



OPEN GOVERNMENT PLAN

VERSION 1.0

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1 Executive Summary

The United States Department of Labor impacts the lives of workers every day. From creating pathways to profitable employment and ensuring safe and healthy workplaces, to protecting the rights and wages of workers and retirees across the country, serving working men and women is at the heart of our vision of “Good Jobs for Everyone.”

This is our initial response to President Obama’s call for “*an unprecedented level of openness in government... to strengthen our democracy and promote efficiency and effectiveness in government.*” But this is also a response to the changing needs and expectations of workers, and it is far from complete.

As a part of these efforts, we are debuting two new online initiatives which will help improve our service to the public. Our [Online Enforcement Database](#) provides searchable access to various enforcement data – some of which was previously unpublished – in one location. Plans for the expansion of this database will open access to the raw data files and encourage collaboration through contests or prizes that highlight innovative public uses of the data. We very much want the public to play an active role in the development of this project and encourage feedback about how they are using the data, what features they would like to see added, and how we can improve the site overall.

In addition, we are launching a new [grants map](#) to focus our attention on greater transparency into the expenditure of federal funds. This new map allows users to see where and how DOL grants are impacting their communities and will eventually help those who are interested participate in the grant making process.

Moving forward, our expectation is that **ALL** the data we collect – while respecting any personally identifiable information as well as any governing legal constraints such as the Privacy Act, the Trade Secrets Act and the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act – will be made public online and in downloadable formats. Accordingly, our agencies will plan internal resources, grants, contracts, and budgets to support the ongoing publication of data.

The themes, elements, and details of this plan were developed through a collaborative process which utilized the diverse skills of employees from across the Department, leveraged buy-in from senior leadership, and invited input from additional employees, stakeholder groups and the general public.

This plan reflects a commitment to a culture of openness within DOL and outlines a series of steps we will take to break down the barriers between the public and their Department of Labor. Doing so will lead to lasting improvements in the way we make decisions, solve problem, and addresses the challenges of working men and women.

2 Introduction

The agencies and offices that make up the United States Department of Labor impact the lives of workers every day. From creating pathways to profitable employment, ensuring safe and healthy workplaces, to protecting the rights and wages of workers and retirees across the country, serving working men and women is at the heart of our vision of “Good Jobs for Everyone.” It is what drives our employees in their efforts.

A good job:

- supports a family by increasing incomes, narrowing the wage gap and allowing workplace flexibility;
- is safe and secure and gives people a voice in the workplace;
- is sustainable and innovative;
- rebuilds a strong middle class; and
- provides access to a secure retirement, and to adequate and affordable health coverage.

Open government is an important tool in carrying out this vision. Improving transparency and encouraging public access to useful government information can help to create safer workplaces and strengthen protections for workers and retirees. Promoting public participation can provide a voice in the workplace, and encourage the development of new, sustainable careers. Supporting opportunities for collaboration can lead to more refined resources and better opportunities for workers.

We are a relatively large organization with an even larger purpose. Made up of nearly 30 agencies and offices, the work of the Department is as diverse as the employees that carry it out. From our Wage and Hour Investigators who uncovered child labor violations in the blueberry fields of North Carolina, to our Employment and Training Administration staff who provide strategic investments to support workers and their families through a wide variety of grant programs, our workforce is made up of committed individuals who believe in the importance of the services and resources we provide workers.

Open government has already changed the expectations that people have of us. Our challenge is to match these expectations with our own commitment to the inherent value of transparency, participation, and collaboration, and ensure that the Department of Labor continues to serve people in the most effective and efficient means possible.

This Department, our individual Agencies and Offices, our leadership team, and the nearly 16,000 employees in our offices throughout the country are committed to the principles of open government. We believe that advancing these principles has the power to improve our service to the public. Doing so increases awareness and understanding of the available worker protections and workforce development opportunities, and provides a meaningful way for the public to engage in the process.

This plan is our official response to President Obama’s call – on his very first day in office – for “*an unprecedented level of openness in government... to strengthen our democracy and promote efficiency and effectiveness in government.*” More specifically this is our response to the changing needs and expectations of workers. We believe the Office of Management and Budget’s (OMB) Open Government Directive set the floor not the ceiling for how federal agencies should interact with the public and with each other.

Within this document we set an aggressive agenda and time-table for specific actions that we believe will have a profound impact on the way we do business – and ultimately, improve the services we provide.

Secretary Hilda L. Solis

3 Leadership and Governance

Moving from a commitment to the principles of open government to a plan for implementing them across an organization as large and diverse as ours is no simple task. This broad-reaching effort required the leadership of a wide variety of employees and the creation of additional new governing structures.

3.1 Developing our Open Government Plan

The themes, elements, and details of this plan were developed through a collaborative process which utilized the diverse skills of employees from across the Department, leveraged buy-in from senior leadership, and invited input from additional employees, stakeholder groups and the general public.

Our efforts have been led by an Open Government Steering Committee made up of senior officials from our public affairs, policy, and technology groups: Carl Fillichio (Senior Advisor for Communications and Public Affairs), Kathleen Franks (Director, Office of Regulatory & Programmatic Policy), and Tom Wiesner (Deputy Chief Information Officer). Along with members of their staffs, this group developed the strategic vision for open government at DOL. The Open Government Steering Committee meets with our Deputy Secretary on a weekly basis and engages the entire senior management team, providing timely updates and opportunities for feedback.

In July 2009, we organized an internal Open Government Workgroup (OGW) to champion public disclosure and public engagement throughout DOL. This group coordinated the release of our initial high-value data and these initial conversations helped to identify areas of focus for the development of this plan.

We also organized a series of cross-agency focus groups to identify challenges and develop strategies to meet and exceed the specific components of the Open Government Directive. These groups tackled the specific themes of importance to implementing open government within the Department of Labor: *Leadership and Governance; Culture*

Change; Data Identification and Publication; Public and Employee Engagement; Our Flagship Initiative; and the Legal, Security, and Record Keeping Implications.

More than 70 employees – across all agencies and with a wide-variety of expertise – took part in these focus groups which helped to formulate our approach to open government discussed in Chapter 4. These discussions were also the launching point for honest dialogue about resistance and resources – both of which were recurring themes.

Additional Resources and Opportunities for Employee Participation

Employee Open Government Corner Blog: Shortly after the President issued his Memorandum on Transparency and Open Government, the Department launched an internal blog designed to engage employees in an ongoing discussion on open government topics. Employees are able to respond to posts on a variety of topics. These initial conversations helped to identify existing barriers to success and provided a venue for employees to provide innovative solutions, as well as share their concerns.

LaborNet: The Department utilizes LaborNet – our intranet – to share valuable information on a wide range of topics. As a part of this process, we developed a special section for Open Government resources. Employees were encouraged to read drafts of this plan and provide their comments throughout the process.

All Employee Web Chat: On March 17, 2010 employees were invited to participate in the first ever all-employee web chat. This 90 minute session was hosted by Carl Fillichio, Senior Advisor for Communications and Public Affairs, and the Department’s senior official for open government. Employees were encouraged to ask questions about the plan and think about potential application and roadblocks. Employees raised a number of internal infrastructure and IT concerns, which were able to be effectively addressed.

Public Outreach and Engagement:

We aggressively promoted opportunities for the public to provide their ideas and engage in the development of this plan through a wide variety of channels. We featured notices in our weekly newsletter which reaches more than 80,000 subscribers, individual agencies sent email blasts to all employees and a variety of stakeholders, and the Department encouraged public participation via Twitter and Facebook.

Public Idea Sharing Platform:

Employees, stakeholders, and the general public were encouraged to provide their own ideas for open government at DOL via a General Services Administration provided platform: www.opendol.ideascale.com. We received 136 ideas through this process, which in turn received 1023 votes. The top three most popular ideas involved

- *Creating stronger policies to protect the right of DOL scientists to speak with the public and the media;*
- *Providing live webcasts of all meetings for proposed rule making and regulations where the public comment should take place; and*
- *Increasing awareness of the platform itself.*

These and other ideas influenced the development of this plan and our overall strategy. The full list of ideas were tagged by appropriate agency and forwarded for response. A full inventory of these ideas and responses will be posted to www.dol.gov/open by **May 1, 2010**.

