**After the Journey: Building Effective Program Monitoring Systems**

And now it's my pleasure to introduce our speakers, we have a new presenter today. Jennifer Mitchell is a member of the Technical Assistance and Training program at SPR, she has over 20 years experience in workforce development, economic development and education program and policy issues. She has worked for both houses at the California State Legislature, and served a staff to many public boards including the California Joint Legislative Committee to develop a master plan for education, the state workforce investment board and CWA's board of directors. Bob Lanter is also our speaker toady, he is the new Executive Director for the California Workforce Association, he has extensive public sector experience and nonprofit experience working in the field of Workforce Development and job training. And our first speaker toady is Bob Lanter, so Bob I will turn it over to you.

Bob Lanter:

Thank you. Hello everybody and welcome to our third Webinar in our series of Webinars related to monitoring. I want to apologize right after that for my voice I'm nursing a summer cold today, and we'll try to be as clear as possible without a lot of coughing. So just bear with me and we will go ahead and begin. So many of you have known SPR Social Policy Research Associates from the research studies that they have conducted in the past, however SPR over the last few years have launched a training and technical assistance department, where they are specializing in offering training technical assistance and capacity building. Jennifer and I have both been working with SPR in this role and both have been working on this project. This project really is from ETA's office of regional management who contracted with the SPR to provide technical assistant and training for organizations and agencies such as yourselves. Particularly those who participate in federally funded workforce programs and initiatives for the current program year, in this role SPR is providing TA services on behalf of all six regional offices across the country, and for the monitoring Webinar series we want to give a special thanks to regions one, two and six for supporting us.

For this Webinar series we use the metaphor of a road trip, any good road trip as you all know starts with preparation. In part one of this Webinar series we looked at developing your state approach to monitoring, ensuring that all the facets of monitoring reviewed and in placed before heading out on the road. Next we went out on our journey and in part two we spoke about the preparations the states need to take to conduct the onsite monitoring reviews and various quality element that should be incorporated into those reviews. We talked a lot about the importance reviewing participant case files, and also conducting interviews with job seekers, customers and partners of Americas Job Centers. Lastly in this session title after the journey we will focus on steps that need to occur once the desk review and onsite reviews are completed. We will look at the reporting process and how best to communicate those results. Before we dive in let me explain a little about the process we went through to develop the content for this Webinars, we held information of discussions with staff responsible for monitoring in 15 states across the country, and also had discussions with federal project officers in all of the six regional offices. During those calls we asked questions about their current monitoring practices, we asked what work for them and what doesn't work, we asked about any technical assistance and training needs they felt they needed or that their states needed. And we also look for promising practices, we want to thank all of you for sharing your success and challenges with us. We have structured these Webinars on the fundamental elements that need to be in place for state to oversee and monitored WI programs and Americas Job Centers effectively.

As a result of these discussions we were able to gather information about activities and tools being used by states across the country, and we plan to share innovative federal and state practices with you throughout today's Webinar. We also we'll give you a chance to interact at several points throughout this Webinar, so be prepared put your thinking caps on and plan to interact with us accordingly. We are going to ask that you please hold your general questions to the end of the session, we will have time for questions and answers then. Lastly I want to point out to you on the right hand side of your screen, there is a materials folder, that folder will contain all of the documents for today's presentation. Also at the end of today's Webinar we will send out all the handouts and presentation materials to you -- to you those who registered for the Webinar by e-mail.

So let's briefly review the content for today's Webinar. Today we're going to discuss five primary areas, we're going to take a look at the difference between a finding and an observation. We're going to discuss some of the most common findings and observations based on our discussions with the states and regional offices, we will take a look at how states communicate monitoring findings, we review steps that state should take to manage sub recipients corrective action plans and finally we'll end by discussing ways that states suggest technical assistance needs and share promising practices. So let's begin, findings versus observation, so in my experience this has always been a very debatable topic, the question is when is it issue and observation, and when should it be elevated to a finding status.

Observations I would argue are just as important if not more so then findings, observations allow local workforce investment areas, sub recipients of grants to really discover what could be a potential problem for them and allow them time to fix the problem before it becomes a finding.

A finding, is the term most commonly use as we all know to identify violations of the act, regulations policies or OMB circulars. Violations of the federal state local policies should be reported as findings, and as they reported the appropriate citation from those policies needs to be identified. In our research we found that issues that are not complaints or answered are referred to in many different ways, sometimes they're called observations other times concerns areas for improvement or recommendation. For the purposes of today's presentation we'll refer to non compliant issues as observation. So here's your first opportunity to participate, we're going to take a pole, the question is does your state communicate violations of state and local statutes, regulations policies and procedures as findings in your written communication to sub recipients. Your choices for the pole are yes, no or not sure. Let's bring up the pole and have the folks go ahead and answer, please choose your answer now. Great few more people, all right I see that 89% of you said yes, you definitely report violations of state and local statutes as violations of state local statutes as findings let's -- Aaron what was interesting from our discussions with states and regional project officers is that we discovered that many states do not elevate issues to a complaints level or finding level unless they violate federal statutes regulations.

