

A
HUGE

Thank You...

Goes out to all ALMIS DBAs who participated in our survey in February! Your input was invaluable and is being implemented as we speak. We thought you might like to hear what others said as well and we will be emailing the full survey analysis to survey respondents very soon!

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Employer Database

New Contract Signed

A master contract for the production of the ALMIS Employer Database was signed between the State of Iowa and *infoUSA* on April 1, 2004. The contract is for a period of three years with two possible one-year extensions.

The master contract and state license have been sent electronically to all LMI Directors and ALMIS Database Administrators. The first deliverable under this contract (3 CD-ROMs) has already been sent to each state. **Each state is required to sign a License Agreement with *infoUSA* to receive any additional deliverables.** The target date to have the state licenses signed is June 15, 2004.

Products

After signing the State License, the state will receive additional products in July 2004. Each State Licensee will receive an uncompressed database (flat file) in the new format and containing the new data elements negotiated under the Iowa contract. This database is being

provided to help Licensees begin testing their applications using the new data format and elements. Also in July, Licensees will receive a copy of the new CD-ROM application for use in conducting training sessions or other preparation for the October release.

In October 2004, each Licensee will receive the uncompressed database, a minimum of three CD-ROMs and an unlimited number of additional CD-ROMs as requested. It will be the Licensee's responsibility to distribute the CD-ROMs to the appropriate users. Instructions on how to order the no-cost CD-ROMs will be provided later this summer. Updates will be delivered every six months.

Uses and Users

The ALMIS Employer Database is licensed to provide information for employer contacts. While information on employment and industry is also provided, its use for statistical analysis may be limited.



The ALMIS Employer Database must be used by only approved "users" and for only those approved "uses." Usage must meet both criteria.

The Employer Database is licensed under the Iowa Master Contract for use by:

- ◆ Individual job seekers
- ◆ One Stop Career Centers
- ◆ Workforce Development Boards
- ◆ The public Job Service
- ◆ Public welfare agencies
- ◆ State employment statistics agencies as defined under Section 309 of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998
- ◆ All mandatory and optional partners as described under WIA

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DBA in the Spotlight

Lori Wasson

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What is your educational background?

BA and MA in Mathematics from the University of Northern Iowa. Certificate of Applied Computer Science from Indiana University-Purdue University of Indianapolis.

Are you originally from Indiana?

No. I was born and raised in Iowa and went to school in Iowa. I moved to Indiana when I got married because my husband is from here.

What are your interests outside of work?

Scrapbooking, cross-stitch, reading, going for walks, NBA basketball (Indiana Pacers), and being entertained by my 2 little girls (Valori - 2-1/2, Sarah - 1).

How long have you been involved in the world of LMI?

9 years

How long have you been an ALMIS DBA?

3 years. Worked as a statistician for long-term projections before becoming an ALMIS DBA.

What is the strangest job you ever held?

I worked as a nurse's aide in a nursing home, in the Alzheimer's unit. I feel for those poor patients and their families. But I encountered some bizarre and scary behaviors working there. I used to have nightmares about working there.

What is the most rewarding aspect of your current job?

Helping people locate information that is useful for them.

What is the most challenging aspect of your current job?

I maintain a web site and the database. Getting data into the database can be a challenge when you must work out all the integrity constraints. Then making sure the data shows up on the web site can be challenging, too.

What is your favorite work-related web site? Why?

Our state's LMI website, INEWS (<http://www.in.gov/dwd/inews/lmi.asp>). I help maintain this web site. We have a lot of useful information about Indiana's labor market for customers. I've really enjoyed working on this web site.

What is the most exotic (or awe-inspiring) place you've been?

I've never been anywhere exotic, but I've been to the Smokey Mountains and to Lookout Mountain. The scenery is so beautiful and definitely awe-inspiring.

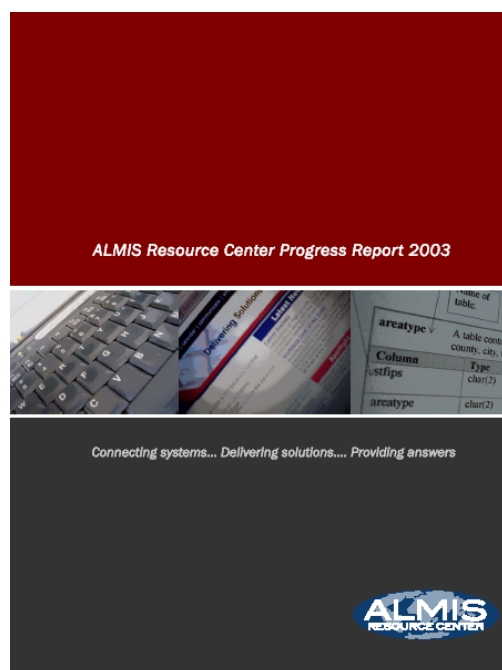
What would a perfect day be like for you?

Being able to sleep in, reading a good book, and soaking in the warm sun on a beach somewhere.

ARC Annual Progress Report

Available on
www.almisdb.org

This report details the history of the ARC, accomplishments, current activities and future directions. Copies of the report were recently distributed to States, National and Regional offices, and other entities.



...Employer Database, continued

(Continued from page 1)

- and other partner agencies.
- ◆ The Employment and Training Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor

The Employer Database is licensed under the Iowa Master Contract for the purposes of:

- ◆ Career Exploration
- ◆ Job Search
- ◆ Job Development
- ◆ Employment Support Services
- ◆ Labor Market Research (including enhancement of existing employer name and address files)
- ◆ Related public workforce system development efforts
- ◆ Generating mailing lists to be used for these purposes.

The Employer Database is licensed for use independent of the media and method of delivery. It can be made available through:

- ◆ Stand-alone PCs
- ◆ Client-server systems
- ◆ Internet systems, and other delivery mechanisms that may develop.

Levels of Usage

Primary Recipient/Licensee (SESA, SWA or ETA): Able to download the entire database to a PC or server (along with the search and display application) or search the database using the CD directly.

Intermediate Users (local One Stop Center or other non-client user as defined above):

After completing an initial search, Intermediate users may retrieve and display an unlimited number of single line records of which not more than 25 records can be viewed at one time. They can also print or download up to 50 records at a time per single print or download request. Usage is only for uses licensed by the contract.

Intermediate Users' access to the ALMIS Employer Database shall be restricted by personal identification and password protection technology. Each Intermediate User that has access to the ALMIS Employer Database shall sign an agreement with the Licensee to abide by the terms and conditions of this License Agreement when using the ALMIS Employer Database. A template for the Sub-License Agreement is available at www.almisdb.org.

Persons using the ALMIS Employer Database in public, college, or university libraries will have End User access only through the Internet.

Client/End User (an individual engaged in job search or career exploration):

End users may receive a display of single line records of which not more than 25 records can be viewed or printed at one time. End users may also print the data elements up to five records

at a time and email one record at a time (per single print/email request). Such usage is for job search and career exploration.

All state/entities have the right to use all the data, for the entire nation or any portion thereof, for the identified uses and users, independent of media and method of delivery, and for a minimum of 15 months subsequent to the delivery date of the most recent issuance of the database without regard to the termination date of the contract.

Data elements available to each level of user are detailed in Attachments 1-3 of the state License Agreement. More specific information is also contained in Section 3 of the state License Agreement.

Licensee Responsibilities/Terms of usage

It is important that Licensees review the requirements for use of the ALMIS Employer Database under this new Master Contract and State License. Carefully review Section 3, Grant of License, in the State License Agreement. Some of the important requirements include the following:

The ALMIS Employer Database is licensed specifically for the users and uses listed above. Both criteria must be met. License is not granted for marketing use between businesses or

for economic development activities.

The Licensee is charged with maintaining a data security system that will control access to the Employer Database and will take steps to prevent unauthorized usage. (See Section 2e of the License Agreement.)