Engaging Open Government Advocacy Groups for Feedback: Senior officials within the Department met with and solicited feedback from a number of open government advocacy organizations including the Sunlight Foundation, OMB Watch, the Association of Research Libraries, Tech America, and researchers from MIT and the University of Maryland to hear their ideas and engage them in the development of this plan. This feedback was especially useful in understanding external expectations and priorities.

3.2 Supporting our Strategic Goals

The Department’s Open Government Plan is fundamental to meeting and advancing our long-term strategic objectives. Only by increasing our efforts in transparency, participation and collaboration will the Department be able to fully satisfy our core mission of promoting the welfare of job seekers, wage earners, and retirees of the United States. Our vision of “good jobs for everyone” is supported through the following goals:

Our Open Government Plan is not just a slogan or policy position, but a powerful strategy towards the achievement of our strategic goals.

- To prepare workers for good jobs and ensure fair compensation;
- To ensure workplaces are safe and healthy;
- To assure fair and high quality work-life environments;
- To secure health benefits and, for those not working, provide income security; and
- To foster fair working conditions in the global marketplace.

Our Open Government Plan is not just a slogan or policy position, but a powerful strategy towards the achievement of our strategic goals. While different aspects of this plan will ultimately help achieve different combinations of our strategic goals, increased transparency, participation, and collaboration will influence the work of the entire Department, and make it better able to satisfy our core mission of promoting the welfare of job seekers, wage earners, and retirees of the United States.

Publishing information online in such a way that it is easily accessible and can be used and distributed as widely as possible dramatically alters the relationships between the Department, our community of active stakeholders, and the public. This data gives the public an unprecedented view into Department activities – and increased transparency holds workers, employers, and the Department more accountable, while ensuring that the public is able to make more informed decisions about where they live, work, and consume.

As part of our transparency efforts, we are launching version 1.0 of a comprehensive [Online Enforcement Database](#) which provides access to enforcement data collected by the Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP), Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), and Wage and Hour Division (WHD) in one location. Users will be able to search a growing series of common dimensions which open a window to all of our enforcement actions for the first time. In addition to the added value of access to aggregate enforcement data, this database also provides access to a variety of previously unpublished data.

Perhaps workers will review the database before beginning their job search, allowing them to more accurately assess a prospective employer's reputation. Or maybe someone will create a mashup of the employers in their community and encourage neighbors to stop doing business with serial employment law violators. Information is power, and a number of our initiatives will dramatically increase the accessibility and usability of the information we collect and further aid in meeting our strategic goals.

Meeting these goals will also require new channels of public participation—both on- and off-line—to strengthen Department decision-making and to better serve the public workforce. With today's technologies, it is easy for citizens to speak directly to the appropriate decision-makers within our Department, and for our decision-makers to sift through and understand the submitted comments and recommendations. Workers will be able to boost our enforcement efforts by directly reporting problems in their work environments, and retirees will be able to report gaps in their benefits to help the Department identify potentially systemic issues. The Department will also be able to provide more responsive and accurate customer service by integrating our outreach efforts into popular online venues. We plan to be aggressive in adopting these technologies to better engage the workforce.

In addition to our worker protection efforts, a large part of our work centers around workforce development programs, and a number of these are conducted through the distribution of grants. Though the Department distributes nearly \$4 billion in formula grants through a de-centralized system of service deliverers and one-stop career centers, we also award millions in discretionary grants for demonstrations and evaluations of labor market strategies and interventions. The grant application process is one area in particular that could benefit tremendously from an increased level of public participation. Increased information dissemination about grants and the grant making process will improve the quality of both the applications and our responses.

Finally, the development of collaborative partnerships among our internal agencies, and between our Department and external entities, will help us efficiently deliver on our open government promise. Integrating data collections within our Department will streamline better cross-agency analyses and provide higher data quality to the public. External collaboration with other Federal entities, especially those who also engage in enforcement activity, will help each entity reduce duplicative efforts, especially in our information technology needs. And external collaboration with private, non-profit and

academic entities, and the public-at-large, will result in improved oversight, extended outreach and better data interfaces and visualizations.

3.3 Measuring Success

Measuring the success of this initiative will evolve over time as we implement the specific action steps outlined in this plan and utilize open government strategies to carry out our mission.

Initially, we will track our success in meeting the specific action steps outlined in this plan through a dashboard on www.dol.gov/open

However, the true goal of this process is not simply to answer the question of whether we are being more “open,” but to address how doing so impacts the services we provide the American public. The better questions – and how we plan to evaluate our progress – are:

Does the public have access to more data? Is it better data?

Does the public have a better understanding of, and access to, our services?

Have we increased our ability to reach a larger, broader spectrum of the population?

Are developers using our data to create tools that are of interest to particular audiences?

Do our projects reflect the input of the public? If so, how?

In addition, we will track quantitative data in the following areas:

- Number of high-value datasets and tools published online;
- Number of developers using our data; and
- Number of specific public engagement opportunities

These reports will be provided on a quarterly basis on www.dol.gov/open beginning on June 30, 2010.

4 Action Steps: Leadership and Governance

To support our ongoing open government activities, we will utilize a leadership and governance framework similar to that which was used for the development of this plan. This framework consists of the Open Government Steering Committee, the Open Government Working Group, and ad hoc groups to support specific elements of the plan. While many departments within the Federal government have “housed” their open government work within their IT offices, the leadership at DOL understood that to meet our objectives, much of the necessary work would require changes within the culture of the organization. We believe that the success of our open government work requires a commitment to fundamentally improving the avenues through which our employees communicate with each other, and with the public. As a result, the responsibility for driving this initiative has been placed within our Office of Public Affairs.

Each individual agency within the Department has also been asked to provide a senior-level official within the agency to serve as the primary point of contact for issues related to the implementation of this plan.

In addition we plan to take the following actions:

- **Integrating our open government strategies into our five year strategic plan, and into each individual Agency’s performance standards and measures.**

Timeline for Action: April – July 2010

- **Forming internal Open Government working groups and/or virtual communities of practice.**

While our internal agencies and offices have very diverse objectives, many share similar business practices and have employees who carry out similar roles within their organizations. Communicating the opportunity and impact of open government strategies internally across these different agencies and offices is a key component of this plan. These groups will encourage employees to discuss progress in using transparency, participation, and collaboration to improve internal processes and deliver better results for the public.

Timeline for Action: Ongoing beginning May 2010

5 Enabling a Culture of Open Government

Within the Department of Labor, the Open Government Initiative is being used to frame a much larger discussion about the way our agencies interact with the American people. From the outset, we viewed this as an opportunity to better focus on our products and their benefit to the American people. We did not want this to become an exercise in checking an “open government” box, or adding an additional layer of work for our employees.

In our initial focus group sessions, two themes emerged. There was a genuine passion and excitement about the possibilities of open government to help employees accomplish our mission. This excitement was often mitigated by an underlying hesitation rooted in a “been there, done that” response to the “next big idea to change government.”

6 Action Steps to Enable Culture Change

To build on the excitement, address realistic concerns over resources and workload, and create a lasting change in the way we do business, our philosophy of open government is focused on 1) enabling a culture of open government by supporting employees in the pursuit of open government; 2) integrating open government principles into existing processes; 3) strengthening an infrastructure for information sharing; and 4) demonstrating stories of success.

