

## **Addenda to LWIA 40 and 41 Regional Workforce Investment Plan**

**Based on LTEGL 23-09 identifying guidelines received from the Louisiana Workforce Commission, Office of Workforce Development, customer service delivery performance goals are to be negotiated based on criteria established for individuals receiving assistance with barriers to employment and individuals more at-risk of not connecting to the labor market, including, but not limited to, those who were formerly incarcerated, the homeless, Veterans, individuals with disabilities and out-of school youth.**

### **Labor Market Information/Significant change in the local economy**

The Louisiana economy and labor market, including Region IV, experienced a “significant change” on April 20, 2010. As the worst national manmade natural disaster unfolded in the Gulf of Mexico, the potential impacts are yet to be fully determined and several economic impact studies and surveys are currently underway.

While that event certainly impacted the economy and labor market, the determination of the high growth and in demand occupations for the region has not significantly changed. The exception is the expected impacts of the *Deepwater Horizon* Oil Spill Clean Up effort, necessitating the addition of specific emphasis to several occupations relating to Hazardous Waste Remediation with certification requirements.

Louisiana provides 20% or more of the total revenue from fishing and oil and gas operations in the United States. Due to the oil spill and the moratorium on drilling operations, these industries and other oilfield support industries have been negatively impacted. The oil spill and resulting moratorium has also negatively impacted other industries and occupations such as tourism, lodging, marinas and retail sales.

The ability of the local Workforce Investment Areas to address the needs of both employers and jobseekers will be an ongoing activity for the foreseeable future. The regional projections for Hazardous Materials Removal Workers was for 1,040 with an expectation of twenty (20) additional workers needed or a total of 1,060, based on the 2016 estimates. The change in need was recognized in multiple job vacancies for over 1,000 workers posted as the result of the tragedy in the Gulf of Mexico. To date, applications totaling over that number have been taken in the region at Business and Career Solutions Centers for oil spill related clean up operations.

Mining occupations, which include the oil and gas industry, are expected to experience shifts in the near future based on the experienced impacts of the *Deepwater Horizon* tragedy. While

analysis is ongoing and the diversification in this labor market area has sought to minimize impacts, the expectations of layoffs, rehiring and retraining needs abound. Currently, new offshore deepwater drilling is under moratorium and shifts in related production workforce needs are being experienced. Workforce is arriving from all areas of the United States with unrealistic expectations caused by media coverage of being placed in training and subsequent employment. Upon their arrival, many are visiting the Business and Career Solutions Centers for any opportunities that may be available. The out-of-state license plates are again highly visible in this regional area. The expectation is that additional dislocated workers and Trade Act Assistance (TAA) volumes will increase.

While the nation and this region will continue to pursue “green” jobs and sustainable, renewable energy opportunities, until those options are more fully explored demand will continue to exist for mining occupations in this region. Response to outreach activities for sustainable, renewal energy alternatives have received limited interest in the regional economy.

Manufacturing job outlooks provide a somewhat more optimistic view regionally and in Louisiana, experiencing only slight decrease, by 2.3%, a much lower percentage than neighboring states and the need for the development in these occupations continues to exist. *Projections from the Louisiana Workforce Commission for the Acadiana Region show a slight increase of two (2) percent.*

Healthcare and social assistance occupations continue to be in demand; however, much emphasis has been placed on this need and the demand is somewhat diminishing but remains viable. Seasonal impacts are being experienced and are somewhat predictable.

Accommodation and Food Service occupations are expected to remain unchanged; *however, regional approval forecasting recommendations reflect projections of increased need.* Retail and Wholesale Trade has demonstrated consistency, as well. Updates to projections have been regionally submitted and await approval by the Louisiana Workforce Investment Council and Occupational Forecasting Conference, and Louisiana Workforce Commission.

In the course of a year, the Lafayette MSA has experienced a decrease of 1,900 non-farm employment jobs. The highest loss in jobs was experienced in the goods produced area with over 1,100 jobs lost. Unemployment numbers remain consistently lower than the national average, higher regionally in the more rural parishes.

The “ripple effect” of a lengthy deepwater drilling moratorium will threaten all economic stability for this region, despite best efforts for diversification. As the area is especially prone also to the impacts of natural disasters, such as hurricanes, the resiliency of the economy and the people who work and live in the region will be tested. The marine industry which services

the deepwater oil rigs off the coast of Louisiana will also experience severe impacts and thousands of people potentially could be laid off.

