

Analyst Resource Center



Analyst Resource Center Meeting
San Antonio, Texas
June 28 – 29, 2011

Attendees

David Adams (TX)

Dan Brown (IA)

Andy Condon (CT)

Bob Cottrell (NC)

Steve Duthie (MT)

Phil Ellsworth (WY)

Amy Gehring (MN)

Steve Hine (MN)

Christopher Knight (FL)

Ben Kuspa (NE)

Barbara Ledvina (IA)

Denise Lee (NC)

John Pearce (OR)

Dana Placzek (CT)

Steve Rosenow (IA)

Bill Stambaugh (NC)

Roger Therrien (CT – for the WIC)

John Torres (NV)

Garold Wilson (IA)

ETA Update

ETA update was given by Sam Wright, Contract Representative. Sam stated that it had been “another successful year for ARC and Washington is giving you all a pat on the back for such an outstanding job. In Washington, we are doing everything to get people jobs, and what ARC does is a key tool to this situation.” He further told us that we should continue to promote the good things that ARC is doing at every opportunity. Bob told the group that we need to encourage more participation by LMI directors if we are going to maintain or increase the level of awareness of the group. He asked ARC members to encourage LMI directors to become more involved.

ETA has expressed concern about continuity in the contract for the Employer Database. Bob told us that he is working with Connecticut to transfer this responsibility there. Sam said that ETA welcomes suggestions for the best way to make this transition, and we should assume that funding will continue at the current level for the Employer Database.

ETA will issue a Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) about continuation of the Workforce Information Council.

WIC Update

Roger Therrien gave an update on WIC activity. He told us that at their April meeting they discussed BLS allocations of funding among the states. The allocations are based partly on wage rates paid in the area, and part on the workload.

A new QCEW system is currently being developed which will replace Win202 and Expo. More information will be provided at a later date.

LMI Technology Forum

Some states are falling behind with the delivery of information over the internet, especially states that use the Workforce Informer system. States with systems that are considered state-of-the-art include:

- Virginia (with Virtual LMI Plus)
- LOGI with XML System

States that are starting to develop new systems:

- California (utilizes a check list with over 100 items)
- Oregon
- Washington (hired a consultant and is focusing on usability)

Some of the features Roger told us we can expect to see in the future include:

- Better graphical presentations
- Mobile Sites
- Social Media
- Data Visualization
 - From Academia
- Duke University
 - From Journalism
- New York Times produced a web feature for faces of the dead
 - From the Census Bureau
- On the Map Mobile
 - Hans Rosling
- gapminder.org

ARC Update

Sandbox Project

Bob and Steve Hine led a discussion on the ARC “sandbox” project that has been discussed at previous meetings. The sandbox project is being created as a way for states to share tools and best practices that they have developed. Steve noted that the Policy group has been working to put plans in place to bring this project to fruition. The group feels that most states would be willing to share tools that they have developed if they were absolved of any liability. It was noted that this project could be expanded to include resources above and beyond just the WID – including data tools, documents and LMI shops.

The Crosswalk Center is working on setting up a server that would be password protected, and access to the server would be granted by the NCSC. Chris Knight will be responsible for designing a website interface for states to use for uploading their information. Developers will need to provide information about the purpose of their application, and any technical requirements. The site would also include an acknowledgement of an open source-type license agreement that stipulates that there will be no technical support available, and which absolves the developer of any liability. States would be encouraged to acknowledge the developer of the tools they get from the Sandbox, and share any enhancements they make to the tools. Steve suggested allowing users to indicate the level of difficulty with the tools and any successes/failures experienced.

Bob suggested that we need to gather information from state DBAs and LMI directors on their expectations for such a service. The Policy group has identified 4-5 applications. However, they have determined that prior to going live with the Sandbox Project, at least 3-4 more applications/best practices, etc. should be available.

ARC Meetings

Bob indicated that because of funding issues, there may need to be some type of registration for future meetings. He noted that certain costs associated with putting on the meetings will not be covered by the contract any more. He asked anyone who feels this may be a problem to let him know.