We encourage you to reconsider this approach if oversight and monitoring is meant to be is to support continuous improvement and to see if a state or local sub recipient is following their own policies and regulations, then enforcement of the state laws and regulations as well as local policies and procedure should be considered if they are to perform and should be communicated as a findings in your -- with your sub recipients. Often we hear that local workforce investment areas do not follow their own written and approve policies, this is definitely an issue. And should we -- be reported this one, so now here's some time to put your thinking cap on and take a couple of short -- well I don't know, quiz is such a strong word but see if you can answer this scenarios. Let's see what you think, in the first scenario a local board has 22 members, two of whom represent employers and the tool and die industry. Let's pretend you're the monitor and you're reviewing the local boards meeting notes and come across the votes for local WIA funds to be sent, on providing incumbent worker training to a local tool and die company. It appears from the vote that there are no abstentions and that everyone on the board was present and approve the use of the local WIA funds for the tool and die incumbent worker training program.

Let's pull the poling mechanism out, and let's see how you guys would handle this scenario. Do you believe that this scenario is a finding, an observation or not sure please go ahead and answer I see most of you are have already started so that's great. Just a few more moments of -- some of you still are thinking about it. Okay, well very interesting is you can see from our results, the majority of the folks who voted 40% of you said that you thought this would be an observation, followed closely behind by 38% of this who said this is a finding, and a significant portion of you 21% said you are not sure. Well the answer is, this should be a finding because it violates the conflict of interest provisions which A, require individuals with the conflict or who even think they might have a conflict to disclose that during the meeting. And B, it prohibits interested board members from voting on any matter that gives rise to a conflict between the personal interest and the boards interest. In this case, the two representative employers who sit on the board from the tool and die industry should have disclosed the fact that they have a conflict of interest and should have also re-queues themselves from the vote.

Let's try another one, now let's say you're on site reviewing participant case files, from MIS system. And you find that roughly 40% of a local service providers youth registrations are deemed eligible under the additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold them planned that provision in the law. And further more you do not see any guidance on how this provision is to be implemented, it's just a finding or an observation, let's poll up the polling mechanism again and have you guys go ahead and mark your answers accordingly. Just a few more seconds, we have a few more people who need to vote, okay all right once again we have very close results 44% of you thought this was an observation, 40% of you are finding and 16% not sure. This one is actually in my opinion a little bit trickier and not so straight forward, folks we spoke to at the regional offices said that they would elevate this to a finding since the WIA regulation at 664.2 10 state that is the responsibility of the state or local board to establish criteria to be used to define a document eligibility under this provision of the law. If you are monitoring and you see that a large number of youth are deemed eligible under this criteria, then it may raise a red flag that additional guidance is needed at the state or local level to interpret how this criteria should be applied. The absence of this additional guidance should be a finding.

So based on just these two examples you can see why it's so important to have a good working knowledge of the federal law and regulations, and we spoke about in Webinar two the importance of capacity building and training for your staff, but it's just as important to really understand the state and local policies procedures and regulation. So before going out to monitor make sure you take a look at any local state policies procedures, wavers regulations that might be in current state implementation law as well as local policies. We encourage that each state take a close look at how desk reviews and onsite reviews issues are communicated and develop consistency when determining whether something you came across is a finding or an observation. So let's talk about common program area findings, based on our regional and state discussions we asked what are some of the most common findings you come across, and the items on your screen you can see who are the ones that came up most often, they are governance case file documentation and oversight and monitoring. Let's take a closer look at each of these, so it's common to see findings around governance and local board and youth counselor composition, state boards and local workforce investment boards may not have all the correct members on the board representing the appropriate, sectors of the local economy. Another area had to do with local boards not enforcing their own bylaws with respect to committee structure, frequency of meetings brown act which is a big one, and a membership term limits.

Another area, a large area is case file documentation and the delivery of case management services. Many ETA monitors comment is that sub recipients typically do not do an adequate job of documenting participant eligibility and the provision of case management services. Remember eligibility documentation must be in the case file, case those need to legible and documented when I'd been monitoring in the past I want to see those case notes telling the story of the services that are provided to the job seeker. I also want to see those case notes be very relevant to the IEP, we'll get to that in a second. What you're looking for here is no 90 day gaps in service, another large area that monitors found is the lack of select the service documentation for mails and insufficient information that documents provision of support services, this is pretty common as well. You want to make sure that if somebody received support services it's documented in the case file and more importantly, the receipt of those support services is documented either through a sign receipts, signed checks, etcetera. Another area regarding support services that is common is when a local area is not following their own support services guidelines and policies, so you'll see in the case file that somebody has receive childcare when the policy says that childcare support services it was not normally a support services that they offer and you don't -- see any signs that there's been exception to that policy in the case file. So that could be an issue.

