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

Deanna Khemani:

 My name is Deanna Khemani, and I work for Social Policy Research Associates. I am part of their evaluation unit and also part of their technical assistance and training team. I also have Bob Lanter from the California Workforce Association with me here today. He is the new executive director. So Bob, congratulations on that promotion. He has a lot of experience in both local state and federal public workforce development program, and he brings a lot of experience also from his nonprofit work. ET's Office of Regional Management contracted with SPR to provide technical assistance and training for organizations and agencies like yours that participate in federally funded programs, and they did so for this current program here. In this role, SPR is basically providing technical assistance services on behalf of all six ETA regional offices that you see that picture on the screen. And we want to give a special thanks to regions 1, 2 and 6 for their support of this webinar series.

I hope everyone had the opportunity to join us and participate in webinar one. If you missed that webinar, it will be posted here in the next few weeks on Workforce3One. We are still working out the process for having that uploaded. But to recap from webinar one, we had a really great discussion about developing state monitoring systems and strategies. We talked a lot about the importance of customizing your state monitoring tools, so that they incorporate not just federal statutes and regulations but also state laws, regulations, policies and procedures. We also talked a little bit about building the capacity of not only your state monitoring staff but your local monitoring units as well. Then we talked about how to incorporate risk assessment into identifying local sub-recipients that may be in need of additional technical assistance, maybe more frequent monitoring or earlier in program you are monitoring. And then finally, we talked a little bit about just reviews and how they are mainly used to prepare you for your onsite reviews. But there is also the ability to use staff reviews to remain connected to local program operation. So maybe you are doing them more on a quarterly or monthly basis.

The webinar today entitled On the Journey is really about the next part of the process which is preparing for and conducting your onsite monitoring reviews. And then on webinar three which is scheduled for June 20th, we are going to be talking again about communicating results, what are the most common findings and observations, and this is based on information we gather from our regional office on telephone calls, and then how do you communicate your results. So we have a full session today, so let me just launch right into it.

To gather the contact for these webinars, we held informal discussion with the state staff responsible for monitoring in 15 states across all six regional offices. We also conducted individual calls with each of the six ETA regional offices. And I want to thank all of you who are on the line today for participating in those calls and sharing information about your successes and challenges with monitoring. We found those calls to be very informative, and we know that you did that in a gracious way to participate on that to help us with this content that we are delivering today.

As a result of those discussions, we were able to gather information not only about your concerns but also some innovative practices that are going on throughout the country. So throughout the webinar, we plan to share some things that were brought to our attention by the states on the call. I do ask that you hold any questions that you may have regarding the content for the end of the webinar, and we will have a chat at the end of the webinar where we can address some of those questions. Also so you know, there is a materials folder on the right hand side, and in that materials folder are some documents that we will be referring to during the webinar. I do want to let you know that's available for downloading now, but we will also send a follow-up e-mail notification to you with all the webinar content including the slide notes as well as all the handouts for anybody that's registered for this webinar series.

So we already went over this a little bit during webinar one, but there were really four primary reasons why we monitor. The first reason was to ensure that local sub-recipients are operating their WIA programs in compliance with federal statutes and regulations and also state and local policies and procedures. The second was to help managers make decisions about how to effectively operate and design their programs. And then third we said it helps states to evaluate service design and delivery features that work well and notes that down in order to make infused continuous improvement into your service design and delivery processes. And then finally, we said the fourth reason why just that monitoring helps you to assess whether there are features, whether like local sub-recipients are meeting their fiscal and performance requirements. Again, we really see monitoring also as an avenue to identify technical assistance in training needs and to identify promising practices, so that that information can be shared with the system and technical assistance needs addressed through training or one-on-one technical assistance. Because onsite monitoring reviews are such an important part of oversight and monitoring, at least according to the federal statute and regulations, we wanted to spend a whole webinar series talking about onsite monitoring. For this reason, we identified issues that you need to think about in preparing for onsite monitoring, and then we are going to talk a little bit about quality elements that we would like to see infused into your onsite monitoring reviews.

So in preparing for your onsite monitoring, all of you probably know about this, but these are the things that we identified as being important from those conversations with states. The first thing you want to make you do is to notify your local sub-recipients. We recommend that you do this by e-mail or a telephone call to try to secure a date that's appropriate for both parties in terms of the onsite review. We do recommend that you follow it up with a formal letter letting them know what the review is, what components you are going to be reviewing and any materials that you need in preparation for the onsite review when you would like those to be submitted and then any materials that you need when you are onsite actually conducting the visit. The other thing that we think is important is that you review your monitoring tool. Again, because monitoring tools are so comprehensive in some stage, if you view the risk assessment process, you may have identified areas that you want to concentrate your review on in a given sub-recipient or local area. As a result, you want to review the monitoring tool so you are familiar with the scope of the review and if you need to add additional questions so that you can gather information to do your analysis.

We say that you need to review key policies and procedures at the local operational level. This is especially important in states where you have given your local sub-recipients a lot of flexibility in terms of how they interpret the law and the regulations. So if you have that flexibility and the state hasn't been prescriptive in establishing like ITA policies, then you allow the locals to do that. You are going to want to spend some time reviewing those policies and procedures to make sure they are in line with what the intent of the statute of regulations was. You also want to look at past financial and performance reports. We recommend that you go anywhere from one year up to three years back in terms of looking at those reports to make sure that you can see if they are patterning in how the local sub-recipient is operating. And then finally, you want to look at past monitoring reports to see what were the common findings in this local area or local sub-recipient, were those issues addressed through a corrective action plan, and then you will be able to have conversations about how they actually went about addressing those concerns. So these are just a few of the things we think you need to consider as you begin to prepare for your onsite monitoring visits.

I would like to open up a poll right now. The question I have is, how soon before the onsite review does your state begin its document request process? Would you say you do it six to eight weeks before your visit, four to five weeks before your visit, two to three weeks before your visit or one week or less before the visit? Or you may not be sure. I am going to open up the poll, and if you will make your selections for me, that would be great. This is great. I can see everybody is making their selections now.

Okay, so this is interesting. Basically, the majority of you say that you request those onsite review documents about four to five weeks, 37% (11:15 inaudible), and then 21% of you said that you make your request six to eight weeks. What we want to say is it really depends about when you make your request. It's dependent upon a number of factors. There isn't one solid way of doing that, but we say the earlier, the better. So obviously, we like that six-to-eight week window. As you all know, everybody is pressed for time, emergencies arise, and sometimes if you make the request, you are not getting yourself enough time; you are really not able to do an adequate and thorough review of those materials in order to prepare for your visit.

