READINESS AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CONSULTATION TOOL Workforce Innovations and Opportunity Act

The Workforce Innovations and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 strengthens the public workforce system through enhancements in strategic planning, broad partnerships, performance measurement, and delivery of services to the Nation's employers and job seekers. Building on the Administration's commitment to getting more Americans ready to work, with marketable skills, the White House recently released its report, *Ready to Work: Job-Driven Training and American Opportunity*. That Report identifies a number of job-driven elements – specific actions or approaches that are rooted in what is known to work – that complement WIOA implementation across our state and local grantees.

The first step in the implementation process is to assess workforce system readiness across key administrative and program areas, and to deliberately identify TA needs. To do this, ETA Regional Offices will conduct consultations with states, compile the results of those consultations, and provide recommendations on technical assistance actions ETA should undertake to support state and local implementation of WIOA. The objectives, methodology and timelines for these consultations using the attached Consultation Tool are described below.

Consultation Objectives:

- Assess state and local areas' understanding of the scope of change involved with the new legislation
- Identify planning and preparation activities already underway by states and local systems
- Discover existing strategies and practices in states and local areas that can be replicated or enhanced to facilitate national WIOA implementation
- Track potential barriers or challenges to states and locals in their WIOA implementation
- Inform ETA with specific areas of TA and training needed by states and workforce system partners to successfully implement WIOA
- Quantify issues and readiness across states and local areas in order to prioritize ETA efforts and resources

How ETA Will Accomplish the Objectives:

- State Readiness Consultations
 Utilize the State Consultation Tool jointly with leaders in state workforce
 agencies and in corresponding state board offices to make a state-level
 evaluation of capacity, readiness, technical assistance needs, and barriers to
 implementation. Included in the consultation will be a review of potential
 administrative, technology and systems challenges, and discussion of any
 recent compliance findings that might indicate potential issues.
 - o The state-level consultation will yield a determination of readiness and a catalogue of mutually agreed-upon technical assistance needs. The determination will be based on states' responses, coupled with the ETA Federal Project Officer's firsthand knowledge of actual operations and past performance.
- Local Workforce Board Readiness Consultation
 Utilize the Local Consultation Tool in consultation with state and local
 workforce system leaders, to make a local-level evaluation of capacity,
 readiness, technical assistance needs, and barriers to implementation.
 Included in the consultation will be a review of potential administrative,
 technology and systems challenges, and discussion of any recent
 compliance findings that might indicate potential issues.
 - o The local-level consultation will initially focus on the local boards that receive the largest share of funds and serve the largest number of worker and employer customers. Regions may choose to include local boards that receive smaller funding levels to enhance their understanding of the technical assistance needs of the workforce system as a whole. Either way, consultations should cover 50% to 60% of a state's capacity.

Consultation Methods

To maximize coverage of consultations, they may be achieved through a range of strategies that may include site visits, consultation with relevant state and local workforce system leaders, group consultations during other ETA technical assistance sessions, or via conference calls. All local boards and state leaders will be made aware of the Consultation Tools as a resource so that they may use them for self-assessment even if they are not included in the ETA-led consultations.

 All Consultations will be in a consistent format that allows ETA to compile and upload results across offices, and to identify trends and needs. Tools will allow staff to capture specific notes and feedback, to collect current practices or examples of systems and strategies that work, and to make a rational assessment of the entity's readiness on each topic. As a result ETA will be able to indicate whether the state or local board is:

- o Ready to implement;
- o Has a plan or strategy, and can implement without further technical assistance:
- o Has a plan or strategy, and needs some technical assistance to support implementation; or
- o Does not have a plan, and is in need of specific technical assistance

Timeline to Accomplish Objectives:

- State and local board consultations will take place during the months of August and September 2014
- Results of the consultations will be compiled by regions and the National Office in October 2014

What the Consultation Tool is not:

The Tool is not designed to be an overall workforce system monitoring instrument