**Workforce 3One**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**Rapid Response Reporting for Trade Adjustment Assistance**

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BRIAN KEATING: So welcome to today's "Rapid Response Reporting for Trade Adjustment Assistance" webinar. Again, I'm Brian. Let me know if you need anything, technically speaking.

But without any further ado, I'm going to turn things over to Robert Hoekstra with the OTAA national staff. Robert, take it away.

ROBERT HOEKSTRA: Thank you very much. I want to thank Brian and the rest of his folks on helping us get this set up. It looks like we've got a great turnout today. There's somewhere in the neighborhood of 30 people and it looks like a lot of people are joining together. So that's great. I know that this was a little short notice on this presentation and I apologize for that. This presentation is being recorded and it will be available.

There's contact information at the end of the webinar. So if you have any colleagues who feel they missed out, have additional questions, they can certainly reach out to us. As they said, my name is Robert Hoekstra. I am with the National Office of Trade Adjustment Assistance along with Susan Worden who is also here. We also are lucky to have these state presenters with us, Jay, Jerry, Tammy, Patrick and Leslie from Arkansas, Wisconsin, Oklahoma, Illinois and Massachusetts respectively.

And we're going to move forward and talk a little bit about the agenda. This will be really quick, but we're going to talk about Rapid Response and TAA, why it's important, how Rapid Response is looking for TAA from an historic standpoint, how it's going now and then a lot of what we're going to talk about today is in state practice examples. So it'll give people ideas of what other states are doing in order to get Rapid Response documented and of course, we're going to close out with some resources that'll help you moving forward.

Rapid Response and trade adjustment assistance, Rapid Response, as you all know, is designed to help us quickly coordinate and bring resources to those affected by layoffs. It's particularly important so that we can minimize what's going on with the disruptions that are caused by layoffs, make sure people get access to the resources that all of you help us provide and make sure that people have all the appropriate information.

Rapid Response is supposed to include both public and private resources and it's focused on being proactive, business-focused and flexible. So depending on the type of layoff, we try and get information out quickly, but we try and get the appropriate information for the right Rapid Response. This presentation, though, is going to talk a little bit more about how we get that documented in the TAPR.

The reporting aspect of Rapid Response, as we'll get into, has been kind of an historic challenge for us and we really want to make sure that when we do Rapid Response, and you guys are doing this outreach, that we get it well documented so that we know what's going on. So Rapid Response teams identify layoffs through a couple of different sources.

WARN Notices, as you know, are only available for – or only required for large layoffs. There's a lot of criteria that I'm not going to get into, but it only gives us a partial picture of when layoffs are going to occur. We see public announcements, whether that be disclosures by companies themselves or news articles. We get direct contact from stakeholders and that may be interested actual workers that know that there's a layoff coming, it may be union officials or even Congressional staff.

And uniquely, in trade, we also have this nice TAA Petition device. So when petitions get filed, people are required to file it both with the state and the federal government. When we do get a petition filed with us, you also get a notification sent out that gives you a list of what cases we've been instituting, who the appropriate contacts are. And that's a great source of information for what layoffs are going on and who to talk to about what is needed.

And Rapid Response reporting really makes a difference. When participants get Rapid Response, they get services more quickly and notably, they have better outcomes. So as you can see here, unemployment rate as well as retention rate are higher for those people who receive Rapid Response and that makes a lot of sense, because it's about bringing the resources to them and getting them adjusted as quickly as possible.

But reporting Rapid Response is more complicated than that and there's a duality in all reporting. One part of it is what we call good reporting, means that the numbers that we get are as close to what's going on in reality. So data is supposed to model what's going on in the real world. And the second part of that is that obviously, we want the good outcomes. So at the same time as we say we want Rapid Response reporting to actually tell us when you're doing Rapid Response, we also want the amount of Rapid Response that's going on to be high.

And sometimes, though, we'll see that those can come into conflict, but the data portion we really want to see is true to reality as possible. And this helps us give some really granular analysis. So as a lot of you are aware, trading was just reauthorized back at the very end of June and that was a very long process with a lot of people involved to get information disseminated to all the various Congressional members and everyone else involved in that reauthorization process.