One of the things we say as if you are a single local workforce investment area that you might not need as much time to conduct those reviews. But if you have multiple areas and you are doing multiple reviews (12:04 inaudible), you may want to make those requests early, so that you have time to synthesize all that information. Also, we see again the flexibility piece comes into play. If you have a lot of American Job Center operators in a given local area, and you have allowed some flexibility for how they interpret policies and procedures, you may want to take a look at their service design and how it's being implemented, and then just how much time do you have onsite to conduct these reviews. If you set aside time during your onsite visit to take a look at policies and procedures and actually sit down and have dialog with them, you might not need as much time during the preparation, preparatory onsite review process. But if you haven't built that time in to the onsite visit, you are going to need to make sure you collect the materials in advance. Again, some of these policies and procedures may be transmitted as part of your local planning process, you may request many of the procedures I am about to talk about as part of that. If you do that, we still recommend as part of the letter that we talked about that you develop a standardized list of materials that you want to collect prior to the visit. That list can obviously be customized based on whether you have already collected those as part of local plan or not. Usually, you want to give yourself a minimum of about four weeks to do the preparation process. So let's take a look at some of the design and governance policies and procedures that you want to collect.

First off, these are just some examples. This isn't a full list, but based on our review of materials, I’ll make sure all I get were submitted. So by states, we have identified these as probably the top four under governance and design. First off was the local board and youth council membership list. You are going to want to take a look at the membership list to make sure they comply with the membership requirements for the local board. Second of all, you want to look at the local board conflict of interest, possibly take a look at any meeting notes to see whether they are following that conflict of interest provision. Next, and this is something that I found as very important especially in my work as an evaluator, is to get a list of the type and locations of all the American service centers within a given local area or sub-recipient. The reason is I found that because of funding cost and consolidation, some centers have been closed or demoted from comprehensive centers with satellite, some of mobile centers. So gathering a list and being able to identify which centers you want to visit is obviously important. And then finally, gathering information about local monitoring policies and procedures, often times this is an area where you can provide a lot of wonderful technical assistance is by looking at the monitoring procedures at the local level and seeing where those can be bolstered or improved.

I would like to turn now to the program and grant management policies and procedures. These are probably where you are going to spend the bulk of your times reviewing these particular documents. Again, this list is not only inclusive, but these were some of the most common ones that we found that cut across states' monitoring guidelines and their manuals. First was rapid response policies and procedures, how is the local sub-recipient working with the state rapid response coordinator, when there are layoffs and things along those lines. Is there a process used to determine when training funds are limited? Often times, we see that there is a priority of service provision, but yet, we don't know, how does the local sub-recipient determine when training funds are limited and when that priority of service should come into play. Veterans' priority of service policies and procedures, again, this is an area where ETA is placing a lot more emphasis, and we found that some people are misinterpreting priority of service for adult training funds to be the same thing as veterans' priority service, and they are really two separate things. You want to look at a list of assessment tools and products that are being used. The reason we recommend this is that obviously, assessments can be used at various phases of the service continuum. You could do assessments with somebody at the core level, do additional assessments at the intensive level and then other assessments for individuals that want to pursue training. We want to ensure that customers are being assessed and getting the job skills and the information that they need to make decisions. So obviously, you are going to want to look at those assessment tools to see how they are being used. Our staff is adequately trained to interpret them and to work one on one with the customer. Then obviously, supportive services and needs related payment policies and procedures. Often times, many local areas don't have the funds for the needs related payments, but they may still offer some other types of support and services by transportation subsidies, childcare, maybe subsidies for uniforms or things along those lines. Then demand occupations and training policies and procedures, you want to look at what are the ITA duration or cost limitations, how is the demand occupation set for the local area, does it limit customer choice. That's obviously a big thing within the Workforce Investment Act that there should be a lot of customer choice. If you see that these policies and procedures are limiting that choice that may be a concern that you want to raise. Then here is one that I think is really important, and this is under the youth program policy. It has to do which requires additional assistance. This is additional eligibility criteria that can be used to place somebody into the youth program, and we found that a lot of local sub-recipients use this particular caveat to put somebody into the youth program, yet it's not really well defined. And so we recommend that you spend a little bit of additional time looking at that area. Again, you want to take a look at the referral policies and procedures, how are customers being referred to other American Job Center partners, are the referrals tracked, how do you make sure our customers actually want and pursue that and that you are documenting their pursuit or working with the partners of the program. Then looking at the individual service strategy or the individual employment plan, is it a generic template, and it just looks the same for everybody, or is it something that's customized so that each individual is getting that one-on-one attention that they so desperately need when they are out of work or looking for training to get a better job. So these are just some examples of documents that we think that you should request in advance and really spend some time scrutinizing.

So next set of documents pertains to performance accountability. Obviously, I have already mentioned that you should look at the past monitoring reports to see what are the most common findings, and you are going to want to pay attention to whether those are still issues at the local sub-recipient level when you conduct your onsite review. Next, you will probably want to look at least a minimum of the last three years' performance on either the WIA or the common measures for that local area. If you are single local workforce investment area in state, you are going to want to look at local service provider performance and see if you see any nuances there, and then finally take a look at the corrective action plan. So those are just a few of the documents that you want to request in advance.

I would like to talk to you next about selecting participant case files. This is something that we weren't really going to talk a whole lot about, but we realized as we were preparing the training curriculum that this is an area where we thought we needed to spend some time. In talking to a number of states, we found that some states leave it up to the local sub-recipients to actually pull the samples for the case file reviews. Now keep in mind, during webinar one, we said you could do this as part of your desk review process if you have electronic case files. Many of you are not quite yet there yet, so you are still going to have to do this particular piece on site. But what happens if you let a local sub-recipient choose which case files to select for you to review? You enter in this thing called selection bias, and that's where you bias the sample by letting them collect it. So what we recommend you do is to generate a list of all participants across all of the WIA programs in a given program here in that local sub-recipient or local area, and then you can select the sample randomly if needed from each funding stream. We think it's very important that you collect a review case file across the funding stream because obviously, the service delivery mechanism will differ depending possibly on the adult population, the youth population or the dislocated worker population. Some things that you want to consider in making your sample selection is do you have a new service provider in that local area and if so, you might want to pay attention to how they are doing their case file documentation just to make sure it's in line with what you think is appropriate. Next, you want to see are there any ongoing issues with that local sub-recipient that would make you want to increase your sample file in terms of the review. If there are service providers or local areas that you haven't visited as part of your onsite review process, then obviously, you are going to want to pay particular attention and pull samples for those local areas. Probably, I think most important is also looking at different stages of the service delivery continuum. You are going to want to see are we looking at customers that are just coming in, seeking jobs at the core level or the core and intensive level, and what is the difference in the case files between those customers and customers that are going on for training or customers that are going on for training, getting additional case management, what does that case management look like, is the follow-up consistent for those types of customers, those are questions that you would want to ask and be knowledgeable about when you are doing your case file review. But again, making sure you have a process in place to select participant case file is very, very important.