### **Changes in the Workforce Investment Board Structure, if any**

The structure of Workforce Investment Boards 40 and 41 has not significantly changed. The retirement of Christopher “Chris” Stephen Dunbar after thirty-six (36) years of service has led to the promotion and appointment of Brenda Hubbard. *Brenda Hubbard has twenty-nine (29) years of workforce development experience and will serve as Administrator.*

The leadership of Workforce Investment Board 41 has remained constant, with Glenn A. Dugas serving as Workforce Executive Administrator.

Both LWIB 40 and LWIB 41 were recipients of recertification in 2009 by the Louisiana Workforce Commission. LWIB 40 is comprised of thirty-three (33) members. LWIB 41 is comprised of thirty-two (32) members.

### **Changes in the “Delivery of Services”, if any**

Both WIAs in Region IV have experienced increased volume in the numbers of jobseekers arriving at the Business and Career Solutions Centers due to the advertisement in the media of oil spill remediation activities. Limitations in funding have led to creative delivery of services for training. Non-WIA training resources are being leveraged, with cap limits being further reduced regionally. On the Job Training and Individual Training Accounts have been reduced. Supportive services are not available through WIA. Community Action Agencies have limitations in LWIA 41 and are working collaboratively with LWIA 40.

The Strategies to Empower People (STEP) program has received a three (3) month extension for funding in LWIA 41. The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) allocated funding to each LWIA for STEP. LWIA #40 has two (2) STEP facilitators and only has funding to operate the program to August 30, 2010. Information was provided to LWC that termination of the program would occur at that time and staff would be returned to the Business and Career Solutions Center. Subsequently, LWIA 40 was contacted by LWC and assured that additional funding would be received to fund the program through the end of September, 2010.

Currently, Unemployment Insurance is being addressed regionally with a representative housed in the Lafayette Business and Career Solutions Center, by an eleven (11) month appointment. Additional Unemployment Insurance assistance is being provided to participants in St. Landry Parish and St. Mary Parishes. The addition of the Re-employment Specialists (RES) staff has added the ability to provide more targeted services to the increasing volumes of unemployed

receiving services at the Business and Career Solutions Centers, including the creation of workshops. Each region has six (6) RES workers that are temporary staff funded through September 30, 2010. A flowchart of the operations of RES staff is attached. (Attachment 1)

The expectation of additional dislocated workers being identified in the region and the anticipation of the need for rapid response services and expeditious services to these participants is being developed. Consideration is being given for short term training projects.

Both Workforce Investment Areas 40 and 41 have provided additional services to participants through referrals from the Department of Social Services in the Connections to Work Pilot Program. This pilot was undertaken to do a better job of connecting the most job ready participants from the Department of Social Services, some receiving public assistance, to the workforce. The intention is to move participants toward self-sufficiency with training and guidance. The participating agencies that have been engaged in the pilot, with referrals continuing to arrive and intensive tracking of enrolled clients have assisted participants in finding jobs. The pilot, after receiving excellent results in the Lafayette area, expanded regionally.

Through the dedication of time and efforts of staff, enhanced relationships have been developed. Special attention has been given to serve these referred clients. Both regions face funding reductions and financial obligations. The pilot program has required additional resources which required and will continue to require funding. LWIAs #40 and #41 intend to work with other partnering agencies to increase the delivery of services and will be scheduling meetings with Community Action Agencies and the Technical College system. LWIA #41 will continue to provide services that were developed and streamlined during the pilot program with continued meetings of the partners under development, subject to funding.

### **Description of the Relationship between the LWIAs in the Region**

LWIA 40 and 41 staff continue to work together to address the needs of employers and jobseekers throughout the region. The effective working relationship is due to the direction of the leadership in both the Workforce Investment Boards and at the Business and Career Solutions Centers in implementation of the vision and policies created by the WIBs for the region.

In addition to the Connections to Work Pilot Program, the working relationship between the LWIAs in the region has been enhanced by the activities of the Bringing Regional Initiatives in Greater Acadiana (BRING) Committee, which was formed after the Louisiana Workforce Commission Summit, held in October, 2008, with continued monthly meetings. Subcommittees

have been established and meeting to resolve workforce development issues identified within the region. Meetings of the BRING Committee are rotated throughout the region.

Apprenticeship Advocacy and Faith Based and Community Based subcommittees are the most recently established. The Louisiana Virtual One Stop (LAVOS) subcommittee and Employer Market Penetration subcommittee have merged realizing their shared goals. Worker Re-entry Support subcommittee participation has led to job fairs with legislated targeted populations in two parishes. Anticipation is that grant applications will be submitted and the creation of a regional five (5) year strategic coalition plan is ongoing. The Resource Mapping subcommittee continues to post and update resources to the database, with the addition of a subcommittee calendar to enhance communication. The Education and Student Referral subcommittee continues to explore creative ways of engaging business representatives with educational resources. This group has experienced a resurgence of activities and interest centered in the Biz2Work program, in conjunction with the Department of Education. The focus of the Workforce Development subcommittee has been shifted based on the increasing volumes of unemployed being experienced in the region.

Additional regional participation has been enhanced through the coordination of activities through the Exploring Careers in Healthcare Occupations (ECHO) program. The ECHO program has been nationally recognized and the recent focus of the United States Department of Labor as a model “best practice” program. Based on funding constraints, the program will have a dramatic reduction in the number of participants for 2010. The expectation is for twenty (20) regional participants, ten (10) in each region. Through the National EMS Academy, Emergency Medical Staff trainees are being recruited, assessed and referred for training.

SEEDCO Consultants are being utilized to revise delivery of services. The increased quantities of participants have required the ability to provide services effectively and efficiently with reduced state staffing or limitation of duration of appointment. Performance standards are currently under renegotiation. Both LWIA 41 and LWIA 40 are combining activities for the best services to clients and businesses. The purchasing and sharing of equipment and staff expertise has proven beneficial and cost effective.

### **Description/Implementation of Regional Policies**

Implementation of the regional policies are continuing with the exploration of opportunities for collaboration and leveraging of dollars for training and services. The integration and identification of needs through the BRING committee have increased and continue to be an ongoing focus within the region. Efforts to work through the Region IV Coordination Committee, with members from both Workforce Investment Areas, have been revisited. The

Connections to Work pilot program has also identified and streamlined operations within the region, with further realignment expected. Interactive training is being explored regionally for both staff and Workforce Investment Board staff. Regional participation in webinars and conference calls has further enhanced relationships within the region. Services are being provided to both jobseekers and businesses regardless of address.

Most recently, the two regions have participated in a Community Based Job Training Grant application for training in healthcare occupations. The two regions will work to identify, recruit and train through the Southwest Louisiana Area Health Education Center for the unemployed, re-employed and displaced workers in the region. These activities have further enhanced the implementation of regional policies for training and identification of participants.

The Intermodal Transportation Grant which was awarded through the Acadiana Technical College system within the region will also require the service delivery system to be fully integrated for referrals. The anticipated date of commencement is to be in July, 2010.

Apprenticeship activities are being explored regionally with both the Electrical Apprenticeship which is an approved registered apprenticeship and the Plumbers and Pipefitters Apprenticeship which has an anticipated implementation date of September, 2010.

### **Review/Modification of Priority of Service to Veterans based on TEGL 10-09**

Priority of services to Veterans has existed and is being ensured. Protocols exist and are being followed by Veterans Program staff within the region, including staff in Lafayette, Iberia and St. Landry Parishes. Staff team members in Membership are assisting in the identification and with advertisement at the point of entry to give Veterans and their eligible spouses full access, including technology-assisted activities, to all available services and training. Based on direction provided with recent special statewide training conducted by the Louisiana Workforce Commission, Veterans are being made aware of their entitlement to priority of service and access to the full array of employment, training and placement activities with established eligibility requirements.

Based on information provided by the Louisiana Workforce Commission, Business and Career Solutions Centers in LWIA #40 have served 1,029 Veterans as well as 142 Veterans identified as dislocated workers. The single Business and Career Solutions Center located in LWIA #41 has served an average of thirty (30) Veterans per week.

Recent retirement of the Veteran's representative in St. Landry Parish has required the replacement and expectations are that the position will be filled. A copy of the drafted local policies for ensuring priority of services is attached. (Attachment 2)

## **Special targeted populations the region served this program year**

Targeted populations in the region which will be included for specialized service attention will include, in addition to those Veterans previously discussed and the disabled, participants identified as meeting income eligibility, re-entry jobseekers experiencing multiple barriers to employment, youth considered at risk, and other populations of identified dislocated or unemployed workers and those identified with language barriers to employment.

### **Additional Language:**

#### **A. Regional Vision and Priorities/Economic and Labor Market Context**

- 1. Provide a detailed analysis of the regional/local economy, the labor pool and the labor market context.**

**While the economic downturn has had a limited impact on the regional/local economy with the primary and most notable consequence of volumes being seen at the Business and Career Solutions Centers, the impact has led to the doubling of the unemployment numbers. Numbers of participants receiving services have doubled while staffing levels have been reduced or classified for limited appointments.**

**Based on the impacts being experienced from the *DeepWater Horizon* oil spill tragedy, National Emergency Grant assistance is anticipated for workers of the oil and gas, fisheries and tourism industries. Businesses in these industries will experience loss of revenues along with employee reductions. Both regions Business and Career Solutions Centers are assisting jobseekers in obtaining training opportunities along with jobs related to cleanup activities.**

**Updated Unemployment Insurance numbers are reviewed, based on initial claims and weeks claimed. Information that was provided with the 2009-2010 plans has not substantially changed as reported with a doubling of volumes noted. Unemployment numbers have remained consistent for the region and have further census and demographic information is expected.**

**The most recent unemployment statistics for the week ending April 17, 2010, reflect:**

<b><u>Regional Labor Market Area (RLMA)/Parish</u></b>	<b><u>Initial Claims</u></b>	<b><u>Weeks Claimed</u></b>
<b>RLMA 4</b>	<b>477</b>	<b>7,146</b>
Acadia	34	508

Evangeline	25	321
Iberia	56	973
Lafayette	151	2,111
St. Landry	73	1,172
St. Martin	41	538
St. Mary	59	913
Vermilion	38	610

**These numbers are being provided for point of reference, based by parish, for reference purposes. Additional updated demographic information is provided by attachment, by parish. (Attachment 3)**

**2. What are the Regional economic development goals for attracting, retaining and growing business and industry in your region?**

**The continued mission statement of the region is to constantly increase our efficiency and effectiveness in an effort to become more demand driven and add value to our products and processes. Partnerships with various economic development organizations continue to be fostered and created.**

**I-Acadia economic development group is no longer in existence. The Acadiana Economic Development Council, Inc., (AEDC), is a non-profit 501c(3) organization founded by local economic developers. This group represents economic development organizations located across the region in Acadia, Evangeline, Iberia, Lafayette, St. Landry, St. Martin and Vermilion Parishes. Their creation of the [www.TeamAcadiana.org](http://www.TeamAcadiana.org) website and the Come Grow with Us! DVD presentation has enhanced outreach and promotion for attracting, retaining and growing business and industry.**

**The Enterprise Consortium of the Gulf Coast (ECGC) is a 501C(3) subsidiary of the Evangeline Economic Development District – Region Four of Louisiana. ECGC/ARDD provides entrepreneur development training and technical assistance to all Southwest Louisiana businesses. Additionally, ECGC Women’s Business Center provides training and technical assistance to women in business or women wanting to start a business. The Evangeline Economic Development District also offers programs that provide loans to small businesses.**

**Most recently, the Louisiana Business Emergency Operations Center (LA BEOC) has been created and will facilitate communication with the state’s major economic driver industries, as well as owners and operators of critical infrastructures and key resources to enhance emergency management efforts. An informational webinar occurred on June 21, 2010, to provide insight on the processes of the organization.**

Activities of the Business Service Representatives continue to be developed with outreach to employers. It has been requested that LWIA 40 have a Business Service Representative assigned for activities across that region in the near future.

4. What is the LWIBs' vision for ensuring a continuum of education and training opportunities that support a skilled workforce?

Workforce Investment Board and Business and Career Solutions Center staff participate in local area Chamber of Commerce meetings and share information. Staff members participate in local economic development organizations, as well, to best serve the needs of local workforce stakeholders. Representative members on both Workforce Investment Boards are included from Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development.

Across the region, WIB staff members have worked with local Community Action Agencies to provide opportunities and leverage resources, based on funding, to assist and provide additional programs including Career Ready 101 and Summer Employment Programs. The programs have adopted various assessment tools, as well as providing basic skills and GED referrals to training.

In LWIAs 40 and 41, staff have provided outreach and worked with local drug court programs by providing information on greater employment opportunities and access to equipment, including computers and software applications to assist participants in LWIA 40.

The potential of regional incentive opportunities continues to encourage the further development of these activities.

5. What is the LWIBs' vision for bringing together the key workforce development players in the region, including business and industry, economic development, education and the workforce system to continuously identify the workforce challenges facing the region and to develop innovative strategies and solutions that effectively leverage resources to address those challenges?

LWIA 40 holds quarterly WIB meetings and monthly Executive Committee meetings. LWIA 41 holds quarterly WIB meetings, with their Executive Committee meetings held as necessary. Joint meetings between the two WIA areas have occurred. Representation on each of the respective boards reflects the key workforce development players in the region. Bringing Regional Initiatives in Greater Acadiana (BRING) meetings continue to occur and engage the primary stakeholders as well. Regionally organized job fairs have been held in conjunction with the BRING Workforce Re-entry Support Subcommittee.

LWIAs 40 and 41 have strong working relationships with the local technical colleges and have explored the possibility of incoming Freshman Orientation projects and potential job readiness training throughout the region. The LWIAs have worked with Community Action Agencies in offering summer training programs. Partners and potential partners are engaged throughout the region. Joint meetings between the two areas have occurred.

The Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) pilot program with the Department of Transportation and Development was not approved by members of the Lafayette Workforce Investment Board. The pilot program with Department of Social Services known as Connections to Work has completed the initial phase and was expanded regionally. There is further expectation of delivery and reporting on these activities. The EMPLOY initiative pilot identified one participant and the program was not continued in LWIA 40.

The Business and Career Solutions Centers are a cornerstone in workforce development activities. The Centers provide integration of services and work to coordinate services with community resources and partners. Funding from partners is extremely limited and activities are currently funded for the Business and Career Solutions Centers heavily from the Louisiana Workforce Commission through Wagner-Peyser and Workforce Investment Act funding.

6. What is the LWIBs' vision for ensuring that every youth has the opportunity to develop and achieve career goals through education and workforce training, including youth most in need, such as out of school youth, homeless youth, youth in foster care, youth aging out of foster care, youth offenders, children of incarcerated parents, migrant and seasonal farm worker youth and other youth at risk?

Based on needs of youth in the regional area and the funding restraints being experienced, outreach is being pursued in the concept of a Neighborhood Place being established in conjunction with the Lafayette Parish School Board with expectation of services commencing in July, 2010. Through the Homeless Students program, additional participants are being identified for referral to services and potential employment opportunities.

Community Action Agency (CAA) partners have been approached by LWIAs 40 and 41 to operate additional Summer Youth Programs to provide work experience and employment opportunities. Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) have been developed with various CAAs to better serve employers and jobseekers. Both LWIAs are currently exploring all options for future training opportunities with the CAAs across the region. Both areas anticipate working with the Technical College campuses to provide job readiness training and Freshmen Orientation classes or presentations to their students.

Difficulties in identifying children of incarcerated parents have provided a challenge to outreach activities. Further development of these activities is expected.

Teach for America continues to be a positive organizational approach for improvement to education for South Louisiana.

**B. Business and Career Solutions Centers/Service Delivery Strategies, Support for Training**

*1. Describe the LWIA's comprehensive vision of an integrated service delivery system, including the role each Louisiana Workforce Commission program incorporated in the Unified Plan in the delivery of services through the system.*

The Louisiana Technical College campuses have changed their branding to Acadiana Technical College. Based on funding cuts which have impacted staffing, revisions to training programs are underway. Call Center training is currently in their last offering. Surveyor training is being revisited and modified, with offerings being carefully reviewed. Heavy equipment operation training has experienced great demand and continues to be made available.

Based on the funding issues being experienced, provision of job readiness training through Goodwill Industries of Acadiana is being reviewed. Summer Youth program funding reductions have also led to further considerations about the ability to provide services. Leveraging of services through the Community Action Agencies continue to be hampered in some areas, based on funding and obligations, while in other areas assistance is being obtained.

