ended on the first weekend of a month. She asked that Advisory Group representatives advise Xerox of any processing changes in their states. Ms. Gohl further reported that the WRIS and WRIS2 User Guides contain sections for both the PACIA and SUIA and noted that the most current version of the User Guide is always posted on the secure Web site for state PACIAs. In closing, Ms. Gohl indicated that the contact information for ETA, Xerox and CDS2 is included in the Technical Operations Review on pages 26 and 27.

## VI. Additional Business

Following conclusion of the scheduled agenda items, Ms. Staha encouraged Advisory Group members to raise questions, comments, or issues for discussion.

Ms. Staha noted that an Advisory Group meeting for members of the WRIS2 expanded data sharing initiative was scheduled to follow the adjournment of the WRIS Advisory Group meeting and provided a brief summary of the agenda topics. Ms. Staha reported that interest in WRIS2 is high, especially from the education partners. She indicated that she continues to receive questions regarding the reasons not all states are members of WRIS2. In response to those questions, Ms. Staha said she often notes that statutes in some states prevent state membership in WRIS2. In order provide more complete information to similar, on-going questions, Ms. Staha requested that states that are not participating in WRIS2 send an e-mail to [WRIS@dol.gov](mailto:WRIS@dol.gov) outlining the reasons. The state responses will help provide a more complete picture of the state issues facing WRIS members that are not current members of WRIS2.

Ms. Staha announced that the Second Quarter 2013 conference call has been scheduled tentatively for June 13, Thursday, at 2:00 p.m. (EDT). Ms. Staha asked that any state conflicts due to conferences or other professional activities be e-mailed to [WRIS@dol.gov](mailto:WRIS@dol.gov) so that ETA may consider an alternative meeting date that is convenient for the majority of the Advisory Group members. The First Quarter 2013 conference call was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.