Displays of the ALMIS Employer Database shall also include the appropriate copyright notice and, where feasible, display the *infoUSA* logo. At the Licensee's option, the display may link to the *infoUSA* website. (See Section 2g of the License Agreement.)

A Sub-License Agreement between the Licensee and each Intermediate User will be required. A template for the Sub-License Agreement is available at www.almisdb.org. (See Section 3, page 7 of the License Agreement.)

The Licensee is responsible for distributing the no-cost CD-ROMs to users as appropriate under the Master Contract and License.

We suggest that Licensees work closely with users, especially intermediate users, to make sure they understand the requirements of the Master Contract and State License. The ALMIS Employer Database is proprietary information licensed only for the specified uses and users. Misuse could result in termination of the License Agreement. Procedures for arbitration of alleged

(Continued on page 4)

DBA in the Spotlight

Ben Garcia

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How long have you been involved in the world of LMI?

I just passed the 20-year mark in Colorado LMI. For most of those years I was an economist working primarily in non-BLS programs like state and local planning and One-Stop LMI. I also did CES estimates for a few years.

How long have you been an ALMIS DBA?

I took over the ALMIS DBA job about 4 years ago, when LMI management appointed me



to a new position called "Web and Database Administrator."

What is your educational background?

I have a B.S. in Economics from Colorado State University, and an M.A. in Economics from the University of Notre Dame.

Are you originally from Colorado?

Yes, I'm a native of Denver.

What are your interests outside of work?

I teach a web-based macroeconomics class for the Colorado Community Colleges (but I guess that's still "work"). I go to all of the Denver Broncos football games, and about half of the Colorado Avalanche hockey games. I like to read books, magazines, and newspapers. I love camping and hiking, and cross-country skiing in the winter. And I make beer at home, although not as often as I used to.

What is your favorite work-related web site? Why?

I use the BLS web site a lot. It's much improved in the past few years.

What is the strangest job you ever held?

I had several strange factory jobs before and during college. I spent two summers as a general maintenance worker at a large aerospace factory. I worked with several other guys that were about my age, and as much as we needed it, supervision was scarce. We were given many strange tasks, but the one I remember most involved a large forklift, a 1,500-pound roll of solid steel and 55-gallon barrels. I won't say any more for fear of opening an EPA and/or OSHA investigation!

What is the most rewarding aspect of your current job?

The most rewarding aspect of my current job is that the web sites that I helped build are disseminating good, useful information to thousands of people. Since I have

been in LMI for so long, I'm able to see how far we have come in terms of quantity and quality of products, and in the sophistication of product delivery.

What is the most challenging aspect of your current job?

Colorado LMI has three distinct web sites, each fulfilling different needs. Two of those sites run against a database that was originally based on ALMIS, but has now evolved into a hybrid database that is actually larger than ALMIS. So the most challenging aspect of my job is staying on top all three web sites, while at the same time keeping the ALMIS database reasonably up to date!

What is the most interesting or awe-inspiring place you've been?

My wife and I went for a hike in the Kauai Rain Forest on the Hawaiian island of Kauai, and the diversity of plant life was amazing. But for sheer inspiration, I've never been able to beat sitting on an isolated rock formation somewhere in the Colorado Rocky Mountains, especially when the wind is howling through the trees.

(Employer Database - Continued from page 3)

breaches are provided for in Section 7 of the License Agreement.

Licensees may engage contractors to support the uses and users of the ALMIS Employer Database. *infoUSA* has pre-approved four contractors:

- ◆ Geographic Solutions, Inc.
- ◆ National Systems and Research Co.
- ◆ Employment Security Commission of North Carolina
- ◆ Xpand Corporation.

All other contractor access to the detailed ALMIS Employer Database is subject to prior approval by *infoUSA*. (See

Section 15.9.2 of the Master Contract.)

The ALMIS Employer Database is managed by Iowa Workforce Development on behalf of the ALMIS Resource Center (ARC) and the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) of the U.S. Department of Labor.

Project Manager:

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employer.database@iwd.state.ia.us

More information can also be found at www.almisdb.org

ARC Meeting Highlights

The ALMIS Resource Center met in Tampa, Florida on April 13 – 15, 2004.

Members gave updates on various consortia, policy councils, workgroups, Workforce Information Council, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), and the Employment and Training Administration (ETA).

The **Structure Subcommittee** reported on several issues they had been working on:

- ◆ Revising the ALMIS Database to accommodate the new structure of the Employer Database
- ◆ Discussed the procedure for making corrections to Employer Database data as the need arose
- ◆ The next version of the ALMIS Database (Version 2.3) would include: a new EMPDB table, a new industry summation table, and contain counts of worksites by industry for more rapid access, addition of SOCXCIP, changes to Licensing tables, minor changes to Programs tables (e.g. field names), deletion of the military occupation to DOT crosswalk and addition of military occupation to SOC crosswalk, addition of LAYTITLE table, addition within the CES table of a series break field, addition of the new metropolitan areas and micropolitan areas and other areas from Census data to areatype tables field values, and other field length changes and value additions from over the past year.

Several items were identified as items for future consideration, discussion and review and are beyond the scope of the next release:

- ◆ Creation of a nonstandard table for data from the Job Vacancy Survey and perhaps the Benefits Consortium for states to use if they chose to and to eventually work toward standardization should states move into a production mode on those.
- ◆ Discussion regarding merging the Short Term and Long Term Projections tables into one table.
- ◆ Discussion about incorporating skills data
- ◆ Regarding MLS data, there was discussion about having it contain summary level data as it currently only allows for individual records from the MLS system.

Florida had drafted a table structure for LED data and the Subcommittee will be reviewing as soon as is possible.

The **Employer Database** contract with *infoUSA* has been signed. The contract is for three years with options for two one-year extensions. The notice and electronic copies of the Master Contract and State License Agreement were sent to LMI Directors on April 1, 2004. In April 2004, three CD-ROMS in the previous format will be distributed to all states. States that had purchased the additional CD-ROMS will receive those at no charge. In order to receive any products after the April delivery, each state and territory will have to execute the state license with *infoUSA*. In July 2004, the states will get an uncompressed database (flat file) with new elements for testing purposes and a copy of the CD-ROM. In October 2004, states will receive the uncompressed database, a minimum of three CD-ROMS and an unlimited number of free CD-ROMS as requested by the state.

Individuals from the Employer Database Steering Committee will be working with the Education and Communication Subcommittee to ensure that all necessary information is communicated to states. The group is in the process of developing several documents, including: a statement of users and uses, summary of differences between the Maine agreement with *infoUSA* and the Iowa agreement with *infoUSA*, sub-license agreement to potentially be used between Licensees and intermediate users (One-Stops), and a timeline.

The **Policy and Procedures Subcommittee** has been concentrating primarily on the Employer Database contract. Other issues they addressed included formulating an appropriate work plan for the next year, identification of any new core elements or any existing core elements that should be removed from the list of core elements, and discussion of future funding for the ARC and NCSC.

The **National Crosswalk Service Center (NCSC)** updated the group on their work activities since the last meeting. NCSC has completed the development of the initial files containing data from the Census EEO file. More resources added to the NCSC site include O*NET 5.1 database (available in ALMIS Database Visual FoxPro format), Common Occupational Titles (aka Laytitles), National Employment Projections available in ALMIS Database format. Work on pending items with the Department of Defense has resumed and the result was a simplified crosswalk and counts of separations. NCSC is testing new methods and processes to notify ALMIS DBAs of updates, new products and new services. The NCSC has also spent a significant amount of time working on the ARC web site and work for the CareerOneStop Consortium.

...ARC Meeting Highlights, continued

(Continued from page 5)

A new system was demonstrated that would allow ARC to log all questions and answers received with receipt date, status of the question, and other relevant information. The question would also post in Q&A format on the ARC web site with only that component of the system open to ALMIS DBAs at this time.