I would like to view another poll right now about what percent of sub-recipient case files do you review each program year. Do you review 0% to 5% of participants and exiters, 6% to 10% of participants and exiters, 11% to 15% of participants and exiters, more than 15% of participants and exiters, or you are not sure? I am going to open up the poll. If you will make your selection, we will talk about it in just a few minutes.

Okay, this is pretty interesting. Would you pull up the results for me? So if you look here at the screen roughly the ones who responded to this question, most of you 41% are looking at between 6% to 10% of participants and exiters and a sub-recipient looking at those case files. And then the next highest result was 15% with 0% to 5% of participants and exiters. While we don't have a number to tell you because each of you is unique, each of your states is set up differently, the way you operate your programs may be different, where you place your emphasis in terms of your public workforce development system, we do want to say that there are some things that you need to take into consideration when making those case file selections. You are going to want to obviously look at how many staff do we have available to conduct the onsite review and do we have enough staff that we can set aside enough time to really do a thorough review of participant case files. Next you are going to want to look at the size, how many customers do you serve in a given program here and what you think is a reasonable percentage of case file to review based on that overall number. And then again, you want to look at how many American Job Centers do you have in a local sub-recipient area and see if you want to place emphasis on certain job center case file reviews versus others. So these are just a few things that you want to consider as you set up a process for selecting your case files. But I am pretty excited to see that a fair number of you are looking at between 6% to 10% of participants and exiters and reviewing those case files.

What I would like to talk about next is a little bit about the flow of the onsite review. Again, we saw that there were some similar ways in which states were conducting their onsite reviews, and they were basically using in some way, shape or form these four elements. They were doing an entrance meeting; they were conducting onsite interviews; they were doing case file reviews, and then they were having some type of exit meeting. I would like to go into a little bit about each of these and discuss some things that we want you to consider as you go through your flow and setting up your onsite reviews. The entrance meeting is really to be brief. You don't want to keep people from doing your work assignments obviously and detain them from their routine duties. But if you are conducting a review with a team of reviewers, this is an opportunity for you to introduce yourself and your team to the staff at the local level. It's also an opportunity for you to just lay out the general purpose of the review. This is especially important in states where you are not doing a WIA program review; you may also be doing maybe a trade or Wagner-Peyser review; you may be also looking at national emergency grants or other discretionary grants that the local sub-recipient has received. You want to summarize your expectations for the review, how many days you plan to be on site, if they have been identified as a high risk local area, you want to let them know what areas you are going to be concentrating your review on for that program here. And you want to pay special attention to any special needs that that local sub-recipient may have. So again, we think it's really important also to review the schedule that you have laid out for the review. I find that as a researcher, I have actually gone out to conduct evaluation. And if you plan weeks and weeks, maybe months in advance for these reviews, and then you get on site and maybe somebody is out sick or somebody has been pulled away for an emergency. So it's important to review the schedule. Make sure the staff are still available. If they are not available, obviously, you are going to want to set up opportunities to talk to them by phone or later on in the review visit for when you can conduct those meetings or appointments with them. We think it's also important to look at the primary deliverables that you will be preparing after you conduct the onsite review to let them know what are your expectations, we plan to have an exit meeting with you on this day at this time; we plan to also prepare a written report, but we plan to give you some summary information in a conference call. You are going to want to lay out what your process is during that entrance meeting and then obviously, spend some time giving them an opportunity to ask any questions or address any concerns that they may have about the onsite review. This is where you are going to spend the bulk of your time conducting your review tasks. Obviously after the entrance meeting is over, you are going to begin to conduct interviews with the WIA staff. You are probably going to have interviews with customers, both job seekers and employer customers. If you do a set of interviews with job seekers, we hope that you set those up in advance. We always recommend possibly like a focus group and to overestimate the number that will attain. We find that there is usually anywhere from a 20% to 30% dropout in the invites that occur, especially when we do evaluation, so overestimate by about that much. Then with respect to the business community, if at all possible, try to schedule those appointments with employers at their location, so that you are not asking them to come into the job center. If that's not available to do, then we recommend that you set up separate meeting space to conduct those employer interviews. Keep in mind that time is limited during the onsite review. You can't conduct telephone interviews with customers and employers from your office. So that's also a way to gather that important information from their prospective about how the services are being delivered. Something else that we talked a little bit about in webinar one was how important it is to conduct observations. These observations can be done of the resource room, go in and observe how are customers using the state job bank, how are they being told about other partner program. You might want to observe what an American Job

Center orientation looks like and is the information being communicated in a way that it's friendly and accessible to job seekers. I found when I have done evaluation projects that often times, I sit in on the orientations and they are full of our jargons, as I say. So it's important to make sure while a jargon is important to you as the providers of the services and the local sub-recipients, it's not so important to the person that's looking for the work.

So look for ways to make that material more accessible. Finally, you might want to take a look at case management session. Sit in and observe how customers are being case managed, how is that information being documented, that kind of stuff.

We also think it's important to hold discussions with American Job Center partners. Again, this goes back to that whole referral policy and procedure piece. Often times we see that there are procedures in place, but when you talk to the partners, they don't really see it happening the way it's written down on paper. And while that may be fine, and you may just need to go back and revise policies and procedures, we think it's important to hold those discussions to see what are the relationships like at the local level, how can they be improved, so that you are truly acting as one public workforce system. Again, you are going to set aside time if you haven't done so through your desk review process for review participant case file. And then here is something, many of you may have your own data validation and report validation units, but we also think it's important for the monitors that they are separate from that unit to also do a review of the management information system. This will help you see if the information being entered into the MIS is consistent with the information being documented in the case file, and so that's one of the reasons why put this MIS review on the sheet as well. In addition, many states have their own state MIS systems. But in a lot of cases, local sub-recipients have complimentary data systems that they use to collection information. It would be interesting for you at the state level to see well, what they are collecting that we are not putting into the state system, and maybe that's an opportunity to improve the type of data that's collected in the state system.