Finally and this is a big area, federal project officer see inconsistence development of IEPs across the case management system and another one they find is generic IEP that is the same IEP the same service delivery plan in every case file it's almost like the copy of the IEPs but needs case file just so that there's one there, that IEP is the backbone of our case management system, the statured regulations address the importance of the IEP process to help case managers and customers identify employment barriers and to create that employment plan that is tailored to the individual. There needs to evidence that the job seeker has seen and has reviewed the IEP with the case manager and that evidence really is in the signature from the job seeker that they've seen the IEP. Lastly oversight and monitoring, this is another common area for findings, particularly lack of oversight and monitoring of service providers, sub recipient and American Job Center operators, one should see that a monitoring schedule has been set by the local board that prove that he's occurred, that their corrective action implementation plan's in place. One area this lack of oversight -- sorry, this lack of oversight has implications for partners who are not following through on their MOU and research sharing agreements, in other cases MOU's are being update and reviewed consistently, or not being updated in reviewed consistency -- consistently. One of the big areas we see is that there might be an MOU in place but that MOU never changes from year to year, that means they are not reviewing their MOU on a yearly basis because MOU's typically will change annually as partners funding and availability change. This can greatly impact service delivery and service quality.

Next slide please, so let's take -- let's talk a bit about communicating your monitoring results, oversight and monitoring procedures that treat sub recipients consistent and fairly need to be developed. You need to be able to talk to one another consistently and you need to be consistent with your approach, it's best for you to communicate the results of your desk reviews as well as your onsite monitoring visits verbally as well as in written format. Most importantly it's imperative that you do so in a timely matter, we recommend that you hold yourself to no more than a 30 day turnaround for informing your sub recipients about the monitoring results as we discussed in Webinar two. However if there are some egregious concerns that would result in (20:11 Inaudible) it's highly recommend that you communicate with sub recipients about this issues when you're on site, just to give them a heads up. One of the largest complains that I get in my position here at CWA from local workforce investment area is that we don't, we the local areas do not get much time to respond to the monitoring report, that the state takes a long time to turn the report around six months or so, and we get 30 days to respond. So that is not a consistent practice, we need to make sure that it's not taking any longer than 30 days to get your reports out the door and it's important to have internal discussions about how that process can be streamlined if it is longer than 30 days.

Again as we introduced in part one of this webinar series it's important to include various units at the state level and the design of your monitoring strategy because this units need to understand that the role they play in helping local area succeed and if they do everybody will be on board with the shared vision of being timely and responsive and communicating findings and observations. We recommend that you share monitoring information after it is completed like your monitoring reports with the state policy performance and fiscal units so that they can determine whether individual attention is needed or some -- there is a larger systemic issue that needs to be addressed. Finally it's important -- of course share these results of the sub recipients and the monitors locally so that they can pay attention to key areas and areas that maybe a issues in their own monitoring efforts.

There are two primary ways that information is shared with sub recipients, they exit conference and the written monitory report, well these are the most common ways to share information we learn that there are some other innovative practices that are going on throughout the country and we will share some of that information with you over the next couple of slides. The exit conference, we already discuss this a bit in webinar two, the exit conference is an opportunity to communicate clearly and concisely in advance of the written report. The exit conference is also a place to confirm some of your initial impressions, you will also want to share promising practices that you found, tactical assistance needs that you may have identified as well as observations and of course finding. Personally I like folks to try not to use the F word, finding that is during these meetings, often times we were taught to always say that this is a possible finding, because you're going to want to get a chance to take that information back to your office, talk to your staff, talk to your management to see if indeed it is a finding. However this approach may not work for all of you and it depends on how you conduct your onsite monitoring visits, for example if a team approaches you, the team may need to meet prior to the exit conference to confer with one another's on what should be communicated consistently at the exit conference. This may not be able to happen onsite and it may occur a few weeks after the site visit ends. However you can always tell local sub recipient that you need additional time to review documents and confer with your state staff before making the final determination on whether an issues or finding or an observation, that's exactly what I just said a few minutes ago often times when you're in the exit review for example you might find that eligibility documentation is missing, the local area might actually be able to come up with that eligibility documentation why you're on site or in the time between your exit conference and that the report is issued.

Many of you chose not to communicate findings during the exit conferences because you prefer to do so through a written agency communication, once you're back at your central office, We think taking this approach is a missed opportunity for you to provide valuable feedback to sub recipients about what you have witnessed and how it impacts service delivery and design. The exit conference is a great place to discuss opportunities for continuous improvement and you should look at ways to begin to frame the exit conferences as opportunity to discuss what's working and where there are opportunities for the -- for that improvement. It can also be used to identify and address questions about how the state policies and procedure should be implemented, above all it also provides an opportunity for management from the local area or the sub recipient to hear from you and so that they get no surprises when the report comes out, and as I just mentioned it's a chance for them to clear up issues while you're onsite. Let's take a look at some best practices, next slide please. All right as you recall from webinar two, Colorado uses that team approach to conduct their onsite monitoring, as we just discussed if your state is using a team approach it may take additional time for the team to meet and discuss the issues that should be addressed with the sub recipient. So instead of conducting a formal exit meeting at the end of the onsite monitoring review Colorado allows themselves two weeks to sort through all the information, identify issues they would like address at the local area, some exit meetings are done onsite a few weeks after the initial site visit, Colorado also has started use adobe connect which of course you may not familiar is the proprietary webinar application, and this allows individuals to connect through a website at the desk to hold the meeting. The state has told us that with funding cuts, the need to coordinate multiple state and local schedules adobe connect has allowed the state monitoring team to stay connected to local operations and to provide times stamps of the information to those areas about monitoring findings and observations.