And we get very interesting data analysis requests and Rapid Response is one of them. A lot of people are interested in seeing what we're doing and how well we're doing it and Rapid Response is a big part of that. Granular analysis comes up as a major request. So instead of a national number of how much are we doing Rapid Response or how are states doing Rapid Response, it's a question of different slices.

So for example, we can get a request that says, let's find out by industry how well we're doing with Rapid Response. And being able to break down into what ends up being very small portions of our total participant pool and have good data means that the overall data has to be almost pristine. And so we really rely on you guys to give us good data so that we can give that analysis.

And you can see that even as one particular state has struggled in an area, if they happen to be the industry we're looking at or a major component of whatever small slice we're looking at, we end up with very misleading data just because of one small part of the country isn't giving us a true picture of what's going on. So it's really important and it really helps drive coordination and marketing on your end, but it also helps drive our initiatives to identify what we're doing right and what we're doing wrong.

Rapid Response for TAA. So we're going to talk about the history here. So the data elements in the TAPR 921, you guys should all be familiar with this, we mark 1 (one) if they received Rapid Response, 0 (zero) if they didn't and blank if it's not applicable. This data should be filled in the same quarter as the date of eligibility. And it's reported in the TAPR, Trade Activity Participant Report.

You should also be aware that along with WIOA we are disseminating what's called PIRL, which I honestly don't remember the acronym for at the moment, which – oh, here we go, Performance Individual Record Layout way at the bottom, which will help us standardize this data model across programs, but it has a lot of TAA elements that we've been doing and that really helps –

And so it's going to be a very big part of that. So take a look at the PIRL elements. They're a little bit different, not this particular element from what we're doing in TAPR. You'll notice some other things. So for example, there is a Rapid Response event ID that we – (inaudible) – stop for in TAPR. It didn't make it into the PIRL partly because the feedback that we received is that most states aren't using that element, but take a look at that.

So quick point here, Rapid Response versus TAA orientation, it's really important to recognize that Rapid Response doesn't necessarily mean TAA information. I know a lot of times we go out to companies and provide Rapid Response before we know whether there's certification, we know whether or not a petition is likely to have a particular outcome. And so it's a little misleading to provide TAA benefit information in some of those contexts up front, but we don't actually require that.

So if you do Rapid Response, even if you never talk about TAA for those folks, you definitely should document that in the TAPR. It just needs to meet the same Rapid Response criteria that they disseminate under – or that is required under WIA, now WIOA. As noted, if you have any questions or comments as we're going through this, please throw them in the chat. I know I'm going relatively quickly through this. So I don't want to leave anyone behind. We're going to talk a little bit about the history. Rapid Response reporting in the early days of TAPR 2009/2010, very little Rapid Response rates.

They were only 20 to 30 percent. A quarter of people were getting Rapid Response. And when we started rolling out data integrity – so TAADI data integrity is in the initiative that we began piloting in 2012. It helps us validate or it helps us get an indication where there might be a problem with data so that we can follow up. And as you – probably everyone on the call is familiar, we email this out with every quarterly file.

We say, here's where you stand on your statistics for data integrity and they would formalize in TEGL 04-14. That TEGL has a lot of documentation. I encourage people to take a look, not just at the main document, but take a look at the attachments it has. If you want to know how we calculate percentage on anything in there, it's all documented and it's a really great resource. TAADI is – I want to talk a little bit about that duality of data again.

TAADI is designed to flag those situations where we don't think the data is telling the truth about what's going on on the ground. And that means not that 50 percent, as it was originally outlined, is always wrong, but that if we see a state reporting 0, 20 percent, we know you guys are doing a lot of Rapid Response. And so chances are that that gap is a result of a gap in telling the story in data, not necessarily that you're not doing Rapid Response.

And so this is about making sure we flag those situations where the data probably needs to look more like reality so that we can get really good data. In combination with that, we know Rapid Response is relatively high. In fiscal year '15, we raised this one target from 50 percent to 55 percent. And to emphasize how important this is, this is the only measure we raised this year. Rapid Response is critically important and we get asked about it a lot.