In support of enabling a true and lasting culture change, we plan to take the following actions:

- **Developing an internal communications strategy to educate and engage employees on the impact and benefits of open government.**
 While much of the focus on the open government initiative has been to engage the public and make more and better information available, the underlying purpose is to rethink not only the expectations of government, but the expectations within government. Direct messaging will model open government principles and help to explain to employees what open government means to everyone at DOL. This will be carried out in a number of ways including: “*Dear Colleague*” emails from the Secretary, all-employee web chats, an elevator poster campaign, feature stories on LaborNet and **FRANCES** our employee E-Magazine, the organization of informal “meetups” and information sharing sessions, and Open Government town halls with each agency head and Departmental leadership.
Timeline for Actions: Ongoing beginning April 2010
- **Committing to an infrastructure that better supports internal information sharing.**
 Through the creation of Apps.gov and other approved third-party services, the resources available for use within the public sector have changed rapidly. While we have made significant strides to embrace these new tools, the ability to utilize additional internal employee resources would have a tremendous benefit on the work throughout DOL. We will launch an internal wiki and expand our use of internal blogs, web chats, and other tools to encourage employee participation across the Department. These platforms will allow employees to identify best practices, discuss creative solutions to common problems, and share success stories.
Timeline for Action: Wiki Launch June 2010
- **Developing an open government speaker series and/or benchmarking program.**
 One of the biggest frustrations or reservations we heard throughout the focus groups was that people need help identifying with the ways that open government can be helpful to them in performing their jobs. This series will allow employees to hear first hand about effective practices and how the transparency, participation, and collaboration have helped other agencies within DOL; departments across the federal government; non-profit groups; academics; and businesses deliver better results.
Timeline for Action: April – June 2010 and beyond
- **Using periodic all-staff emails to share milestones and success stories.**
 Our focus groups also revealed that many people who don’t deal work routinely with data or statistics have difficulty seeing the value of open government principles or how they can lead to a more efficient and effective program. These messages will help bridge that gap by highlighting the impact of open government benchmarks or specific success stories from internal agencies.
Timeline for Action: Ongoing beginning April 2010
- **The creation of a Secretary’s Award for Open Government.**
 This annual award will highlight the contributions of DOL employees who exemplify

DOL's commitment to transparency, participation, and collaboration in support of "Good Jobs for Everyone." One award will be given in each category. We also encourage the creation of an Open Government award category within each agency-level Employee Recognition Program.

Timeline for Action: September 2010

The new DOL Searchable Enforcement Database provides a single, easy to search, point of entry to the Department's enforcement records.

- **Launching an external blog to share highlights and invite feedback.**

Though we have found an engaged audience through the use of a number of social media platforms, we currently do not have a DOL blog. Many other agencies have effectively used blogs to engage the public in conversations about key initiatives and invite meaningful feedback. We believe this is a missing piece in our comprehensive public communications strategy and one that should be addressed.

Timeline for Action: May 2010

- **Exploring ways to build open government into our human resources and talent management practices.**

The culture of our organization is influenced by a number of factors including how we recruit, onboard, train, and retain employees. In order to ensure that our commitment to open government is reflected at all stages of employment, we will identify ways to build an open government component into the Department's new employee orientation and on-boarding process; incorporate clear open government goals into performance standards for applicable employees; and develop employee training programs covering various aspects of open government.

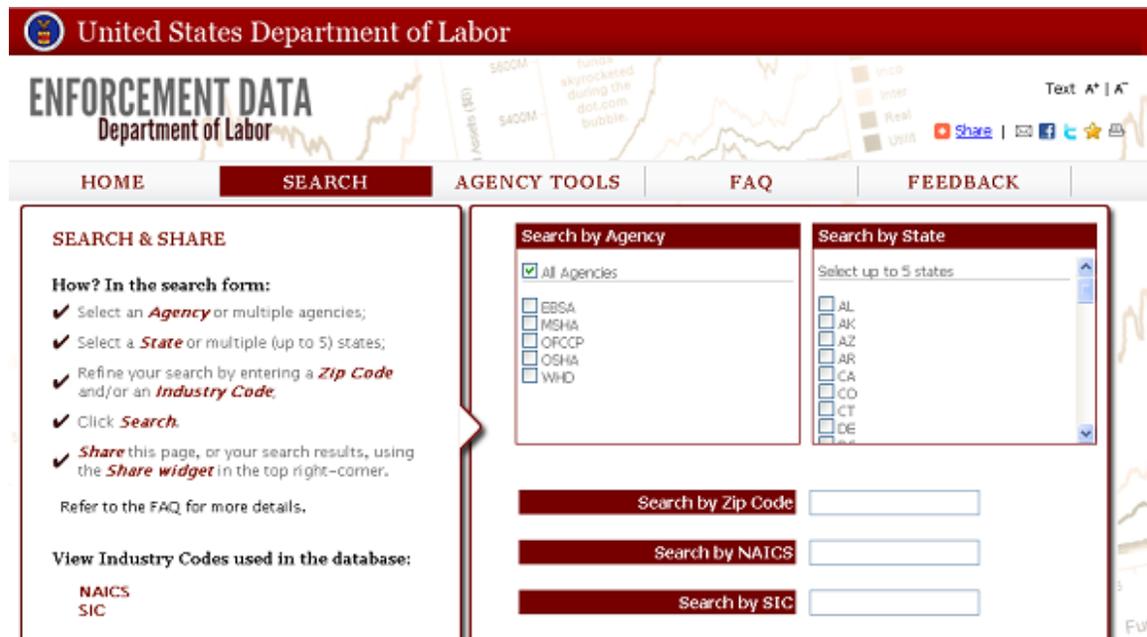
Timeline for Action: December 2010

7 Flagship Initiative: Online Enforcement Database

While we continue to move forward on many projects that incorporate elements of transparency, participation, and collaboration we are particularly excited to announce our flagship initiative, the Department of Labor Online Enforcement Database, which will support our goals to ensure safe, healthy, and secure workplaces.

Version 1.0 of this database is [now available online](#) and provides the public with access to enforcement data collected by Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP), Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), and Wage and Hour Division (WHD) in one location and searchable along a series of common dimensions. In addition to the added value of access to aggregate enforcement data, this database also provides access to a variety of previously unpublished enforcement information.

Prior to this public database, only OSHA and MSHA made their enforcement data available online. For other DOL agencies, accessing this data required submitting requests directly to the agencies and waiting for a response, which can often be frustrating and discouraging. In some cases, accessing the data would have required submitting a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request. In addition, once an individual had all the data they'd requested, there was no easy way to cross-reference it. The new DOL Searchable Enforcement Database provides a single, easy to search, point of entry to the Department's enforcement records.



The launch of this database is an important step in the implementation of Open Government at DOL. In the spirit of transparency, we believe it is important to open access to this information as soon as possible to aid in our mission of promoting workplace safety and protecting workers. This project is a reflection of our commitment to the principles of an open government and over the course of the next few months we will provide additional updates and functionality to meet the anticipated needs of our users.

Additional features under consideration will:

- Increase transparency by allowing access to the raw data files and enabling more user-specific search results.
- Promote participation by encouraging public feedback in prioritizing new features and functionality.
- Encourage collaboration by offering contests or prizes that highlight innovative ways that the public is using, visualizing or mashing up the data.

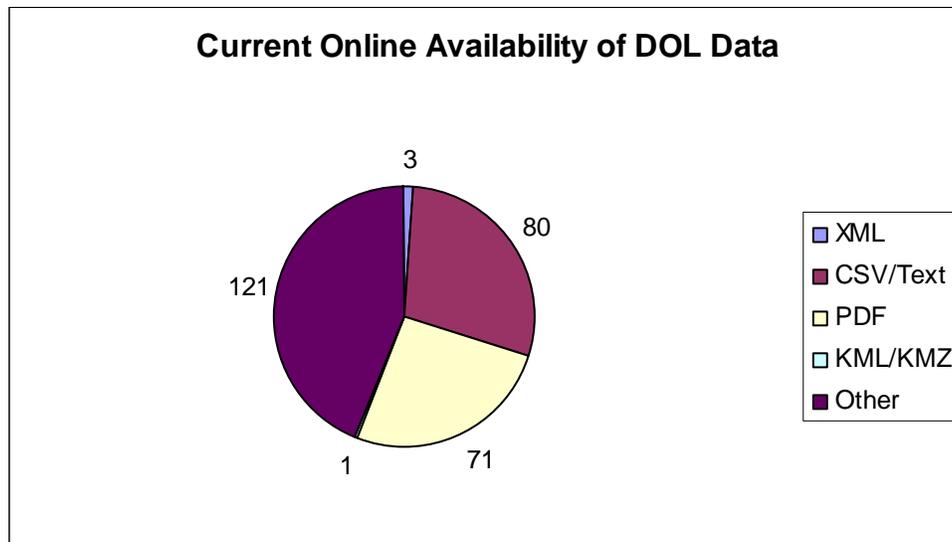
We very much want the public to play an active role in the development of this project and [encourage feedback](#) about how they are using the data, what features they would like to see added, and how we can improve the site overall.

8 Transparency

Even prior to the Open Government initiative, DOL published a dizzying array of information online. Our Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) has been a leader in making data available to the public, and was one of the early contributors to [Data.gov](#) – the central site that enables users to find, download, and utilize datasets which are generated and held by the Federal Government. We currently have 40 datasets and three tool catalogs featured on Data.gov.