When we spoke to New Jersey, they say that their monitoring staff use the exit conference to discuss complaints issues and observations with the sub recipients and find this process to be very helpful, and New Jersey does their exit conference either by phone or in person depending on the size of the sub recipient and the time available during their onsite visits. Finally Arkansas provided another interesting strategy, the state monitors conducted debriefing session at the end of each day, and then a final debrief at the end of each visit. Staff stated that this many debriefs give them the opportunity to talk about technical assistance need and minor issues on site. Again those issues can be ruminate before the state, have release the local area and issues then do not become findings as easily. So another pole for you all, how soon after your onsite visits completed that your state summit its writer report to the sub recipient, the answers are 15 days or less, 15 to 30 days, 30 to 45 days, 45 days or more or you're not sure, let's pull up the poling mechanism please enter your answers now. Okay, so you can see from our results the majority of you 37% said that you get your reports out to the sub recipients between 30 and 45 days, 29% of you said that you get your reports out 15 to 30 days and even 11% said that you get your reports out in 15 days or less you're not sure. As we have already talked about a 15 to 30 day turnaround time is idle, any longer than that we believe you need to communicate with the local area to let them know when they can expect their monitoring report, what some the issues maybe that are delaying the insurance of the report, give them a rough timeframe of when they expect the report and then most importantly if you give them a rough timeline do all you can to hit that timeline because they are waiting for the report the boards are interested in knowing how their monitoring a results turned out and like I said earlier they like as much as possible to be able to respond to any observations and findings.

Okay, next slide let's talk about the written report, we recommend that you have a report format that, to use consistently by all staff and that is issued in a timely manner. Again 30 days is the -- is for us is the key time turnaround, but if you can get it out sooner like those of you who do 15 days or less even better. If there are areas that senior executives are having difficulty approving particularly regarding a finding or a corrective action then another approach to release, another approach to release an initial or a draft report and the state in the cover letter that are more detailed and final report will be released, and again specify your timeline and try to meet that deadline. In addition all findings identified during the review should be part of the written report even if the issues are resolve prior to the exit, so this really means if you talk about it in the exit conference mention in the written report because otherwise the local areas wondering what exactly happen to that issue that you brought up. Again the goal here is not surprises if you do not have a report format we highly recommend that you formulate one and that you (30:06 Inaudible) set of labels and definitions. When I started the webinar today we mention the material pod over on the right hand side, in that pod you'll see a state report template from the state of Virginia that can be customized to use for your state, we want to thank Virginia for allowing us to share that with you all today. So what goes into the report well the most common format for formal monitoring reports include the following elements, a title page an executive summary background and scope of review, findings a required action, areas of concern and suggestions and finally identification of training needs and promising practices.

Let's take a look at each element a little bit more closely, to give the report of professional appearance a title page is a really great idea, some of the things that should be on that title page includes the name of the state agency performing the monitoring, the date of the onsite review, the name of the local areas that you're working and its administrative entities if it's different from their name of the local area and of course most importantly the issue date of the report, we have some without an issue date. An executive summary is also very important because this should really be used to give high level administrators like the local board chair or the chief executive officer in the local area, a summary of the monitoring report it should be short, clear and concise, you know, no more than one to two pages and it's recommended that you highlight what's working well as -- at the beginning of the executive summary. Before you go into the description of what needs improvement, it's always an important piece to a well receive monitory report. So please include an executive summary, next we'll take a look at the background and the scope of work, the organization and the actual monitoring report should include a scope of the review, this should include that dates of the last review and the most current review and the date of the exit conferences the site visits, the site who visit it while you are there, then names of the state staff who conducted the review, the names and titles of those of the exit conference and the purpose of the review, the program areas you reviewed and any materials used for desk reviews prior to the actual visit.

Next we'll take a look at concern and suggestions, as we said earlier -- please go back to the slide, yeah thanks. As we said earlier the report definitely should describe any findings there should be a clear statement of the identified problem, you should site this specific statutory regulatory or local policies plan that have been violated and in a minute we'll review a test of practice that is used by most ETA offices for writing up findings that maybe useful for you states incorporate. Each finding should have a corresponding corrective action so local areas know what states expect and how they can improve that situation, this really helps with the implementation of corrective action. You can also give alternatives, alternative ideas to correct the finding, so that way they have more than one idea to choose from. Next comes the description of the observation or area of concern, and what the state suggest be done to improve that situation, again the approach will be describing in a minute, could be use to describe the areas of concern as well. Finally the report should end with the summary of the technical assistance and training needs and should outline it -- definitely I want to underline this, should outline any promising practices or innovative practices in the local area. So it's best to transmit this official report under a separate cover letter, the cover letter should be brief to the point and it should communicate though results of the states monitoring efforts, the dates of the review and the program area is covered by the review. This cover letter should also include information on what the grantees response to do, especially if there are significant findings and corrective action as required. Lastly once again make so you thank the staff or the local sub recipients for their assistance while you are onsite, and allow the sub recipient to contact you with any questions. At this point I'm going to turn it over to my colleague Jennifer Mitchell for the rest of the webinar, Jen?