So it's very important we get good data. So here's the history of Rapid Response rates over time. You can see way back in 2009, we are down at 22 percent. We come up a lot and part of that's due to data integrity and having people look back at their data. We now are a little over 60 percent at 61 percent. And that represents, obviously, almost a three-fold increase in that reporting.

But I think in reality, our Rapid Response rates are actually higher than that. And as we get to the state example, you'll see that there's a number of different ways to get that data into the TAPR system and the states that we're highlighting have done a really good job of that and that's why they have very high Rapid Response percentages. So our current status, right now, National Rapid Response rate is a little over 60 percent.

Most states are passing the data integrity measure. Right now, this quarter, 59 percent of states passed the 55 percent data integrity measure, but there's a very wide variation in states by percentage. All states have different processes and when we get to the state examples, you'll see that there isn't a single process that gets good results. There's a lot of different ways to do it. But making sure you look at that process, get it documented, get people trained on following the process is really important.

Let me just show you that variation. It's fairly substantial. So we have some states that are reporting at 100 percent, some that are reporting at 0, some at 70, some at 20. It's really all over the place. And it's actually surprisingly even distribution around just over where our measure is. So we're really talking about how to get these states closer together, preferably closer together on the high end.

Although, I will say that a state that's reporting 100 percent every quarter, we have to second-guess whether or not that's a true reflection of reality as well. So now the fun part is that we're going to get to some state practice examples and we're going to kick off with Jay from Arkansas.

JAY BASSETT: Thank you, Robert. Hello, this is Jay Bassett and I'm the division chief with the Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force in Arkansas. The task force was legislatively mandated back in 1983 as the first responder for the state to any announced or known business layoff or closure. So the task force does comply with all the Rapid Response functions in Arkansas.

And we realized a while back that employers get confused and distracted when there are multiple contacts within the state agencies. So our Rapid Response teams strives to be the primary point of contact with the employer throughout the entire dislocation event. And when the Rapid Response team engages with an employer, one of the questions that they generally will ask is whether or not competition has been a positive factor to the dislocation event.

As you know, whether it's import of competing goods or export of production. And in Arkansas, we believe and have been proven in many cases to have a higher percentage rate of certifications when our Rapid Response team is the one that actually submits the petition for trade certification to the department of labor. And when we're working with an employer, we encourage them to allow us, the Rapid Response team, to file the petitions on their behalf. That's not always the case.

Right now, the significant majority of all petitions out of Arkansas are filed by the state represented by our task force. And the Rapid Response team continues to track that petition process. They facilitate and engage department of labor whenever necessary and continue to keep in contact with the employers regarding the status of that petition process. In Arkansas, our Rapid Response team and our trade programs operate under the same organizational umbrella.

Literally, our program managers are just a couple of offices away from each other. So they're in regular engagement about status of petitions. And also, the Rapid Response team and the trade program have weekly status meetings to discuss what's going on, what companies are experiencing closures, who may or may not be eligible for trade, what's the status of our trade petitions that are currently being reviewed and also, when current petitions expire.

Now, even if a company has been identified as trade certified, our Rapid Response team still remains in active engagement and they continue to be the primary point of contact for workers' lists and any updates to those lists, which they then forward on to our trade team. Our trade program then takes those lists and manually updates them into the case management system, which feeds the TAPR.

So all workers' lists are derived from our Rapid Response team and when they receive updates, they scrub those lists to avoid any duplications prior to forwarding it to TAA. So not only are trade-eligible workers directed to the trade program by Rapid Response, but Rapid Response continues to engage them and provide services even after certification for trade eligibility. One of the few exceptions when trade staff will directly contact the employer is when they're trying to coordinate a trade information session prior to a layoff.

Oftentimes, as you know, we hope to have these sessions onsite before the workers actually lose their positions, but throughout the process, our Rapid Response teams and trade staff are in constant communication. We also work actively with our local workforce managers to let them know what's going on and ask that if they have any questions of the employers that they funnel those through Rapid Response as well, again, just to avoid multiple contacts from within the agency.

