

A National Call for Innovation: *Rethinking Reemployment Services for UI Claimants*



A Report of the Unemployment
Insurance and Workforce System
Connectivity Workgroup



September 2010

eta

Acknowledgements

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I. Executive Summary

The publicly-funded workforce system is in the midst of responding to the most severe recession in decades. As part of this response, the Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration (ETA), state and local workforce agencies are collaborating to implement new and innovative reemployment strategies to better connect Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants with the larger publicly-funded workforce system. This is being accomplished using regular formula funds including Workforce Investment Act funds, Employment Services funds, as well as additional sources such as the Reemployment Services funding provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and the Reemployment Eligibility Assessments (REA) funding.

ETA engaged the National Association of State Workforce Agencies' Center for Employment Security Education and Research (NASWA/CESER), and the Information Technology Support Center (ITSC) to "initiate a two-phased effort to develop a national vision for improving the UI and workforce systems' connection and integration."¹ As part of the first phase, a national workgroup consisting of individuals at the federal, state and local levels of the publicly-funded workforce system was formed (see Appendix A). This workgroup developed a vision statement for improving the UI and workforce systems' connection and integration (hereafter referred to as Emerging National Vision) and addressed approaches for serving UI claimants as a key customer of the workforce investment system. Under Phase I of this initiative, the workgroup goals, as defined in its charter (see Appendix B) were to develop:

- An integrated service delivery vision;
- Recommendations to implement the vision; and
- Recommendations for developing tools and solutions to support the System in achieving the vision.

The Emerging National Vision developed by the workgroup is as follows:

Emerging National Vision for Improving the UI and Workforce Systems' Connection and Integration

We envision a system that is driven by an Integrated Workforce Customer Registration as the entry to the nation's "reemployment system" – and offers a coordinated customer-centric focus with full partner access. The UI claimant process is seen as a part of the broader "job seeking" process and customers are treated as job seekers (their UI claim being just one aspect of the services available to job seekers). Services are available via the Internet as well as other means – but the Internet access is supported by dynamic social networks linking customers, career counselors, employers and educators. Integrated service delivery is focused on customer outcomes. The system is focused on skills transferability, is data driven, measureable and accountable (both to the law and to customer needs).

¹ Taken from Project Task Order

In their approach to Phase I, the workgroup carefully examined the existing “as is” state of the UI and workforce system connectivity. The overriding recommendation of the workgroup was that every UI claimant should be treated as a job seeker. Therefore, in addition to expediting timely and accurate income support benefits, all UI claimants should be provided access to core workforce services – virtually and in-person via One Stop Career Centers. In the process of developing the Emerging National Vision described in this report, the workgroup identified **four transformational areas** that define this vision:

1. **Integrated Workforce Customer Registration.** This represents the ideal goal of offering each customer, whether they are seeking UI benefits and/or workforce services, with a "no wrong door" point of entry to register. In other words, a customer can enter the system as a UI claimant or as a job seeker requesting workforce services. The workgroup recognizes that information management systems vary from state to state and that it may not be practical or appropriate to collect all eligibility information for all programs at the entry point. The Emerging National Vision suggests that common demographic and personal information that are used by all participating programs should be collected from customers just once and shared across programs, thus streamlining the process for the customer and reducing redundancy for specific program staff.
2. **Real time triage.** Current UI claimants are typically profiled once to determine the likelihood that they will exhaust their benefits before becoming reemployed. The Emerging National Vision describes a continuous process, defined by the workgroup as real time triage, where job seekers are linked with job openings, training opportunities and career counseling on a continuous basis while registered in the system. Information and data collected through the Integrated Workforce Customer Registration will be used to better target services and manage resources as well as complete an assessment of job seekers reemployment prospects, link them to employment opportunities tied to their current occupation, work experience and/or skills, and introduce them to workforce services, training programs, support services and education opportunities. Real time triage is intended to assist both the job seeker and the front-line workforce specialist throughout the period the job seeker is registered in the system and actively seeking employment. Throughout the real time triage process, workforce staff use labor market and economic data to inform the customer of the possible jobs and career pathways available to them and, if appropriate, additional education and training they may need to be successful in their job search.
3. **Transferability of Skills/Job Match.** Tied to real time triage is an automated process to link job seekers to job openings in their area based on past work history, education and training including degrees and certifications. There are a number of tools (both self-service and staff-assisted) currently available that have been developed using O*NET occupational data. Among these is ETA's newly unveiled *mySkills myFuture* website (<http://www.myskillsmyfuture.org/>) that identifies job openings based on past or current occupations. There are existing systems that go beyond occupations and work

history to include specific skills, training, certifications and degrees. The Emerging National Vision describes the use of automated tools to link job seekers with employment opportunities based on a skills match. Ideally, occupational and skills information will be collected in the Integrated Workforce Customer Registration process to support this feature.

4. **Social Networking.** The Emerging National Vision incorporates the power of the Internet to link job seekers with job openings, training and education options, peer networks and general labor market and career information. While the workgroup members did not consider themselves experts in this field, the workgroup recognized the potential of employing social networks and tools to leverage information and contacts available through the Internet. In the Emerging National Vision, social networking tools would be used to complement traditional outreach efforts to the public and raise general awareness of the benefits and services available through the public workforce system. Social networking tools would also serve as a platform to exchange information regarding job opportunities, service offerings, training programs, educational courses, labor market trends (high growth industries and occupations), certifications, apprenticeship programs and links to employers, labor groups and community-based organizations. Recognizing that employing social networking tools may be new to workforce professionals, the workgroup noted the need for investment in front-line staff training and orientation to fully exploit these resources.

Recommendations

The workgroup developed the following recommendations as an approach to implement their Emerging National Vision for improving the UI and workforce systems' connection and integration. They include:

1. The Emerging National Vision contains 10 areas involving the use of currently available or future automated tools to assist UI claimants and job seekers in gaining reemployment and are illustrated in Figures 1 and 2 of this report. The workgroup recommends that ETA serve as an **advocate** to implement the vision and encourage the use of tools to facilitate the four transformational aspects of the vision.
2. The workgroup recognizes that many aspects of the Emerging National Vision involve investments in staff development and system upgrades. They are recommending ETA consider **financial incentives and policy changes** to encourage states and local areas to adopt these changes. The workgroup also recommends that ETA, working in collaboration with the states and local areas, serve as an advocate for more flexible program services between the UI and workforce systems.

3. The Integrated Workforce Customer Registration, Real Time Triage and Transferability of Skills/Job Match transformational areas briefly outlined above and explained in greater detail later in the report would benefit from direct ETA investment. The workgroup is recommending that ETA **fund pilot projects** to develop open source platforms for each feature that could then be adopted by states on a voluntary basis.

This report documents the accomplishments of the workgroup and how their transformational approach to data collection, customer assessment, reemployment services and use of the Internet forms the basis of the Emerging National Vision. It also captures the recommendations of the workgroup for the UI and workforce systems on how they implement proposed improvements in Phase II of this innovative effort.

II. Understanding the Challenge

Since the mid-1990s, State Workforce Agencies have been transitioning UI claims filing from an in-person approach conducted in local UI offices with face-to-face staff service to a primarily virtual system that provides UI claims filing either over the phone or via the Internet with little or no face-to face staff service.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, currently 85 percent of UI initial claims and 95 percent of continued claims are processed by telephone and the Internet. Most One-Stop Career Centers across the country have no UI program presence, except for remote access assistance in the form of a telephone or computer for access to Internet claim websites.

One of the results of the movement to a virtual method of providing UI services is the lack of a strong connection between the UI program and the rest of the services of the publicly-funded workforce system, including reemployment, job search and career counseling services, which have also undergone a major transition from in-person services to primarily self-service. The flat-funding of the Wagner-Peyser Act (Employment Service) over the last three decades has added to this disconnect and has made it difficult for states and local One Stop Career Centers to provide more staff-assisted services to UI claimants and job seekers who need extra help. Limited efforts and funding have been made available by the federal government over the past several years to address the disconnect such as the Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services (WPRS) and/or the Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (REA) initiatives, however many UI claimants no longer have a clear connection point to the wide array of employment and training services offered through One Stop Career Centers and/or other parts of the workforce system.

However, advances in technology and the wide use of the Internet for job search, career and workforce information and resume-building tools have expanded the reach of the publicly funded workforce system by providing self-service options for UI claimants and other individuals to receive career and workforce information and job openings on-demand. Many of these services are available 24/7, and can be accessed from individuals' homes, public libraries and schools.

While technology adds great customer value, research over the years has shown that worker profiling or early and on-going analysis of UI claimants' skills and experience against the

available job openings, coupled with the receipt of job search assistance, is an effective and efficient way to speed referred claimants' return to productive employment. As part of this project, the workgroup was provided with a Synthesis Paper (**Appendix C**) that summarized currently available research on current practices, methods, and processes states and locals use to connect UI claimants to workforce system services. This document highlighted a number of studies and as well as past policies that were issued by ETA as far back as 1997 that transmitted information and policy recommendations to state workforce agencies that was intended to assist them to improve the quality of reemployment services to profiled and referred UI claimants.

The Synthesis Paper also reviewed the dramatic affects of the Great Recession of 2008 and 2009 and how it resulted in a significant increase in the number of individuals receiving UI benefits across the country and a substantial increase in traffic at the One Stop Career Centers. As a result, states looked at ways to shift staff and processes in an effort to find creative solutions to meet demand at the point of service. The document highlighted the steps undertaken by ETA to assist the workforce system in responding to these challenges including sponsoring a number of Regional Forums on Reemployment and a National Summit in January 2009, which focused on the implementation of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act) and increasing reemployment services through the workforce system.

The workgroup took the lessons shared from these forums and previously-cited research and policies to help inform its discussions. Common themes from the forums that the workgroup found particularly useful included:

- Providing flexible service delivery,
- Conducting skills assessment,
- Exploiting technology and electronic tools, and
- Collecting, analyzing and providing access to actionable workforce data.

The findings and recommendations from the Regional Reemployment Forums and National Summit were discussed by the workgroup and helped identify those transformational areas that the workgroup focused on, including:

- minimizing repeat data collection by sharing data between programs
- the need to conduct on-going profiling or real time triage throughout the reemployment process
- the increased use of social networking tools for outreach, job referrals and other services; and
- the increased use and availability online tools such as assessment features, and resume writing and interviewing skills workshops for job seekers who are capable of using these tools

A year and a half has transpired since the Regional Reemployment Forums and National Summit and since that time, ETA and the publicly-funded workforce system has learned a great deal from the recent surge in UI claimants. The additional funds provided to the workforce system under the Recovery Act have allowed for more staff-assisted reemployment and training services to be delivered through the One Stop Career Center system. These resources have also provided the opportunity to explore innovative ways of delivering services to a broad range of UI customers, many of whom are “Internet-savvy” and prefer to receive services via virtual means.

The recent history, the economic downturn, and new, dedicated funding for reemployment services in the Recovery Act, prompted leaders at the Employment and Training Administration to initiate a new collaborative process. The approach taken by ETA was to involve system leaders at the national, state and local levels to help develop a national vision for improving the UI and workforce systems’ connection. As highlighted earlier, ETA engaged NASWA, CESER and the ITSC to assist in an effort to develop a national vision for improving the connectivity between the UI and workforce systems.