We recently conducted an initial inventory of data collected throughout the Department. The initial data call produced a list of more than 300 datasets from 14 of our agencies. Almost all responses included a description of the dataset, the format(s) in which it is currently available, whether or not it is currently published online, and whether any of the data elements pose privacy concerns. While some of these datasets are already online in a structured format, the majority of our data is only currently available through search interfaces or as a part of aggregate statistics.

We are currently in the process of poring through this list to prioritize additional high-value data for publication as well identify any data that was not included as a part of the initial inventory. It is clear from this initial inventory that a primary objective within DOL must be to facilitate the disclosure of existing data in more usable formats such as XML and CSV. The “Other” category in the chart below includes a number of items currently in XLS, which may be easily converted to CSV files.



Based on an initial analysis of this initial inventory, nearly a quarter (24%) of the data that is not currently published online contains information protected by the Privacy Act

and therefore disclosure of this information is subject to important legal constraints. This is especially true of the data collected by our Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP). Other examples of information not currently available include data on grant applications which may contain proprietary information, data that contains specific information regarding ongoing investigations, and yes, even some historical data that has traditionally been collected in hard copy only.

8.1 Compliance with Existing Transparency Initiatives

Data.gov

Beginning in May 2009, the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) began to work with DOL agencies to publish datasets on Data.gov. We immediately published 34 datasets from the Bureau of Labor Statistics as a strong start to compliance with the guidance and direction of transparency in Government.

The OCIO coordinated with all DOL agencies to work together towards providing other valuable datasets from within the Department. To date DOL has 40 raw dataset publications and three tools on the site that include some data that were never publicly available and others that were available but not in a downloadable format. Examples of these datasets include:

Bureau of Labor Statistics Data: BLS contributes 34 datasets to Data.gov, ranging from the Consumer Price Index (CPI) to the American Time Use Survey (ATUS). This data is used regularly by developers in a variety of mashups and visualizations.

[View at Data.gov](#) | [View on BLS.gov](#)

EBSA Form 5500 Data: This data tool contains the information about the financial condition, investments, and operations for most private pension and many private welfare benefit plans and is collected by DOL's Employee Benefits Security Administration through the [EFAST system](#).

[View at Data.gov](#) | [Download Data](#)

Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Protection Act (MSPA) Registered Farm Labor Contractor Listing: The MSPA requires a contractor to obtain federal certification prior to performing any farm labor contracting activities. The farm labor contractors who appear on the following list have obtained a federal certificate.

[View at Data.gov](#) | [Download Data](#)

OSHA Establishment Specific Injury and Illness Rates: Each year OSHA collects work-related injury and illness data from employers. This data is searchable online from 1996 to 2007.

[View at Data.gov](#) | [Download Data](#)

Research and Evaluation Inventory: The first phase in the development of a single repository of all completed and planned research and evaluation projects that have or will

be conducted in the upcoming calendar year. The database will be updated on a monthly basis to add more agency information and links to completed projects.

[View at Data.gov](#) | [Download Data](#)

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Net Impact Evaluation Dataset: The evaluation employs administrative data from 12 states, covering approximately 160,000 WIA participants and nearly 3 million comparison group members.

[View at Data.gov](#) | [Download Data](#)

eRulemaking

DOL was one of the initial partners in the eRulemaking initiative and all of our regulatory steps seeking public input (e.g., Requests for Information, Advance Notices of Proposed Rulemakings, Notices of Proposed Rulemakings) are posted on [Regulations.gov](#) for comment. This allows the public to search and view any federal agency's rulemaking dockets. Previously, a person would have to visit each agency to inspect or make copies of docket materials (i.e., the rule, supporting studies/documents, all public comments received on the rule) – now this can be done through one portal. This also allows for cross-agency searches to see what any federal agency is doing with respect to a particular topic.

A number of DOL agencies have also effectively used [Regulations.gov](#) for non-rulemaking Federal Register notices. The Department of Labor's Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB) regularly utilizes the site to solicit broad input from stakeholders around the world. Whether it is to gather information about goods from countries produced by child labor or forced labor under the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005 (TVPPRA), information about efforts by countries to eliminate the worst forms of child labor, or its procedural guidelines for implementing its monitoring responsibilities, ILAB posts information gathering efforts on the [regulations.gov](#) portal.

ILAB will soon post a call for information on best practices to eradicate child labor and forced labor as part of its overall research under its TVPPRA responsibilities. Using the [regulations.gov](#) tool to reach stakeholders provided an effective means to collect substantive comments in a manner that is fully open and accessible to the public. Those who wish to make comments can readily see the input of other stakeholders and provide relevant information. ILAB strives to conduct its international work in as transparent and open manner as possible, and publishing its notices requesting information or feedback on [regulations.gov](#) is an integral part of this process.

In addition to actively participating in [www.regulations.gov](#), we also created a landing page within our own Web site to provide visitors with a one-stop source for comprehensive information about our current and proposed regulatory actions: [www.dol.gov/regulations](#). This site provides videos explaining the impact of proposed regulations as well as listing the current and upcoming opportunities to provide comments, and the transcripts from our extensive regulatory web chats.

Some DOL agencies, such as EBSA, post the public comments on the agency website in an effort to improve accessibility for the broader public. The comments are posted with links to the Federal Register documents (RFI's, proposed rules, interim final rules requesting comment) as well as testimony from public hearings, if held. Many of the regulations have had a lot of public interest with hundreds of comments submitted. The index of the comments posted allows visitors to see who commented and then read those comments they wish to read.

IT Dashboard

The [IT Dashboard](#) is a new Web site, launched by the Office of Management and Budget in June 2009, which enables federal agencies and the general public to view details of federal information technology investments. The IT Dashboard helps the public review and track the spending, performance, and progress of technology investments over time. As a part of this dashboard, the public can easily obtain information about our technology investments.

The performance of each of our major IT investments is rated on three factors: cost, schedule, and a CIO rating. Each month the DOL program office provides an update of the investment's actual costs, as well as actual accomplishments of the program's activities for that month. These two factors are compared against the planned activities for that month when the investment first began. The variance is then an indicator of how well the investment is achieving its performance goals at that point of its development. The third factor, the CIO assessment of the program, is primarily based on a risk assessment associated with the investment achieving its intended results.

Integrating Federal IT Dashboard with DOL IT

We have embraced this transparency program since its inception and have had a long standing quarterly control review process for all of our major IT investments. Since the announcement of the IT Dashboard, we have integrated the associated requirements of the IT Dashboard with our program reviews and other IT governance processes. The CIO ratings are applied each month, and the entire process is managed by the Office of the Chief Information Officer resulting in timely updates with data quality reviews that results in an accurate portrayal of DOL's IT investments.

Assessing Our IT Investments

In July 2009, in accordance with Federal CIO Rating guidance, the DOL CIO assigned initial CIO IT investment evaluation ratings to all DOL major IT investments posted on the Federal IT Dashboard. Monthly DOL CIO evaluation updates focus on assessment of the risks associated with each investment achieving its intended results.

Focusing on Timely Updates and Data Quality

Since the Federal IT Dashboard was released, DOL has consistently updated its IT investment information on the Federal IT Dashboard by the 15th of the reporting month.

This schedule results in accurate and quality performance data from the previous month that keeps the public up to date with timely investment information.

Recovery.gov

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) created the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board, which maintains Recovery.gov so the American people can see how ARRA money is being distributed by federal agencies and how the funds are being used by the recipients. The Board's goals are to provide transparency in relation to the use of ARRA-related funds and prevent and detect fraud, waste, and mismanagement.

DOL fully complies with Office of Management and Budget guidance for ARRA implementation and reporting. On a weekly basis, DOL submits an ARRA Financial and Activity Report to Recovery.gov and posts the report to www.dol.gov/recovery to provide the public with a snapshot of its ARRA-related obligations and outlays. The report includes a breakdown of funding by Treasury Account Fund Symbol, Award Type, and State, as well as a narrative description of the past week's major ARRA-related developments.

DOL utilizes its www.dol.gov/recovery Web site to provide important data and narratives regarding its ARRA-funded programs and efforts, including working training, unemployment benefits, and expanded access to continued health benefits.