Jennifer Mitchell:

Thanks Bob, so as Bob said we're going to talk now about how best – to organize our strategies for organizing your monitoring finding and observation, and what we like to see is the use of the four Cs, so the condition, the criteria, the cause and the correction. And we may hear us say hand in hand the conclusion that the conclusion is also what the correction may be. So first what you would do it using the four Cs is identify what condition or issue was found in a monitoring process and we're going to get to some examples of this in just a couple of minutes. Next you would identify any criteria which were not met, so basically, you know, what does the statute, regulations the federal or state policy's require, then identify the cause of any issues that are found and why the issue or issues occur. And then recommend what corrective action would be required to remedy the issue and the timeline for doing so. And which provide sub recipients with a clear understanding of what the issue is and what step they need to take to improve it. So let's cut through some examples now, how actually to apply the -- so in terms of eligibility documentation, there's a four C example so first let's look at the condition. Let's say you're reviewing or just in case IOs and you're looking at 25 of them and ten of the 25 files reviewed for the bills program did not contain sufficient documentation, to support program eligibility to receive of intensive services. So, then you would want to identify criteria that were not followed on that so in this scenario we're going to say the local board has a priority of service policy, so when training center limited to serve individual to have income within a 150% of the federal poverty level, based on your discussions with the sub recipient they have told you that training funds are limited, so then obviously in this case those priority of service restrictions would definitely apply.

So, then you want to find out what is the cause, so why would they not apply it right, so during your discussions with local case managers you learn that they're not completely clear on when to use the local areas priority of service policy nor are they clear on how to use financial information collected to apply a policy. So for example, income of family members may not have been used to support the individual eligibility under the local areas priority of service provision. So here is where we get you -- okay so now what - what is the conclusion and correction, so in the conclusion, here to me it would be their lack of capacity - clearly the staff are not familiar with all of these so they were not applying them right, so the correction would be framing should be provided within a specified amount of time for case managers to help them understand how to interpret and apply the local areas priority of service policy for individuals who are pursuing WIA funded training. Then the sub recipient would have a specified amount of time to go back and verify the eligibility of those ten participants of whom they did not have adequate eligibility documentation and submit copies of completed paper work to the reviewer. So if any individual is found to be ineligible for the program after the review is completed then the local area must stop sending grants –funding on that person. And here's the sticky thing , and I'm sure you all know this, so any cost already spent on the in-eligible individual could be disallowed and in that case they would need to be reimbursed - so this is the worst case scenario no one wants this, this is – a concept can really put your local elected officials in a bad position and at sometimes it can even be raised to a states level official, you know, be brought to their attention, so that's why we always want to be proactive provide the support and technical assistance upfront, give folks time -- time to take the findings and get them fixed and, you know, so that it doesn't come to corrective action that leads to disallowed cost.

Okay, so now we're going to move on to an example of applying the four Cs towards customer choice and in this example in terms of the condition after reviewing the local board for ITA policy it becomes apparent that the local area is narrowly defining which occupation customers can use ITA to fund - and this condition were confirmed during interviews with the local case managers and customers and has been adversely impacting the number of training programs and providers from which customers can choose. So in this case, which criteria were not followed, the WIA regs require policies governing ITA duration and cost limit to be described in the state of local plan, and the regs go to state that these policies should not be implemented in a manner that undermines the acts requirement, the training services are provided in a manner that maximizes customer choice, you know, in the selection of an eligible training provider.

So next in this case what is the cause? Well it appears some local boards limit customer choice by narrowly defining demand augmented occupations in which customers could be trained. So what is the conclusion or corrective action, well the sub recipient must revise its ITA policy to expand its definition of demand occupations to allow for exceptions consistent with the law. ITA limitations may provide for exceptions on an individual basis, that all policies and procedures must inform to acceptable business standards, to include proof or approval and dissemination.

These policies must be approved by the local board and reviewed and approved by the state as well, so that's quite the process. So these are examples of how the course - - fees may be applied in a couple of different circumstances and we do recommend that the -- you use them - it just makes things I think, you know, a little easier and then give you a tool there.

So now we're going to switch back to innovative state practices and we're going to highlight the state of Washington. So Washington has been doing interesting work with their local job development center to discuss the value of the state monitoring activities and reports and also looking a continuous improvement, you know, talking with local folks to figure out how they can improve things together. So state staff spent a few days during an offsite meeting with local reps talking about the state monitoring process, and what happens before they arrive so there are reviews, what they look at onsite so, you know, this is like what to expect - and then what happens when we're actually here - and then how the information is used after. So reports in Washington were taking too long to be developed, so state was looking for input from the locals, on how streamline processes but also how to make it a valuable exercise for all involved - state and local staff and of course, you know, ultimate waking advance of our customers. So other states they want to be more proactive in talking with their local sub recipients about how to make the monitoring process more meaningful, I mean we all know it makes most no sense to impose policies on the other people without insuring that they are effective – I mean you've had it done to you the locals I'm sure have had it done to us that happens at every level things can rolled down, you know, but to insure that policy can turn into effective practice it really takes communication and the input from all levels, and I know because of resources, limited resources that this is easier said than done, but it isn't - it is important, it's important to try to make those connections happen.

