

# **Wyoming Department of Workforce Services**



## **Wyoming State Government Annual Report 2006**

### **Results Statements:**

- Wyoming families and individuals live in a stable, safe, supportive, nurturing, and healthy environment.
- Wyoming has a diverse economy that provides a livable income and ensures wage equality.
- Students are successfully educated and prepared for life's opportunities.
- Advanced technologies and a quality workforce allows Wyoming businesses and communities to adapt and thrive.

### **DWS' contribution to Wyoming's quality of life results:**

- DWS is focused on ensuring that Wyoming's people are well trained, educated, and employed in a career field that is rewarding to them both professionally and financially.
- DWS is focused on helping businesses recruit, screen, select, train, and retain a workforce that improves the company's competitive advantage, financial stability, and its ability to grow and prosper.
- DWS' vision is to link human and economic development for Wyoming's future.

### **Department Facts:**

- DWS has consolidated its structure from five divisions to three (Business Training and Outreach, Employment Services, and Vocational Rehabilitation).
- DWS is 80% federally funded with restrictive federal program requirements that do not allow for funding to be moved from one division or function to another based on Wyoming's needs. Creating efficiencies in operational or overhead spending, therefore, does not always lead to the redistribution of funds.
- Since 2002, DWS has seen a yearly 15% (or \$2,071,936) reduction in federal funding of the Workforce Investment Act.

**Primary functions of Department:**

***Recruitment*** - process that locates individuals looking for a job or a business seeking an employee with specific experience, skills, and/or abilities

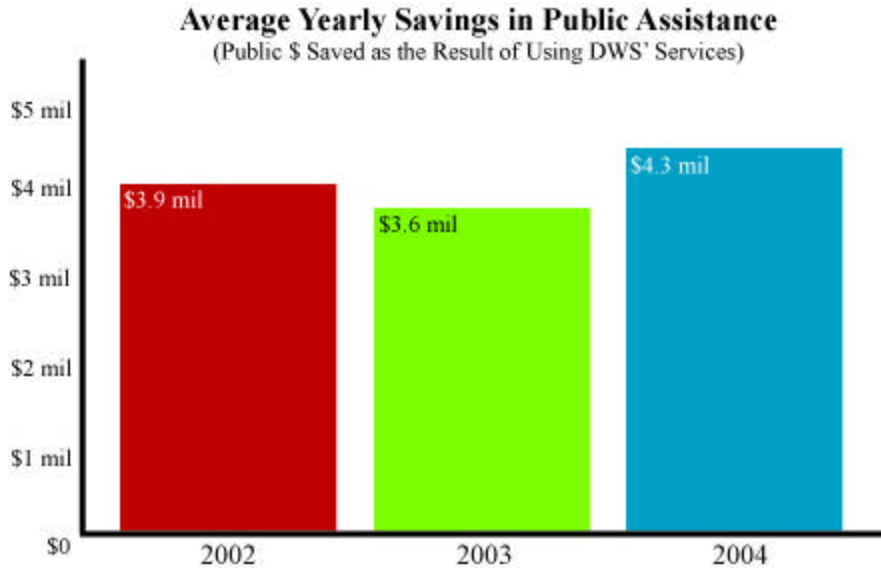
***Screening*** - matching a person's skills with those needed by a business and forwarding qualified recipients

***Employment*** - job placement

***Training*** - programs focused on providing skill development leading to placement, retention, and wage progression

***Career guidance*** - assessing interests and aptitudes leading to establishment of career pathways

***Rehabilitation Counseling*** – assisting clients with disabilities to gain or retain employment that they cannot engage in without specialized services such as assessment, vocational counseling and guidance, physical and mental restoration, training, placement and job development



\*DWS is unable to extract data to update this chart at this time. A new management information system is under development and updated data for the above chart will be available in early 2007.

### **Story behind the performance:**

As shown in the first chart, on average, the combined return on investment to the State of Wyoming in the form of savings in yearly public assistance has consistently been between \$3,000,000 and \$4,000,000 per year as a result of the services provided by DWS. The primary focus of DWS services is to create self sufficiency so that dependence on public assistance is not necessary. This chart is a reflection of only two of the DWS programs.