USASpending.gov

USASpending.gov is the Office of Management and Budget's public requirements of the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (Transparency Act or FFATA). Data on USASpending.gov are largely obtained from the Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS), which contains information about federal contracts, and the Federal Assistance Award Data System (FAADS), which contains information about federal financial assistance such as grants and assistance. Data are also obtained from agency submissions via OMB's FAADS PLUS file format. DOL does not have direct loans, loan guarantees, defaulted guaranteed loans or insurance.

Since 2007, DOL has complied with USASpending.gov reporting cycles as documented on the site's data transmission and compliance dashboard. Current performance is based on the timeliness and content of data submission. To view current DOL USASpending.gov performance, visit: <http://www.usaspending.gov/data/dataquality.php>

To send assistance data to USASpending.gov, DOL uses its E-Grants system. Grant data captures the requisite information from Grant Awards, which is transferred into periodic data files for upload to USASpending.gov on a monthly cycle. DOL has instituted a data validation process to ensure the consistency and accuracy of its grants award data.

DOL uses its E-Procurement system (EPS) to collect, report, and transmit contract award data to FPDS. DOL relies upon the data validation and edit-check features found within FPDS to ensure the accuracy and completeness of its contract award data. These financial data are transmitted to USASpending.gov by FPDS and OMB then posts these data on USASpending.gov on a monthly basis.

DOL has consistently complied with USASpending.gov reporting requirements to date; however, DOL is currently developing its Open Government Data Quality Framework and Data Quality Plan, which will formalize a strategy to enhance the quality of spending information.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) has taken several steps at the Departmental level to ensure that President Obama's instructions regarding the "Presumption of Openness" are carried out to the fullest. Immediately upon receipt of the January 21, 2009 memoranda, the Department disseminated the information to all Agency Heads. In addition, the Office of the Solicitor (SOL) promptly forwarded the instructions to all personnel with FOIA responsibilities. In June of 2009 DOL-wide FOIA training was held with the new policy being the centerpiece of the training. Both the Director and Chief of Staff of the Department of Justice's (DOJ) Office of Information Policy participated in the training and DOL's Deputy Secretary gave a key note speech stressing his commitment to openness. These steps build on the efforts DOL made to improve its FOIA process in response to Executive Order 13392 and the OPEN Government Act amendment to FOIA.

DOL is a diverse agency with responsibilities ranging from enforcing worker protection laws to collecting labor statistics to overseeing worker benefit programs, the unemployment insurance program and providing labor certifications for worker visas. As a result, DOL has a decentralized FOIA program to meet the needs of each component's FOIA customers. For our enforcement agencies, the most frequent type of FOIA request is a request from an attorney or an individual engaged in or contemplating, private litigation related to a matter investigated by DOL. For example, an attorney pursuing or defending a private tort suit related to a workplace accident investigated by OSHA will request OSHA's investigation file. Another frequently requested type of record is a labor certification file sought by an immigration attorney. A final type of frequently requested record is a first party request that is responded to under the Privacy Act for a claim file such as an injured Federal employee requesting a copy of his/her Federal Employees' Compensation Act claim file.

In order to best respond to this diversity of requests, each agency has been given flexibility to design a program that meets its needs. Most agencies have delegated their disclosure responsibilities to officials at the Office Director or Division Chief level in Washington, as well as to their regional offices. Others have delegated their field FOIA responsibilities to district or area offices. Conversely, some small agencies handle all of their FOIA requests centrally in Washington, DC. The differing agency practices are

explained partly by the number of requests that agencies receive and partly by the nature of the programs they administer.

In FY 2009 DOL received 16,726 FOIA requests. OSHA received roughly 50% of these requests (8,328). During that same period the number of DOL's backlog grew substantially from 416 to 619. A number of factors may have contributed to the increase, including for example, the diversion of resources to transition efforts and in the case of at least one agency to comply with a statutory requirement of the ARRA. Another factor appears to have been a slowing of processing time due to the learning curve associated with implementing the new policy. DOL is taking steps to implement a plan to reduce the backlog by 10% a year. The components are reporting their backlogs quarterly and are being told to close their 10 oldest requests each year. Our first quarter data call showed that significant progress was being made as the number of backlogged cases has been reduced from 619 to 541 or a reduction of 12.6%.

In addition, DOL has recognized that, although it has made great strides in promoting openness, it needed to make changes in the structure of its FOIA program to continue to meet the increasing FOIA administrative, management, and oversight responsibilities. Therefore, DOL is establishing an Office of Information Services (OIS) within the Office of the Solicitor. The OIS mission is to coordinate the FOIA administrative functions at the Department of Labor. It will provide FOIA guidance to all DOL personnel with FOIA responsibilities (consulting with legal advisors as necessary); perform DOL-wide FOIA training to ensure that all DOL FOIA personnel adhere to OMB, DOJ, and White House guidance; maintain the FOIA tracking system/database serving all DOL components, and improve it over time to allow the public and all DOL components to review the status of FOIA request; assist in resolving disputes between FOIA requesters and DOL agencies and coordinate and file any reports needed on DOL's FOIA operations, including the FOIA annual report and Chief FOIA Officer's report. In many instances, these functions were formerly being performed by attorneys in SOL who had other responsibilities, including litigation, which would often have to take priority over these duties. By creating an office dedicated to these responsibilities, DOL will be better able to manage its FOIA program to promote greater openness.

Currently, there are three significant FOIA cases pending that involve the Department of Labor. In UtahAmerican Inc. v. MSHA (DDC 08-CV-1780), the plaintiff is a target of criminal and civil investigations in connection with the two tragic accidents that occurred at the Crandall Canyon Mine in Utah, in August 2007, in which several miners and three rescuers were killed. The records sought are being withheld pursuant to exemption 7(A) of the FOIA because their disclosure could be expected to harm the ongoing investigations. In Dolin, Thomas & Solomon v. DOL (WDNY 08-CV-6181) the plaintiff is seeking records related to the drafting of three Wage and Hour opinion letters. Litigation is continuing despite the fact that DOL re-reviewed the documents originally withheld in light of the Holder FOIA memoranda and released over 1,000 pages of previously withheld material. The final significant FOIA case is National Right to Work v. DOL, (DDC 09-CV-02205), seeks records concerning Secretary Solis and Deputy Solicitor Deborah Greenfield including records concerning their communications with

labor unions as well as records concerning the union financial reporting requirements. Briefs have not yet been filed in this case.

Additional information about our FOIA process is available at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/foia/>.

Congressional Inquiries

The [Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs](#) (OCIA) has primary responsibility for analyzing and responding to Congressional requests for information. The Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs oversees a staff of Legislative Liaisons responsible for each of the specific offices and agencies within the Department of Labor. Inquiries that specifically involve the Secretary of Labor are also routed through the [Executive Secretariat](#) within the Office of the Secretary (OSEC). OCIA also notifies congressional offices regarding grants awarded by the Department and provides direction and coordination for all congressional and intergovernmental liaison and outreach activities for the Department of Labor.

OCIA assists the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, agency heads, and departmental staff to develop effective programs and strategies to promote the Department's goals and objectives on Capitol Hill as well as among state and local officials. In addition to congressional and intergovernmental affairs units, OCIA also includes the Department of Labor's Regional Representatives.

A record of the recent congressional testimony by the Department's senior leadership is available online at <http://www.dol.gov/sec/media/congress/main.htm>.

Record Keeping

The Department is committed to meeting its Records Management requirements and ensuring the timely transfer of all permanently valuable records to the National Archives. The Department's Records Management Program objectives are to:

- Provide effective control, appropriate security, and management over the creation, maintenance, use and disposition of all records within the Department regardless of recording media.
- Ensure that the records accurately reflect the business practices, policies, and transactions of the Department.
- Foster effective and economical Departmental record keeping.
- Ensure care, preservation and disposition of the Department's records.
- Coordinate records management activities with other information management and Departmental activities.
- Ensure all DOL employees are well-informed of their records management responsibilities.
- Prevent the unauthorized access, removal, and loss of Departmental records.

A detailed description of the Department’s records management program is available at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/records/>.

DOL Declassification Programs

The Department of Labor has not had classification authority in over thirty (30) years. As a result, we do not have an active program for the declassification of documents, nor do we have staff assigned to this task. A small number of historic documents which were classified before 1978 are maintained by the National Archives and Records Administration, Federal Records Center Program under a joint Memorandum of Understanding.