Summer Workforce Education and Training (SWEAT) was not able to be offered during 2010 based on lack of funds. The potential for Keeping Youth Trained and Educated (KYTE) program funding is in jeopardy. Private foundation and non-profit funding opportunities are being pursued to enable the program to exist in the future.

Oversight of the integrated Business and Career Solutions' delivery system is being addressed through careful review by SEEDCO. Processes are being reviewed and the certification of the Business and Career Solutions Centers is expected. Jobseekers continue to be greeted by Membership staff and are offered a warm, supportive atmosphere to explore their immediate needs and further career development and advancement needs. The region has the distinction of having enrolled one of the highest volumes of participants in the State of Louisiana with mostly word-of-mouth advertising. The advertisements of the Louisiana Workforce Commission have also provided information on the availability of services which has further directed jobseekers and businesses to the Business and Career Solutions Centers.

2. Describe the actions each LWIA has taken to ensure an integrated Business and Career Solutions Center service delivery system.

Business and Career Solutions Center staff and WIB staff are regionally participating in Louisiana Workforce Commission conference calls daily since the *Deepwater Horizon* Oil Spill occurred on April 20, 2010. Additionally, training webinars and conference calls have been attended jointly with instruction on the usage of the Louisiana Virtual One Stop (LAVOS) system.

The two regions have participated in a Community Based Job Training Grant application for training in healthcare occupations. The two regions will work jointly to identify, recruit and train through the Southwest Louisiana Area Health Education Center for the unemployed, re-employed and displaced workers in the region to work regionally for the implementation of this grant. Standard enrollment and assessment criteria have enabled the consideration of this grant application to be undertaken.

The Intermodal Transportation Grant which was awarded through the Acadiana Technical College system within the region will also require the service delivery system to be fully integrated for referrals to occur expeditiously for the benefit of jobseekers and employers.

Both LWIAs within the Region 4 area have experienced funding issues which have led to reduced ability to provide Summer Youth Programs. By participating regionally, additional cost savings were realized; however, enrollment numbers are greatly reduced. Youth services continue to be provided.

Transportation issues continue to be a concern posing challenges within the region, particularly in the more rural parishes. The ability for participants to commute to training and work opportunities is a large factor in their ability to succeed. Youth are particularly impacted by this barrier. The region will continue to explore the ability to fully utilize leveraged resources to address this identified challenge and provide a level of supportive services to ensure participation abilities across the region. Co-location of technical training campus services in proximity to Business and Career Solutions Centers has been implemented in Vermilion Parish. These activities have led to cost savings which allowed the Vermilion Parish Business and Career Solutions Center to remain open.

2. WIA Title I and Wagner-Peyser Act Economic and Labor Market Analysis. As a foundation for this strategic plan and to inform the strategic investments and strategies that flow from this Plan, Region IV will provide a detailed analysis of the regional economy, the labor pool, and the labor market context.

a. What is the current makeup of the regional economic base by industry?

<u>Industry</u>	<u>Employment Estimates</u>
Agriculture, Aquaculture and Natural Resources (Including Oil and Gas)	22,689
Architecture & Construction	18,341
Business, Management & Administration	13,879
Education and Training	19,568
Finance and Insurance	6,701
Government and Public Administration	9,137
Health Science	38,658
Hospitality & Tourism	25,448
Human Services	6,238
Information	3,973
Law, Public Safety & Security	7,351
Manufacturing	22,765
Marketing, Sales & Service	44,289
Scientific Research/Engineering	10,318
Transportation, Distribution and Logistics	9,961

\*Louisiana Workforce Commission, Office of Occupational Information Services

*d. What jobs/occupations are most critical to the region's economy?*

**Registered Nurses and Related Healthcare and Social Assistance Personnel**

**Retail and Service Industry Workers**

**Computerized and Standard Welder/Fitters and Equipment Operators**

**Transportation and Material Handlers (Including Hazardous Waste Remediation)**

**Hospitality and Tourism Service Personnel**

Based on current conditions and in light of the *Deepwater Horizon* Oil Spill tragedy, expectations are for the “ripple effect” of a lengthy deepwater drilling moratorium to threaten all economic stability

for this region, despite best efforts for diversification. As the area is especially prone also to the impacts of natural disasters, such as hurricanes, the resiliency of the economy and the people who work and live in the region will be tested.