III. Project Approach

To accomplish the objective of better connecting the UI and workforce systems, a national workgroup made up of individuals at the federal, state and local levels of the publicly-funded workforce system was formed for the purpose of developing a national vision. The following sections of the report provide an overview of the mission given to the workgroup, its organization, the process used to accomplish its work and most importantly, the recommended national vision for better connecting the UI system with the workforce system.

a. Mission

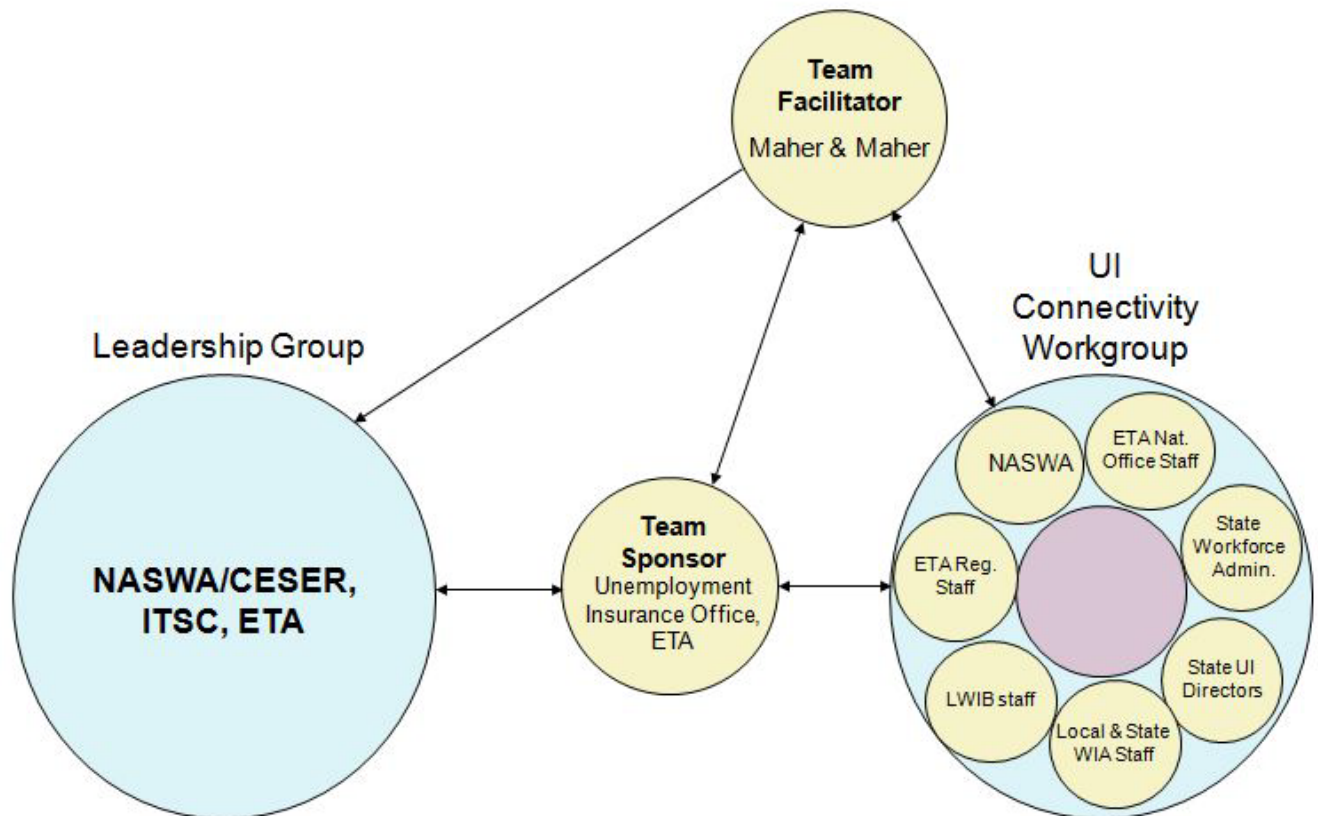
The Mission Statement for the project as agreed upon by the workgroup members was as follows:

- To support states in developing new strategies to connect and integrate unemployment insurance (UI) claimants into the publicly-funded workforce system, by:
 - Defining and supporting a collaborative federal/state vision for connecting the two systems for the benefit of employers and individual UI customers;
 - Defining the continuum of services available to a UI claimant for reemployment services;
 - Identifying tools and solutions, and informing policy; and,
 - Support the system in achieving that vision.

b. Our Organization

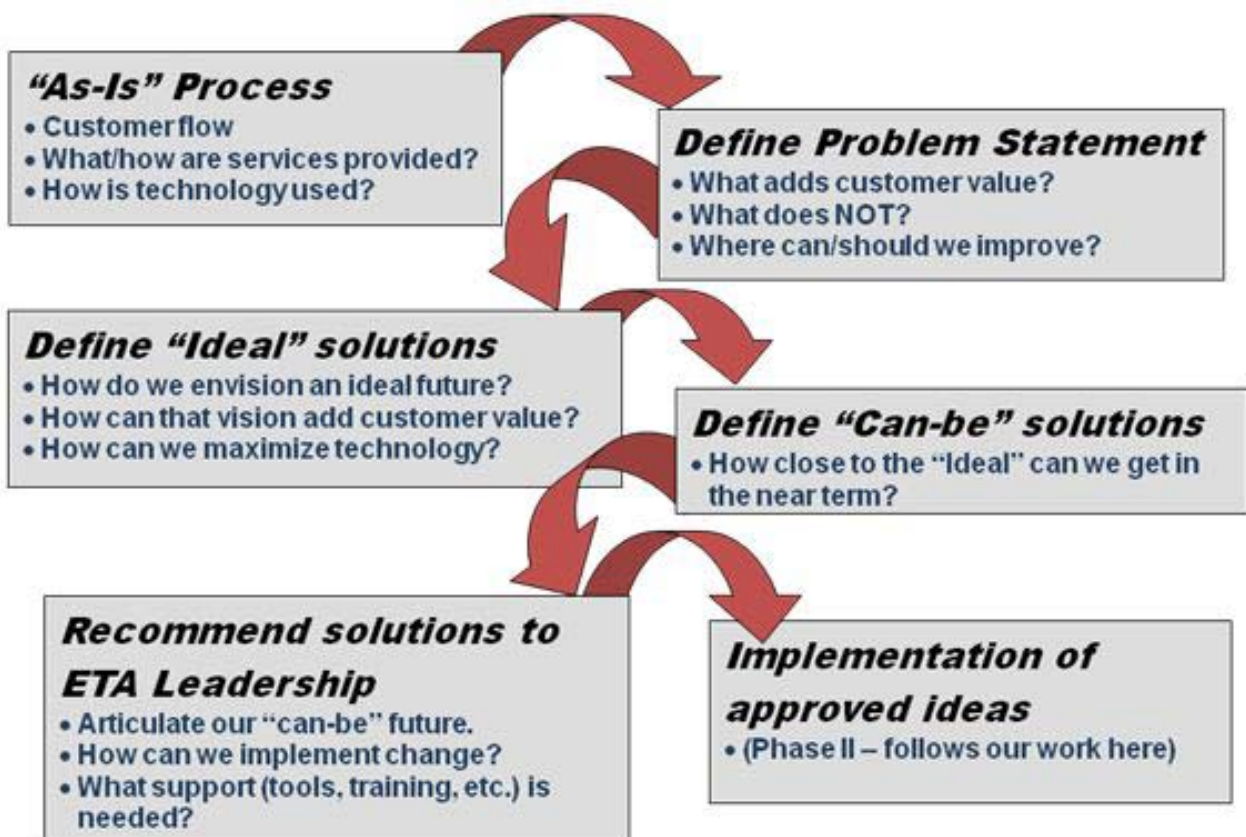
To accomplish our mission, the Office of Unemployment Insurance within the ETA engaged CESER and ITSC to organize a National UI Connectivity Workgroup to develop the vision and an implementation plan of better connecting the UI program with the larger publicly-funded workforce system. CESER/ITSC identified state and local representatives to serve on the workgroup and ETA identified a number of national office and regional office representatives from the UI program as well as the Workforce Investment/ES programs. The state and local members included a diverse mix of representatives including state workforce agency administrators, UI directors, state and local WIA administrators, and local workforce investment board staff. Maher & Maher was hired by CESER/ITSC to provide support and facilitation services during the in-person and virtual meetings (webinars) and to assist in the writing of workgroup's report and recommendations. (See **Appendix A** for list of workgroup members).

Below is an organizational chart that shows the workgroup.



c. *Process Used by the Workgroup*

The process used by the workgroup facilitator was a change management, collaborative approach that helped the members of the workgroup 1) describe and dissect the current or “as-is” flow of the UI claims process and its connection (or lack thereof) with the One Stop Career System; 2) define and describe an “ideal” vision of how this could be improved; 3) identify how close to ideal is realistic to accomplish in the near term; and, 4) recommend solutions to ETA leadership to accomplish this vision. Below is a visual map of the collaborative process used.



The work was accomplished through a series of three virtual meetings and two, two-day in-person meetings. The entire process lasted four months (June-September 2010).

The first virtual meeting provided workgroup members with an overview of the mission of the project, a brief explanation of the Project Charter (see **Appendix B**) and a description of the team member role(s). The first in-person meeting included a review and acceptance of the charter, and a presentation of the highlights from a "Synthesis Paper" (**Appendix C**) that was produced to provide an overview of currently available research on current practices, methods, and processes states and locals use to connect UI claimants to workforce system services. The

meeting also included a facilitated discussion of the current "As-Is" condition of how a UI claimant enters the system, and the key elements of that process. This facilitated discussion resulted in the creation of a series of problem statements that the project was setting out to address, along with a presentation and discussion about how UI profiling is currently used in the system to identify likely-to-exhaust claimants. This exercise produced an initial process map that was then further refined in subsequent meetings and eventually transformed into the "Emerging National Vision" of how to better connect the UI process to the broader workforce system. Workgroup members also identified examples of some promising practices of how UI claimants are served within their state or local area. This discussion then led to listing of the characteristics of an "ideal" system, along with a draft "ideal vision" statement.

A follow-up virtual meeting was held in-between the two in-person meetings in which the workgroup reviewed and commented on the Emerging National Vision system map and description provided prior to the virtual meeting. The workgroup, through several brainstorming exercises during the second in-person meeting, identified four transformational elements within the "ideal" process map, as well as obstacles and barriers that would need to be overcome and solutions to make these new processes successful. The input received was then used to refine the "can be" process, which the workgroup decided was a realistic goal, so it was adopted as a consensus recommendation as the Emerging National Vision.

Other items discussed and identified in brainstorming sessions during the second meeting was a "Customer Bill of Rights" that listed the rights that all customers should be able to expect when they interact with the public workforce system, as well as a comprehensive list of the menu of services that ideally should be made available to all UI claimants (and job seekers) entering the workforce system. The final brainstorming session held during the second meeting was a discussion about how best to communicate the Emerging National Vision endorsed by the workgroup. At the session, the workgroup also identified the key audiences at the federal, state and local levels as well as methods to get the word out and types of technical assistance needed to aid the system partners in understanding and implementing the vision, as they see fit. A follow-up virtual meeting was held a few weeks after the second meeting to share the revised map and receive input from the workgroup on the outline for the final report (refer to timeline in **Appendix B**).

d. Problem Statements

During the in-person and virtual meetings, the workgroup members were asked to identify the challenges associated with linking the UI program/function with the services of the larger workforce investment system. While there was no set definition of this linkage, the general concept agreed to by the workgroup has UI claimants enrolled to receive workforce services. That is, as UI claimants are receiving UI benefit payments, they are also automatically registered to receive core workforce services in person or virtually, followed by intensive and training services as necessary.