The **Education and Communication Subcommittee** gave the group a brief overview of post-Seminar activities. Transcription work is continuing with the filmed portions of the Seminar and filmed interviews of presenters and some attendees. Will be putting together a mini-business CD-ROM that will include a link to the ARC web site. The South Carolina media team is working on packaging the video for any potential use we may need including training videos. Many presentations and materials from the Seminar were made available on the ARC web site immediately following the Seminar.

A sample of a new ARC Annual Progress Report was shared with the group. There will be a limited paper distribution and it will be made available on the ARC web site. ARC will be creating a separate "fact sheet" or briefing flyer that will have a similar design.

A survey of DBAs was completed in February 2004 to gather information about their applications, environments, software, training needs and other issues. The survey results were presented to the group. The results will also be shared with respondents. There was a significant amount of information gathered that will be useful for ARC's work activities over the next year.

An overview and handout of the ARC web site was presented. There is consideration being given to doing a text version of the web site. The site will be one year old in September and the plan is to revisit the site content/design this fall. Another web site issue being discussed is the archiving process.

Last year, ARC proposed having a bimonthly newsletter and the subscription list has grown. However, there have been timeframes where due to content and other issues it was not possible to adhere to the bimonthly schedule. Therefore, will be doing a Spring Issue for the months of January through April 2004. The newsletter schedule will be adjusted to a quarterly release versus bimonthly. The first session on the last day of the next meeting will be set aside for planning content for the subsequent newsletter.

There will be a three-day ALMIS Database training the week of June 14, 2004 in Raleigh, North Carolina. The class will be based on the existing curriculum for the Applied/Advanced ALMIS Database training and will be adjusted as necessary to incorporate new issues and information. Have also begun discussions on the next ARC Seminar for April 2005. Will be investigating potential sites but will not be making any financial commitments at this time. The content of the Seminar would build on last year's topics and schedule.

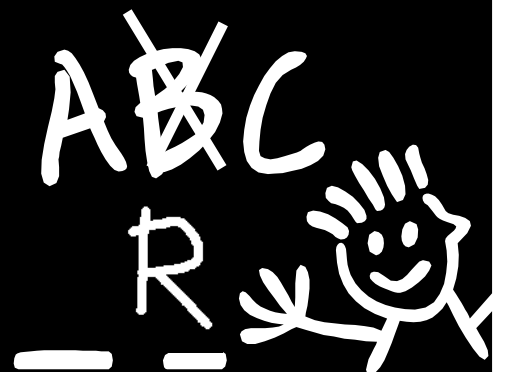
The next ARC meeting is tentatively scheduled for either Montana or Connecticut the first week of August 2004.

ALMIS Database Training

June 15-17, 2004, Raleigh, North Carolina

This class is now **full** but nominations for a waiting list if cancellations and for a future class are still being accepted.

To be added to the waiting list, please fill out the nomination form at <http://www.almisdb.org/Pdf/04282004NominationForm.pdf>



Ask the ALMIS Database Expert

Q.
How are the OCCDIR and INDDIR tables created?

A.
The OCCDIR and INDDIR tables are created by the Utah Micromatrix system. They are automatically produced when the ALMIS outputs are requested.

Q.
Is Geocoding part of the Employer Database?

A.
In the new ALMIS Employer Database flat file, which will be distributed in July 2004 in the new format under the Iowa Master Contract, there is one Latitude and one Longitude field (replacing lat1, lat2, lat3, and long1, long2, long3). The Latitude and Longitude will apply to the physical location of the employing unit. Check the Geocode field to gauge the precision of the latitude and longitude coordinates. (0=address, 2=zip+2 centroid, 4=zip+4 centroid, X=zipcode centroid, Y=?????).