I would like to do just one more poll. This one has to do with whether you interview customers and/or conduct observations of activities while you are conducting your onsite review. The answers we have here are yes, you do that; no, you do not, or you are not sure. I am going to open up the poll. If you will make your selection, that will be great. Okay, if you pull those results up for me that would be great. Thank you. So this is interesting, and I am actually really literally tickled pink if I look at the color up there about what's on the screen. Basically 58% of you say that you conduct the interviews with customers and/or conduct observations of activities, and we think that is wonderful. For those of you that are not currently doing that, the 27% of you that said no, we have created some tools that are available in the material section that you can download. They give you examples of the questions that you could use with job seeker customers to talk to them about how they are engaged by the American Job Center staff and the WIA staff.

We have also included some observation types that you can customize that help you look at what does the resource room look like, is it conducive to support a job search, that kind of thing. So if you are not currently doing interviews or observations, again, we want to just recommend highly that you look for opportunities to include these types of activities into your onsite reviews.

Okay, this is the final piece of the onsite review. This is your exit meeting. This is where you are going to explain local sub-recipient about whether you saw some compliance issues. Obviously, if they are overt, you can pull those out. But if you are conducting your review with a team, a monitoring team, you are going to need to set aside some time either morning or afternoon before this exit meeting occurs to meet up and talk about what you see. We do see that some states do a divide and conquer where certain staff go to one American Job Center, other staff visit another job center in a particular local area. So this really depends on how you can coordinate this. But if at all possible, have a conference call one evening, talk about what you have seen what you want to highlight in that exit meeting. One state, I think it was Colorado, actually doesn't do an exit meeting on site. They actually come back and do the exit meeting about a week later when they have all had time to join up and talk about what they saw and what they experienced on site. So that might be an approach depending on how your state operates that you might want to think about incorporating. Things that you want to review, obviously, on the more "get some sugar before the medicine" approach, I probably should have done these bullets a little bit differently on the slide and put promising practices first. I think it's important to share of what you saw that's working well at the local sub- recipient level with that, what are those promising practices, and then talk to them about their technical assistance needs. You are going to want to review again the compliance issues and then talk to them about whether you saw opportunities to do a better job of delivering services and coordinating services maybe prompt partners. There is some things that we see as evaluators where even though we don't want the silos of the programs, there are still often times the silos in terms of staff talking to one another. Then finally, you are going to want to address any questions that the local sub-recipient has. This is another opportunity for you to talk about the timeframe for the onsite report, when you think you will be able to get that out, when they have to - if there are corrective actions that need to occur, when are those corrective actions due, how will they be reviewed, is there an approval process, that kind of thing. So again, just allowing some time for those questions we think is so important because it helps you to build those relationships at the local sub-recipient level.

I already talked a little bit about Colorado, but I wanted to highlight them a little bit here because they actually do have an entire team of program monitors and fiscal monitors that go out to conduct onsite monitoring reviews. One program monitor will take the lead for any given local area, and they are responsible for coordinating the onsite visit with the local sub-recipient. They have about a five-day window to conduct their onsite reviews, and they said to us that their reviews are very comprehensive in nature. They look at not only the WIA programs that are being operated, but they also take a look at discretionary program and how there are linkages with other programs like the Trade Adjustment Assistance program, National Emergency grant; they take a look at rapid response activities, all those types of things. In addition, Colorado really tries to look at system level issues. The state tries to identify where is it that they can either identify whether there is a gap, does the state need to establish policies and procedures in a certain area or provide additional technical assistance. And the state really uses their monitoring as an opportunity to identify those system level issues. They are one of the states that conduct interviews both with job seekers and employers, and again as I said, they do those fiscal and program reviews. They do come back and do the exit meeting about a week to a week and a half after the onsite review, so that everybody on the team has an opportunity to come back, sit down, analyze what they have heard, synthesize it and be able to provide really meaningful information back to the local sub-recipient after that onsite review. So with that said, I would like to turn it over to Bob Lanter now. He is going to discuss a little bit about the program areas that states should incorporate into their onsite monitoring visits.

Bob Lanter:

Thank you, Deanna. Good morning everybody at least in Pacific Standard Time. Good afternoon to all the rest of you across the country. I am really excited to be with you today to talk about monitoring and more importantly the how you can monitor for quality program design. So before I get started, we wanted to talk a little bit - just kind of step back for a second and talk about monitoring and the framework which you need to provide monitoring. And when I was a WIB director here in California for many years, I might be in the minority, but I was really looking forward to opportunities where we got to be monitored. For me, and I think this is true even when I was doing monitoring in region 6, it is an opportunity to see if a local sub-recipient a local workforce board actually is compliant for sure. It's also an opportunity if you are a local entity to really show your best practices to the state and if you are the state (41:46 inaudible) etc. And I used to tell my staff, "Hey, it's our ability and our time to see how we stack up to the law." But beyond that, really it's a process that needs to support continuous improvement. And how do you do that? Well, if you are monitoring, you do that by incorporating a review of the quality of a program service, design and delivery to ensure that there are positive outcomes and a positive program. So what we are going to do is we are going to take a look at this framework, and over the course of the next several slides, we are going to look at the areas that most people monitor when they are out in the field. So next slide please.