The problem statements identified by the workgroup were as follows:

- The problem is that UI profiling information is not necessarily getting to the right people at the one-stop career centers. In some states this interaction is being completed by the UI program staff, and not necessarily the Reemployment/Employment Service (ES) or Workforce Investment Act (WIA) staff.
- The problem is that current UI profiling models have a limited application. Many states have not updated or managed their models on an on-going basis.
- The problem is that in many places, the publicly-funded workforce system continues to segregate the customers into UI and WIA and ES programs. Not every One Stop Career Center assesses and provides services to all customers. Customers include individuals seeking UI benefits, workforce services (training, counseling, etc.), or job search assistance.
- The problem is that many individuals do not realize all of the services that are available in a One Stop Career Center. To require UI claimants to come to a Reemployment Orientation (RO) may be useful. Some states mandate ROs and find it has worked well. Other states feel they do not have the staff capacity to handle all UI claimants coming into the One Stop Career Centers.
- The problem is that bottlenecks in the interactive voice response (IVR) of the UI claims filing process has resulted in potential UI claimants going to the One Stop Career Centers to get help on their UI claim filing. This causes problems at the One Stops where there are few/no UI staff to answer questions.
- The problem is that individuals not eligible for UI are informed of their appeals rights as described in the Benefits Rights Information or BRI. However, many states do not provide any ES/WIA information for these denied claimants. There is a need for a better connection for these individuals to know where they can go to get some services, even if they are denied UI.
- The problem is that One Stop Career Center staff in some local areas do not receive UI profiling information on a regular basis on those individuals likely to exhaust in their area, and perceive that it inhibits their ability to provide these individuals with earlier interventions that will assist in their reemployment efforts and provide seamless services.

e. The Customer Bill of Rights

As part of its discussions, the workgroup identified the rights that all customers should expect when they interact with the public workforce system. This "Customer Bill of Rights" helped influence the design of the National Emerging Vision.

Any UI customer has the right to receive the following:

- Prompt, high quality and easy-to access services
- Professional, competent, courteous and well-trained staff
- Choice of services
- Fair treatment
- Timely response to questions and benefits
- Information that is understandable —without jargon, and in multiple languages
- Clean/well-equipped facility
- Easy/secure Internet services
- Assurances that their personal information will be kept secure and confidential

IV. Emerging National Vision

a. "Vision for the 21st Century Reemployment System"

Through two in-person meetings and three virtual meetings, the workgroup developed a vision for a reemployment system that effectively connects UI claimants with the services and resources available in the public workforce system. This proposed system was conceived through a process of examining the current system, identifying aspects that needed improvement, proposing ideal characteristics and then through a gap analysis and consensus process, agreeing on the following design. The workgroup collaborated to develop what became known as the "Emerging National Vision" for a future-state system that better links UI claimants with reemployment opportunities and services.

The following sections highlight the Emerging National Vision, illustrate the process the customer will follow to receive UI and workforce benefits and services, and describes the menu of services.

Emerging National Vision for Improving the UI and Workforce Systems' Connection and Integration

During its in-person and virtual meetings, the federal, state and local UI and workforce system experts represented on the workgroup came to consensus on a definition of an ideal UI-WF system into the following statement:

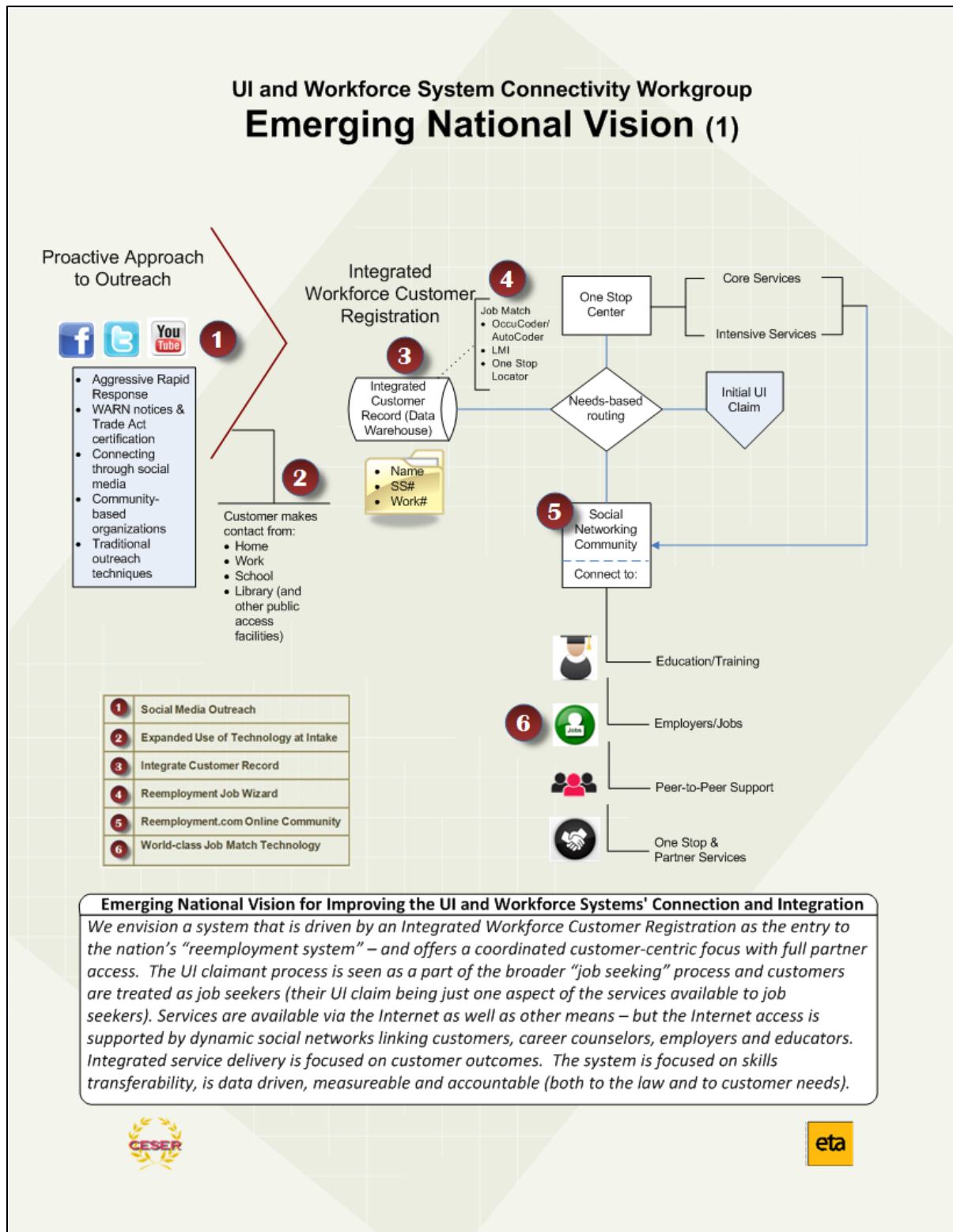
We envision a system that is driven by an Integrated Workforce Customer Registration as the entry to the nation's "reemployment system" – and offers a coordinated customer-centric focus with full partner access. The UI claimant process is seen as a part of the broader "job seeking" process and customers are treated as job seekers (their UI claim being just one aspect of the services available to job seekers). Services are available via the Internet as well as other means – but the Internet access is supported by dynamic social networks linking customers, career counselors, employers and educators. Integrated service delivery is focused on customer outcomes. The system is focused on skills transferability, is data driven, measurable and accountable (both to the law and to customer needs).

It was this statement and subsequent examination of existing and proposed features and services that led to this Emerging National Vision which is illustrated in the next section.

i. The System Map

The following two process maps illustrate the Emerging National Vision as designed by the workgroup. The first map (Figure 1) describes the approach to informing the stakeholders of the evolving system and the services available. It highlights the use of social media tools to not only inform users of available services but also to link them directly to education, training, job listings, workforce services and peer networks. The second diagram (Figure 2) illustrates the steps the customer will follow from registration to applying for benefits, receiving core or intensive or training services through the workforce system, to securing employment. The following subsection (iii) provides descriptions of each of the activities listed in the process maps.

Figure 1. Emerging National Vision (1)



ii. The Emerging National Vision Explained

The Emerging National Vision begins with a proactive approach to outreach – one that uses traditional means (such as public relations and outreach to community organizations), but that also makes better use of social media (such as Facebook and Twitter) to connect with people both before and after separation from a job. This is indicated in Figure 1 (**1**).

Outreach, including interventions such as rapid response, WARN notices or Trade Act certifications that may occur before separation, will encourage customers to register with the workforce system. In this Emerging National Vision, registration is an integrated registration – combining the needs of system registration used for partners like WIA, ES and UI – so that customers may be registering today for general information about career or educational opportunities – and later coming back to activate a UI claim (if and when separation from a job occurs). This Integrated Workforce Customer Registration houses common data that feeds into or can be accessed by all partners' case management systems. The workgroup recognized that states have a range of case management systems, in most cases with little or no connection between the workforce and UI systems. The Emerging National Vision proposes that states examine options to link core customer information such that a "no wrong door" point of entry is made available to end users.

This proposed approach allows for a number of access points such as from home, from the office, from school, or from public access locations (such as a One Stop Career Center or library) as indicated in Figure 1 (**2**). The key to the future state vision is a more robust strategy to drive customers to Internet registration and claims. Nearly 50% of all UI claims are processed currently through the Internet. Increasing this percentage is expected to free up resources to allow career counselors and front-line staff to spend more time with phone and in-person customers – typically those job seekers who may need more personal support either due to skill or access issues.

The Emerging National Vision is based on a robust Internet function, based on the priority assigned by the workgroup that the Integrated Workforce Customer Registration (**3**) allow customers to enter data that could serve both the UI and workforce systems. As the customer enters data (**4**), the system would access O*NET-SOC information to translate entered employment history to skills data and match claimants and/or job seekers to current employment opportunities. The system would immediately provide the job seeker with a listing of job opportunities in their region. Customers could click to review job openings by accessing a "Job Matching Reemployment Wizard" feature which would be modeled after or built on existing tools in the marketplace and would offer information such as:

- Job opportunities in the customer's region (zip code based) and expandable to further distances away from the "home" zip code based on customer preferences
- LMI information (such as average earnings in my area for my current occupation(s), employment trends, high growth occupations, etc.)