### **What DWS proposes will improve performance in the next two years:**

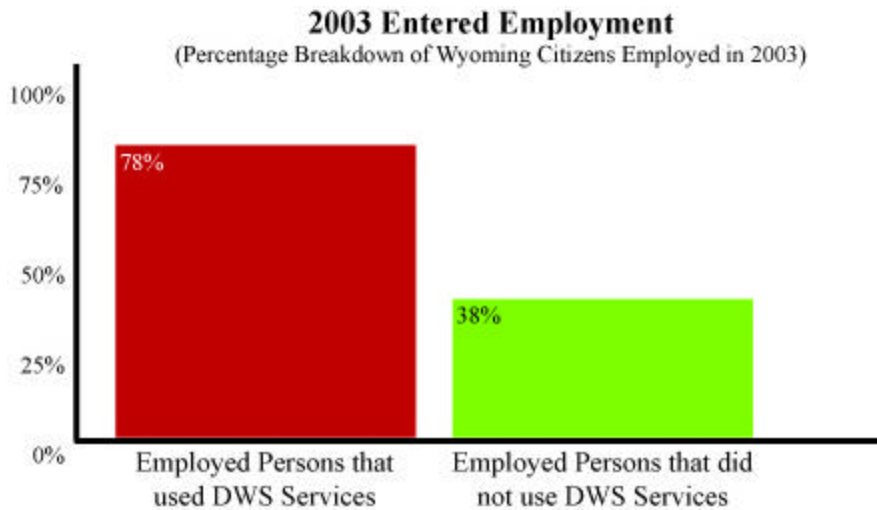
- In the next two years, DWS will begin to use the Family Economic Self Sufficiency calculator with clients. By using the calculator, DWS will be able to help clients understand their current living costs compared to their current family incomes, and determine what type of employment and income will be required for their family to live self sufficiently without public assistance. (Low-cost)
- DWS will continue to measure programs in the agency to ensure an accurate calculation of the money saved in public assistance by receiving employment, counseling, and training services. (Low-cost)
- DWS will partner with DFS to increase the referral network across agencies concentrating on those receiving TANF resources who could be helped by DWS to move them to self sufficiency. DWS data will be transferred to the HCMS group to conduct an examination of shared clients, to increase the utilization of an MOU agreement for information sharing between DWS and DFS, to create and deliver a statewide training of utilization of the FESS calculator across both agencies, to create a way to measure current referral activity, and ensure that both

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agencies are connecting the right people with the resources they need. (No-cost partnership)

DWS provides work search activities for Food Stamp recipients and TANF/POWER recipients who DFS refers to the Department. Further, DWS continues to meet with DFS staff at the administrative level on at least a quarterly basis to develop strategies to increase referrals between the two Departments.

DWS continues to submit quarterly data to the HCMS group allowing them to conduct their research based on the data collected.



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### **Story behind the performance:**

As shown in the chart above, the two things which are clear are that DWS services help people find work and increase their wages. Wyoming citizens looking for employment in 2003 were 40% more likely to find employment after receiving a DWS service compared to those who did not. The clients served in 2003 by Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services have a combined income increase of 60%, or \$4,011,153, allowing them to better care for their families, move off public assistance and contribute back to the economy.

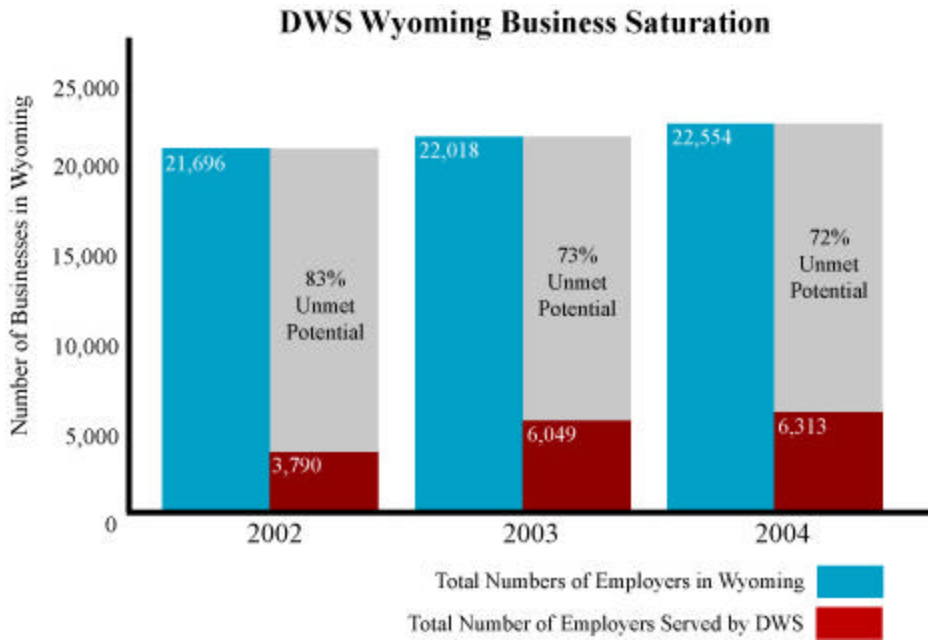
### **What DWS proposes will improve performance in the next two years:**