All right. So in our research, we have seen the tools that states use, primarily incorporate these five key programmatic areas that you see on your screen in front of you, design and governance, program and grant management, service delivery including case management, follow-up services, and program and performance accountability. So when you are using these areas, you should really attempt to weave into our monitoring guide quality elements that can be reviewed. We will discuss some of these quality elements over the next couple of slides. Many of you are familiar with these five areas, but just in case, let's take a moment - go back to slide please. Let's take a moment and review these just a little bit more in depth. So first, let's start with design and governance. When you are looking at the design and governance, you really need to be able to evaluate the local areas program design in the context of the demand-driven system. When you are monitoring, you need to look at whether the indicators are in place that support objectives such as strategic planning, their local plan, how does what's written in the local plan and strategic plan get implemented, program integration, the web structure, etc. When you are taking a look at program and grant management, you are really taking a look here to see how a local board or a sub- recipient administrative entity has the capacity to perform all of the management functions that are required when you are operating a federally funded workforce development grant. Some of the areas you want to look for here are, of course, administrative controls, personnel and procurement, processes and procedures, equipment and inventory, their monitoring policy, and how they handle their audit and more importantly audit resolution. Next is the service delivery area. This is where you are going to be spending a lot of your time, and of course, this is where you are looking at a local capacity and the effectiveness in delivering services to participants and their employers. So here is where you take a look at their operating systems, of course participant files, how they operate training and training opportunities, what kind of business services they offer, their case management process, how they deliver support services, etc. Follow-up services, this is an area that often gets short shrift. People just glaze over this, but it's an important area in meeting a lot of our performance standards, particularly job retention. So here is where you are going to take a look at services that a local entity or sub-recipient has in place to engage job seekers and businesses in all the activities that surround job retention. Finally, and maybe just as important or some people would say more importantly than all the other areas put together, is performance and accountability. So these areas allow you to determine whether a sub-recipient is meeting its goals such as its plan service level, expenditure targets and whether they are meeting their performance outcome goals, and I would also say how they review these on a consistent basis and make changes in that stream if necessary.

Let's talk for a moment about the State of Ohio. What we found in the State of Ohio is that they use a monitoring guide that they have customized to facilitate their own onsite reviews. They incorporate quality principles into their guide. Additionally, Idaho staff identified best practices and technical assistance opportunities because of course, if you are doing monitoring for quality program design, you will find best practices, and you will find opportunities to provide training. When possible, the state monitoring staff participates in the customer process at each center, so they know how the services are sequenced and what the customer experiences. This includes sitting in orientations, workshops, sitting in with case managers etc. Idaho is monitoring tools include checklist as well as business and participant interview forms. And I think as Deanna mentioned, we will be providing you examples at the end of the session in the material section of the webinar as well as providing information to you on what of course we want. But I want to say it's very critical to spend time immersing yourself in the local process, case management process, customer experience. This will really help you gauge the quality of the programs and see if the programs they put in place actually work. So next, what we are going to do is we are going to highlight areas that you might want to consider in incorporating into your monitoring reviews based on the five program monitoring areas. That would allow you to gauge the quality of the program in the six local areas with continuous improvement and/or identifying best practices. So as we go through these next few slides, please be thinking about other ideas. As you know, in our industry, peer-to-peer learning is critical in building our capacity. So at the end of these five slides, we are going to give you all opportunity to give us other ideas and other examples of how you incorporate reviews that include quality, design, monitoring.

So first, we will take a look at design and governance. Remember, these are not necessarily compliance areas or compliance questions but examples of areas that can get you to the quality of programs being reviewed. So what are some of those examples? Our programs that you are looking at design to reduce duplication, maximize resource, ensure customer service and reduce overhead. So let's just take a look at how that might work. Ensuring customer service, so many of the areas that I have looked at over my experience have customer service surveys, either out in research center or maybe they incorporate that as part of the case management process. But the question that I have often looked at is what do you do with those surveys, how are the results aggregated, who looks at those and more importantly, if there is a problem, is it addressed and how is it addressed. That's what will get you to quality design of a program. Second, has the local workforce area consulted with leadership in forming its local strategy, and again, more importantly, how does that strategy translate into program, design and delivery? Does the local board coordinate with other economic and workforce partners? And how does that partnership actually play itself out in program design? Where are the best practices? Where is the place for continuous improvement? If they are having problems partnering with an organization, can you give them the capacity building that they need? Has the local area identified high growth industries and workforce needs? And more importantly, this what we are seeing a lot of today where a local board will have identified key industry sectors, but we don't see it in the program design. You go out to the One Stop and you say, "Hey, you know what your local key industry sectors area," and they will say - some of them will say, "No, we really don't know." Others will say, "Well, we know the workforce board adopted these six industry sectors, but we don't know what it means to us. So this is where we are looking at the connection between strategy and program, design and delivery. It's time to highlight the State of Arkansas. So Arkansas gives significant attention to the design and governance area of their monitoring activities. They do this during the onsite review process. Arkansas reviews local board and youth council membership. They review board minutes. And when they are locally, they attend board meetings and committee meetings when possible to ensure that these local boards are functioning appropriately. So this is a great practice, and I would encourage all of you to do. First of all, it would allow you to take a look at what the local policies are, what the discussion is at the board level around local policies, how those local policies are being implemented in program, how those local policies are resulting in performance outcomes, does the local board adhere to the Brown Act and the conflict of interest rules, are they talking about their local strategic plan. In essence, are they fulfilling one of their primary roles as a local workforce investment board? Again a quality program design.

Now let's take a look at a couple of examples of quality review areas in program and grant management. So the first example is, is the management structure and the staffing of the organization designed to ensure responsible management of the organization. So what does this mean? So do they have the proper structure to manage a federal grant, including fiscal support, program support, One Stop operations of management, board and committee support? Those are all things that you want to take a look at in terms of their org chart. Make sure you pull an org chart. Are staff positions filled with individuals that possess proper qualifications that match job assignments? So this is an interesting example. How would you actually incorporate that into your monitoring review? Well, a couple of ways are to take a moment to sit down and interview staff, talk about their background, see what they do on a daily basis, give a feel of how they serve customers. Ask the local board management if they have actually recruited people recently. Take a look at those job descriptions and the process they use to hire people to see if they are actually getting people with proper qualifications to match the job descriptions. A third example is does the sub-recipient have a research sharing agreement in place that is reviewed and updated annually. So of course, you guys are probably all familiar with research sharing agreements and the struggle that system has had to have them in place. Many times, what we will see is that the local sub-recipient has research sharing agreement in place, but when you ask them how often do you review it, how often do you make changes to it because as we know resources add and flow; they increase; they decrease, and when you are putting them all together, then you mix the partners, that resource sharing agreement should change on a continual basis, so what's the process they use to do that.