Important to note is the possible impact to the region of the *Deepwater Horizon* Oil Spill tragedy and to quote Gregg Gothreaux of the Lafayette Economic Development Authority (LEDA) from *The Independent*, June 11, 2010, who has been “analyzing the economic impact of the ban on this region and is sickened by what the numbers show could happen here in the next year:

- total economic loss of \$2.4 billion
- \$466.7 million loss in wages and income
- more than 7,700 jobs lost
- of the 7,756 jobs the Lafayette MSA stands to lose, 3,751 are direct jobs lost meaning 4,005 jobs are indirect and induced

Gothreaux says it’s important to note that as the recovery continues, it is likely that many individuals who lost jobs, specifically in the energy industry, may be able to gain new employment in the recovery efforts, “in other locales where the rigs will be deployed, and in other sectors of the economy, which will mitigate some of the negative impact on the labor force.”

It is vital that both regions continue to seek the maximum resources available to address the needs of the employers and jobseekers.

*i. Based on an analysis of the economy and the labor market, what workforce development issues have the LWIAs identified?*

- Need for expeditious services for those impacted by potential mass layoffs
- Prioritization of educational and training services for re-employment
- Targeted emphasis for re-entry or formerly incarcerated workers
- High proportion of families living in poverty
- Lower per capita incomes
- Low ranking regarding national health index
- Economy heavily based on low skilled, low wage jobs
- Low educational attainment of adult population
- High numbers of adults who have not completed high school or have less than a 9<sup>th</sup> grade education
- High dropout rates and low completers at colleges and universities
- Aging population and a high out migration of citizens
- High percentage of 16 year old individuals and older who are not in the workforce
- Additional financial resources and partner participation in the Business and Career Solutions Centers

Priority of services is provided and assured to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals.

#### **F. Youth Services**

Region IV will provide a wide array of coordinated services in an effective and timely fashion, based on available funding.

A regional initiative that took place in 2009-2010 and will again be undertaken with collaboration for work readiness skills training and healthcare exploration is Exploring Careers in Healthcare Occupations (ECHO). This program has been recognized by the United States Department of Labor as a model practice.

The potential exists for in-house undertaking of GED tutoring services to participants based on the inability to fund the Keeping Youth Trained and Educated (KYTE) program. Staff members are currently exploring this option as a possibility to continue to provide GED tutoring services.

#### **G. Veterans' Priority of Service**

Protocols exist and are being followed by Veterans' Program staff within the region, including staff in Lafayette, Iberia and by recent expectations for an appointment in St. Landry Parishes. Staff team members in Membership are assisting in the identification and with advertisement at the point of entry to give Veterans and eligible spouses full access, including technology-assisted activities, to all available services and training. Veterans' services will be coordinated by the Local Area Coordinators, in conjunction with Veterans' Program staff.

#### **H. Service Delivery to Targeted Populations**

With the integration of the Louisiana Rehabilitation Services into the Louisiana Workforce Commission, expectation is for increased ability to target this specific population. A strong working relationship exists in the region, further enhanced by the Connections to Work Pilot Program. Further development of the Ticket to Work Program is expected. Direction from the Disability Program Navigator is being provided by Memorandum of Understanding with other regions across the State of Louisiana. Activities associated with a special job fair to be held in October, 2010, are being planned.

The renaming of the "Emerging Workforce" to "Workforce Re-Entry Support" population of re-entry workers continues to be a service delivery area targeted in the region. Additional job fairs are planned with regard to this population and further business and employer outreach is expected. A regional coalition is currently under development. The Bringing Regional Initiatives in Greater Acadiana (BRING) Workforce Re-Entry Support Subcommittee is currently studying the Northeast Louisiana Regional Reentry Task Force Comprehensive Five Year Strategic Plan for possible improvement in current re-entry activities. The volume of individuals with criminal records attempting to re-enter the workforce demands service deliveries that are atypical of those of the general population. The continued provision of providing for the public safety and welfare and the integration of this population back into the workforce poses unique workforce development challenges. Close working relationships have been developed with the Sheriff's Departments in several of the parishes of both regions. Further development of these activities is expected.