And this does promote a lot more transparency, agency-wide. That is, in a nutshell, how we utilize Rapid Response and trade within Arkansas and I am open to questions and my contact information is provided on the PowerPoint and I encourage anyone to contact me if you've got anymore questions.

MR. HOEKSTRA: Thanks, Jay. I really appreciate that. We're going to wait just a quick second. If you guys have any questions, type them into the main chat about Jay's presentation and we'll just pause for a quick moment.

MR. KEATING: All right. Just a reminder, Melissa asked a great question about the recording. We are recording today. It'll be available in about two business days. We want to encourage you throughout today's webinar to ask your questions or make comments. You can do that in the chat window on your screen. So if you have a question or comment so far, go ahead and type those in now.

MR. HOEKSTRA: All right. Well, I'm not seeing anything popping up. We'll catch questions again at the end. In the meantime, we're going to move on to Jerry in Wisconsin.

JERRY KLUGE: Thanks, Robert. Good afternoon. In Wisconsin, our participant activity tracking system covers TAA and all WIA titles, as I'm sure yours do as well, along with special grants, like NEG and state's special response. Though previously, we had relied on our WIA dislocated worker partners to report whether a participant received Rapid Response services, but that was not consistently done.

There was little incentive or really, a requirement to do so other than for inclusion in those special grants, like NEG where the proposed grant activity must be based on surveyed needs of the participants, which happens during the Rapid Response process. And we did use that as a proxy to report Rapid Response if they were co-enrolled, but it didn't truly capture all the Rapid Response to TAA participants.

You know, we did see some improvement as we had more NEG dual enrollment grants, but we weren't making our 50 percent threshold consistently. So to improve that consistency in capturing the information, we added a direct question to our TAA application form at intake or really, it was somewhat of an indirect question. We try to avoid using jargon like Rapid Response. So we asked, have you already attended a group meeting about layoff assistance for workers from this company, yes or no?

Now, at group intakes, when filling out the application, we explain what we mean by this question and we remind them as to the dates of any known Rapid Response sessions. You know, we're talking about those meetings at the union hall last April, etc. So that question is answered right at our application along with all the other vital information that we collect to determine individual eligibility.

Now, afterwards, we did and still do some cross-checking against Rapid Response attendance lists from the major layoffs as available and we found that our application form response to be consistent with those lists and accurate. Nobody was reporting that they had attended when we didn't have any evidence of that nor vice-versa. People were forgetting to mark that when we had clear evidence that they were at Rapid Response sessions.

Now, that didn't immediately improve our overall Rapid Response rate. We implemented this probably in early 2014 law when we had a low number of new certifications and new applicants. So it took a while. It took a few quarters to bring up our yearly rate. Ultimately, we had- several major high profile layoffs where we knew there were well attended Rapid Response sessions. And so that help bring our rate up when the TAA petition was certified.

But even then, with our cross-checks, it didn't increase as much as our cross-checks indicated it should have. So we did some troubleshooting and they determined that it was our reporting issue. For those new applicants early on without a TAA participation service reported, we weren't reporting data other than the basic demographic characteristics, which didn't include Rapid Response.

I guess we overlooked initially that added requirement to report Rapid Response in the first quarter of eligibility termination. So we figured that out, we modified our programming to include that Rapid Response data element on the TAPR, even for applicants without a participation or performance service. And so that really improved our reporting percentage and I think it accurate achieved it.

It addressed the intent of the data integrity measure for Rapid Response. So overall, I would say Wisconsin's improvement in reporting that was due to a combination of consistently collecting that Rapid Response information by directly asking TAA applicants with a double-check against list and accurately reporting that data on the TAPR. That's about all I have.

MR. HOEKSTRA: Great, Jerry. Thanks.

MR. KLUGE: You're welcome.

MR. HOEKSTRA: And it's really important what Jerry said about not only is it them getting a good question upfront, but also, checking on the backend to kind of validate against what lists that they do have. We're going to pause for just a minute to see if there's any other questions for Jerry.