Now let's move on to service, design and delivery. So in this area, some examples to look at are, does an individual employment plan get updated regularly and case notes are put in the case file to reflect the service delivery that correspond to the IEP. Deanna a little while ago talked about the generic IEP where it basically photocopied, signed and put in people's case file. This is not what we want to see when we are looking at a quality program. We want to see an individualized employment plan, one that is different for each customer. Make sure that customer is signing the IEPs. That's the key finding that we have seen in the field. I think another way to look at it is if there is a change in service delivery, is that reflected in a modification to the IEP, so does the IEP identify and meet the specific needs of each participant and how do the assessments and the activities that the participant is going through relate to the IEP. So if somebody is going to a training program, they have nothing to do with how they assess or the IEP, we might have a problem here. If the assessments have nothing to do with the IEP, we might have a problem there as well. They should all flow together. Is the need for support services documented in the case file and how are the services provided? So this is another area where we see common findings. Quality program design would allow you to take a look at the support service policy, what does the web say they will pay for it, how much will they pay for it, what are the steps an individual participant has to go through in order to access support services, are they following their own policies. That's a big deal in quality program design. You set a policy, are you following it. The other thing is once a support service has been received, how are they documenting that the service was actually received by the participant and how is that documented in the case file? Okay, so what is the procedure in place to move customers through the tiers of service? This is another example of what you might want to look for. So many of them have a customer flow map, well, are they following their own map. That's one way to take a look at it. Get out into the center, sit for a while and observe. Follow customers through the process. Actually, sit down and interview some of the customers. Often times, I would just go into a research room, grab a job seeker and say, "Hey, can I ask you a few questions? What were you looking for when you came in? How has your experience been since you have been here? What services were you provided?" That will really tell you a lot.

Finally, the last example here in this section are services tailored to meet the needs of business community, so you want to actually take a look what do the business services look like both at the board level and the One Stop level, do they have business service representatives that report to the board, are the job developers out of the career centers, how do the business service reps and the job developers work together, what's the menu of services to business, what's the outreach like, how do they actually perform accountability and metrics around their business services. This is a huge area for quality service design because our performance measures and the Workforce Investment Act do not necessarily reflect business services. So many local boards will actually adopt their own metrics, what are those and how are they following it. Lastly, I would say one of the areas that we see where a system either works very well or sometimes breaks down is the handout between case management and job development business services, how are the folks that are in jobs and in training and that are in job search and in training actually referred to real job opportunities, how do they get screened, if necessary, how do they meet minimum qualifications and what is the follow-up process on interviews, etc.

That's a great area to get under the hood and see if folks are making the connections and delivering quality program design.

All right, let's take a look at our next state we would like to highlight, and that's the State of Ohio. Ohio developed a comprehensive program guide that incorporates detailed questions about policies and procedures and how they are used to provide services. While on site, they hold discussions with the local administrators and their staff to gain a better understanding of how services are structured. They review case files to see how customers are served, outcomes achieved and follow-up provided. Their staff is interested on a return-on-investment model, and this includes examining how long someone is in the system and what the benefit cost analysis is to the system. So again, information about the State of Ohio's monitoring process will be posted on Workforce3One. We highlighted Ohio in our last webinar so as soon as we get webinar one up on the site, you will be able to take a look at their monitoring guide. And in addition to that, we are going to be emailing copies to the participants as well.

Now let's take a look at follow-up service area. Quality review examples in the follow-up service area include the following, do all participants sign a follow-up agreement. So this is a great idea and a real fabulous practice. This should be done up front when somebody first enrolls into the program. That way, your expectation is set at the beginning. Hey, you are going to go through our system, you are going to get help finding a job, you are going to get placed into job and then you are going to work with me to ensure that you stay on the job. And what some of the those activities would be could be included in your statement, have that retention statement in the case file from the beginning so they know what to expect because we hear time and time again, so and so went to work, and we never could get a hold of them again; they never returned the phone call; they didn't feel obligated. Well, this will help manage that. How do case managers actively manage customers during the follow-up period? What you are really looking for here in the case notes is real contact made with the clients, the job seekers and the real services provided.

So whether that means they came back into the office to debrief on the job, whether that means they are getting continuing indication through you, whether that means they are attending you are going out to the job site and you are having small management meetings for the first 90 days. Whatever that entails, that needs to be documented into the case file, not just call them of the message, we see that a lot. There is a plan and process in place to engage business and follow-up service, and so what does that look like? So do they actually have a written policy and procedure to say to a business, "Hey, once we put somebody in your employment, we are going to be coming by on a monthly basis to visit them at the job site or we would like to work with you to see how they are going to engage your feedback so that we can assure that they are retained on the job?"

Okay. Next, let's take a look at performance accountability area. This is our final area and one of the more important areas. So are participants tracked in the state and local MIS? Now this sounds like well, of course, they are tracked, but what you really want to do when you are looking at quality is you want to see that 1, are the services provided and are they documented in the case file. Okay, cool, so let's follow that service through, is that service then entered into their local MIS system. Many local areas have their own MIS management systems, so how does that service then get transferred into the state system. Follow that all the way through. That's a great idea to look at quality areas. Second one is, is plan performance regularly tracked against actual and are the sub-recipients on track to meet or exceed performance. So when grants are awarded, there is always an expectation that a grant recipient has an expenditure plan and a participant plan in place. Oftentimes, you will see that's where it stops. But what you want to see in quality program designing is that they are using those plans as a plan. So you want to make sure that they are regularly quarterly taking a look at their expenditure rates, how does it stack up to that plan, taking a look at their enrollment and other participant indicators and how do they stack up to the plan. And once they do that, you want to make sure that they have a plan in place to implement any modifications to correct any shortcomings. So hey, at the first quarter, we see that we are behind in our enrollments, what's the plan in place to actually increase enrollments in quarter #2. You want to be able to see that they have the ability to do that and that they are doing that on a regular basis. Finally, is there a process in place to identify service methodologies that result in positive outcomes? So evaluations are becoming much more commonplace in our industry for grant awards. So we will give you the money, but you have to ensure that you are doing a comprehensive evaluation of your program. So our evaluations are being one of new program designs that really show you what's effective. And when a local area finds something that's effective, are they expanding what works in other areas of their system.

So here is your chance, in the beginning of this section, I told you that we were going to be picking your brain. It's really key that we are able to get examples from the field. You know what works and what doesn't work, particularly in quality program and monitoring review. So we would like to give you an opportunity to share your ideas in regards to quality elements and monitoring practices. There is a chat box there on the right. We would like you now to take a moment to enter an example of any one of the five elements on what might you look for when looking for quality design. Go ahead and enter your ideas now.

So here is a good one. This is business engagement. So how is the business engagement plan and strategy in place and coordinated across multiple America Job Centers, and what kind of target outreach is being done. That's a great one. Do you have lead, do you have sector leads? How do you ensure that if you have six One-Stops in your local area that they are all working together in a coordinated way? It doesn't have to be just for WIA review. It could be for any type of monitoring review, particularly with ETA type of fund. Other ideas from your state folks that you have seen or from the regional office folks that are on the line where you have seen in monitoring tools or when you have been out monitoring where you have looked at that quality program design? Performance data is shared with line staff, not just managers. So now the line staff knows where they are on a regular basis and knows whether they need to be focused in certain area or maybe they need to pull back in a certain area if expenditures are way out in front, excellent. Other ideas?

This is a good one. How are the WIA services being commuted to career center customers? Let me just see what else, customer flow. So I think the Workforce Investment Act, I am pretty sure, says that local performance needs to be shared out in the career center. So how does that happen? That's a great question, one that I would love to ask every time I am in a One Stop. Another one is Oregon is having TAA and rapid response teams participate in closures to laid-off workers, are seen by both state-operated programs. So that's also very good. So now you have got TAA and rapid response teams working together, and when they are out in the field, they are working together to provide the highest quality service to the folks that are being laid off and affected in lay-offs. Somebody asked, can you provide post examples of follow-up agreements? For Deanna, one of the things we might want to get from either the states participated or the regional offices is follow-up agreements that are signed by the job seekers. So if any of you on the phone that have them, please feel free to either let us know in the chat or follow up with those after the webinar.

Deanna Khemani:

 Yeah, Bob, this is Deanna, that's a great idea. And both Bob and my e-mail is at end of the webinar series. So if you are a state that does that type that process, if you could share any documents that we have, we would be happy to create a repository for those materials. In addition, if you want to share any of your monitoring guides or policies and procedures, we are trying to create some type of clearinghouse, so that there is one location where states can go and say, "Well, what's Ohio doing?" or “What’s Colorado doing?" So if you share those materials with us, we would be happy to be able to link people to them.

Bob Lanter

Absolutely. Somebody asked, what if the folks in the rapid response-TAA partnership are not TAA eligible? I will let Oregon ask that, but my guess is that if it's not a possible TAA layoff, then it's probably just handled by the rapid response folks. Here is another question or another example, identify the mandatory partner program agencies for each American Job Center and evaluate service delivery appropriate in a coordination. So this is really good, how are folks referred to the other customers in the job centers, how are they referred, what type of services, how do you ensure that the referrals are actually being followed up on, excellent. Another idea is capacity and financial issues incorporated into feedback. So I think what you are saying there is that I am guessing when you get customer feedback, you are asking them about staff capacity and whether or not folks are able to kind of garner all the resources that they need at the center. But I am not exactly sure what that means, - that's who asked, who typed that.

Any other thoughts? Oregon is helping laid-off workers to understand whether they might be eligible for TAA, and it starts the process moving faster in some cases, absolutely. And I have seen that, I have actually been up to Oregon and often times, folks don't even understand what TAA is and whether or not they could be eligible or the business itself. So this is good when you have both teams work together.

Deanna Khemani:

Yeah, and this is Deanna. I also think Oregon's model of doing that helps individuals to understand all those timelines that are in place for the Trade Adjustment Assistance program. The clock starts once they are identified and received the notification letter. So often times, it's very important that job seekers understand what that letter means and what effect it has if they are not enrolled within a certain time period. Often, Oregon is being proactive in trying to talk about the program, lets people know when they actually get an official letter sent to them that they can take certain action on it and how it can benefit them in their future.

Bob Lanter:

Yeah, and I would add to that. One of the areas that we see where there are challenges when TAA and WIA come together is who does the case management. Of course, TAA can pay for case management, but often times, folks would be enrolled in TAA training, and the handoff back to WIA or for case management doesn't happen or doesn't happen very easily. So those areas are, we see, really nice leveraged (1:10:54 inaudible) of program design where it really works very well where training has been paid for TAA and case management placements paying for WIA is a real phenomenal example.

Another example that has just come in is prior to going on site, take the time to learn the local MIS and case management system to be able to navigate through the system during case files reviews, particularly now in this day and age – thank you, Linda - where you have a lot of electronic case management systems. That way, when you are on site, you can actually be in a room and look at files online without somebody hovering over your shoulder. Are you ready to receive other questions yet? Are you reading to receive other questions yet?

Thanks, Deanna. Let's move on. Excellent input and examples, everybody. Thank you so much for all of that. So a little while ago, I was talking about evaluations and how evaluations are becoming prevalent in workforce development field. The Department of Labor has worked to launch a new database. It's called Workforce System Strategies, and it is the task to Workforce3One. And in this database, Department of Labor has looked to identify promising practice and proven workforce system practices in one place. This web-based tool is available, as I said, on Workforce3One and gives you access to this evidence-based research. Primarily, it is that each research paper or research piece is summarized into a profile that gives you basic information about that research. Things like why the study might be useful, which populations were served, which regions it was operated in and programs that it focuses on and major findings to help the user decide whether to link to the whole study. If you are interested, you can link to the whole study, download whole study and use that study to help develop initial quality services in your local area. Visitors to the site will find it very easy to use. You can use the key search features and you can search on your local area, your state; you can search on a target population; you can search on a particular policy or practice such as industry sectors. That will call up all of the research that's in the database relevant to industry sectors. And you can find by going to Workforce3One and clicking on the Workforce System Strategy tab on the top, or by going directly to the website which you can find on the bottom of this slide in gold which is strategies.workforce3one.org. We encourage you to check out this application. I think you will find it very useful.

Lastly, before we wrap this up today, we wanted to see if there are any other general questions about any of the material we covered today. Please use the chat box to type in any questions.

Deanna Khemani:

 Yeah, I just want to let folks know, this is Deanna, that we got a question earlier in the presentation about the number of program monitoring staff in any given state, and we did conduct those interviews or those discussions, I should say, they weren't really interviews, with 15 states. And what we have learned is that there was a lot of variability in the number of monitoring staff that any given state had. As we said in webinar one, some states have dedicated program monitors, and other states have staff that have multiple job responsibilities. We saw states that had minimum of two program monitors, and then some states had up to maybe six to seven program monitors. One state had 11 monitors, but what we didn't identify is whether those included fiscal and program. So again, it's really going to be dependent upon how often you often you go out and conduct onsite reviews, how comprehensive those reviews are, whether you have other additional staff like your MIS, data validation, fiscal and program that go out and conduct the reviews. So there are a lot of different things that factor into the number of program monitors.

