

BRIEFLY...

Highlights of Report Number 03-10-003-03-390, to the Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training.

WHY READ THE REPORT

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducted a performance audit of the State Workforce Agencies' (SWA) evaluations of their programs and activities carried out under Title IB of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998. WIA is designed to provide employment and training services to assist eligible individuals in finding and keeping meaningful employment and to help employers find the skilled workers they need to compete and succeed in business. DOL's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) is responsible for administering WIA at the Federal level and provides funding through grants to SWAs to operate the programs at the state and local level. WIA Section 136(e), Evaluation of State Programs, requires SWAs to conduct ongoing evaluations of their Title IB workforce investment activities for the purpose of promoting, establishing, implementing, and using methods for continuously improving workforce investment activities. Programs authorized under Title IB of WIA are the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs.

WHY OIG CONDUCTED THE AUDIT

The audit objective was to answer the following question:

To what extent are SWAs conducting evaluations of their workforce investment activities and using the evaluation results to promote efficiency and effectiveness in their respective state workforce investment systems?

The audit covered evaluations conducted during the period July 2005 through January 2010, and ETA's policies and processes related to SWA evaluations as of May 2010. We selected the following 8 SWAs from a universe of 57: California, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, and West Virginia.

READ THE FULL REPORT

To view the report, including the scope, methodology, and full agency response, go to: <http://www.oig.dol.gov/public/reports/oa/2010/03-10-003-03-390>.

August 2010

ETA CAN IMPROVE ITS PROCESS FOR SHARING INFORMATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS BY INCLUDING BEST PRACTICES FROM SWA WIA EVALUATIONS

WHAT OIG FOUND

Most of the SWAs in our audit (six of eight) conducted evaluations and used the results to promote the efficiency and effectiveness in their respective state workforce systems. Although there is no specific Federal requirement covering the frequency for conducting evaluations, two SWAs did not perform any evaluations in the prior 52-month period of our audit. These SWAs may have missed opportunities to achieve increases in the effectiveness and efficiency of their employment and training programs. For those SWAs that did conduct evaluations, they did not always report the identified best practices in their respective WIA Annual Reports to ETA. The 6 SWAs reported only 9 of the 38 evaluations they performed. SWA officials stated that ETA's requirement was not clear as to which evaluations had to be reported in the WIA Annual Report.

SWA officials were interested in evaluations conducted by other SWAs and how the results were used to improve various aspects of their respective programs, but they had no readily available access to this information. ETA did not have a process for analyzing and sharing the results with other SWAs and stakeholders. Without a mechanism for capturing, analyzing, and sharing the SWA evaluations, SWAs are missing the opportunity to learn of and use results from other SWAs that might create significant efficiencies in their own operations.

WHAT OIG RECOMMENDED

We made recommendations to the Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training to clarify ETA's requirements to the SWAs for reporting evaluations in the SWA WIA Annual Report, develop and implement a system to analyze the SWA evaluation results and identify best practices that could improve employment and training service delivery, and develop and implement a system so that these best practices can be shared nationally with other SWAs.

The Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training agreed with the report findings and recommendations.