With the highest incarceration rate in the United States, Louisiana returns a stigmatized population that searches diligently for opportunities for gainful employment and quickly becomes frustrated by the inability to successfully earn employment. This vicious cycle predisposes the participant to recidivism and other barriers to employment including housing, transportation and the inability to earn a legitimate living wage seal their fate. The corrections costs are overwhelming an economy that is sure to be tested in the year ahead.

Staff members of the Lafayette Business and Career Solutions Center have worked through J-COR affiliation with the identification of employers in the region that are willing to consider re-entry participants.

In addition to re-entry challenges, the revisions being undertaken with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)/Louisiana Job Employment Training (LaJET) Program, are being touted as some of the most progressive service delivery improvements within the region. As the direct result of the Connections to Work Pilot Program, service delivery revisions were implemented. A flow chart of the changes is provided as an attachment. These changes have greatly impacted the lives of the participants who have benefited from the additional services provided. Meaningful services have included job readiness training and the availability of additional referral to Volunteer Instructors Teaching Adults (VITA) Adult Learning. (Attachment 4)

#### K. Procurement

Procurement by means of Requests for Proposals (RFPs) is being utilized periodically, as necessary, for solicitation of youth training activities.

If applicable, Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for youth class-size training activities which include in-school and out-of-school youth programs, occupational skills training and occupational and job readiness training may be solicited. Procurement Policies are attached for review. (Attachment 5)

Procurement policies and procedures are attached.

#### L. Monitoring and Oversight

Implementation of the new schedules for Monitoring that were suggested during regional training have been created, approved by both WIBs. Schedules and checklists are attached. (Attachment 6)

##### a. Local Workforce Investment Board

###### 1. Describe the organization and structure of the Local Boards.

The LWIA #40 Workforce Investment Board, comprised of thirty-three members (33) is a private, non-profit organization which is represented with a private sector majority. St. Landry Parish Government is the grant recipient and the Chief Elected Officials have selected LWIA #40 to serve as the fiscal agent and administrative entity for the WIA program.

The LWIA #41 Workforce Investment Board is a *public board or commission appointed by the “grant recipient” or “chief elected official” in accordance and pursuant to the provisions of the WIA and the regulations promulgated thereunder, and having the duties and powers set forth therein, comprised of thirty-two (32) members.* The Lafayette Consolidated City-Parish Government is the grant recipient.

Both boards were certified by the Louisiana Workforce Commission in 2009 for proper representation and concurrence. (Attachment 7)

2. Identify the organizations or entities represented on the Local Board.

The most recent WIB Roster and Matrix for each area is attached, identifying organizations and entities represented.

b. Scholarships, Formerly Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)

1. What are the LWIAs’ policies on Scholarships/ITAs?

Further reductions in funding experienced by both areas have led to additional reductions and increased limitations. Responsibility for review of each funding request is placed within the realm of the Scholarship Committee which reviews applications, based on merit, with final determination at the discretion of the Local Area Coordinator who is ultimately responsible for accountability and transparency in the administration of scholarship, ITA funding.

4. Describe each LWIA’s policy for limiting Scholarships/ITAs, Training Funding

LWIA 40 has a maximum currently set at \$500.00 per participant. LWIA 41 reviews applications on an individual basis and determines an appropriate funding limitation based on obligations and available funding.

LWIA #40 and LWIA #41 recognize the importance of educating and training in Acadiana and make substantial investments of resources to assist jobseekers in achieving their employment and training goals.

M. Accountability and Performance

1. Describe how the LWIAs/LWIBs measure the success of its strategies in achieving its goals and how the LWIAs use this data to continuously improve the system.

The further negotiation of performance measures will impact and determine programmatic services designed to meet the needs of employers and jobseekers. Performance is reviewed quarterly or as received from documentation provided by the Louisiana Workforce Commission.

The targeted levels are expected to promote continuous improvement in performance and customer satisfaction. The return of the more weighted regression-based performance levels are expected to be adopted.

**The high expectation of these coordinated services and additional strategies to ensure the success of jobseekers and business customers and further identifying that “core” services are delivered within a common framework of service delivery will lead to continued high performance outcomes.**

**The Region IV area has enjoyed some of the most outstanding training and placement performance measure ratings in the past and expects to fulfill that standard in the future.**