Q.
Is there any standardized way to populate the PERIODID table?

A.
The ALMIS Resource Center has not designated standardized values for periodid. One simple identifier would be to use the two digits for the out-year. For example, for the 2000-2010 cycle, use '10' for periodid. This system would work for the next 90 years, which is beyond the careers of most analysts and database administrators.

Q.
I've noticed that for the past couple of months, the NCSC has uploaded two different national CES tables. What's the difference, and which should I use?

A.
The NCSC has reformatted national CES data for use in the ALMIS Database monthly since January 2001. BLS is working with the ALMIS Resource Center to produce files from their various statistical series for direct import into the ALMIS Database. This frequently involves making changes to computer systems states use for producing estimates, but in this case, it involves the direct production of a national file. The first CES file uploaded by the NCSC each month is one developed from data downloaded from the BLS web site on the day the national employment situation news release and related data are released. The file contains estimates for a limited number of industries (146 in the February 2004 file). The second file, which is usually uploaded later in the month, contains estimates for over 1,000 series. Both files use industry codes that are based on the NAICS. The file you choose to use should be based on your needs. For example, you may decide to use the less detailed file in your LMI delivery system, since it may closely match the level of detail found in your state's estimates. And, you could use the more detailed file in your own research. The NCSC intends to continue making both versions available so that you can choose whichever version best meets your needs.

Q: *We're nearing completion in developing a couple of new Internet delivery systems that use the ALMIS Database. How do I get these applications added to the ARC web site (www.almisdb.org/8links.cfm)? Are we limited to having only one application there?*

A.
To suggest these or other changes to the web site, send an e-mail message to the ALMIS Resource Center. Content of the web site is managed by the ARC's Education and Communication Committee and updated on a regular basis. You can also use the "feedback" link found in the footer of all of the pages on the ARC web site. Also, you are not limited to having only one application listed on the ARC web site. We want 'em all!

If you have a question(s) you would like to see addressed here, please submit at www.almisdb.org/level2/9-3submitFAQ.cfm

Project Management Tips

Where did I put that file? Oops! I forgot to load the new LAUS data! Who wants what, when??? And the server just went down?!

Sound familiar to you? The ALMIS Database is a good thing but management of it can be - shall we say - a nightmare! Read on to see how one DBA tries to keep it all together.

It helps when you can set up a timetable and check off the data items as they are received. I keep mine on my desktop making it easy to access.

Using an Excel spreadsheet, (see Example 1) I am able to keep a running check on the data and who is supposed to give it to me. I keep my computer calendar set to pop-up five days before the

data is due so I can start checking on the status in case a publishing date has been changed.

The checks and balances process keeps me out of hot water and helps me to stay on top of new data coming my way so I can follow up as needed and organize my time better.

With this system I have been able to keep from getting bogged down with too much hitting me at one time. On the plus side, I can tell folks when I should have items updated; especially helpful when the Governor calls requesting when data will be available.

*– Elizabeth Vereen,
South Carolina Employment
Security Commission*

Example 1. File Management Tracking in an Excel Spreadsheet

File Management January 1, 2004 - December 31, 2004						
ALMIS Table	From Unit/ Whom	Approx. Date Expected	Updated How Often	Version	Date Received	Date Completed
CES	CES-Jamie Williams	2nd Week of Month	Monthly	2.2	3/16/04	3/18/04
EMPDB	infoUSA CD-ROM	June 2004	Semi- Annually	--	--	--
Etc.						

ARC ALMIS
Resource
Center

news

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If you have any questions regarding **ARC news** or would like to contribute information, please contact Marilyn Skalberg (503) 623-2504 or Email mskalberg@yahoo.com.

The ALMIS Database is a normalized, relational database structure developed for the storage and maintenance of labor market, economic, demographic and occupational information. The ALMIS Resource Center is responsible for the ALMIS Database structure development, update, and maintenance. Members include North Carolina (lead), Connecticut, Georgia, Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Carolina, Oregon, South Carolina, Wisconsin, and ETA, along with support from the National Crosswalk Service Center and the LMI Institute.