MR. KEATING: All right. And also, we can invite you to go ahead and let us know what state or presenter you're asking a question of. That would also be great.

MR. HOEKSTRA: Thanks. All right. It doesn't look like anymore are coming in on Wisconsin. I'm going to introduce Tammy from Oklahoma.

TAMMY WOOD: Hi. My name is Tammy Wood. I'm the TAA coordinator with the State of Oklahoma. And probably the reason I got included in this is because I do a lot of whining about the TAPR. I kind of got thrown headlong into getting our data integrity report up to snuff and getting everything fixed and trying to resolve some issues with our reporting. And so when we talked about Rapid Response, in Oklahoma, we do a pretty good job of Rapid Response.

We work with a couple other agencies. Our agency doesn't handle Rapid Response, but I'm always in touch with the Rapid Response coordinator. Our local offices are always informing us if they know about layoffs. Everybody's in communication. We always share any rumor or any knowledge we have of layoffs so that we can do a Rapid Response event. If a petition gets certified, we always let the Rapid Response coordinator know, but everybody tries to stay in the loop so that we can just be informative to everyone.

With our state, we have on our online website, you can download a Rapid Response handbook. You can go on YouTube and you can see videos of what's presented at a Rapid Response event. There's videos on YouTube that shows that. So we're doing pretty good about identifying companies and going out to them if we're aware that there's a potential layoff or a layoff. The thing is, our reporting is not really reflecting that very well.

So the first thing we had to do is try to identify, first of all, how the data was being captured in our system. And we contacted one of the companies that's responsible for collection of data and asked them how they captured that data element and we learned that it's tied to the company name. In the system, there needed to be company name tied to the individual that got let go. Those companies are only listed if a Rapid Response event occurred.

And if that was in there, if there was a company name represented, that we'd count as a positive toward a Rapid Response being provided to that individual. And so we went in to look at everyone's files and everyone that didn't have a company name listed, if it was missing, we filled it in. We contacted the local offices and did some training and said, this needs to be included so that we'll get an accurate count.

We changed our state practice to make sure that when we get a new application, we go in the system and make sure that that was being identified, if possible, if a person had received the Rapid Response. Well, our numbers came up, everything looked fine, did great. The next quarter, our numbers dropped significantly. They went down probably from 70 or 80 percent to closer to 5 percent. And so at that point, we're like, what happened?

We went in and checked and we had all these clients and the company name was listed. Well, somewhere along the way, all the sudden now there's a Rapid Response event number being assigned to companies and our data collection is now collecting information based on a number. And neither TAA nor the Rapid Response person was aware that that was a change that was made, who made it, how it got made, when it got made or anything. We started doing some checking and WIA had been instrumental getting that changed, but it didn't trickle down to us.

We weren't made aware that that was a change. Well, ultimately, now every time a new petition is certified, there's a Rapid Response identifiable number associated with the company name. And so every new petition, we're not going to have a problem if a Rapid Response occurred and when we open up enrollment for a client. If we put that company name and there's a Rapid Response, we get it counted.

Now the downfall is that all the older companies, and we're reporting for nine quarters, it didn't address any of our older companies. So we're having to manually look at each client, look what petition they were served under, identify whether Rapid Response event occurred with that company. And right now, we're manually recording whether they recertified that or not. Until we can get it – we're going to work with WIA and Rapid Response to assign numbers to prior events to the ones that have happened previously so that we can get that fixed in the system and then hopefully everything –

Then we'll just go back to making sure everybody's aware they need to be recording everything in the system when they enroll someone. Once we get all that lined out, our numbers should stay pretty close to true.

MR. HOEKSTRA: Thanks, Tammy. That's great. I think that's a really great example, because it not only emphasizes how important it is to coordinate with the other groups involved, particularly WIA and WIOA, but also, how data integrity forces people to start asking those questions and talking to the other parts that tend to be siloed to figure out what's going on with the data. Any other questions for Tammy before we move on?

MR. KEATING: All right. Again, go ahead and type those into the chat. You can type them in at anytime.

MR. HOEKSTRA: All right. We're going to move on to Patrick in Illinois.