- Other/compatible job openings to explore (based on the customer's past occupation or with minimal additional training)
- An initial assessment of the job seeker's reemployment prospects
- Core services and training opportunities for which the customer might qualify
- Locations (and maps) to local One Stop Career Centers

With this information in hand, customers could select options to:

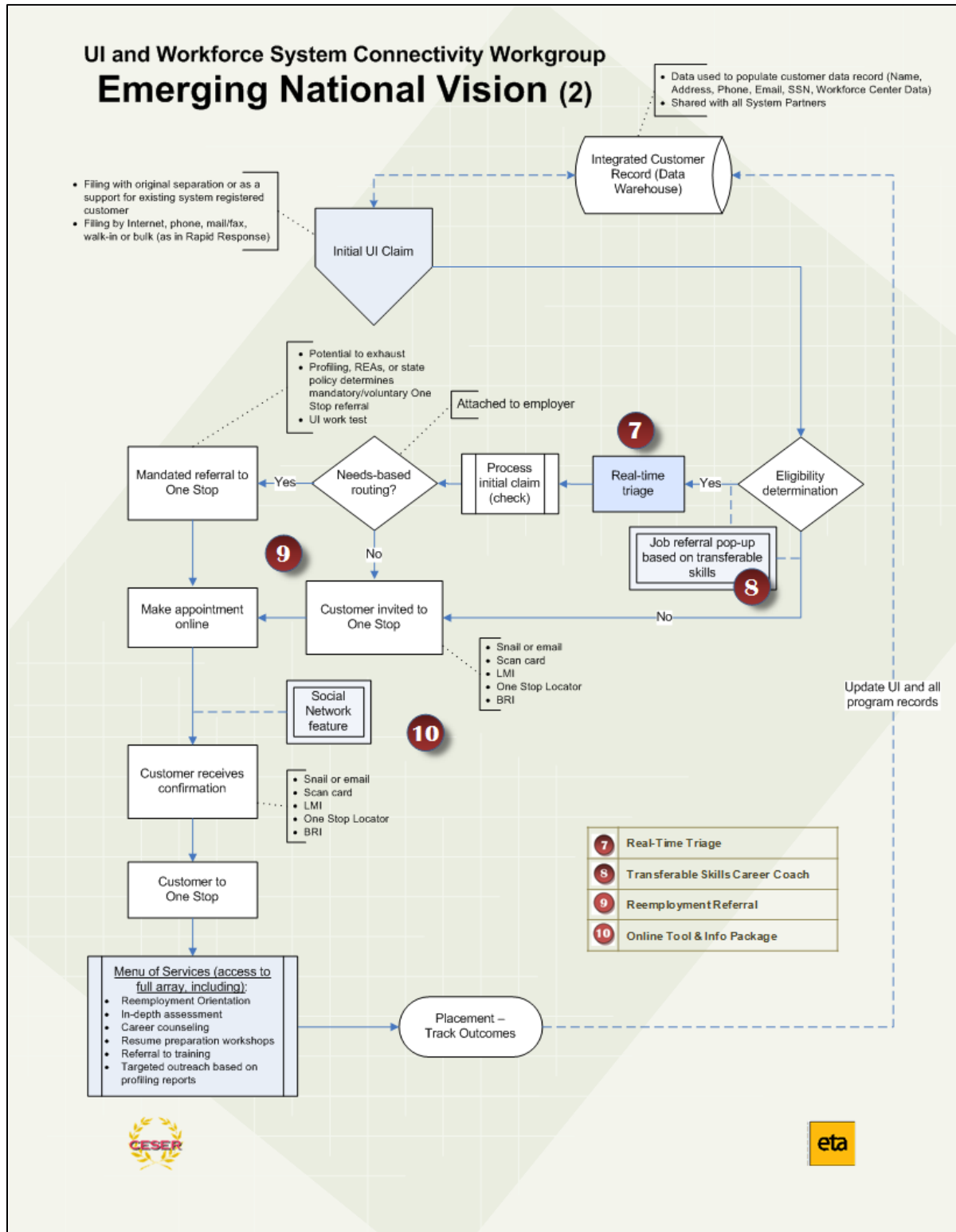
- File their initial UI claim (again, they could do that during an initial visit or at any future time they may become separated from a job and return to the site);
- Continue in self-service mode (online) to investigate employment and career options,
- Make an appointment with a one-stop, OR
- Learn about online social media communities that are focused on job and career search (5). Tutorials would be available on line and front line staff would be trained to help customers with limited computer skills.

The online community will be dedicated to reemployment and is envisioned as a virtual exchange for those seeking employment or educational opportunities. In this case, customers would "opt in" allowing the system to generate a profile for the customer which could be updated similar to personal profiles on popular social media sites. It would contain basic customer data, but also allow for a detailed resume, career and educational interests as well as educational degrees and occupational credentials. With educators, training providers and employers also linked to the site (6), customers would be able to search for employers and training programs, but so too would employers and educators be able to search for and connect with potential "matches" (customers would be given the option of allowing such searches on their profiles). Customers would be able to connect with others for peer-to-peer networking and with professionals from One Stop Career Centers and other partner agencies and service providers who might join and participate in the community. These social media types of services are particularly well suited for younger, Gen X and Y customers who might prefer this activity, but it would be available to all system users.

In this social media service, as with professional services available inside One Stop Career Centers, job matching can be even more focused on skills transferability. This will be based on the more detailed work history and educational records supplied by the job seeker and captured in the workforce system registration. The workgroup envisioned that technology patterned after existing solutions such as those used in Minnesota's MinnesotaWorks.net might make sense to explore and advance here.

Figure 1 illustrates all of the activities that might take place before a customer has actually become a UI claimant or before job separation. Figure 2 illustrates the process each customer will follow through creating the Integrated Workforce Customer Registration to file for benefits and automatically be assessed for mandatory or optional workforce system services.

Figure 2. Emerging National Vision (2)



In the majority of cases, UI benefits are desired. At this point in the process, a customer would return to their workforce system registration and "click" on the feature to file a UI claim. The Emerging National Vision still allows for this to be accomplished by phone or in-person, but as noted above, Internet registrations would be encouraged. Regardless of the point of entry, the same customer record in the data warehouse would be accessed to file a UI claim. (Note: any UI Claim specific information, or Personally Identifiable Information not captured during the initial integrated workforce customer registration would be collected in the specific program eligibility system.)

Once the UI claim feature has been selected, the workgroup envisioned a "Real Time Triage" automated assessment (7) would be set in motion. Traditional UI profiling is done in a "batch process" and is used by some state and local agencies to target at-risk populations to identify those UI claimants most likely to exhaust their benefits before securing employment. In the Emerging National Vision, the workgroup believes such action is not uniform and can be tailored to individual claimant needs by performing a "real time" assessment of each reemployment prospects of each claimant based on such factors as:

- Work history
- Separation history
- Occupational and sector trends (high growth or high demand)
- Skills transferability
- Local market needs/trends and more

So, while the system is determining eligibility, it is also – through the proposed "Real Time Triage" process using currently available assessment tools – determining the prospects for each claimant to become reemployed. Real time triage would continue as long as the claimant was registered in the system and actively seeking employment. As noted above, the system would provide job that are available and occupational information (8) to the claimant as he or she goes through the process of entering employment, education and skills information into the common customer registration. Based on the results of the automated triage (and based on individual state regulations) the customer will be either:

- Invited to connect to a One Stop Career Center – for reemployment services, or
- Mandated to go to the One Stop Career Center for reemployment services.

Whether by mandate or by invitation (9), the proposed process would also include an informational package (10), delivered by email or U.S. Postal Service as indicated by the customer's preference, which could contain:

- The status of their UI claim (approved or denied with relevant benefit rights information)
- Local and regional job opportunities
- Labor market information
- Information on one-stop/reemployment services available

- A "scan card" for identification at the One Stop Career Center
- Information on location of the local One Stop Career Centers
- Confirmation of the date and time of their mandated appointment (if applicable)

Regardless of the point of entry to system services (online, by phone or in person in the One Stop Career Center), the Emerging National Vision calls for proactive and intentional steps to make sure that every UI claimant (whether they are approved or denied benefits) has access to a full array of reemployment services. These will include:

- A reemployment orientation that introduces the job seeker to available resources in the One Stop Career Center (online and in person)
- An in-depth assessment of their skills and work experience to link them to available jobs (provided automatically during registration)
- Career counseling at the One Stop Career Center and via on-line tools
- Resume preparation
- Referral and possible support for training
- Targeted outreach based on real-time triage profiling

b. Key Elements of the Vision

The Emerging National Vision is built on four significant transformational changes to the current UI and workforce system processes. This new model envisions 1) a "no wrong door" point of entry for a combined system; 2) includes initial and continuing assessment to focus services and benefits; 3) provides real-time job matching and labor market information to the customer; and 4) introduces the user to the virtually limitless resources of the Internet through social media channels. The vision of the workgroup for these transformational areas is described below.

c. Four Key Transformation Areas

1. Integrated Workforce Customer Registration

Entry to the integrated system begins with intake where the currently separate and distinct registration processes are combined into a seamless single point for customers. The workgroup emphasized the importance of customer focus and streamlining the registration process. While there was general recognition that a complete overhaul of the information management systems may be cost and time prohibitive, the workgroup recommended that efforts should be made to integrate the front end experience (what the customer sees on their computer screen or discusses over the phone or the information they provide at a One Stop Career Center) so that data entry is not replicated. This is important to driving customers to self service via the Internet. All were in agreement that the automated process be straight forward and intuitive so that individuals with limited computer skills might still feel comfortable using a web-based system.

Data collected through the registration system would be stored in one or more data management systems and would be secured in accordance with current personally identifiable information guidelines. Where appropriate, the necessary memoranda of understanding or other forms of confidentiality and data sharing agreements would be established between agencies within a state to share this information. In accordance with current data privacy laws and regulations, this process change would be effected state by state without inter-state data sharing or storage.

ETA recognized the potential cost of integrating these systems and agreed to examine promising practices and approaches for additional funding. It was suggested by the workgroup that ETA might support developmental grants to select states to test innovative approaches.

2. Real Time Triage

The current UI system includes a profiling process where UI claimant employment histories and occupations are compared to local labor markets to determine the likelihood that the individual will exhaust their UI benefits before reemployment. This process provides workforce system staff with a single data point from which to guide their service strategy. In the Emerging National Vision, the workgroup has recommended the use of automated assessment tools based on available technology. This innovative feature, labeled as real time triage, is intended to provide the customer and workforce system staff with job listings, skills assessments, career information and regional labor market information to guide their job search continuously. It will link the job seeker to available training or education resources and highlight high growth occupations that may match or be complemented by the customer's current skills, certification or education.

The workgroup envisions that this assessment will be continuous as long as the customer is actively engaged with the system. Rather than a single determination based on the potential of a claimant to exhaust his or her benefits – the new approach will include real time feedback based on available job listings, career pathways, training opportunities and benefits programs for which the customer may be eligible. One of the powerful features envisioned is that the triage is automated and will be available to the customer regardless if he or she registers via the Internet or walks into a One Stop Career Center and works with a counselor. In either case, the system will assess continuously the individual circumstances of the claimant and link the claimant to relevant career information (particularly, current job listings).

The workgroup noted that a number of states have updated their profiling models and have changed their policies and practices to use the results of profiling to support reemployment. This approach, consistent with the concept of real time triage, involves using labor market information and automated tools that highlight transferable skills matches to provide individuals with real time information about available jobs, training and related services.