Employer Database

Andy Condon indicated that Connecticut has been looking into the mechanics of taking over hosting the Employer Database contract. It was noted that compensation to help defray the cost may be needed. In order for the process to be successful, an RFP for the Employer Database needs to be issued by October of 2012. A draft of the RFP needs to be ready for review at least 90 days before it is issued.

NCSC Update

Steve Rosenow provided an update on National Crosswalk Service Center activities since the previous meeting. Data updates included the usual monthly files (CES, LABFORCE and CPI) as well as the first release of 2010 census data and the first release of five-year estimates from the American Community Survey. This brings the level of geographic detail from this survey to that of the decennial census. We've also seen the first intercensal data revisions, to BEA income estimates. The intercensal revisions occur when data estimates (population, income, etc.) are revised to be more in line with the last two decennial censuses.

Classifications and Crosswalks have figured prominently into NCSC activities. The 2010 editions of the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) and Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) have come into much wider use. The Bureau of Labor Statistics has released employment and wage estimates from their OES program based largely on the 2010 SOC. The National Center for Education Statistics is gathering counts of postsecondary program completions using the 2010 CIP. Those two agencies, BLS and NCES, have developed a crosswalk file linking the 2010 CIP and SOC. NCSC staff and a contractor participated in a working review meeting at BLS at which they presented a draft version of their crosswalk for review.

With the recent release of Version 2.5 of the **Workforce Information Database**, the NCSC has been hard at work creating resources to help states deal with the transition to the new structure. The Workforce Information Database Wiki has been updated to include changes in the structure of individual tables in the new version. The center also created an MS Access version of the database, complete with table constraints.

Time and technology wait for no one. Since the last meeting, the NCSC staff have:

- Added the capability to search the Workforce Information Database Wiki to the NCSC web site
- Added a "NCSC Headlines" section to the NCSC web site that scrolls through recent RSS postings. This keeps recent data and other updates in front of the center's web site users.
- Begun the transition away from using Visual FoxPro for processing and distributing WID files. The center is about to lose access to this software, and is beginning the transition to Access and SAS/PC for file manipulation and distribution

The NCSC update concluded with a “Cake Break.”

Subcommittee Reports

Education & Communication

- The Committee will evaluate the possibility of having a national conference, and whether or not another training session is needed.
- A survey of DBAs will be developed
- Will work on developing articles for a newsletter
- Developed a document to highlight the changes in the WID Structure from 2.41. to 2.5.

Structure

Dana reported out for the Structure Committee. He said that the group produced a policy document. The group continues to work on fine tuning it. They discussed the best way to handle the 2012 NAICS codes. John Pierce volunteered to determine if separate tables are needed for each version of the NAICS.

The Committee is exploring other data sources related to economic development activity, including a state gross domestic product, utility cost data, building permits and starts, auto sales and patents. This came in response to question raised by one of the states.

A modified structure for the Quarterly Workforce Indicators (QWI) table has been discussed. The Committee will develop a modified structure and put it on the Non-Standard Tables page of the NCSC website.

The Committee debated the value in developing the next major revision to the database structure, version 3.0. They decided that there was no reason to restructure the database at this time, and that any revision must include major improvements given the current funding levels. They also decided to get rid of all references to ALMIS in the next database structure document.

Next Meeting

The timing and location of the next ARC meeting were discussed. Locations mentioned included Washington, D.C., several cities in Florida, and Nashville. Bill will work on proposals for the next meeting and advise the group.

Update

Robert Cottrell, Jr., has retired October 1, 2011 from the North Carolina Employment Security Commission after being employed there for 37 years. He had served as the Information Systems Director, and previously as the Deputy Director for over four years. He had worked in the field of Labor Market Information for over 25 years, including seven years as the Director of the Labor Market Information Division. We as members of the Analyst Resource Center wish him the very best.

Steve Hine, Ph.D., Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), Labor Market Information Director will assume the duties of Chair of the ARC consortium. North Carolina will remain the fiscal agent.