Now we'd like to get some more feedback from all of you in terms of tools you are providing to your local sub recipients. And so we are going to ask you that your state have a template for local sub recipients, corrective action plan submissions and the choices are - as you can see yes, no or not sure - so we're going take a moment for you to check the appropriate boxes and then we'll have an – a better understanding at – at where we stand now, so go ahead. Okay, oh this is interesting okay, again pretty close the numbers but yes 43%, no 43% not sure 14%, it would make it easier to have a consistent template- right, and as Bob mentioned in the pod there are, you know, are examples that are there for your use, and for those states who have those maybe you can submit those templates and they could be shared with your colleagues in other states because I do think it's important to have a common template that is shared so that everybody is looking at the same thing and not apples and oranges. So thank you for sharing that information with us.

We're going to talk a little bit now about the importance of managing the corrective action planning process, so you want to insure that sub recipients formulate a corrective action plan and implement the identified corrections in a timely manner. And while there is no set time requirements for when corrective action must be taken, states should establish a timeline for sub recipients to submit corrective action plans. And I believe we talked about this a little bit earlier, you know, some states require 30 days, the time period to resolve a finding actually we're very depending on the require the actions that need to occur, but important parts of any corrective action planning process is providing oversight to insure the problem or situation is resolved to your satisfaction. So and it, you know, to have the proper tools out-front, you know, upfront that will help you get to this point and we recommend that the state develop some benchmark, all states develop benchmarks for the appropriate period of time to resolve findings so that timeline are consistent within your states. So for example if the local sub recipient needs to establish a policy to address an issue, it may take a few weeks to draft the policy and the local board that needs to review and approve the policy and the sub recipient needs to send the policy to the state for review and approval and then the sub recipient will want to disseminate the policy and train local service providers on how it should be implemented. So again capacity building is a very important component and depending on the frequency of board meetings and the timeliness of the state review during this -policy changes and submissions, this process could take anywhere from three to six months.

And in fact during our state discussions, with all of you we learn that many states do not actually have a clear strategy for managing corrective action, more than half of our state discussion in those we heard that states do not give sub recipients guidance on how to submit the corrective action plans and then in some cases that may be an entire year before you assess whether corrective action has actually occurred. So again we would impress upon you to have full templates -communication early and often. We're going to highlight another innovative state practice now, so in the state of Virginia they -- their monitor have the opportunity to require that corrective action occur more quickly and also track corrective action plans in a state spreadsheet. So -- what's really cool about this I think is that all monitors have asked us for the spreadsheet and contract sub recipient findings and observations so it's kind their at your fingertips to everybody. And the spreadsheet is also reviewed and updated by monitors monthly to insure that issues are resolved, so it's like a tickler. And so we would like to find out what types of things the rest of you are doing in terms of tracking the evolution of finding and observation so we're going to move into a chat box at this time and we want you to respond to how do you monitor what timeframes do you provide, do you feel you have innovative practices that have not been highlighted and it's vaguely described. And so this is more open- ended we invite you to you take a couple minutes to respond to this and we can share this information with everyone.

(Informal Talk)

Okay so some answers are coming in to responsive one state uses portable filters that through all callings it sounds like something researchable one state uses a Greek calendar to track the evolution, and I see here that there's a process revisit with the local areas at a six months interval. So there are a few different approaches but all that seem to be on target ---

(Cross Talk)

Bob Lanter:

This is Bob I know that a couple of states we talk to and there's a couple of new ones coming in here. Actually keep the corrective action as an open item and, you know, when they go back to do monitoring they particularly look at an item to see if it's been implemented so that they can close that out.

Jennifer Mitchell:

Okay thank you and a lot of state responses are coming and with the -- here that several states are using calendars here's a state that using bi weekly report to keep activities and corrective action plans organized and I will say, you know, this is not bad - if you have something that's working for you great, and that's consistent that's wonderful and if not - let's take some of the other examples that are being provided and we can get something implemented in your state.

Bob Lanter:

Yeah, I like that one that Virginia just submitted- it says they keep the summary of findings in corrective actions for all workforce staff to view during the program here. And they started sending e-mail to WIA staff that is about dislocated worker youth fiscal the administrator so that issues are related in real time right when they're doing the reviews, so common thing clarifications can been made of course before the draft reports are even written. So that is, you know, you're talking about being very proactive.

Jennifer Mitchell:

If there -- is this information going the captured and available in the pod?

Bob Lanter:

Yeah I believe it is.

Jennifer Mitchell:

Fantastic okay, thank you everybody for your responses so this will be shared with your peers, really appreciate it. And so now we're going to talk about training needs and promising practices, -- so using oversight and monitoring activities is part of a continuous improvement effort to allow you to identify what is and what is not working, right. So a number of you have recorded that your monitoring activity is including desk reviews onsite monitoring visits and so on, help you address problems with additional training or identify opportunities to develop state policies and procedures to a system resolving a problem. And there are many ways that TA can be provided to sub recipients in its best to the -- when customize to a direct unique issue or challenges facing individual sub recipients or groups of sub recipients because that, you know, different folks may be experiencing different problems or may have lots of capacity in different issues. So states may be determine that monitoring issues can be resolved through comprehensive state policies and procedures check clearly address how local sub recipients to design and deliver services, that in some cases subject matter experts within federal state or local agencies maybe brought it, I mean there are lot of, you know, national workforce consultant. There are Think Tanks, there are, you know, organizations like SPR - there's other than you may want to bring in to help really customize the training technical systems if you don't have the in house capacity.