3. Skills Transferability/Job Match

Tied to the real time triage is the skills transferability and job match feature. At the point of intake and throughout the active engagement of the customer or job seeker in the system, the Emerging National Vision includes an automated job match feature. As envisioned by the workgroup, the new system would use available tools to link job seekers to available jobs. The assessment tools would base these matches on the stated occupation, certifications or degrees they possess, or on basic skills information provided by the job seeker during registration or subsequent collaboration with a career counselor at a One Stop Career Center. Several state workforce systems use automated tools such as Occu/Auto-Coder which is based on the O*NET/SOC occupational coding system. A few workgroup members indicated that they had tools that used features that were developed by other vendors that helped facilitate job matches based on past work experience and skills. The workgroup members, while not well-versed in the tools and technology, listed a number of tools and web-based resources that are currently using or investigating. While these are not recommendations or endorsements, they are included to provide examples of what is currently available in the public and private domains. Brief descriptions of each follow below:

- EmployOn (Burning Glass) – Commercial concept based search engine that matches resume and job content.
- In-Demand (NJ product that shares job information with the local job boards)
- MinnesotaWorks.net - MN UI applicants are required to seek employment and receive a series of emails that notify them of additional services, links and resources they can access to help them in their search for work.
- JobFinder (EMSI)- Uses O*NET data to help job seekers find employment in their current field, understand their current competencies (uses O*NET codes) –weights available jobs against O*NET-identified skills of the job seeker.
- Tools for America's Jobseekers
- Wanted Technology (Canada) –works with the Conference Board--Help Wanted On-Line
- I-SEEK (Minnesota based career, education and job website)
- Simply Hired (Commercial database of job listings that includes a social media platform)
- InDeed – Commercial job board listing openings across the country: www.indeed.com
- Direct Employers Association - JobCentral National Labor Exchange (www.jobcentral.com) - An alternative to commercial job boards, developed to increase labor market efficiency and decrease recruiting costs while generating job opportunities for displaced employees.
- America's Job Link Alliance (AJLA) is an affordable information management system to support the operations of one-stop workforce development centers.
- Virtual One Stop (Geographic Solutions) - Comprehensive one-stop operating system providing a full range of one-stop services to individuals, employers, providers and staff via the Internet.

- Skills Matching and Referral Technology (SMART) 2010 program (NY) - Analyzes job seeker resumes for skills and work experience, then electronically matches them with job openings.
- CareerOneStop.org – U.S. Department of Labor’s website offering career exploration and assessment, education and training resources, core services such as resume preparation and job search support, and links to state and local resources. Includes Reemployment portal for auto and Census workers.
- mySkills myFuture (released Labor Day 2010 by DOL) helps laid-off workers and other career changers to find and explore new occupations based on past work history and occupations: <http://www.myskillsmyfuture.org/>.
- TORQ™ (Transferable Occupation Relationship Quotient) - Is a commercially developed analytical tool offered by Workforce Associates, Inc., that links occupations based on the *abilities, skills, and knowledge* required by workers.

4. Social Networking

One of the most innovative aspects of the proposed system is its goal of harnessing the power of the Internet to assist job seekers in securing employment. Just as networking with colleagues and friends has propelled job searches in the past, the Emerging National Vision promotes the virtual exchange of information to identify job openings, training and educational opportunities, benefits information and career planning and guidance. This peer-to-peer feature would be eligible to all users but is particularly intended for the Generation X and Y job seekers who increasingly turn to social media sites such as Facebook, My Space, LinkedIn and others to post and exchange information. Among others, New York State’s workforce system has enjoyed tremendous success with a dedicated Facebook page and the Secretary of Labor now uses Twitter, Facebook and YouTube to deliver the Department’s message. The emerging system will be prepared to support the evolving trend of labor market and career information being shared through the Internet.

V. Recommendations for Implementation

Key Challenges/Barriers to Overcome and Recommendations for Implementation

During its deliberations, workgroup members identified a number of challenges that would need to be addressed in order for the National Emerging Vision to be realized. **The challenges and barriers were organized into four challenge areas: 1) Policy; 2) Resources; 3) Technology; and 4) Cultural.** The workgroup looked at the obstacles in each category and identified proposed solutions to those obstacles and recommendations for action. Below are the key challenges identified by the workgroup and their recommendations for addressing these challenges.

1. Policy Challenges and Recommendations for Action

- **Confidentiality of UI claimant information** was cited as a possible impediment by the workgroup members. In particular, the proposed vision is predicated on a system that is driven by an Integrated Workforce Customer Registration that would include customer identification information such as name, social security information, date of birth, address. This information would be collected only once from the individual and the appropriate customer information would be housed in a data warehouse and made available to individual programs, as needed. Appropriate data sharing agreements and/or memoranda of understandings (MOUs) would need to be developed so that confidentiality of information is secured and maintained and these agreements and MOUs would need to comply with any specific state laws. The benefits of an Integrated Workforce Customer Registration are that individuals are only asked to provide the same basic personal information one time and they are not subjected to multiple requests for the same information from separate program staff. The data warehouse concept is not the same as integrated data systems, which some states may chose or have chosen to develop. Instead, the warehouse system is the repository for customer identification information that can be drawn on by individual programs, as needed for the purposes of providing services to the individual.

The states are in a better position, based on state law, regulations and funding availability, to decide how integrated these data systems should be among programs. However, ETA, through cross-program policy guidance technical assistance (TEGLs, UIPLs, TENS), can encourage states to share basic customer information for the purposes of improved customer service.

- **Changing the concept of profiling to one of “Real Time Triage”**--The use of profiling of UI claimants to identify those individuals likely to exhaust may be perceived as a punitive method to require UI claimants to report to the One Stop Career Center for reemployment services. However, an increasing number of states have updated their profiling models and have changed their policies and practices to use the results of the profiling in a proactive way, along with real time labor market information and tools that show transferable skills matches to provide individuals with real time information about available jobs, training and related services.

The workgroup supports and recommends policies that move towards a different type of profiling--one that is centered on a "real time" assessment of the reemployment prospects of individual claimants based on such factors as:

- Work history
- Separation history
- Occupational and sector trends (high growth/high demand)
- Skills transferability
- Local and regional market needs/trends and more.

Federal, state, and local policies and practices should be updated to support the broader use of real time assessments throughout the reemployment process. **The workgroup recommends that these assessments or triages should occur at multiple points in the service delivery process to inform next steps for service delivery.** As much data as practical should be captured from the customer at the first point of contact and identification of any barriers such as language, accessibility, literacy, should be noted in order to target services. The workgroup recommends that policies, practices and tools focus on skills matching and transferability of skills in order to maximize reemployment and career advancement opportunities.

- **Performance measures for the UI program should encourage/support reemployment activities; not just timely and accurate payments** – The key performance measure for the UI program has primarily focused on timely and accurate benefit payments. **Under the Emerging National Vision, UI and reemployment service goals will have to be consolidated so that prompt payment and gaining employment are equally important.** Policies and procedures to support all reemployment activities should be encouraged at the federal and state levels.

2. Resource Challenges and Recommendations for Action

- **Cost allocation issues** and allowances as they pertain to leveraging staff resources from various programs (especially the UI program) present barriers to implementation. The workgroup noted that a more flexible and cross-trained staff would be needed to support a universal workforce registration system. For those customers that register for the system electronically, on their own, this issue is not as problematic. However, for customers that require/desire assistance in the registration process, this issue becomes more complex. Some workgroup members suggested that a small percentage of the various program funding streams be "fungible" to allow staff the ability to assist in this process. This would require legislation at the federal level. In other words, the workgroup recommended that ETA **treat the collection of customer information for the purposes of identifying the most appropriate menu of services as an allowable cost for all programs.**
- **Funding for updated systems, tools and technologies**--The on-going costs for maintaining and improving technology tools and systems was a key challenge identified by the workgroup. Some states are in the process of major modernization efforts for their UI benefit and payment systems, while others have invested a great deal of resources into the development of one-stop operating systems that may or may not

include a connection to the UI program. Beyond the operating systems, new tools and technologies are being produced constantly --but all of these have associated costs for developing, purchasing and maintaining.

The workgroup strongly believes that ongoing investments in tools and technologies will result in improved efficiencies and services to customers.

3. Technology Challenges and Recommendations for Action

- **Creating a common registration interface for multiple systems** was identified as a key challenge to overcome in implementing the vision outlined by the workgroup. Most states have developed separate program registration and reporting systems. To create an integrated workforce registration system may entail substantial costs.

In the National Emerging Vision, there would be one integrated registration system that all programs use. As a stepping stone to this vision, the workgroup recommends that a data warehouse type of system stores core customer information that would then be available to partner programs within that state. By doing this, a single point of entry would be made available to customers, whether they enter the information themselves, or with staff assistance. This common data warehouse would feed into all partners' case management/registration systems. The extent of this challenge will vary greatly by state, depending on the current level of integration between programs. **The workgroup suggests that ETA could assist in facilitating consortia among states (perhaps facilitated by NASWA/ITSC) to help with the development of technology that would jumpstart these connections.**

- **Guidance and technical assistance on the use of social media tools** was another challenge identified by the workgroup. The use of social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, LinkedIn, webcams, communities of practice, distance learning platforms and other related tools is a new and exciting way for individuals to access the services of the publicly funded workforce system. Some states and local One Stop Career Centers are using and promoting these tools with their customers, while others are in the process of determining how best to use these new tools. **ETA can help build capacity in the workforce system to use social media and facilitate the sharing of the promising practices.**

4. Cultural Challenges and Recommendations for Action

- **Getting beyond the "turf" issues between UI, ES and WIA** was identified by the workgroup members as the largest "cultural" barrier to implementing the National Emerging Vision. This barrier includes changing the mindset of employees and modifying systems so that they work as seamlessly as possible for the benefit of the customer--both individual job seekers (UI claimants) and employers.

This challenge needs to be addressed in multiple ways, including making a case for employees to see the benefits of working together--across programs--for the benefit of the customer. Part of changing this mindset will be through the changing of automated systems and performance measures reward seamless behavior. **ETA can reinforce this issuance of system-wide policies and guidance that span across multiple programs. Similar system-wide policies and guidance should also be adopted at the state and local levels.**

Other solutions recommended by the workgroup to address the cultural challenges include:

- Cross-training of all staff so that they can provide more holistic services. **Customer service training should emphasize reemployment services throughout the process as well as how successfully placing job seekers into reemployment services can positively affect performance measures.** Upper management from all programs at the federal, state and local levels should actively support this cross-training.
- The **adoption of a reemployment measure that is the same for all programs.**
- Create incentives for states and locals to develop joint plans, policies and procedures that incorporate the National Emerging Vision outlined by the workgroup. **These incentives could include the establishment of pilot programs or grant opportunities, as well as peer-to-peer strategies facilitated by pairing "early adopters" with other states.**
- **Development of an outreach plan on UI trust fund solvency** that shows how this approach to serving the customers is a good business practice that will help address solvency problems.
- **Rename Unemployment Insurance to Reemployment Insurance.** This includes changing the customer mindset of the unemployment insurance program by changing the messages and collateral materials that are distributed at the one-stops, and on the websites to focus on reemployment of job seekers. A similar perception change was made when Welfare was rebranded as Temporary Assistance to Needy Families or TANF.
- **Rename and re-engineer UI profiling** and how it is used in the One Stop Career Centers to support a real time triage approach to reemployment.