PATRICK CAMPBELL: Great. Again, I'm Patrick Campbell. I'm the one of two regional managers for the state. I deal with the northern half of the state and my counterpart, Deb Waldruff (ph) deals with the southern part. We always joke and say, I have the people and she has the territory. So I think I-80 is basically our dividing line. But what we do is we do have two trade coordinators and the Rapid Response office generally works very closely with their office to insure that Rapid Response occurs for all trade events.

Illinois has had a dislocation event tracking system, which is incorporated with our Illinois Workforce Development System now for about, I believe it's over three decades now. So we have thousands, a vast array of companies and information that are in our dislocation event tracking system. I previously heard Tammy talk about that they assign an event ID and that's what we've always done for our events.

So those event IDs are directly incorporated into the customer case management file on the Illinois Workforce Development System. So they actually put that event ID in. We can track who those customers are and what event they're coming from. Rapid Response staff are responsible for entering all data into the dislocation event tracking system, which has a number of different screens, whether it be regular WARN or whether it be trade.

They would be responsible for all data that goes in there and then they are tracked on a quarterly basis to insure that data is actually put into the system and then they work with their local workforce areas to insure that any local event information is also put into the system. We do do Rapid Response onsite for trade events when we are aware of them being a trade event. I would like to just throw in one thing, we sure would like to see the list of folks be included and sent out to the states when companies are certified.

So when department of labor trade office gets those lists of employees, we sure would like to get that as well. So we don't always get that information. But the debt system has been useful to us in helping us track who we've done Rapid Response for and what services, whether it be the initial onsite meeting, trade orientation, regular pre-layoff workshop, all of the necessary granular level issues that are associated with specific trade events are all tracked on the dislocation event tracking system.

We generally, like I said, do Rapid Response for all trade events. For those local events that are determined after we have already done regular Rapid Response, of course, we reach back out to them based on the lists that we get from our unemployment insurance office and we initiate additional orientations and follow up with two additional requests that they participate in Rapid Response activities through an orientation at the local workforce area.

I would invite anyone that is interested, I know my coworker Janet Rosentreter, many of you may know her, or Susan Bock (ph) have done some presentations on the dislocation event tracking system and we're quite proud of it. And like I said, we have a lot of detailed information, that we can pull multiple reports and it can help us, given our state size, determine what has occurred with each individual events regarding Rapid Response.

MR. HOEKSTRA: Great, Patrick. That was very informative. It's Illinois' great example of a system where you have a data event for every single layoff. Just a quick point on Patrick's comment for the state lists, the national office doesn't actually collect worker-specific lists for layoffs. We generally get a number and part of that is often, we are certifying companies before they know how many people, but not necessarily who is going to be included in the worker lists.

One of the things we are working to change soon is we send out a company contact at institution, which is great, but often, those change in the course of the investigation. So we're looking at being able to send out a list of the company contacts along with the determination so that you guys know who to reach out to if you haven't been able to get a hold of someone. Any other questions for Patrick before we move on? Great. Next one is Les in Massachusetts who unfortunately couldn't make it today.

But I wanted to highlight Massachusetts, particularly, because they have a little bit of a different system. In each of their local 16 areas, they track their participants and they start tracking at the time of Rapid Response. So when they do mass meetings for Rapid Response, they actually go through the work of registering every person's information, including social security number, date of birth and graphic veteran's status with each and every layoff in their system.

And as a result, when a participant comes back into their system to receive other benefits, like TAA, they already know whether or not they received Rapid Response. And so they do that tracking on the individual basis instead of registering which companies they've been doing Rapid Response with. I obviously am not from Massachusetts. So I'm not a great contact for that, but if you have more questions about how Massachusetts manages to do that, which is quite an accomplishment, feel free to email Les. His information is on the slide.

All right. I put together this slide. This just gives a very brief summary of what we talked about with each of the states, how their process is a little bit different. I know that there's a lot of information when we go through that list of – or when each person talks and you're trying to keep things organized. This hopefully will help you do that. So refer back to this slide if you're trying to remember which state was talking about which process.