And this will assist sub recipients to in -- in identifying operational procedure improvement that can be incorporated into their program design. And one practice used by many states to identify sub recipients or doing things well and -- fine, identified sub recipients that are doing this well and then links into the areas that aren't, so basically a mentoring or peer to peer type of arrangement and then that can be provided at very usually -- usually cost effective and help, it helps to builds relationship and one of the things that I think sometimes people are great to ask because we know that everyone's really busy. In our experience people will make the time to help coach their peers because, you know, it's nice that you're- hey you're doing something really great and there are other areas that could use your help - would you mind mentoring them and we've asked people to that a lot. Well we are and no one has ever said no, so that's something else to keep in mind. So we've highlighted some other innovative best practices and we'd like to talk about what's happening in Colorado and Ohio and in Colorado program monitors aren't just monitors they are actually the primary point of contact from local sub recipients, when they have issues or problems. So they have, you know, the common correspondent to go to -- and this allows the program monitor to stay connected to the needs of the local areas. And members of the state monitoring team attends local board meetings and I just want to - just talk a little here - and I think that's really important because having gone out into local areas throughout the country, there's a lot of incompetency in terms of who goes where and the folks who do attend those board meetings are more in the know- they have more information and I know that a lot of times they can't go because they're busy and off working, that (59:13 Inaudible) is possible I think it's very helpful to even go to those meetings - you just -- you're going to have more information - it's going to be helpful.

Anyway, also some states conduct quarterly meetings with sub recipients to ensure they remain in close contact and to provide technical assistance and training and enable. And since the executive unit or the state agency conducts to quarterly grantee meetings, state monitors often have time on the agenda to discuss concerns and more to address those issues directly to sub recipient. So again I think this is, you know, a really good model and if it can replicated in other state I think it would be very helpful, and it's great to have those kinds of personal relationship as well. So that state of Ohio keeps track about finding and concern each program year and state monitoring staff (60:14 Inaudible) the need for state policy guidance or whether state level training or peer to peer systems from another sub recipient would helped to resolve the issues and we talked about, you know, a couple of minutes ago about what a great tool that is and, you know, there's a recognize need for policy guidance so IO monitoring unit will work with the policy unit to identify the issue and ways it can addressed though guidance, and this approach will allow sub recipients in Ohio to understand that there are opportunities to share information and implement change during the monitor and process again, you know, communication key relationships are key knowing, you know, what's happening beyond just the work that you're doing really gotten perspective I think it helps.

So we're going to talk about New Hampshire now. New Hampshire emphasis on providing a technical assistance and training to sub-contractors helps the state to develop positive working relationships with the job center staff, and the fact that they're able to do this I think it was fantastic they host an annual conference called the New Hampshire Works Conference, and it provides state staff with an opportunity to deliver technical assistance and training to contract staff and to increase the capacity of staff within systems operate workforce programs. So you may want to consider setting aside a dedicated time and space for local program operators to come together because you're about state priorities and policies to receive program training, to share innovative strategies for addressing workplace issues or workforce issues and also just kind of a place for peers to come together and really be able to be candid, you know, again see what's working and what's not working and feel safe in the environment. And we know that again, not everyone can afford to put on a conference but you may be able to, you get someone to host a quarterly meeting for you, you know, it doesn't have to be a huge thing and if nothing else it could be quarterly conference calls or a monthly conference call so it is always good to get people together face to face and I think it's helps with relationship building.

And the State of New Jersey their emphasis is on promising practices with two important benefits - one it puts a positive and on the monitoring process and facilitates with the dissemination of best practices throughout the state, so that's a good, you know, opportunity to share and provide information upfront and be proactive, and at the conclusion of an onsite monitoring and review the state of New Jersey monitors, they prepare a monitoring summary for each of the local areas that's been visited and those summaries highlight the promising practices and then they' re shared with all of the areas in the state, so again it's like not just going okay kudos, you know, to one area but here this is great and let's share it so people can take these promising practices and then use them as their if there a good fit for them. So and they also share this promising practices and -- and they're report the US department of labor and, you know, this was important, I know we're not here to talk about, you know, what's happening in congress but honestly, you know, one way to keep WIA funds from being kept further is to continuously have those promising practices available to the -- a congressional delegate.

In terms of resources we've talked about the pod and the information is going to be sent out to all of you and a number of you have commented that additional assistance is also needed on developing IEPs and making the IEP process meaningful and then also another identified area for TA was lack of proper case management and training materials for these areas are available on Workforce3One under the tool kit section, and I would like to emphasize that Workforce3One has a lot of other areas that you may be interested in reviewing as well, so if you haven't our events though check that site out, noodle through it and see if you can find items that are helpful for you. And if you are in need of other ideas and strategies lessons learn from programs that have already been tried and implemented by workforce system colleagues and evaluated by a third party. you can use a new page application called the workforce system strategy so this is – an ETA funded tool and resource and it is the workforce state and local program staff to identify and implement effective practices based on existing research and ultimately to support improved outcomes for workforce system customers, and that's what it's all about right, we're all in this for the customers. And the site highlight strategies that are backed by lighter range of rather than such as experimental studies and implementation evaluation and performance data. So the other thing is, you know, some of your highlight and promising practices and resources some of you may have information that may be, you know, we know we're going to post, you know, what you provided that again ongoing in the future there may be information that you can provide that will end up being of use to all states.