5. Summary of Workgroup Recommendations

The preceding workgroup recommendations can be summarized into three broad concepts as prioritized by the members. They are:

1. The Emerging National Vision contains 10 areas involving the use of available or future automated tools to assist UI claimants and job seekers in gaining reemployment. **The workgroup recommends that ETA serve as an advocate** to implement the vision and encourage the use of tools to facilitate the four transformational aspects of the vision. Advocacy by ETA will also help overcome any cultural or policy issues that states may encounter in implementing some or all of the proposed system.
2. The workgroup recognizes that many aspects of the Emerging National Vision involve investments in staff development and system upgrades. **They are recommending ETA consider incentives** to encourage states to adopt these changes. This addresses the need for flexibility in cost allocation between the UI and workforce systems and their potential need for additional funding to make infrastructure investments.
3. The Integrated Workforce Customer Registration, Real Time Triage and Transferability of Skills/Job Match areas outlined in this report would benefit from direct ETA investment. **The workgroup is recommending that ETA fund pilot projects** to develop open source platforms for each feature that could then be adopted by states on a voluntary basis. This recommendation addresses the concern of the workgroup regarding implementing new technologies that are proven and accessible to states. Having ETA fund pilot projects will expedite development and reflect the broadest possible spectrum of state needs. Using open source software will also increase the utility of any automated tools by allowing states to modify the systems to meet their specific requirements without incurring licensing or sole-source consulting fees. These pilot products and approaches could be introduced to the broad workforce system through forums or institutes where states would have access to the developers and learn firsthand how to utilize these tools. The forums would also allow for peer-to-peer exchange between state IT managers regarding lessons learned implementing these automated systems.

VI. Communicating the Vision

The National Emerging Vision recommended by the workgroup is not a one-size-fits-all approach to providing seamless services to UI claimants. As outlined in this document, the vision is predicated on the concept of UI claimants as job seekers and a system that is driven by an integrated workforce customer registration as the entry to the nation's "reemployment system" – and offers a coordinated customer-centric focus with full partner access. The UI claimant process is seen as a part of the broader "job seeking" process and customers are treated as job seekers. Services are available via the Internet as well as other traditional means such as in-person and over the phone – but the Internet access is supported by dynamic social networks linking customers, career counselors, employers and educators. Service delivery is driven by fully-integrated staff that is themselves driven by customer outcomes rather than by

separate, funding streams. The system is focused on skills transferability, is data driven, measurable and accountable (both to the law and to customer needs).

State and local workforce system leaders will likely have a variety of different reactions to the recommendations contained in this report. The workgroup had representatives that were in different stages of connecting their UI and workforce systems. However, there was clear consensus among the workgroup on the National Emerging Vision.

Some states and local areas have already adopted many of the suggested recommendations outlined in the report and may even have additional recommendations and tools to share that will help further the vision. Other states and local areas may take issue with some of the recommendations and may have concerns with some of the suggested changes outlined in the report.

In its discussions about communicating the vision, the workgroup identified a number of stakeholders at the national, state and local levels that should potentially be briefed on the efforts to connect UI and workforce programs. Below are the various agencies, offices and interest groups that were mentioned:

- **Department of Labor:** Top management at the U.S. Department of Labor, including the Secretary of Labor and ETA Assistant Secretary will have to play a critical role in announcing and supporting this reengineering process. Other offices within DOL that will play important roles include the Assistant Secretary for Policy, senior staff in ETA's Offices of Workforce Investment and Workforce Security (UI) and the Regional Administrators and their staff working with state and local workforce agencies.
- **Federal and national level:** Other federal offices that may be interested in this include the staff at the Domestic Policy Council, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and appropriate program offices at the Departments of Education and Health and Human Services, which have customers that are often customers of the one-stop career center system. In addition to federal agencies, the Congressional Committees with jurisdiction over WIA/ES and the UI programs should be briefed on the vision. These committees include the House Ways and Means Committee, the House Education and Labor Committee and the Senate Finance Committee and Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) should also receive information on the vision.

National intergovernmental organizations such as NASWA, the National Governors Association, National Conference of State Legislatures, the National Association of Workforce Boards, the National Association of Counties and the Conference of Mayors should be briefed. In addition, organizations that represent organized labor (AFL-CIO, AFSCME, SEIU, and UAW) and business (U.S. Chamber of Commerce, National Association of Manufacturers) are important constituent groups that should receive

information on the vision. The National Employment Law Project (NELP), which focuses its efforts on the UI system, would have a special interest in this initiative.

- **State level:** State Workforce Administrators and the state executive staff that oversees and manages the UI, ES and WIA programs should be involved in this initiative. Other key staff that will have a role in implementing the vision at the state level would be IT staff and labor market information directors. States may also wish to involve their governors' offices as well as key staff at the state legislature that oversee workforce and UI programs. Finally, State UI Advisory Councils would have an interest in the vision.
- **Local level:** Local workforce investment boards, community partners, community-based organizations, one-stop operators/managers, local elected officials, local One Stop Career Center staff are also stakeholders to this initiative.
- **Job Seekers/UI Claimants:** The customers (employers and job seekers) who will access the system may be the most important stakeholder in this attempt to reconnect UI and Workforce programs. A less technical and easy to understand campaign will need to be mounted to educate customers on the services and benefits available to them and how to access this support.

The message for each of these audiences would need to be tailored to the group, using business cases to show why the new vision would result in an improved system for the customer. As an example, the business case for House and Senate staff or the Office of Management and Budget would focus on the potential savings to the UI trust funds that could result with a more targeted triaged approach to providing reemployment services to UI claimants. Ultimately, all audiences should understand the context of what the workgroup set out to accomplish and how improvements in technology and customer choice in how services are delivered provide an opportunity to better connect the UI program to the larger publicly-funded workforce system.

The key audiences to educate on the vision are state and local policymakers and staff of the One Stop Career Center system. These individuals are the individuals that will ultimately be responsible for implementing any changes in service delivery and developing policies to support these changes. **Because states and local areas are in different stages of fulfilling the vision, it is recommended that ETA hold regional forums that bring together state teams that represent the all programs to discuss how to better connect these systems. Likewise, states should hold similar forums with local workforce leaders and front-line staff.**

As part of these forums, ETA and states can **assist in communicating the vision by issuing multi-program-wide policy letters that encourage integration of systems and encourage the use of tools to facilitate the four transformational aspects of the vision.** Other steps that could be taken include presenting the ideas set forth in the report at various conferences held at the national, state and local levels.

The workgroup recognizes that many aspects of the Emerging National Vision involve investments in staff development and system upgrades. They are recommending **ETA consider incentives to encourage states to adopt these changes.**

Lastly, the Integrated Workforce Customer Record, Real Time Triage process and Transferability of Skills/Job Match would benefit from direct ETA investment. **The workgroup is recommending that ETA fund pilot projects to develop open source platforms for each feature that could then be adopted by states on a voluntary basis.**

Appendix A – Workgroup Members

Connectivity Workgroup Members	Originating Organization
Elisabeth Buck	State WF Agency
Larry Temple	State WF Agency
Rochelle Webb	State WF Agency
Karen Coleman	State WF Agency
Bonnie Eley	State WF Agency
Jim Wroblewski	State WF Agency
Scott Eychner	State WF Agency
Jerry Haisler	Local WIB/One Stop
Mike McQuaid	Local WIB/One Stop
Carol Rayburn	Local WIB/One Stop
Jeff Whitehead	Local WIB/One Stop
Scott Sheely	Local WIB/One Stop
Jerry Vitzthum	Local WIB/One Stop
Stephen R. Duval	State UI Director
Hal Bergan	State UI Director
Jerry Pectol	State UI Director
Tom Clendenning	State UI Director
Roy Mulvaney	State UI Director
Project Sponsors	
Gay Gilbert	USDOL
Grace Kilbane	USDOL
Dale Ziegler	USDOL
Mary Alice McCarthy	USDOL
Adriana Lopez	USDOL
Jacqui Shoholm	USDOL
Cheryl Martin	USDOL
Lloyd (Pete) Fleming	USDOL
Tim Martin	USDOL
Steve Narolewski	USDOL
Steve Scott	USDOL

Project Administrators	
Rich Hobbie	NASWA
Bob Simoneau	NASWA
Pam Gerassimides	NASWA
Charlie Terrell	NASWA
Don Wehbey	NASWA
Yvette Chocolaad	NASWA
John Quichocho	NASWA
Joe Vitale	NASWA
Project Support: Maher & Maher	
Rick Maher	Facilitator
Bruce Rankin	Consultant
Katy Cashen	Consultant
Susan Tartaglino	Project Administration
Patty Kosowsky	Knowledge Manager

Appendix B – Project Charter

TEAM CHARTER

for PHASE I

I. MISSION

To support states in developing new strategies to connect and integrate unemployment insurance (UI) claimants into the Workforce System, by:

- Defining and supporting a collaborative Federal/State vision for connecting the two systems for the benefit of employers and individual UI customers;
- Defining the continuum of resources available to a UI claimant for reemployment services; and
- Identifying tools and solutions, and informing policy, to support the UI and Workforce Systems in achieving that vision.

II. UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE AND WORKFORCE SYSTEM CONNECTIVITY WORKGROUP (CONNECTIVITY WORKGROUP) STRUCTURE

This newly formed Connectivity Workgroup will use a change management structure that creates a series of roles and responsibilities that will foster collaboration and consensus.

The **CONNECTIVITY WORKGROUP SPONSOR** is ETA's Office of Unemployment Insurance (OUI). Their role is to guide the project and ensure that final recommendations are gathered and supported through implementation. The Sponsor is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the mission is adopted and pursued by all parties to the project
- Providing guidance, access to information, and timely feedback
- Addressing roadblocks and process obstacles that cannot otherwise be resolved
- Attending Connectivity Workgroup meetings when and if necessary
- Ensuring Connectivity Workgroup members' availability to serve and support the project
- Receiving, reviewing and refining the Connectivity Workgroup's recommendations
- Ensuring that ETA Offices work collaboratively, in an integrated fashion, to support the System Integration Vision as adopted and approved.

The **CONNECTIVITY WORKGROUP** is the core work group for the project. It is comprised of representatives from ETA's national and regional offices, State Workforce Administrators and UI Directors (and staff) and representatives of Local Workforce Investment Boards. Its role is to work collaboratively to develop:

- The vision for connecting UI claimants to the Workforce System;
- Recommendations to implement the vision; and
- Recommendations for developing tools and solutions to support the UI and Workforce Systems in achieving that vision.

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Elisabeth Buck	State WF Agency
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Bonnie Eley	State WF Agency
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John Quichocho	NASWA
Joe Vitale	NASWA
Project Support: Maher & Maher	
Rick Maher	Facilitator
Bruce Rankin	Consultant
Katy Cashen	Consultant
Susan Tartaglino	Project Administration
Patty Kosowsky	Knowledge Manager

Connectivity Workgroup members will also be expected to:

- Attend all virtual and in-person Connectivity Workgroup meetings as collaborative team members (rather than representing a certain rank or office);
- Perform anticipated additional work in between meetings;
- Design and map the Ideal and “Can Be” processes;
- Present recommendations for the vision and tools to the Project Sponsors; and
- Assist in implementing recommendations by serving as connectivity champions throughout the Federal/State system.

The **PROJECT ADMINISTRATOR** is NASWA/ITSC. The role of the Project Administrator is to:

- Appoint a single Point of Contact (SPOC) to coordinate project logistics and day-to-day communications;
- Provide full project management services, from the beginning of the project through completion and presentation of the final report;
- Identify research materials and work with the Project Facilitators to synthesize research materials; and
- Provide guidance and support to the Project Facilitators and the Connectivity Workgroup.

The role of the **PROJECT FACILITATORS** (Maher & Maher) is to work under the direction of NASWA/ITSC to synthesize research materials, facilitate the Connectivity Workgroup meetings and to provide ongoing subject matter expertise to the overall Workgroup. From the beginning, facilitators will emphasize that the relationships within and between the Connectivity Workgroup's organizational elements are to be collaborative and dedicated to quality "dual customer" service.