9 Action Steps to Improve Transparency

The ability of agencies to proactively push more and better data out to the public is a part of the changing expectations of public service. We believe that the data we collect is done so on behalf of the public and are committed to making more and better data available for public use. We will make historic data available where possible given existing legal barriers and without causing an undue cost or resource burden. This process must also actively involve input and feedback from the public to help in the prioritization of historical data. The way that the public perceives the value of our information – and the impact that releasing it may have – will be a primary driver in our efforts to improve transparency. As a part of our data prioritization, we encourage the public to provide feedback and submit requests for additional data through the various existing channels outlined on our Open Government Page (www.dol.gov/open).

*Moving forward, our expectation is that **ALL** the data we collect – taking all measures to protect any personally identifiable information as well as any governing legal constraints such as the Privacy Act, the Trade Secrets Act and the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act – will be made public online and in downloadable formats.*

Moving forward, our expectation is that ALL the data we collect – while taking all measures to protect personally identifiable information as well as any governing legal constraints such as the Privacy Act, the Trade Secrets Act and the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act – will be made public online and in downloadable formats. Accordingly, our agencies will plan internal resources, grants, contracts, and budgets to support the ongoing publication of data. Over time, this will encompass adopting standardized clauses (e.g., for contracts and other legal instruments and documents) and operational practices that articulate a preference or need for underlying raw data to be provided in a structured, machine readable format. Such clauses and practices would also state our intentions to release to the public information on grant and contract outcomes, to the extent permitted by legal and security requirements. Despite our expectation of providing on-line access to data, personal-level data like that found in workers’ compensation files, will not be disclosed in such a manner.

Our initial data inventory will be updated on a quarterly basis and a summary will be posted online. A full list of DOL's data collection projects is available at <http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain>.

To facilitate this process, without causing an undue burden on existing resources, we have identified the following principles to prioritize data.

Our highest priority will be data which:

1. Advances one or more of the Department's five strategic goals:
 - To prepare workers for good jobs and ensure fair compensation;
 - To ensure workplaces are safe and healthy;
 - To assure fair and high quality work-life environments;
 - To secure health benefits and, for those not working, provide income security; and
 - To foster fair working conditions in the global marketplace.
2. Responds to the needs of an identified audience and inspires new forms of citizen engagement.
3. Provides new insight into Department activities because the dataset was previously unpublished, previously unavailable online, or previously unavailable in a bulk machine-processable format.
4. Enables third party civic innovation by conforming to established data best practices:
 - Primary—exposes the underlying raw source data not aggregate statistics.
 - Structured—available in a machine-processable format such as XML, CSV or other.
 - Timely—includes the most recent data available and is updated on a regular basis.
 - Usable—provides an understandable description of the dataset and its context and makes available the data schema and other relevant metadata.
 - Complete—includes all collected data of this type as described, except where constrained by privacy or legal barriers.

To improve our ability to provide more and better data to the public we will:

- **Publish a summary of the results of our initial inventory of the high-value information collected by all agencies and offices.**

This document is included as an appendix within this document and is accessible from www.dol.gov/open. This initial summary reflects the results of a data inventory conducted between February 4th and February 25th of this year.

Agencies were asked to provide a listing, brief description, the publication status, and other pertinent information for any ongoing data collection activities.

- **Publish 10 datasets or tools to Data.gov by the end of 2010 containing new publically available data.**

While we believe that our data publication efforts are best driven by the criteria above rather than sheer volume, we also feel it is important to set realistic goals to spur accountability in our transparency efforts. The following are examples of the types of data we will publish throughout the rest of 2010.

EBSA Enforcement Data

This data consists of closed cases that resulted in a penalty assessment under the Deficient Filer program, the Late Filer program and the Non-Filer program, beginning with FY2009. EBSA is responsible for ensuring that plans file their Form 5500 every year timely, completely and accurately. This is done through these enforcement programs as well as a voluntary compliance program.

OFCCP Enforcement Data

This data consists of completed compliance evaluations and complaint investigations conducted by OFCCP since FY 2004. It provides data on our enforcement of the EEO-mandated laws and regulations within the Federal Contractor Community (those which have been provided government contracts).

OSHA Health Sampling Data

In the course of inspections, OSHA compliance officers take samples to determine the exposure of workers to hazardous substances. The primary purpose of this sampling is to determine employers' compliance with permissible exposure levels established by OSHA or other generally accepted standard and do not represent a randomly selected sample. However, this data will offer insight into chemicals commonly found in the workplace and how exposure to specific or classes of hazards are distributed across industrial sectors, geographical areas, exposure levels, and time. With an understanding of the limitations of this data, this analysis could be combined with other data to target further research into occupational hazards and illness.

- **Publish 10 datasets or tools to Data.gov by the end of 2010 containing data previously available in other formats.**

We believe that transparency does not just mean publishing more data, but also publishing better data. To that end we will also focus our efforts on identifying information which is currently available on www.dol.gov which would be more valuable as a discrete dataset or tool on data.gov. The following are examples of the types of data we will publish throughout the rest of 2010.

Frequently Cited OSHA Standards

This dataset lists the most frequently cited Federal or State OSHA standards for a specified 2, 3 or 4-digit Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) code.

EBSA's Participant Assistance Program Data

EBSA provides participant and compliance assistance directly to the public

through a staff of Benefits Advisors, located in EBSA's field offices, who answer inquiries and complaints received by phone, mail, electronically, or in person. EBSA's Benefits Advisors responded to over 360,000 telephone, written and electronic inquiries and complaints in fiscal year 2009 from plan participants, employers, and plan sponsors, assisting them in understanding their rights and obligations under the law and obtaining benefits that may have been denied. In 2009, the Benefits Advisors obtained over \$120 million on behalf of participants through informal dispute resolution. This data consists of closed inquiries with benefit recoveries from valid complaints.

EBSA Private Pension Plan Bulletin Abstracts

This annual publication is a statistical summary of Form 5500 data on private pension plans including plan counts, participant counts, and financial totals (including assets by category, contributions, and benefits).

- **Create standard language to support transparency.**
This language will be included in grants, contracts, and internal forms to articulate our preference that a machine readable format be provided as part of DOL's scope of work unless this provision would cause an undue burden. This language will also clearly state our intention to release information on grant and contract outcomes to the public that do not violate confidentiality, privacy protections or security requirements
Timeline for Action: August 2010
- **Conduct an "Open" analysis of existing IT systems and available tools.**
A continuing commitment to publish more and better data may require additional technical resources. This analysis will address our capability to convert existing data sources into more readily available formats and possible gains in efficiency and cost by modernizing data collection, especially within our field operations.
Timeline for Action: July 2010

10 Participation and Collaboration

In many ways participation and collaboration are elements of successful communication. To engage the public in our work we must first be able to describe our work to them in a meaningful way. We have made significant improvements and investments in creating more effective and efficient avenues for communicating with the public including:

Re-launching a more user-friendly Web site that supports open government.

Our homepage, www.dol.gov, was redesigned in September 2009 and features a number of changes which make information more accessible. Users can browse by topic, audience, or location to see the most pertinent and relevant information or see which pages contain the most requested information. The site also allows visitors to sign up to receive notices when updates are made to particular pages, and highlights the many ways that the public can connect with DOL resources.

Streamlining security and hosting public events at the Frances Perkins Building.

In an era where virtual spaces dominate the stories of open government, we chose to also make a commitment to opening our physical space. Over the last year we have opened the doors of the Frances Perkins Building to host a wide variety of educational events open to public attendance.

Publishing a weekly newsletter that reaches more than 80,000 subscribers.

Much of the content in [our newsletter](#) is focused on stories from across the country that show the very real benefits that our programs, grants, and enforcement actions have had for the public. Chanette Purser-Smith, a Job Corps graduate who is now the head chef at a popular San Francisco eatery, contributed her own words to the newsletter saying, “Job Corps supported my focus and drive and instilled in me a sense of pride in my work. I am thankful for the taxpayers’ funding of such programs.” The newsletter encourages readers to provide feedback via email, which has resulted in adjustments to formats and driven the inclusion of additional content.