So, and -- and we want to encourage you to use those tools or resources, encourage you to talk to each other encourage you to be, you know, hooked in with other organizations that can be helpful and your partners as well and keep those lines of communication open and establish and maintain those relationship again that's- I think in my mind, that's the most important thing is -- building and maintaining relationship and then -- and making sure people have the tool and resources necessary to do their jobs. And we'd like to hear a little more from you now, and in terms of what other needs you may have so we're going to go back into the chat mode again and this time I'll make sure I can see it. So we want to know how this training series has helped your state monitoring unit think about ways to expand your oversight and monitoring efforts, and also, you know, if there are other areas where additional training would be helpful for you in the work that you are doing. So we're going to give you a few minutes to respond. So here's a response we appreciate hearing what other states are doing to effectively provide oversite and technical assistant to the state.

Very good suggestions for future webinar and conducting evaluations of local performance areas -- or local performance and policies and another one how do other states deal with local areas that are resistant change. So these are requests that we can share with the department of labor, regional rep and maybe there's a possibility to make that happen.

Bob Lanter:

We got a question here what is the turnaround time of peer ETA review, on workforce system strategy of state and local approaches. So the ETA review the way that works is a -- somebody submits a proposal through the website, that proposal is initially screened to see if it meets their criteria there are three or four different types of criteria it is based on the evaluative methods that were used for the submission, they will look at the relevant to state and local workforce development organizations, they will also look at topic relevant and I think there is one other one. So initially they'll let you know whether or not it meets the criteria and if it's going to move forward into the process, once it move -- once it moves forward into the process it takes about four weeks for them to review it, develop the profile read the research and make it available online, so just so you know. Okay somebody said pretty darn good, thanks for providing a copy of the power point prior to the meeting makes it easier to take notes, you're welcome.

Jennifer Mitchell:

So there's always room to expand and good examples have been provided should there be a regional work matched along with our network, I think that would be great.

Bob Lanter:

Yeah it would be great.

Jennifer Mitchell:

Yeah, it would be good to know what kind of monitoring with the fact that we mention for example to get a report out in 30 days would be hard, it's going on reviews for a week every few weeks. Yeah, I think that I mean it would be fantastic to have a regional -- regional and national monitor networks, I think.

(Cross Talk)

Bob Lanter:

We don't even see statewide monitor networks in every state, some states have them some states don't, but the states that have definitely benefit from state and local monitors getting together on a regular basis to discuss common issues findings observations etcetera. Our office, Jen, want folks to know that the effective monitoring guide that we've been working on will be also released onto Workforce3One later this one, and it will contain much of the information and many additional best practices resources as well. So look for that on the effective monitoring guide and that will be on Workforce3One.

Jennifer Mitchell:

So and that's based on, you know, the interviews with -- with all of you, based of discussion that occurred with all of you so you will see yourself reflected in that monitoring guide and I would say kudos to the SPR staff and Deanna and and Bob and others who worked on that. It will be another useful guide for you.

Bob Lanter:

Great, there's a comment here it says lean it the further seems to be a key and how to balance risk and leaning monitoring -- on this type of effort will be helpful. So I think that really I think and Michael I'm hoping I get this right, I think that means, you know, how do we streamline monitoring and balance the risk inherent in doing that. And it will be key as funding continues to be reduced as we look to get more streamlined as the demand for information increases exponentially balancing that with the risk involved is key and I think we don't have to look much further back then the risk assessments and the desk reviews that Deanna was talking about in webinar one, that was one of the ways you wanted to kind of make sure you're balancing the risk, those risk assessments are key in that regard. I believe the guide will be available electronically it will be available to be downloaded from Workforce3One and you should be able to then tweak it and use it for your -- your state and local needs, you know, our – workforce system is famous for allowing people to, you know, share information, copy information, tweak the information that's really great for that so I do believe we will be making it available electronically for you.

Jennifer:

Okay any other question or any other comments here before we move on the question. Okay so if you have any questions at this point we would be happy to respond to them. I think some of you have your cap your questions answered in a – the last rule session here. But any -- any other last minute questions any burning questions. Well if not we want to thank you all for your time today but not just today for your participation in the other webinars for those of you who were able to participate and really for the time that you took to spend talking with us about the work that you're doing and your candid feedback about what's working, what's not and where you need assistance. I know sometimes it can be daunting when you're talking to folks about, you know, what kind of help that you need or what your sub recipients need and we do appreciate that you have been so candid and we know that this is not easy work and that it can be bureaucratic and to your credit and completed so if there's any way we can help you streamline it that is in our intent and we want to thank you for all of the work that you're doing and again as we all know in this business we ain’t in it for ourselves but to help the people who need this type of assistance - employers, the job seekers and so on. We thank you for all of the work that you do, and again we will have the materials posted from this webinar and the other materials. It is our goal to have them by the end of the month and if you have any issues in getting the information that you want, you can follow up Bob or myself and our e-mail address is available for you.

Bob Lanter:

I don't think I should need to say anything else except thank you all very much –we really have appreciated your time and participation and look forward to talking to you.