The Connectivity Workgroup Facilitators will:

- Maintain a Collaborative Workspace (CWS) for all project personnel;
- Facilitate all Connectivity Workgroup virtual and in-person meetings;
- Maintain continuous contact with the Project Administrator as to project progress and status;
- Maintain communication with the Connectivity Workgroup between its virtual and in-person meetings;
- Conduct status check and decision point meetings with the Team Sponsor as required; and
- Prepare a final report that will include consensus-based recommendations for the key elements listed in the Mission Statement.

The Connectivity Workgroup may recruit **EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS** to contribute specific subject matter expertise to the Workgroup's work on an as-required basis.

III. Deliverables

We anticipate the following deliverables in achieving the Connectivity Workgroup's mission:

1. Create and maintain a detailed Project Plan
2. Provide monthly status reports
3. Assist in migrating content from the CWS to ETA's Reemployment Community of Practice (COP) at the completion of Phase I
4. Deploy a project Collaborative Workspace (CWS)
5. Collect, review and synthesize currently available related research from various sources
6. Facilitate the Connectivity Workgroup through the entire process described above
7. Prepare final report as described above

IV. TIMELINE

Approx. Date	Activity	Comment
5/11	Project Kick-off Meeting (ITSC – ETA)	Finalize project approach and project plan. Other set-up activities. Complete Project Charter (defines roles, mission, and timeline).
6/1	Review & Synthesis of existing materials complete	Two man-weeks of consulting/analyst time to review and synthesize materials, brief principles and prepare summary report for the workgroup.
6/10	Kick off Webinar	Meet with workgroup. Define mission and discuss Project Charter and team member role(s).
6/22-23	In Person Meeting # 1	Review and accept Charter Discuss Process Define “As-Is” Condition Create Problem Statement
7/1	Report of First Meeting Delivered	
7/12	Webinar # 2	Present findings of emerging “best and promising practices” (Fuels visioning of an ideal system)
7/20	Webinar # 3	Brainstorm “Characteristics of an Ideal System” (defines benchmarks for Ideal system discussion)
7/27-28	In Person Meeting # 2	Create the Ideal Vision Define customer value statement Define the “Can-Be” Process
8/16	Webinar # 4	Review the Can-Be Vision in final form List of Recommendations
9/15	Final Report – Draft 1 Completed to ITSC	
9/22	Webinar # 5	Review Draft Report and gather comments from workgroup
9/30	Final Report Submitted	



Unemployment Insurance and Workforce System Connectivity Initiative

Synthesis Paper of currently available research on current practices, methods, and processes states and locals use to connect Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants to workforce system services

Crafted with pride by:



June 2010

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I. Scope

The publicly-funded workforce system is in the midst of responding to the most severe recession in decades. As part of this response, many states have developed new and innovative strategies to better connect Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants with the Workforce system using fund sources such as the Reemployment Services funding provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and REA funds.

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA) engaged the Center for Employment Security Education and Research, Information Technology Support Center (CESER/ITSC) to initiate a two-phased effort to develop a national vision for improving the UI and Workforce systems' connection. Phase I includes the organization of a national vision and an implementation plan. As part of this first phase, a National Workgroup made up of individuals at the Federal, State and Local levels of the publicly-funded workforce system has been formed for the purpose of developing a national vision and models for serving UI claimants as a key customer of the workforce development system. Phase II will be the development of the systems, tools and processes identified in Phase I that are necessary to implement this plan.

As part of Phase I, this synthesis of currently available research has been prepared. It summarizes findings from the Reemployment Summit and Regional Forums held in 2009 as well as current practices, methods, and processes states and locals use to connect UI claimants to workforce system services. This synthesis is meant to inform the National Workgroup as it embarks on its mission to develop a national vision and models.

II. Background and History

Since the mid-1990s, State Workforce Agencies have been transitioning from an in-person unemployment insurance (UI) claims system that was provided in local UI offices to a virtual system that provides these services either over the phone or through the Internet.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, currently 85 percent of UI initial claims and 95 percent of continued claims are processed by telephone and the Internet. Most One-Stop Career Centers across the country have no UI program presence, except for remote access assistance in the form of a telephone or computer for access to Internet claim websites.

One of the results of the movement to a "virtual" way of providing UI services is the lack of a strong connection between the UI program and the rest of the services of the publicly-funded workforce system including reemployment, job search and career counseling. The flat-funding of the Wagner-Peyser Act (employment services) over the last decade has added to this disconnect and has made it difficult for states and local one-stop centers to provide more staff-assisted services to UI claimants.

Various efforts

and funding have been made available by the federal government over the past several years to address the disconnect such as the Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services (WPRS) and/or the Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (REA) initiatives, however many UI claimants no longer have a clear connection point to the wide array of employment and training services offered through One-Stops and/or other parts of the workforce system.

However, advances in technology and the wide use of the Internet for job search, career/workforce information and resume-building tools have expanded the reach of the publicly funded workforce system by providing self-service options for UI claimants and other individuals to receive career and workforce information and job openings on-demand. Many of these services are available 24/7, and can be accessed from individuals' homes, public libraries and schools.

While technology adds great customer value, we also know that research over the years has shown that worker profiling, coupled with the receipt of Job Search Assistance (JSA), is an effective and efficient way to speed referred claimants' return to productive employment. As far back as October 17, 1997, ETA issued Employment Service Program Letter (ESPL) No. 01-98: **Reemployment Services for Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants through State Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services (WPRS) Systems.** This ESPL transmitted information and policy recommendations to State Workforce Agencies that was intended to assist them to improve the quality of reemployment services to profiled and referred UI claimants.

The following recommendations, taken from various Departmental studies and reports at the time, were provided to states to help improve the quality of reemployment services and speed claimants' transition time from unemployment to reemployment. Later in this report more recent recommendations and ideas will be highlighted, but it is clear from the research that many of the recommendations made back in 1997 are important context – even in today's environment. Key recommendations from the 1997 ESPL include:

- **Provide JSA Early.** Those claimants who have the skills and experience required to fill suitable job openings should receive immediate job referrals; other claimants need to be quickly referred to other reemployment services necessary to become reemployed. Early intervention accelerates job finding and increases the likelihood of rapid reemployment.
- **Individualize Services and Customize Service Plans.** In order to supply each claimant with the blend of services that optimizes his or her likelihood of attaining rapid reemployment, it was recommended that States provide referred claimants with customized service plans, as well as individualized services that use either person-to-person or group methods. Rather than a "one size fits all" approach, services should be tailored to claimants' individual reemployment needs. In this way, the value of the reemployment services provided to referred claimants can be maximized, and cost efficiency in service provision may be realized.

- **Provide More and Better Services.** Ultimately, the objective of reemployment services for referred claimants is to help them find suitable jobs as quickly as possible. To do this, the reemployment services offered should be extensive, and participation requirements ought to be tailored to the individual's needs. The existing menu of reemployment services in 1997 included resume preparation, information on interviewing techniques, counseling, and aptitude and interest testing. Expanded services recommended at the time included:
 - Workshops that include employer representatives to provide "real world" job hunting techniques and information about jobs and occupations;
 - Job Clubs that encourage peer-to-peer job networking;
 - Reevaluation of claimants' service plans after participation in Job Search Workshops or Job Clubs;
 - Job loss counseling to help claimants adjust to the devastation of unemployment;
 - Financial counseling to provide advice on such topics as spending priorities and maintaining medical insurance while unemployed; Seminars or workshops that teach tools and techniques for utilizing computer-based JSA and other State job bank aids; and
 - Technology that uses continued-claim voice response units to link claimants to State job banks and America's Job Bank.
- **Increase Service Capacity.** States were encouraged to seek ways to increase their flexibility to match local need for reemployment services to local capacity for providing these services. Recognizing that in some States, increasing the number of front-line staff may not be an option within their current budgets, ETA encouraged States at the time to consider other options for ensuring that referred claimants receive the reemployment services that they need in order to attain employment. This included collaborating with other workforce development service providers who provide reemployment services.
- **Automate Service Plans.** In order to facilitate the tracking of referred claimants' service participation, ETA recommended that States automate service plans for referred claimants. According to Departmental studies, numerous States report using an automated tracking system in which each claimant's individual service plan is entered into a computer system so that the claimant's progress in services can be automatically tracked against the plan.

Clearly, the one biggest change from 1997 is the impact that technology has had on all aspects of services--both the UI claim process as well as the kinds of reemployment services that are provided to UI claimants to help them return to work. But as the following sections in this paper will show, many of the interventions that have been successful in the last few years are very similar to the recommendations made nearly 15 years ago.

III. Overview of States/Locals Practices in Connecting UI Claimants to Workforce System/Reemployment Services

During the summer of 2008 and into the first quarter of 2009, ETA sponsored a series of Regional Forums on Reemployment. These culminated in a national summit conducted in Baltimore in January 2009. These events focused on the implementation of the American Recovery and Reemployment Act and increasing reemployment services through the workforce system.

The backdrop to these forums was that there was a significant increase in numbers of individuals receiving UI across the country and a huge increase in traffic at the One-Stop Centers. As a result, States looked at ways to shift staff and processes in an effort to find creative solutions to meet demand at the point of service.

ETA's ongoing effort to redesign reemployment functions and services include meeting the needs of unemployed workers, linking workforce and economic development functions, and developing and implementing strategies to support a workforce that is competitive in the global economy. Common themes across all the forums included:

- providing flexible service delivery,
- conducting skills assessment,
- exploiting technology and electronic tools, and
- collecting, analyzing and providing access to actionable workforce data.

A significant portion of the Reemployment Forums focused on the growing gap between the UI system and the rest of the publicly-funded workforce system and how best to reconnect them.

The following highlight findings and recommendations from the summit and forums as they relate to strengthening the UI-Workforce connection. All of these findings and recommendations have been or are being implemented to some extent in states and local areas.

Summary of Reemployment Summit and Forums Findings and Recommendations

- Many states have increased the use of profiling to identify UI claimants likely to exhaust their benefits and link them with job openings that match their skills and experience.
- States have increased collaboration and integration in One-Stop Centers by cross-training staff.
- States are integrating labor market information into career counseling to more efficiently link job seekers with openings.
- States are minimizing repeat data collection by sharing data between programs (where appropriate).

- Transition teams or Rapid Response teams for large layoffs have increased to mobilize resources to serve affected workers and introduce them to the workforce system sooner into the layoff process.
- States are increasing the use of data mining to link job seekers with employers who are not engaged with the workforce system.
- Web 2.0 tools such as Twitter, social and business networking sites and text messaging are increasingly being used in some states and local areas for outreach, job referrals and available services.
- States are beginning to add mapping and Geographical Interface Systems (GIS) features to labor exchanges.
- States have increased their on-line tools such as assessment tools, and resume writing and interviewing skills workshops for job seekers

Survey of State Workforce Agency Administrators

The National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) commissioned a series of surveys in 2009 and 2010 to assess the state of the publicly-funded workforce system as it responds to the recession of 2008/2009. Among these reports are several surveys of State Workforce Administrators on the outcome of the efforts put into place as the result of Recovery Act funding and a comprehensive examination of One-Stop Career Centers.

In one survey, NASWA reported the following observations or achievements following implementation of the Recovery Act workforce provisions/funding:

- There was increased and improved coordination between UI and workforce systems (reemployment and job training services).
- Recovery Act funding allowed for improved triage of job seekers and expanded staff capacity to assess customers and conduct skills transferability analysis.
- Most states indicated a priority of linking reemployment services (RES) to UI claimants including: job finding and placement services; job search workshops; assessment and career counseling; making available LMI; and, integration of Employment Service and UI information technology to better serve customers.