- DWS solicited proposals, selected a vendor, and executed a contract with Geographic Solutions, Inc. to implement a new electronic labor exchange system. Geographic Solutions, Inc. has been working with DWS staff to modify the existing electronic labor exchange system, and progress has been made towards implementing this new system as Wyoming's electronic labor exchange system. For reasons outside of the control of this Agency, this system was not implemented in July 2006; it will, however, be implemented in November 2006. This system will be more user-friendly for both business and job seeking customers, as well as providing DWS staff with actionable business intelligence allowing the Department to meet the changing needs of Wyoming's business, citizens, and economy.
- During the last year, DWS, through a committee made up of representative from Administration, Regional Management, local Workforce Centers, and local businesses, developed a plan and made recommendations which will redirect how

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services are provided to Wyoming’s businesses, citizens, and communities. This effort is known within the Department as the Employment Services’ Division as the “New Service Delivery Model.” The Department, with the assistance from this committee, has developed job descriptions which outline specific duties of Workforce Center staff (approximately 30% of local Workforce Center staff) who will work primarily with businesses to assess their workforce needs and provide solutions based on those needs. DWS has researched and implement assessment and screening tools to further assist businesses, whether their needs are recruitment and screening for qualified applicants, addressing retention issues, and/or developing training solutions.

- DWS continues to realize reduced federal resources. In order to continue providing services throughout the state in the 20 locations currently staffed, the Department submitted an exception budget to the Wyoming Legislature in the amount of \$2,672,000. The Wyoming Legislature and the Governor approved this request, allowing DWS to maintain current levels of service throughout the state. Further federal reductions may lead to requests for additional state-sponsored funding.
- DWS has co-located in the Rock Springs and Kemmerer areas to better serve customers in Lincoln, Teton, Sublette, Sweetwater, and Uinta counties. Full-time staff in the Department’s Employment Services and Vocational Rehabilitation Divisions have a positive impact in the area of placing disabled and non-disabled Wyoming citizens into employment.



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**Story behind the performance:**

DWS has successfully grown its percentage of Wyoming businesses served from 18% in 2002 to 28% in 2004. All of Wyoming's industries are struggling to hire and retain the right employees for their companies due to the state's low population rates, low unemployment rates, and growth in labor market. DWS has proven programs and services to help businesses meet their needs; yet, due to limited resources and lack of awareness, the majority of Wyoming companies are not accessing these resources.

**What DWS proposes will improve performance in the next two years:**

- Increase the number of businesses served by the Workforce Development Training Fund by enhancing marketing efforts.
- The implementation date for the New Service Delivery Model in the Department's Employment Services Division will be November 15, 2006.
- DWS uses labor market information from sources such as the Department of Employment's Research and Planning Unit, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Department of Administration and Information's Economic Analysis Division and an in-house labor exchange system to determine and develop targeted strategies. One such strategy is DWS will offer assistance in developing and implementing employee recruitment and in-depth screening services to businesses that provide long-term employment, self sufficient wages, and health care benefits.
- DWS continues to advocate and increase its partnerships with state and local economic development entities, industry associations, and chambers of commerce. In all areas of the state, DWS staff are members of their local chamber of commerce and in several areas staff are chamber of commerce board members. Through monthly reports, local workforce center staff stay very much involved with the local economic development activities in their communities.

## **Appendix A: Data Development Agenda**

Areas in which we need additional data to establish a baseline for subsequent performance improvements include:

- Labor Exchange Management Information System (MIS): Development and maintenance of the MIS system for the Employment Services Division. Currently being developed and scheduled for implementation in November 2006.
- Financial Allocation & Reporting System: New financial allocation and reporting system – currently in the research and development phase with the goal of its implementation at the end of 2007.
- Worker Wage Progression Studies: The Research & Planning study of the Workforce Development Training Fund has provided important information to DWS for answering the question, “Are people better off after using this program?” These studies provide valuable information, but can only be financed every two-to-five years because they are expensive to conduct.
- Unemployment Insurance Wage Data: DWS is working with the Department of Employment to expand usage of Unemployment Insurance wage records as a management information tool. Unemployment Insurance wage records will allow staff to determine if wage progression is occurring for program participants without going through the formal and expensive research process.