

BRIEFLY...

Highlights of Report Number: 22-05-007-03-330 to the Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training. September 2005

WHY READ THE REPORT

The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program, which is administered by Labor's Employment and Training Administration (ETA), was established in 1974 to assist individuals who became unemployed as a result of increased imports return to suitable employment. TAA's goal is to increase the employment, retention, and earnings replacement of workers dislocated because of trade.

The Labor Department relies on participant data, submitted quarterly by the states, to assess whether or not a program is achieving its yearly goals and if changes are needed to make it more effective. Congress may review performance information in making decisions about future program funding.

WHY OIG DID THE REVIEW

We conducted our review to determine the completeness and reliability of the CY 2003 data used to support the FY 2003 performance goal 2.3B (changed in FY 2004 to 1.1G): Increase the employment, retention, and earnings replacement of workers dislocated in important part because of trade and who receive trade adjustment assistance benefits. We selected TAA data from CY 2003 for our review. Four states and 150 exiters were judgmentally selected for our review.

READ THE FULL REPORT

To view the report, including the scope, methodology, and full agency response, go to:

<http://www.oig.dol.gov/publicreports/oa/2005/22-05-007-03-330.pdf>.

September 2005

GPRA Data Validation Review, Trade Adjustment Assistance Program

WHAT OIG FOUND

Based on our review of the eight CY 2003 data elements used to report GPRA performance goal 2.3B, we verified 7 data elements to source documentation found in participant files. However, we found the eighth element, "date of exit," could not be verified due to the following reasons:

- The "date of exit" element was recorded as an anticipated date, not the last date of services as required by TAA guidelines.
- The State Workforce Agencies (SWAs) did not have source documentation available to verify the "date of exit" element.

Five of the seven data elements verified to source documentation were dependent on the "date of exit" and, therefore, were not complete or reliable.

WHAT OIG RECOMMENDED

To improve the completeness and reliability of Trade Adjustment Assistance program's performance data, we recommend the Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training ensure the TAA Program:

- Collects and records the participant's actual "date of exit" according to ETA's written definition.
- Properly manages and maintains source documentation to support the actual "date of exit," and makes it readily available for review.

ETA concurred with the recommendations and provided information about actions taken and planned to address the recommendations.