This same survey indicated that the majority of states reported that their number one priority was to use Recovery Act funds to expand services to UI claimants. These services were guided, in large measure, by the use of UI profiling systems to identify job seekers most likely in need of additional assistance. A general strategy reported by the states through the survey was better coordination of WIA, RES and Wagner-Peyser funding to provide UI claimants with a full array of services. Examples of expanded services to UI claimants found in the survey included:

- Use UI profiling to prioritize services
- Increase in the number of job search/assistance workshops
- Increased use of assessment and career counseling services, including more staff assisted and one-on-one career guidance and counseling
- More referrals to job training and/or job openings
- Increased integration of ES and UI information technology systems resulting in immediate and automated job openings being sent to UI claimants
- Increase in the number of UI claimants receiving on-site, in-person support
- Increased oversight and use of the UI work test which ensures that UI claimants are actively looking for work
- Increased use of Individual Reemployment Plans
- Increasing the capacity of staff to employ technology tools (profiling, AutoCoder, LMI, etc.) to link reemployment services to UI claimants.

Nearly all states that responded to this survey indicated that the Recovery Act funding had allowed for closer coordination between UI and One-Stop services. In the same survey, states reported that they had exhausted, or were about to exhaust their Recovery Act funds for workforce programs. The results indicated that many of the coordination activities would not be sustainable without continued funding.

Examination of One Stop Career Centers and Workforce Services

The Brookings Institution, with support from the Hamilton Project, completed an assessment of the One-Stop Career Center system in April 2009. It provided detailed information on the cost of providing core services (career counseling, skills workshops, LMI, job matching and training) and who receives support. With respect to this project it discusses various strategies and approaches that help transition UI claimants back into the workforce.

The first recommendation made in the report was the need to improve UI claimant job search assistance and work search screening. The author cites research that shows high quality and intensive job search assistance results in faster job placement without an appreciable decrease in future earnings. A similar improvement in job placement can be traced to increased work-test enforcement (ensuring that UI claimants are actively seeking employment and/or training). The author posits that additional funding for expanded core services to UI claimants would be more than offset by decreases in UI outlays.

The author highlights a pilot program conducted in Washington State which demonstrated the increased return on investment tied to more intensive services and direct engaging UI claimants. The study showed that self reporting resulted in increased periods of income support while requiring in-person reporting of work-search results reduced payments. A similar improvement was shown in a pilot where

UI claimants were offered a cash bonus for quickly returning to work. These results indicate that more intensive screening and services reduce the period of income support.

Tied to improved and expanded services are investments in information technology infrastructure. State-of-the-art systems in use in several states continuously monitor job listings and automatically notify job seekers via e-mail of potential job openings. These systems include easy to use on-line sites to collect information and allow job seekers to link with public labor exchanges. Besides providing a critical service, these automated systems free up staff to provide more complex and intensive services yielding a double benefit.

The report summarizes its findings by highlighting five recommended actions to expedite the job search and placement process:

1. Increase the frequency of UI claimant call-ins for work-search screening
2. Provide high-quality job search assistance
3. Expand job listings in public labor exchanges to increase the possibility of a match between an opening and job seeker
4. Provide more thorough assessment and counseling for prospective trainees
5. Make additional investments in job training programs

In summary, the Brookings study recommends a \$4 billion increase in One-Stop funding to expand services, particularly to UI claimants. It goes on to suggest a revamping of performance measures to more effectively allocate limited training resources. This approach would fund the hiring of nearly 40,000 staff members at One-Stops to provide expanded job search assistance and training. The author estimates a 3.9 to 1 return on investment through reduced income support and higher tax revenues.

IV. Promising/Proven Practices

The research and findings presented above have identified a number of promising practices to facilitate the connection of UI claimants to core workforce services. These practices can be separated into three broad categories: Information Technology, Policies and Procedures, and Capacity Building. In this section are presented recommendations that could improve connectivity between the UI and Workforce systems.

Information Technology

A number of states have addressed the challenges of the recent recession by employing technology systems to serve more customers with limited staff and declining budgets. A good example is how one state has implemented an automated system that allows UI claimants to schedule return calls when there is heavy call volume. The system allows individuals who will have a wait time of more than two minutes to elect to opt out of the call. While similar to systems used by airlines and other high traffic

call centers, it goes further by allowing users the option of leaving a call-back number and the ability to specify the day and time for the return call.

This system has been quickly embraced by individuals seeking information on UI benefits as well as workforce system information. An added bonus is that it is expected to save money by more efficiently using existing phone systems.

Another state has set out to design a centralized data management system that will serve as a point of intake for all residents seeking support. It will expedite case management, facilitate service delivery, and allow for efficient reporting. This system builds on the One-Stop premise of providing customers with all of the program services that they are eligible for at one location and with one application. The old business model forced customers to apply for program services multiple times at multiple locations, physically as well as virtually. This resulted from each of the employment and training programs and benefit providers having their own offices and information systems that didn't "talk" to any of the other ones. This "siloes" approach leads to increased customer frustration, inefficient staff workload, and data redundancy and degraded data integrity.

In response, several states are in the process of linking labor exchanges and unemployment insurance systems, and including the human services agencies that serve TANF participants. The general approach of these systems is to share information in real time so that the activities of mutual or co-enrolled customers are also present in the real-time reports. This data is then available to front line staff to allow for connection of UI claimants to workforce services. This new business model of a centralized point of intake, case management, service delivery, and reporting will enable One-Stop center staff to enter intake information for customers just once for multiple employment and training programs and to retrieve it statewide. These systems also include functionality allowing One-Stop center staff to query and retrieve information from legacy systems - Employment Services (ES), Unemployment Insurance (UI), and social service support programs such as Food Stamps, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), and SSI (Supplemental Security Income).

Another state has reduced administrative costs associated with records management and increase productivity by more efficiently processing cases. The state engaged stakeholders to design and create a central document management system, which includes a web-based user interface, custom search, scalable infrastructure and applications. The system has increased process performance, reduced cycle times and improved productivity.

A number of states have implemented automated systems to match UI claimants with job listings. Notable among these systems are AutoCoder and OccuCoder. These are software applications that do automated occupational coding using the O*NET-SOC occupation codes. These software tools are used to help identify the appropriate occupational code for individuals looking for a job or applying for Unemployment Insurance. Job openings in online job banks are also coded with the closest O*NET occupational code describing the job. Job seekers can then be easily matched with job openings through the use of these tools. CESER/ITSC has just completed development of OccuCoder, which is the next generation of automated occupational coding. These systems provide workforce system staff a head start in helping job seekers identify opportunities. The practice of linking UI claimants to job openings has contributed to reducing UI claims duration.

Policies and Procedures

A number of states have integrated UI and workforce services to better serve job seekers and to reduce administrative costs. The integration of services among multiple workforce development programs is accomplished by such means as co-enrollment, staff cross training, common MIS, or other means at the One-Stop level; or through cross-program performance measures.

A 2006 evaluation study conducted by SPRA examined six states (Florida, Michigan, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Utah) that have made workforce services integration a priority. In the study they identified key leadership elements that were necessary for successful implementation.

These included engaging multiple state levels of leadership:

- Governor's leadership is critical.
- Bipartisan support can smooth the way for changes requiring legislative action and reduce the risk posed by partisan shifts in the governorship and legislature.
- Governor's cabinet must also be committed to the change. High-level gubernatorial appointees across the spectrum of changing agencies and programs must be committed to the proposed change.
- Local leaders must be empowered to make decisions that allow them to tailor the change to their areas, in the context of strong state leadership. Thus, the state must provide training and evaluate efforts in order to maintain adherence to the change.
- Local supervisors and line staff must be "brought on-board" to support the change. Supervisors are a critical link between administration and front line staff. They have the potential to support or derail the process.

The researchers found that the local system should be operated with the state's imprimatur. Survey respondents had different opinions on the importance of local level involvement and leadership in change efforts, but all supported a strong state role.

Capacity Building

Several of the cited studies address the issue of staff capacity and training. Pilot programs expanding workforce services to UI claimants called for flexible, creative, and enthusiastic staff experienced in serving job seekers likely to exhaust their benefits. Implement new approaches to serving customers will require an investment in change management. This could include defining and instilling new values, attitudes, norms, and behaviors within an organization; building consensus among customers and stakeholders on specific changes designed to better meet their needs; and planning, testing, and implementing all aspects of the transition from one organizational structure or business process to another.

V. Summary

The studies cited in this report all indicate that worker profiling linked to core workforce services yields shorter duration claims histories and higher average wages for placed workers. To achieve these outcomes states must consider investments in Information Technology infrastructure, process improvements and/or staff training and development. The obvious challenge is how to implement these changes in the face of declining budgets. The goal of the UI Connectivity Work Group will be to examine these options, apply the membership's extensive insight, and formulate options for the greater workforce system to consider.

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Appendix D – Glossary of Terms

As-Is: existing state of the UI and workforce systems' connection

BRI: Benefit Rights Information - information on their right to appeal that is provided to individuals denied UI benefits due to lack of meeting the eligibility requirements.

CESER: Center for Employment Security Education and Research

Customer Bill of Rights: Rights, as proposed by the workgroup, that a customer should be able to expect when they interact with the public workforce system

DOL: U.S. Department of Labor

Emerging National Vision: Vision for a future-state system that better links UI claimants with reemployment opportunities and services

ES: Employment Service

ESPL: Employment Service Program Letter

ETA: Employment and Training Administration

Ideal Vision: “Can-Be” vision statement developed by the workgroup for improving the UI claims process and delivery of reemployment services

ITSC: Information Technology Support Center

IVR: Interactive Voice Response

Menu of services: Services that ideally should be made available to all UI claimants (and job seekers) entering the workforce system

mySkills myFuture: New ETA website that identifies job openings based on past or current occupations

NASWA: National Association of State Workforce Agencies

National Workgroup: Individuals at the federal, state and local levels of the publicly-funded workforce system that developed the Emerging National Vision and recommendations.

NLX: National Labor Exchange

Occu/Auto-Coder: Automated tool for job searching

One Stop Career Center: Locally-operated career center offering publicly-funded workforce services for job seekers and employers.

O*NET/SOC: Occupational Network coding system/Standard Occupational Codes

PII: Personally Identifiable Information

REA: Reemployment and Eligibility Assessments

Real time triage: Process that uses currently available assessment tools to determine the prospects for each claimant to become reemployed and to direct job seekers to appropriate workforce services

RO: Reemployment Orientation

Social networking: Use of electronic tools to build relationships between people with shared interests or activities – in this case, to secure employment. Such tools include Facebook, My Space, LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube.

Synthesis Paper: Overview of currently available research on current practices, methods and processes used by states and locals to connect UI claimants to workforce system services

UI: Unemployment Insurance

Virtual system: Provides services over the phone or through the Internet

Wagner-Peyser Act (of 1933): Federal law that provides for the establishment of a national employment system and for cooperation with states in the promotion of such system. This Act was amended by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

WIA: Workforce Investment Act (of 1998), Federal law that encompasses public workforce programs. It amended earlier law (Job Training Partnership Act) in order to increase business participation in the local delivery of Workforce Development Services, as well as seamless services.

WPRS: Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services