So I want to talk a little bit about the key points to take away from this. Providing reporting Rapid Response, we know, is a requirement. We also know that more of it is needed and a lot of times, while we do provide a lot of Rapid Response, there are definitely some companies and some workers who are not receiving it. We also know that Rapid Response leads to better outcomes.

We know that systematic approaches on Rapid Response, whether that be an actual automated system or manual system, but having a systematic system where people are trained, they know their roles, they get regularly trained on what to do when they run into issues and who to contact will help enhance coordination, marketing and reporting through the program. The coordination of information through Rapid Response helps us reduce duplication, increase service delivery and reporting has really improved at a national level.

And a lot of that is due to the work that you guys have done in responding to our data integrity questions. And just to illustrate, even with TAPR, while we are at 61 percent receiving Rapid Response, in the wizard, you're seeing numbers much more close to 20 and a lot of that is that for trade, we've been asking you guys to go back and look at that data. I want to encourage people not to be afraid to reach out to another state for ideas.

There's five examples here. If you need more examples or a new state contact, reach out to your regional contacts, reach out to me or Susan and let us know what you need. Let us know who you want to talk to and we can make sure to facilitate that. A lot of states are doing different things. They've got good practices in some areas and combining those good practices across states is really how we're going to make this data substantial.

So I want to loop back to a couple of questions and I'm actually going to kick a couple over to Jay. Jay, do you want to talk a little bit about Rapid Response and trade orientations?

MR. BASSETT: Certainly. As I mentioned, we do rely on our Rapid Response team to be our liaison with the employers throughout the process even once the company has been trade certified, but we do not combine our worker assistance workshops and our trade information sessions into one big session. That's just too much information overload. In Arkansas, it's not unusual for a company to have previously been trade certified or to have a unit that's currently under some trade certification.

So sometimes workers are familiar with the trade program and if that's the case in the context of a worker assistance workshop, our Rapid Response team may mention it or give a status on it if a petition has already been filed on these workers' behalf. But we do have totally separate sessions to go into the nuts and bolts regarding TAA with the workers. Now, the other question was, how do we capture Rapid Response if the individual is not registered in our system in order to add that activity?

Again, Rapid Response, we rely on our Rapid Response team to obtain the workers list from the companies. If that's not optimal, then our Rapid Response team can utilize our unemployment insurance information to create our own workers list, but even if a new client comes into an office claiming that they are eligible for the trade program benefits, we utilize Rapid Response to go back to the company, whenever possible, to verify that that employee was indeed trade effected.

And even if they had possibly worked for the company during the time period in question, we want the company to verify that they were not terminated for cause versus having been released from employment due to competition. So again, our Rapid Response team is critical to verifying trade eligibility and only until Rapid Response has verified a client's eligibility for trade services and has provided the Rapid Response information to that client, they then will verify that client's eligibility to our trade staff who then enter it into our case management system for the trade program.

MR. HOEKSTRA: Thanks, Jay. How many people are on your Rapid Response team?

MR. BASSETT: Currently, we have five, one program manager, two program monitors and two workforce specialists.

MR. HOEKSTRA: Great. Thank you very much. I'm not seeing any other questions coming in. I just have one final note. You're going to see some email dissemination at the end of this week about PIRL and asking you to review and illustrating which elements are important for TAA. I also want to direct – actually, Brian, if you wouldn't mind putting the slides back up. Thank you. There are a couple of resources that I've included at the end of the presentation.

These include how to – improving the quality of state-filed petitions, which helps us and Rapid Response. TEGL 04-14, we talked about this a little bit. This is data integrity, lots of great resources. And finally, this came out, correct me if I'm wrong, someone else, about two weeks ago. Our TEGL 05-15, which is our brand new operating instructions for our new program – (inaudible) – 2015 and I encourage everyone to look through.

There's great information in there. It took a lot of work, but it's well worth at least a look-through, because there's a lot of different things going on in our new program. Finally, for me and for Susan, you can find our contact information here and as always, on our website, you can find the state and regional contacts.

If there aren't any other questions, I thank everyone for attending. I know it was the end of the day.

(END)