Bob Lanter:

Do any of you on the line have any general questions for us while we are on the line about anything in either part one of the monitoring series or this webinar here that we just concluded? As a reminder, after the webinar, we will leave the webpage open for you to click on the material section and download the documents there. Is that right, Deanna?

Deanna Khemani:

Yes. We are going to leave it open for about 10 minutes after the webinar ends for you to download the materials, and again, we will be sending all the registrants for this webinar a copy of the PowerPoint slides with the note pages as well as any of the materials that are in the materials folder. I give you guys a couple more minutes in case you are typing in your questions before we end today. I know we are getting pretty close to 3 o'clock, and many of you are very busy, but-

Bob Lanter:

So there is a question, is DOL offering any funding for states to hold best practice events? And I am assuming this is best practice events relative to monitoring. And Deanna, do you have any insights to that?

Deanna Khemani:

Yeah. You know what, that's a really interesting question, Michael. It's gotten much harder these days to hold face-to- face events due to some of the restrictions placed on those events. I don't know of any additional funding available for that at this time, but I think if you talk with your ETA regional office, encourage them about the value of doing that type of session, I think that would be very helpful in moving that forward. But it does take quite a while to get those face-to-face meetings approved.

Michael: Right. Another question just came in, do other states utilize targeted review when issues surface doing annual monitoring, just spend more time and go deeper and broader?

Deanna Khemani:

 I think what we have found is yes, when a finding comes up during an annual monitoring review, what we found in many of the states, some states actually have monitoring networks. So that issue will be brought up, and they will either take a look at incorporating more review questions, more review activity around that certain issue in the following year, or they will look for it particularly when they go out to other local areas and certainly, when they go back to the area where that issue first arose. And let me give you a really clear example of that, Michael. In Arkansas, they have a monitoring unit, but that monitoring unit also serves as a technical assistance lead or a primary point of contact within the state for individual local workforce investment areas in their state. And so not only do they have the requirement to address the compliance issue or the observation issue, they also have a responsibility to make sure they find ways to help that local area remedy those concerns. So it doesn't end with just submitting a final report and getting a corrected action plan; they actually have to find resources and the ability to help the local area address it, which I think that's a promising practice. You don't just communicate the finding; you actually work one-on-one closely to help them remedy it.

Bob Lanter:

Right. And back to the question about best practice events, so I think what

Deanna said was particularly true in terms of we are seeing, because of the restrictions, we are seeing a lot less of these events. And I know here in California, even our state is finding it tough to provide best practice and technical assistance sessions particularly due to the reduction of Governor's Discretionary Funds and the sequestration combination. So one of the things we are doing is we are really trying to work together local, state and fed to see if we can scrounge up enough funding to provide technical assistance at our statewide conferences or even have the local areas kind of all contribute money into one pot and then the association kind of take the lead in providing technical assistance back, working through either other states or with the experts from around the country. Anyway, I think we will see if we can continue to voice our concerns. Some other questions have come in. I just wanted to let you guys know, I think the regions obviously would like to hold those face-to-face meetings but they are limited so maybe bit's (1:20:17 inaudible) to contact them directly. But they will try to host these webinar technology events and that's something they are trying to move forward on. So if there are ways to make this more engaging or can meet your needs, definitely let us know and we will try to do that.

So Tim, thanks Tim, wanted to correct us in saying that from fiscal year 2011 forward, trade funds can now be used to pay for case management. So that's even a better and deeper way to leverage funds between TAA and Rapid Response. Another question is, this is the region, oh okay, never mind, sorry. Okay, so another thing about TAA is it can't pay for things like childcare, so support services. A question came in on how do other states balance less funding for monitoring staff which results in states accepting more risk down the road?

I think one of the ways that they do that is obviously by implementing those risk assessment procedures that we talked about in webinar #1 to identify local sub- recipients that may place the state at higher risk if policies and procedures and statutes and regulations are being followed. So they use a more comprehensive desk review process to identify those (1:21:38 inaudible) that they need more frequent or more comprehensive onsite monitoring reviews. In addition, we have seen a number of states that while their monitoring unit staff have shrunk, they try to engage both their physical, their MIS, and their program units to help them identify local areas that they think are most in need of a program review.

Right. Another question, does the regional office look at the states' completed program monitoring reviews during the compliance audits? And in my experience, the answer to that question is yes, we do look at states' completed program monitoring reviews from the prior year when the regional office is on- site. Deanna, I don't know if you want to add anything to that question or if any of our regional folks on the line want to address that as well.

Yeah. If one of the regional folks wants to raise their hand, we can unmute their line. But based on Bob and I have both worked in ETA regional office in prior life and based on our experience in conducting on-site monitoring reviews, both of us did look heavily at the program reviews that were being conducted by states. We would read through those reviews, look at the information and reports that were submitted to local areas or local sub-recipients. So I would say that that is something that ETA does do as part of its three-year review process. And I think one of the things that we used to look at quite a bit is whether or not if there was an open finding, whether a corrective action had been submitted, whether a corrective action had been followed up on and implemented. So definitely, we take a look at whether the findings have been addressed.

Another question is, does Colorado's five days in the field include travel time, and if not, do they spend more than a week with travel time on-site? Tim, do you know? I didn't talk to Colorado. I didn't talk to Colorado either. I read that in their write-up. But I believe it's actually five days monitoring on-site. I am pretty sure that did not include their travel time, so. But I will confirm that and try to verify that for webinar #3. Really great interaction everybody, really pleased to see the questions, we really enjoyed that. I think if there are no other questions, here is your chance.

Alright, let's go to the last slide. So that concludes our webinar #2. We hope this session has helped you to understand the importance of developing a clear and detailed process to conduct on-site monitoring, particularly, as it pertains to quality design. And we hope that this webinar has given you ideas. We had a lot of them shared from the participants on how to incorporate quality elements into your review process. And before you all go, this is the reminder that webinar #3 in our series, we are going to take a look at communicating results, findings, observations, etc. to your local sub-recipient is scheduled for June 20th at the same time, and we look forward to seeing you all then.

Thanks everybody. Have a great weekend and we will talk soon.