Conducting Online Rollouts of Major DOL Initiatives

Our Web site provides useful resources and opportunities for the public to engage in discussions on our annual [budget](#), [regulatory agenda](#), and [strategic planning process](#). These pages include scheduled public web chats which use free, publically available web chat software to respond to public inquiries. Traditionally, these initiatives have been limited to stakeholder groups and members of the public who live and work in Washington, DC. Online rollouts have allowed us to reach a much larger audience than traditional methods and engage members of the public from around the country in this process. While the chats are “live” events, the software produces instant transcripts which not only allow for continued viewing, but also lower the costs of transcription services.

Demonstrating the Value of Social Media

We have made a commitment to use social media platforms like [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [YouTube](#) to not only push out useful information, but also use these avenues as a means for the public to ask important questions and provide meaningful feedback. Using the resources of our award winning National Call Center, combined with the expertise of our agency public affairs directors, we have been able to provide quick, accurate responses to public inquires. The responses that we post are visible to the public and drive additional conversation. As a result, we have seen these tools also become communities where members of the public share useful resources and information related to our programs and services.

OSHA used YouTube to post [instructional videos](#) that explain the importance of respirators, which are used – and misused – by millions of employees across the country. These videos, posted in both English and Spanish, have been viewed nearly 30,000 times, and a number of users have reported positive feedback. While these videos are also available on OSHA’s Web site, having this information available on a consumer oriented site like YouTube has lead to increased exposure. Based on positive feedback, we are in the process of producing similar instructional videos.

Using crowd-sourcing to help Job Seekers Connect to Jobs

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA) made its first foray into crowd-sourcing, utilizing the IdeaScale platform to conduct the [Tools for America's Seeker's Challenge](#). Organizations and entrepreneurs were given the opportunity to add their job search and career development web sites to the platform, and the public then voted on their favorites. More than 16000 people participated on the site, casting more than 32000 votes. The leaders in each category are now featured at our One-Stop Career Centers around the country, and this compilation of more than 600 job search sites will live on as a resource for those looking for employment. The use of this new technology allowed a small group of committed employees to take on this project at a fraction of the cost of a similar effort to survey the landscape of job search sites available nationwide.

Using Web Chats to Provide Unprecedented Access to DOL Experts

In addition to conducting live web chats on DOL's [budget, regulatory agenda](#), and strategic planning process, we have also used chat technology to give the public the opportunity to provide feedback on a number other useful initiatives. Our worker protection agencies have used live chats to get feedback on upcoming rules. Our Women's Bureau also used live chats to talk about [job opportunities for women in green technologies](#) and the Bureau of Labor Statistics conducted a live discussion on the release of the March employment report featuring statistical experts from their [Current Population Survey](#) (CPS) and [Current Employment Statistics](#) (CES) programs.

Many of these initiatives were initially met with internal anxiety and resistance. By demonstrating and sharing success internally, we have been able to build support for these new strategies, and encourage innovative thinking in additional areas.

Lessons in Collaboration in Developing this Plan

The process of developing this plan was an excellent test case in the power of focused collaboration. The structure of our Open Government Steering Committee, Open Government Workgroup, and our internal open government focus groups relied on the shared expertise of individuals from across many dimensions of the Department. As a result, when we identified challenges, we also were able to quickly identify the best way to route this information and fix it.

We also participated with other federal agencies in the development of "leading practices" to help guide agencies in the development of these plans. Working with the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Transportation, the Department of the Treasury, the Social Security Administration, the General Services Administration, the National Archives and Records Administration, and others allowed us to learn from each other and share ideas and effective practices in developing this plan.

Collaborating with the Public: Good Jobs, Safe Jobs, Green Jobs

A prime example of our commitment to collaborating with non-profit, academics, and the general public has been the work the Employment and Training Administration has done issuing grants to support jobs in energy efficiency and renewable energy industries. These grants, part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA),

focus on building collaborative relationships with organizations across the country who are best able to provide the job training and certificate programs in these growing fields.

Strong partnerships are the key to DOL's success in strengthening not just training programs but also employers and industries. Our training initiatives frequently involve strong partnerships with community colleges, local businesses, and workforce development boards to help prepare young people, displaced workers and even elderly workers for the economy of tomorrow. These collaborative partnerships are training workers for jobs in green occupations including weatherization experts, solar panel installers, energy auditors and hybrid automobile experts. In short, they are making good jobs — jobs that are safe, secure, green and pay family-supporting wages for more and more Americans.

As a part of this process the Bureau of Labor Statistics is currently accepting feedback and ideas on a proposed statistical definition of green jobs. More information about our green jobs initiative can be found at www.dol.gov/green.

Better Grants Through Transparency and Collaboration:

In his Memorandum on Open Government the President specifically emphasized the need for greater transparency into the expenditure of federal funds. In this spirit, we have launched a [Grants Map](#) to advance the level of transparency on all grant awards: both formula and competitive. The map displays aggregate totals by agency and by state for grant awards made in program year 2009 and fiscal year 2010 and offers the public – for the first time – a unified gateway to access all DOL grant award information. In addition to promoting greater accountability within our grants, this is the first step in a larger plan to engage the public through a more collaborative grant making process.

Collaborating with Third-Party Developers:

Our commitment to the ongoing release of additional raw datasets is a key foundation for increased transparency at DOL. However, we also realize that releasing data alone serves a limited practical purpose if the public never puts the data to beneficial uses.

Understandably, raw data can often be intimidating and confusing to many of our non-technical constituents, and parsing datasets not only requires access to the appropriate tools but also a fair amount of technical know-how. As a part of this plan, we are also making a strong commitment actively engaging developers of innovative civic technologies to bridge the gap between the empowering qualities of raw data and the needs of interested constituents. We highlight some of our developer-specific proposals in the appendix.

11 Actions Steps to Improve Participation and Collaboration

To build upon existing efforts to engage a broader audience in the work of the Department, and to demonstrate a commitment to ongoing public engagement efforts, we will:

- **Respond to specific ideas submitted to our OpenDOL platform.** Ideas will be tagged by subject matter and routed to the appropriate agency subject matter experts for consideration. We will develop a web page on www.dol.gov/open that highlights the ideas we received, how we acted on them.

Timeline for Action: May 2010

- **Maintain www.opendol.ideascale.com as ongoing online presence** where the public is encouraged to provide ideas and feedback about departmental operations, services, and information.
- **Develop a Public Code of Conduct** which sets reasonable expectations for responding to online public inquiries and develops mechanisms for internal accountability. This will also provide our expectations of the public regarding the use of inappropriate language and solicitation as a part of DOL commenting opportunities.

Timeline for Action: September 2010

- **Provide guidance on being “open government ready”**
Managing and responding to public feedback will require that appropriate information technology and human resource infrastructures are in place before moving forward with engagement. This guidance will present existing models in place throughout the DOL and provide best practices in estimating the required resources.

Timeline for Action: September 2010

- **Create a central “Input and Feedback” page**
While the Department currently provides a wide variety of opportunities for the public to provide feedback online, a user coming to www.dol.gov may have a difficult time knowing where to go to provide input on the issues that matters most to them, or may not even realize that opportunity exists. This page will provide a listing of all of the areas where the Department is accepting input such as Federal Register notices, Regulatory items open for comment, and scheduled web chats.

Timeline for Action: May 2010

- **Create a “Developer’s Corner”**
We plan to establish a “Developer Corner” on www.dol.gov/open that specifically targets and engages developers. Our goal is to make it as easy as possible for developers to re-purpose our data, provide feedback, get technical help, bring developers with similar interests together and, ultimately inspire the best possible uses of our data for the benefit of the public. Ideas under consideration include a bug tracking system, RSS feeds for dataset changes, dataset versioning, public code competitions, data authentication, and an ideation platform to prioritize developer needs.

Timeline for Action: July 2010

- **Develop a Grants 2.0 Dashboard**

Our newly launched [grants map](#) is just the first stage of a larger commitment to provide additional transparency into our grant making process and open up new avenues of collaboration through a grants dashboard. As we move forward with this project, additional features will display more granular data about grant activities by state, zip code, program, and budget year. This data will also be made available as raw datasets and provide users with unprecedented access to timely, searchable, downloadable, and visually interactive data. Our goal in this process is not simply to provide the public with better information about our grants, but rather to provide the public with additional opportunities to take part in the process of grant making itself.

Timeline for Action: Multiple Phases in 2010 and 2011

Appendices

1. Summary and Analysis of Initial Data Inventory

In conducting our initial data inventory, we sent a request to the 22 of our relevant agencies and offices within DOL. Of those, 14 responded to the request, 5 requested waivers due to their primary function as a judicial body and 3 have not yet responded. The request included a spreadsheet template asking for specific information about the data commonly collected and held by each office or agency. The requested information included:

- Name of the dataset;
- Description;
- Dataset URL, if available;
- Available Formats (XML, CSV/text, PDF, KML/KMZ, or other);
- Publishing Status (offline, online, online on data.gov, linked to from /open);
- Whether any of the data are potentially protected by privacy concerns; and
- Whether the report is internal or external, if applicable.

In all, DOL agencies and office submitted more than 400 items as a part of this inventory. Analysis showed that approximately one quarter of the items submitted were not datasets as they're traditionally understood, but were instead PDF reports, fact sheets and other web-based documents. Upon review, some clearly misunderstood what was meant by "data" and we hope to remedy this problem during our next iteration of our inventory. While this inventory returned a number of useful results, we do not believe that it represents the entire universe of data collected at this point. Working through the Open Government Work Group and with agency data managers we hope to ensure that future iterations of the inventory represent a more complete picture of the data being collected and held by our Department.

Many of the 300+ datasets inventoried are already available online in various formats. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) for example has 34 datasets already available on Data.gov, with more available on their own data dashboard, <http://www.bls.gov/data>. We also found a number of datasets that are online – searchable through existing agency web tools – but not yet downloadable in bulk, machine-processable formats. We unfortunately were not able to count how many such datasets exist. In hindsight, we should have designed our spreadsheet template better to separate reporting of back-end data formats from the current user-facing publishing data format. Again, we hope to receive clarifying responses in our next round of inventory.

We noticed many reported datasets that were actually summaries or charts of aggregate data, and we are unsure whether the Department has access to or has kept the underlying dataset used to produce these summaries. This may depend on how and by whom the data was collected. For those datasets of the highest perceived value, we plan to collaborate with the agency data managers to determine whether the raw datasets exist and whether they can be brought online.

Overall, the inventory process is hardly an exact science. But based our initial inventory, we already feel that we have a much better sense today of the data landscape at our Department, which will allow to make immediate progress towards greater transparency.

Agency data pages:

- BLS: <http://www.bls.gov/data>
- OSHA: <http://www.osha.gov/oshstats>
- MSHA: <http://www.msha.gov/stats/statinfo.htm>
- EBSA: <http://www.dol.gov/ebsa/foia/foia-5500.html>
- FOIA reading room: <http://www.dol.gov/dol/foia/readroom.htm>

2. Online Resources and Contact Information

Department of Labor Web Resources:

- Open government webpage: <http://www.dol.gov/open>
- Online Enforcement Database: <http://ogesdw.dol.gov>
- Grants Map: <http://www.dol.gov/dol/grants/map/>
- Ideascale platform: <http://www.opendol.ideascale.com>
- Regulatory information: <http://www.dol.gov/regulations>
- Recovery Act information: www.dol.gov/recovery
- FOIA information: <http://www.dol.gov/dol/foia>
- Congressional testimony: http://www.dol.gov/_sec/media/congress
- Records Management Program: <http://www.dol.gov/dol/records/>
- Budget information: <http://www.dol.gov/budget>
- Strategic planning: http://www.dol.gov/_sec/stratplan
- Data collection projects: <http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain>
- Weekly Secretary's newsletter: http://www.dol.gov/_sec/newsletter
- Tools for America's Job Seekers Challenge: <http://www.dol.gov/challenge>
- Women's Bureau web chats: <http://www.dol.gov/wb/GreenWebinars.htm>
- Green jobs initiative: <http://www.dol.gov/green>
- FOIA reading room: <http://www.dol.gov/dol/foia/readroom.htm>
- Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/usdol>
- Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/departmentoflabor>
- YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/usdepartmentoflabor>

Federal Web Resources:

- Regulatory information: <http://www.regulations.gov>
- Recovery Act information: <http://www.recovery.gov>
- IT Dashboard: <http://it.usaspending.gov>
- USAspending.gov Data Quality Evaluation:
<http://www.usaspending.gov/data/dataquality.php>

Useful Contact Information

- Open Government Email: open@dol.gov
- [National Toll-Free Contact Center](#). Live assistance is available Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time by calling, 1-866-4-USA-DOL, TTY: 1-877-889-5627.
- [Phone Numbers by Topic](#). Search for a Departmental phone number based on the topic of your question.
- [The Leadership Team](#). A list of phone numbers for key personnel in the Department.
- [Email General Questions](#)
- [Email Technical Questions](#) for accessibility problem, difficulty navigating our site, to report a broken link, or if you have some other technical question.

3. Table of Actions and Deadlines

Date	Task	Page
April 2010 (ongoing)	Use periodic all-staff emails to share milestones and success stories.	11
April 2010 (ongoing)	Develop an internal communications strategy to educate and engage employees on the impact and benefits of open government.	11
May 1, 2010	Publish the full inventory of open government ideas and responses from Ideascale.	7
May 2010	Launch an external blog to share highlights and invite feedback.	12
May 2010	Create a central “Input and Feedback” page.	28
May 2010 (ongoing)	Respond to specific ideas submitted to our OpenDOL platform.	28
May 2010 (ongoing)	Form internal open government working groups and/or virtual communities of practice.	10
June 2010	Launch internal wiki.	11
June 30, 2010	Publish quarterly report on open government implementation.	9
June 2010 (ongoing)	Develop a benchmarking program.	11
June 2010 (ongoing)	Develop an open government speaker series.	11
July 2010	Create a “Developer’s Corner.”	29
July 2010	Conduct an “Open” analysis of existing IT systems and available tools	24
July 2010	Integrate our open government strategies into our five year strategic plan, and into each individual Agency’s performance standards and measures.	10
August 2010	Create standard language for inclusion in grants, contracts, and internal forms to support transparency.	24
September 2010	Provide guidance on being “open government ready.”	28
September 2010	Develop a public code of conduct.	28
September 2010	Create a Secretary’s Award for Open Government.	12
December 2010	Develop a Grants 2.0 Dashboard.	29
December 2010	Build open government into our HR and talent management practices.	12
December 2010	Publish 10 datasets or tools to Data.gov containing new publically available data.	23
December 2010	Publish 10 datasets or tools to Data.gov containing data previously available in other formats.	24
December 2010 – March 2012	Publish quarterly report on open government implementation.	9

4. Developer's Toolkit Proposal

We plan to establish a “Developer Corner” on our /open webpage that specifically targets and engages developers. Our goal is to make it as easy as possible for developers to re-purpose our data, to provide feedback, to get technical help, to bring developers with similar interests together and, ultimately to inspire the best possible uses of our data for the benefit of the public. We are exploring the implementation of:

- **A bug tracking system for datasets.** Every dataset has the potential for errors and, when identified, these errors need to be fixed. A tracking system will allow developers to report bugs in our datasets and will allow us to respond promptly and in an orderly fashion to these reports. It can also be used more generally to report problems with metadata or other related issues. This system is a key component to maintaining overall data quality.
- **RSS feeds for dataset changes.** When datasets are fixed or updated, developers need a convenient and automatic way to be notified about such changes. Ideally, each individual dataset or group of datasets will have its own RSS feed where each feed item is a machine-processable data patch with an understandable description of the changes.
- **Dataset versioning.** Since datasets will be updated from time-to-time, it will be important for developers to know which version of the dataset they are using. Explicit versioning for datasets will allow developers to know whether they are using the most current and accurate data and will allow the Department to measure quantitative improvements in data quality over time.
- **Public code competitions.** We plan to run public code competitions and offer public prizes for the most innovative applications built using our data. Contests for developers will incentivize third party innovation and data re-use. We hope these contests will generate a suite of public-facing tools for our constituents and will cost significantly less to produce when compared to hiring private contractors.
- **Data authentication.** In many cases, third party developers will want to prove to their users that the data they are providing are authentic government data. We will explore the feasibility of applying cryptographic digital signatures to our data at various levels of granularity.
- **An ideation platform to prioritize developer needs.** We intend to field general feedback from developers about the entire top-to-bottom process of using Department data. By using current ideation technologies, our staff will be able to prioritize developer needs for new features or services. We will also use the ideation platform to rank unpublished datasets to identify and prioritize our upcoming data releases.