

ABBREVIATED SUPPORTING STATEMENT CLEARANCE FORM

A. SUPPLEMENTAL SUPPORTING STATEMENT

A.1. Title: Local-Level Technology-Based Learning Survey of the Workforce Investment System	
A.2. Compliance with 5 CFR 1320.5: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	A.3. Assurances of confidentiality: Yes. Based on terms of umbrella clearance, OMB No. 1205-0436 requiring confidentiality.
A.4. Federal cost: \$259,005.00 ¹	A.5. Requested expiration date (Month/Year): June 2013
A.6. Burden Hour estimates: a. Number of Respondents: 455 a.1. % Received Electronically: 100% b. Frequency: Once c. Average Response Time: 90 minutes d. Total Annual Burden Hours: 682.5	A7. Does the collection of information employ statistical methods? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (Complete Section B and attach BLS review sheet).
<p>The Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) launched a national strategy technology-based learning (TBL) agenda in 2006. The dramatic evolution of available technology coupled with the pressing need for increasingly cost-effective training solutions has likely had an impact on both consideration and use of TBL, over the ensuing six years. However, comparatively little is known about the current extent to which these TBL training and development strategies are being used, under what circumstances, and the factors that shape their adoption in the public workforce system. This request is for a 29 question web-based survey to be completed by the Executive Directors of the universe of Local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs). The survey will be administered one time only during fall 2012.</p> <p>The primary purpose of this survey is to gather up-to-date on information on TBL usage in LWIAs and factors that influence its adoption and design.² Specifically, this research is designed to profile the public workforce system with respect to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The extent to which TBL is currently being used within local American Job Centers and by approved Title I training providers and Title II education providers, - The current mix of platforms, instructional approaches, the technologies currently in use, and - Factors that appear to facilitate or impeded the use of TBL within LWIAs. <p>Given the rapid evolution of training and educational technology, this survey of LWIA representatives is the only practical method for efficiently gathering an up-to-date profile of local practices, priorities and developmental needs. This highly current feedback will allow ETA to more effectively propose an appropriate budget to Congress, issue</p>	

¹ This is the federal project cost for entering into this contract with Abt Associates.

² The scope of work under the task order executed with Abt Associates calls for the conduct of two complementary surveys to gather insight on TBL use from the perspective of both state policy makers as well as local workforce development practitioners. Specifically, in addition to this survey of LWIB Executive Directors, the SOW calls for a companion survey of State Workforce Agency Administrators to gather information on TBL opportunity at the state level and factors that influence its adoption and design. The shared fixed costs incurred in the development of the overall research design and the questionnaires makes it impractical to estimate the total cost of either of the surveys independently in Section A.4. However, the two surveys are being submitted under separate OMB applications because they are distinct data collection efforts and doing so maximizes the flexibility in the data collection schedule.

clarifications of policy, promote TBL in an effective and appropriate manner, provide necessary technical assistance, and promote continuous improvement. Additionally, timely information on TBL usage among LWIAs participating in the Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF) grants (SGA/DFA PY-11-96) will contribute to the collection of baseline data for the national evaluation of WIF.

The instrument will be designed and hosted on the internet using the FluidSurveys online survey platform.³ This survey consists of six sections: 1) contextual information about the Local Workforce Investment Area; 2) the use of TBL in the provision of WIA Title I core and intensive services; 3) the use of TBL to support WIA Title I training services; 4) the use of TBL to support WIA Title II services; 5) the accessibility of TBL services; and 6) factors influencing the current level of TBL provision. The content of the survey further justifies this request for abbreviated clearance in that the instrument, in select cases, references specific technologies and modalities that may evolve at a very rapid pace.

The survey has been pilot tested with six LWIB Executive Directors to carefully review an array of design issues including content, wording, organization, flow, skip logic, and clarity of instructions, as well as overall level of burden. Pilot testing revealed considerable variation across LWIAs in TBL use as well as the availability of detailed provider and program information. The instrument has been revised to accommodate this cross-site variation. In addition, the wording of select questions and response scales has been revised in order to elicit the most accurate and current data possible as well as minimize overall burden.

The variation in pilot responses, coupled with the absence of reliable information about current TBL use and practices necessitates targeting the entire universe of LWIB Executive Directors. Specifically, it is this type of information that would be needed in order to identify and draw a nationally representative sub-sample of WIBs. Efforts to survey the universe of LWIBs will result in approximately 455 responses from LWIB Executive Directors.⁴

An examination of the select web-based surveys conducted over the last ten years with local WIBs, indicates that an 80 percent response rate is a viable target with appropriate levels of support and follow-up. Specifically, a Government Accountability Office (GAO) survey concerning youth services in 2001-2002 received responses from 83 percent of LWIB Executive Directors⁵ and a survey concerning training in 2004-2005 was completed by 73 percent of the LWIB Executive Directors.⁶ More recently, and using strategies similar to that proposed for the TBL survey, Abt Associates obtained response rates of 97% of nearly 1,500 non-profit organizations in 2011⁷ and over 95% of 544 community-based organizations in 2010.⁸

This data collection will not duplicate any information currently collected. Although identifiers will be used to monitor survey completion and link survey responses to states and regions, identities of respondents will not be included in published reports nor otherwise be revealed to anyone not directly involved in the information collection (i.e., contractor personnel).

Program Official	Date	Departmental Clearance Officer	Date
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³ The survey is section 508 compatible.

⁴ This response target will be reached through a combination of strategies including: 1) a series outreach and reminder e-mails sent by appropriate representatives at strategic intervals; 2) a user friendly web-based survey instrument that can be shared across the respondent organization and accessed multiple times; 3) deployment of an in-house “solutions desk” to monitor response rates, data quality and aggressively follow-up with non-respondents who will have the flexibility to complete the instrument by phone if they prefer.

⁵ *Workforce Investment Act: Youth provisions promote new service strategies, but additional guidance would enhance program development.* GAO-02-413. Washington, DC: April 2002.

⁶ *Workforce Investment Act: Substantial funds are used for training, but little is known nationally about training outcomes.* GAO-05-650. Washington, DC: June 2005.

⁷ www.lsareports.org

⁸ Abt Associates Inc. and Branch Associates Inc. (2011). *ACF-OPRE report: Building non-profit capacity and community partnerships: Findings from the Communities Empowering Youth Evaluation.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation.