SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION DEVELOPMENT

ADVISORY PANEL QUARTERLY MEETING

JUNE 9, 2010

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

REPORTED BY: STEPHEN P. ANDERSON
Free State Reporting, Inc.

A P P E A R A N C E S

PANEL MEMBERS PRESENT:

MARY BARROS BAILEY, Chair, Ph.D.
ROBERT T. FRASER, Ph.D.
SHANAN GWALTNEY GIBSON, Ph.D.
THOMAS A. HARDY, J.D.
H. ALLAN HUNT, Ph. D.
SYLVIA E. KARMAN
DEBORAH E. LECHNER
DAVID J. SCHRETLEN, Ph. D.
MARK A. WILSON, Ph. D.
GUNNAR ANDERSON
ABIGAIL PANTER

I N D E X

P R O C E E D I N G S

(1:00 p.m.)

MS. TIDWELL-PETERS: Good evening, everyone. I am Debra Tidwell-Peters, the Designated Federal Officer for the Occupational Information Development Advisory Panel. We welcome you to the June Quarterly Meeting.

I would like to turn the meeting over to the Panel Chair, Dr. Mary Barros-Bailey. Mary.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Thank you, Debra. Welcome, everybody. Good afternoon. I'd like to thank you for your attendance live or telephonically to the Third Quarterly Meeting for the OIDAP.

Before we begin today's agenda, I'd like to announce some changes to the Panel. Nancy Shor has resigned from the Panel effective June 1st, 2010. Nancy was the Chair of the User Needs and Relations Subcommittee. As a matter of fact, this afternoon I will be reading her report. We'll wish Nancy well.

Before we go the activities for today, I'd like to announce to those listening in remotely that to follow along you can go to our website, www.socialsecurity.gov/oidap, for a copy of the agenda. And for those who are attending our meeting for the first time who might be interested in activities and deliberations of the Panel from past meetings, at the same website, again it’s www.socialsecurity.gov/oidap,

You can click on the meeting information web page and download past agendas and the PowerPoints associated with those meetings. You can also look at Panel documents on that web page for technical and working papers, formal correspondence, and our first report by this Panel delivered to the Social Security Commissioner in September 2009.

As we indicate at the beginning of each meeting, the charter of the Occupational Information Development Advisory Panel, or OIDAP, is to provide the Social Security Administration with independent advice and recommendations for the development of an occupational information system to replace the Dictionary of Occupational Titles and Disability Adjudication. Our task is not to develop the OIS itself. As our name implies, it is to provide advisory recommendations.

At our home page you will note our call for public feedback and comments upon the report that was delivered to the Commissioner in September. Although we welcome input from stakeholders in the public at any time throughout our process, to help streamline that input to the September report, we’re strongly encouraging feedback from all sources by June 30th, 2010. To facilitate the feedback, we are using the regulations.gov system as announced through the Federal Register on May 4th.

Now looking at today's agenda, we will start by Sylvia Karman providing the Project Director's report. I will be giving a brief overview or update the Roadmap, the Panel Roadmap. After break I will be reading the report that Nancy Shor provided as Chair of the User Needs and Relations Subcommittee. Then Mark Wilson will provide the Research Subcommittee report. Deb Lechner will provide the Ad Hoc Committee report. And we will adjourn for this afternoon.

Beginning at this meeting we did not have anybody signed up for public comments as part of the agenda. And assuming that there is nobody signed up for that, we anticipate adjourning at 4:30.

So I will go ahead and pass it on to Sylvia.

MEMBER KARMAN: Good afternoon, everyone. Sorry about the delay. I'm going to just real quickly go through where our staff is with the number of activities that we have underway. And I think the Research Subcommittee kind of hears about this almost on a bi-weekly basis. So some of this material may kind of seem familiar to a number of you.

And this is really just going over some project activities that have been underway since the last time we had a public meeting in March of 2010 in St. Louis. And one of the activities that we have underway is our Occupational Medical Vocational Study. Again the objective there is to identify significant occupational, functional, and vocational characteristics so to the vocational profile of DI and SSI so Title 2 and Title 16 adult disability applicants whose claims have been reviewed both at the initial level and at the appellate level.

And we have had that study underway now for a while. We are up to, it says, 1,079. That was as of the day that this PowerPoint was assembled. We are now at 1,400 cases and so we’re moving along quite well. And we’re also looking to -- okay, that’s on the next slide.

We would like to begin the hearings level portion of the review as soon as we can if possible by inviting other reviewers within our agency to assist in that so that we can finish the review before the end of the summer. But we’re working on it. We’re moving pretty quickly with our sister component, the Office of Medical Vocational Expertise, is reviewing these claims for us. And so we have that underway. Of course one of the purposes of that we’re hoping will be to inform our data collection effort so that we can at least have a sense of what occupations are most frequently represented among our claimants. Its past relevant work, where should we start in terms of data collection, and also what kinds of profiles are we dealing with depending on the outcome of the cases, whether they're allowances or denials, what kinds of jobs are we citing in the cases of denials where the facts of the claims do not meet the rule directly. Are we citing jobs in certain circumstances with certain kinds of physical and mental limitations and what might that suggest with regard the vocational profile? So that's where we are with that.

We're also wrapping up our international occupational information system investigation so that we will be preparing a report over the next few weeks in the summer. And I hope that we will have something to share with the work group, with the SSA work group, as well as the Panel by the end of the summer. So basically we've conducted interviews with a number of officials who may have been able to give us some information about how occupational information is used in a variety of programs in their countries and to what extent. If in fact it is used with disability, how are they using it and how might that inform us?

Also the study that we have been calling the OIS Design Study I, largely because it was intended -- it has been intended to get at some design issues for us.

And we numbered it as one, anticipating that there may be more than one. And at this point we are -- the Research Subcommittee did give us some excellent feedback on a very early draft of the study design. And we're taking that back and looking at how we can have this be a test to look at the feasibility of conducting job analyses using trained job analysts.

So for example, if we were to pick one or two of the occupations that seem to rise to the top as most frequently performed based on the Occupational Med Voc study, are there also occupations that SSA Adjudicators tend to cite as examples of work that the individual could do at Step 5 as a result?

And in terms of the results from our study, if we were to select one or more of those occupations, what could we learn from just attempting to do job analysis of those occupations using an instrument that we're looking to develop which I will talk about in a little bit? And that also gives us an opportunity to perhaps test that instrument and a number of other things. So that's really where we're headed with that and revisiting a design for that and how we might be able to operationalize it.

And I guess I've talked through that screen. We are looking to conduct this study in the next fiscal year, so you're going to be seeing a revised study design shortly.

With regard to the content model, our staff and the agency's work group has been doing a lot of work on just getting through the physical elements and now also the mental cognitive elements that our work group believes are most critical to disability evaluation. And it's done on the heels of a synthesis that our staff did of the Panel's recommendations as well as whatever -- a fair amount of input that we've received from the users, our users, as well as stakeholders from outside the agency. So we have been doing a lot of that work.

Our work group has been meeting actively with their team. And we have also begun the work of how can we be testing those data elements. And so we've posted a request for proposal. Actually it was a request for information. Since many people may have already seen this, we have sent a request for proposal to our Office of Acquisition and Grants. We're hoping that that will be coming out shortly this summer.

And that really is where we are, using a prototype instrument basically as a means or a vehicle by which we could get some of our Adjudicators and medical staff throughout the regions, social security regions, to conduct a few case reviews. So we may give them some cases where they're using what we now currently identify in our RC and LRC. Use the same type of case facts, same kind of case. And now present them with the new or altered data elements as the result of what the Panel's recommended and what the work group has recommended.

And just ask them -- then in a focus group setting ask them a series of questions to get a variety of issues, not the least of which is how useful are these elements. Do you in fact see medical evidence frequently that could help you assess this? Are the scales that we've selected, do these make sense for you? Are they getting at the kinds of issues that you need to get at? Are these measures useful? So that's kind of where we're headed with that.

And it will also provide us with an opportunity to then come back and then refine that. And any of that information then also would be, I think, informing our development of a work site -- well, not work site -- work analysis instrument.

Our communications area has been very active. We've really -- and a number of you, thank you very much for participating in our effort to get our word out on what our Panel is working on and what our staff is working on. We've done a lot of conferences and presentations. A number of not only our Panel members but people on our staff as well as people on the work group have volunteered to come out and present on what our activities are and what we're about. So we've done a lot of that.

We've also at the beginning of May recorded some webinars which we're hoping to have out shortly. And some of these webinars cover a variety of kind of like frequently asked questions or frequently asked about topics. I know, for example, Mark Wilson did a series of definitions for us. And Shanan covered some of the technical issues involved with our recommendations, for example. So it's kind of to be a way to help people access the information that was in our report. Maybe just another way for people to get at that information.

We are also working as best we can with our Chief Information Officer to develop web-based methods of interacting with people. And we have a couple of things that are still needing to get ironed out for the agency, not for work necessarily. But apparently there are some other things that the agency has to get ironed out before we can make those things active.

So and, oh, the comments on our -- we did publish -- on the Federal Register we published the Panel's report, asking for any public comment. And so in that Federal Register Notice, we have asked that people users would provide their input by June 30th. So we've extended our general request for comments to June 30th. So that's out there. And we have been seeing a number of comments. So people may want to check that out.

And as I understand it, the User Needs and Relations Subcommittee will be preparing sort of a summary of the comments that have been received since January. Of course it would include any of the material that's there. In addition, our staff will then take that information that has been sort of recorded on the Federal Register site and summarize these things and let the public know what areas people were commenting on and what the -- you know, how the agency -- how we are planning to deal with those comments.

So some of the next steps we are developing the overall plan for the project and development of the OIS. And I think to some extent that's part and parcel with bringing on board additional expertise or more specific expertise in the area of work measurement and job analysis.

So as that is happening over the next -- over this summer hopefully, a lot of things are going to be able to move along a lot more quickly. Our staff is working in the direction of all of these things, but I think to some extent we are also waiting for that expertise.

And we are, as I mentioned earlier, developing a prototype person site instrument over the summer. And again that's just for the purposes of conducting its focus group and claims review that are -- those who are involved in the focus group testing and claims review will have a means by which they can actually assess the data elements and the attendant measures and scales.

And also we will be developing the work analysis instrument. And we're hoping to do that throughout the late -- later this fiscal year. So from fall on into the winter hopefully finishing a prototype of that by next January so that other work can begin.

And we're also developing a means by which we can develop a business process for the recruitment, training, and certification for job analysts. So that's going to be a big, big process. And I know the Panel has an Ad Hoc Subcommittee set aside to help us with that.

And so the last point on this screen I guess that the area of expertise that we're looking to bring on board perhaps through a couple of consultants, one in the area of vocational rehabilitation and largely and probably in an academic area, both for that voc-rehab and industrial organization psychology, to be assisting us with -- in one case VR side sort of helping us with training staff on how do we write items that might be very useful for the person side of the prototype at any case.

And then a number of other issues that we have that we want to take a look at on the person side be very helpful for the VR person to be assisting us with. And the IO psychology expert or someone in that related field to be assisting us with the development of a work analysis instrument. So that work is anticipated to begin this summer. So we have a lot planned.

That's it. Does anybody have any questions?

MEMBER SCHRETLEN: Yeah, I do, Sylvia. And I'm sorry, I know I've asked this before. But the job level data that derive from the occupational and medical vocational study, are they -- how specific are they? Are they just titles or are they descriptions? I just forget. I know we've been over this.

MEMBER KARMAN: The resulting data would be the DOT title. So basically what we're having the reviewers do is code the information that's in the file to the best of their ability, associate that information with a DOT title. Now we have protocol for circumstances in which it's just simply impossible to do that. And so in that case it's not accomplished that way. But that's basically what we're going to end up with is DOT titles.

And so from that one would be able to find a description. Now whether that's an accurate description at this point, that remains to be seen.

MEMBER SCHRETLEN: Will more than one reviewer assign jobs to DOT titles from a single file? In other words, will we have any way of looking at the reliability of assigning jobs to DOT titles so that's Part 1. And Part 2 is just are we thinking that 75 percent of them will be classified to a DOT title or 25 percent and 75 will go unclassified?

MEMBER KARMAN: Well, I think we're not going to be including the ones -- the cases where we can't do that are not included. So for ones that -- and I don't know what the percentage of things are that have been a problem. It's been low. But we have looked at reliability raters that we've asked them to do piloting. Before they would -- we have a reviewer begin in earnest recording any data, they've had to go a protocol and actually do a pilot so that we have a chance to take a look at, well, are there responses within the range of what is considered the norm.

Anything else?

MEMBER FRASER: Just one question. Sylvia, anything of interest from the representatives from the other countries that you've contacted?

MEMBER KARMAN: Not that I'm aware of yet. Staff has just finished compiling all the -- actually they've finished doing the interviews. Some of them were very difficult because of language barriers that we had to find somebody who spoke some language that we spoke. And then the timing too because in some cases it's like 12 hours difference or more.

And in any case one of the things they're doing now is they've just finished compiling or transcribing the interviews that they've recorded. And they're going to begin actually drafting an outline for the report.

One of the things we're finding is that nobody really has a data -- I guess a classification system that would be applicable to our purposes. In fact in some cases people are using the DOT, like Canada. So and I think even New Zealand although I can't swear to that. I'm not sure about that. But so I really don't have any information yet about specifics.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Tom.

MEMBER HARDY: I just have kind of a general question. One of the comments I've heard is that it seems for the past six months lots been being done by the work group, but people haven't seen any product yet. And I understand the reasons why.

But can you give an idea of when we're going to start seeing things coming out of the work group for us to review and discuss?

MEMBER KARMAN: Well, I'm hopeful that we will have -- well, first of all since we have -- it's a series of contracts, certainly at least one for which we will be asking a contractor to conduct and help us facilitate claims review as well as a focus group. Certainly we will need to have the prototype person side instrument ready for that at that point. So I would imagine we'll need to be having something ready by the end of the summer. At least on the person side we should be showing something concrete at least in paper by that point.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Any other questions?

Thank you, Sylvia.

MEMBER KARMAN: Thank you.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Did you all get copies of my PowerPoint? It's only three slides, so it's not very expensive. Let me go ahead and put it up for the people in the audience. (Pause)

Okay, and in your folders right in front of Tab 3, you have the Panel 2010, Panel Roadmap by function. You'll recognize this. We've seen it in January. We saw it in March. And so this is what we're using to update listings, evolve, and we go through the process.

Just wanted to -- oops, that's not mine. Okay, hold on a second. (Pause)

Okay. Now the PowerPoint is up there and we'll get to Slide No. 1. And on January 19th, 2010, the Commissioner provided us with a letter that we're all familiar with. There were four things that the Commissioner asked us to do within that letter -- actually five.

One is an annual meeting, so we typically -- or annual report. So we typically don't include that when we have these kinds of slides.

But in terms of deliverables was a recommendation by the OIDAP to SSA for plans to help them with plans for sampling and data collection. The other one was for the field job analysts in terms of recruitment, training, and certification. Then the establishment of association or the linkages between the human functions and requirements of work. And then the other deliverable was advice from the OIDAP to SSA on any reports that exist that may help SSA with their development of the OIS. So that is what is driving the Roadmap in many ways.

And from a functional standpoint the Roadmap has six main areas that fall out of that. Some of the areas we will also recognize as part of our seven general recommendations back to SSA in September.

We start with communications. And most of this information in terms of communications is processed or dealt with through the User Needs and Relations Subcommittee or the Administrative Subcommittee. So we have the development of FAQ sheets. At this point we have one FAQ sheet which is on the general recommendation that is up on the website that has been used with presentations to try to bring the information that we have recommended back to SSA in terms of language that a lot of the users can access.

Also we’re getting a lot of not FAQ sheets, the FAQs, frequently asked questions. And so potentially the development of FAQ kind of information as it gets developed. And again up on the website questions like, Why not the DOT? We have the webinar already; why not -- that kind of thing. You know, the assumption that we as a Panel are the ones developing the OIS instead of SSA. Those kinds of basic facts, getting that information out there.

One of the points of interest for the Panel on the User Needs and Relations Subcommittee was expanding the use of Federal Register notification process in terms of feedback to our report. That’s been done. It’s in the process of happening as we speak. And as I noted at the beginning of the meeting, an important part of our process to collect that feedback that we as a Subcommittee and then as a Panel will be processing and bring it back to the Panel.

Recommendations in terms of development of an outreach plan. We have had some aspects of that plan come together in terms of presentation, in terms of FAQ sheets and the webinars and that type of thing. But this is an area that is ongoing. It needs probably further development, recognizing that this project and the reason that we exist is more of a technical aspect of it.

Part of the recommendations we head back to SSA was the engagement of the scientific and the research community. And so how do we through that communication process start engaging in this to meet some of the needs that were identified in that first slide in terms of the letter and ongoing R&D aspects of the project. So an area of further development there.

Again we have a web presence. There’s a lot of things we can do with the web and they’re kind of tied to the previous recommendation or point of development of a outreach plan. How do we make it work and make it work better and get the information out there and use that as a method for collecting information?

Recommending plans for disseminating information. That’s been ongoing and I’ll get into a lot of detail as I read Nancy’s report. That was pretty comprehensive in some of the efforts with User Needs.

The electronic presence in terms of electronic media. I think Sylvia indicated that the staff has been working internally to try to effect some of those processes and expanding those and making those more effective. The process of collection and review of public comment is ongoing, but it isn’t just collection of the information. It’s also how to consolidate that information. These are the art work which is basically back to the recommendations that were made and how to bring that back and make it an effective and informative part of the process. And again that is anticipated to close formally.

But again I always say we always take feedback on the 30th. And hopefully we will have the information back to SSA on that and then the annual report, as I mentioned earlier. So communications is ongoing. We have been very active in that regard to keep this process as transparent as possible.

In terms of the contents model, I think Sylvia’s presentation was indicative of where that is. We’ve provided the recommendations. It is now at SSA in terms of the content model development and in terms of that iterative process that’s happening. And so that’s kind of outlined here how the OIS design study is involved within in terms of the anticipated time line in some of those areas. So I'm not going to develop each of those or talk about each of those in detail cause I think those have been covered quite well.

Into the next area which is the instrument development and testing. Again I think Sylvia through her review -- and I also don't want to take away from Mark's presentation later -- will address some of these areas in terms of what is expected in terms of the prototypes, the focus groups, work analysis instrument, that type of thing.

And then in terms of the roundtables, there is something a bit different about this document as opposed to the other two that we've seen before. We recognize that a variety of roundtables need to happen and that those need to be kind of orchestrated along with the R&D effort to end. So the development of a more concrete plan in terms of the roundtables as a separate line item instead of spread like we had them before.

Job analysis and sampling plans which is Page 4 of the Panel Roadmap. Again research taxonomy group's working on the SSA. And a lot of these areas have already been covered about the occupational and medical vocational claims information study, the roundtables, and the OIS Design Study I.

And then in terms of other, looking at plans or identified plans for potential methods of data collection, including field job analysts, we're going to get a report from that in terms of where that is in terms of the development of that process from the Ad Hoc Subcommittee. And that covers both the person side, job side.

And then the last that's under Other is the review of the National Academies of Science reports. That is in draft copy. The Executive Subcommittee reviewed it today over lunch. There will be some modifications to it and we will review that tomorrow as a Panel as well.

So that's where we are in terms of our Roadmap. It's anticipated as we go through this process that things will change and emerge and hopefully be kind of a back and forth process.

Any questions? Tom, you look like you have a question for me.

MEMBER HARDY: I just have one. I'm trying to remember. I probably missed its linkages. Where is that in our Roadmap?

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Where is that where?

MEMBER HARDY: In the Roadmap? Where are we addressing that --

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: We have it there. Hold on.

MEMBER KARMAN: It’s under an example of some of the roundtable the Panel may be looking to do. Again it’s an example largely because I don’t think we’re at a stage -- at least I don’t think we’re ready to take it on.

MEMBER HARDY: Is it one of our four for the year? And I’m thinking, well, we should probably get something in our minds about it somewhere, I guess. I recognize it’s still very early, but I just want to make sure that we keep it somewhere.

MEMBER KARMAN: I don’t know that it was literally referenced as a bullet point.

Mary, am I wrong on that?

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: You’re talking about Bullet Point No. 3. Let me back up. Establishment of associations linkages between human function and the requirements of work that serve the disability evaluation process.

And this isn’t for fiscal year 2010. This is areas that will need to be addressed. So it isn’t like by September we need to have this done because this is a really heavy carry there. It’s a really big part of this project. So this is kind of long-term.

MEMBER KARMAN: And that's why what I meant was it's not on your deliverables.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: It's deliverable at some point, not necessarily by September.

MEMBER KARMAN: Mary, I had a -- I think it may be a point of clarification for me anyway. Page 2 of 5 under the Content Model, review OIS study design or design study, which is true. But it may be confusing to some folks because it's under Content Model.

And I know, you know, you and I worked on this together, so I was probably part and parcel the reason why this ended up on this list. But now that I'm looking at it, I'm not sure if maybe we should consider -- it's more of an editorial comment actually, so...

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Yes, I understand. Okay.

Any questions? David?

MEMBER SCHRETLEN: Yeah, one question that I had is since the public comment period formally is coming to a close shortly and you'll be starting to compare responses, if public comments concern certain subcommittee, will you be contacting us about that? Cause I know that occasionally I've seen things circulated out in e-mail. But frankly I haven't looked at the preview of that.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: I think that's an anticipation that if it directly effects one of the subcommittees, mental cause, physical demands, taxonomy, that it would go through those content subcommittees to review.

Any other questions?

Well, we are -- actually we've caught up on time which is a great thing to do. Before we break, I'm going to go ahead and move maybe User Needs and Relations report up a little bit.

And we all have before us the draft of the Subcommittee report that Nancy put together before she left the Panel. So I thank Nancy for doing this. And I think probably the best way for me to do this is to go section by section and also to read it. I think that will be helpful.

And it was submitted by Nancy actually the day after she resigned, so on June 2nd. And she summarizes the teleconferences that the Subcommittee had.

And let me -- before I go on, does everybody have a copy?

MEMBER SCHRETLEN: No, I don't see one here.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Okay, it's being delivered. It looks like this.

MEMBER SCHRETLEN: Yes.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Okay. And it outlines the teleconferences. I think there might in there -- I think there was an assumption that there was going to be one on June 2nd. I don't think that was actually held.

Is that correct? Okay

So between December 1st, 2009 and May 19th, there were a variety -- I haven't counted them up, but eight or nine teleconferences for the User Needs and Relations Subcommittee. And the goals identified for the Subcommittee at that point were to utilize existing lines of communication about the Panel's work with Users and with the public and to develop and open additional lines. This was a key component of the Panel's determination to work in a transparent fashion.

For outgoing communication the Subcommittee wanted information about the Panel and the Panel's work readily available to users and to the public. To date the Panel has accomplished a great deal of outreach through numerous items posed in the OIDAP website. And the website is given ssa.gov/oidap. The Federal Register and then person conference presentations, further plans are detailed below. Second for incoming communications the Subcommittee is working to receive and post comments from users. Further plans are detailed below.

And in terms of presentations -- and I want to echo what Sylvia said -- thank yous to everybody who has been out and about to many places in the country presenting. We've been very busy. And I think it's been an important part of the process. And we've learned a lot from that process itself. But a number of Panel members have traveled to conferences and meetings of organizations to give presentations about the Panel and its work.

Attached is a list -- and I don't know if Debra has that list -- of speakers and conferences as well as the feedback reports that have been received by the speakers. So we developed a kind of speaker feedback form that helps us understand the audience and what kinds of questions we're getting to make sure that we're addressing those.

Also attached is upcoming confirmed presentation for conferences and meetings. So this is still ongoing. There are still other presentations that we've been asked to do through September of 2011.

The Subcommittee recommends that the Panel develop a protocol for incoming invitations or expressions of interest for Panel speakers. National meetings should get an in-person speaker if that is possible. Other meetings such as state or local chapters of national groups might be well served with a web event or webinar presentation. And so I think the thought there was about there's a lot of time involved with this and whether the effective use of our time overall. We recommend that the Panel be surveyed of the task if they can identify any upcoming meetings and conferences where we should seek a speaking invitation.

Webinars were recorded on May 4th. The topics presented were the OID project and OIDAP general overall and Sylvia and I did that webinar. The OID recommendations and FAQ Sheet No. 1; Shanan did that webinar. I did a webinar of Why Not the DOT? And Mark did a variety of kind of sound bite webinars A Word about a Word, things like content model, that kind of thing that are a lot of times new terms for a lot of the users. We anticipate that these webinars will be in final form shortly and posted on the OIDAP website.

We believe that an explanation of terms would help users better understand the contents of our presentations. Shanan will use the closed caption scripts to create another webinar to be entitled Glossary. The subcommittee recommends that additional webinars be created as occasions arise. It will be useful to watch for any comments that are submitted which provides feedback on the webinars.

In terms of the FAQ sheets, Shanan drafted the first FAQ sheet, a resource that will be a valuable introduction to the Panel's work for users. The Subcommittee makes a recommendation that each subcommittee prepare its own FAQ sheet. All FAQ sheets should be posted on the website. They would be useful handout to accompany presentations.

In terms of the website the recommendation is that the location for the OIDAP documents that makes it a perfect location for along with webinars and FAQ sheets visitors to the website can see instructions for submitting comments. The Subcommittee recommends that the website be the Internet home for the Panel, which links to other sites. These would include regulations.gov, where comments are posted.

And then the final comments on the reports. The comments period has been extended through June 30th. Notification was sent to everyone who submitted a comment, requesting that if they want their documents shared, that they post it to regulations.gov websites.

In terms of outreach activities we utilize an e-mail sign-up list, the OIDAP website, the Federal Register Announcement with telephone calls to most of those listening to the OIDAP meetings. The script for the letter is attached.

After much discussion with the agency, we see that the comments are now being posted on the regulations.gov website. Due to the privacy concerns it has been necessary to re-contact all those who had previously submitted comments to ask permission to post their comments. Debra and the staff have prepared an excellent synopsis of the contents of the comments. A copy of the current synopsis is attached, so we could get copies to you. We understand that comments submitted to the regulations.gov website will appear online within a few days of their submission.

The Subcommittee recommends that the Panel members be surveyed as to whether they received -- want to receive the synopsis on a regular basis and/or the comments themselves that relate to their area of expertise.

So thank you, Nancy, for putting together that report.

At this point I have not appointed a replacement for Nancy in terms of User Needs and Relations Subcommittee.

I think I noted that in terms of the Roadmap there are a couple of areas of development within that group in terms of a outreach plan, kind of a broader plan that’s anchored to the project. And as that evolves, I anticipate that somebody will be appointed to replace the

User Needs and Relations Chair.

So I wanted to invite the members of the User Needs and Relations Subcommittee if there’s anything else in terms of your thoughts that have occurred, particularly since the last meeting that you would like to add. Okay.

And the rest of the Panel if there are any questions?

MEMBER SCHRETLEN: At the end Nancy suggested surveying Panel members about their interest in receiving stuff. I’d be interested in receiving synopsis of comments that relate to the Subcommittee Mental Cognitive, but not necessarily the others.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Okay.

MEMBER GIBSON: The model that the staff has utilized for summarizing comments thus far actually is wonderfully done with multiple linkages or references back to each subcommittee to which they belong and also to the recommendations. So that should be viable. But it took us quite a while to actually review what they had used as their initial framework for summarizing comments. My understanding was we were all in agreement it was a very good framework and we were going to maintain it. But I can’t actually tell you at what point we were in terms of summarizing in terms of comments that come in.

So we might actually be behind on that.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Okay. Allan.

MR. HUNT: Just quickly. When do you expect that synopsis to be distributed?

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Well, the public comment period closes on the 30th. At this point we haven’t received them yet, those comments. But maybe people are waiting until the very end. So I anticipate there might be quite a bit coming in and so it might take a little while to be able to process that. So sometime in the summer and before probably our next meeting at the end of August, beginning of September.

MEMBER GIBSON: I would actually probably add that we have received many comments which were not necessarily related to our recommendations or actual Panel activities too which have to be sifted through.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Any other questions?

Okay, let’s go ahead and take a break, a 15-minute break. Come back at about 2:20, a little after 2:20. Thank you.

(Off the record at 2:06 p.m. and back on the record at 2:22 p.m.)

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Welcome back, everyone. We’ll go ahead and resume our meeting and our agenda. And I would like to pass it on to Mark Wilson in terms of the Research Subcommittee's report.

MEMBER WILSON: Thanks, Mary. I will be real brief here, because as both Mary and Sylvia indicated, they touched on a lot of the activities where the Research Subcommittee has been involved. So I'll be very brief and then answer any questions anyone has if there's areas you need more detail.

Basically the Research Committee has been involved in three areas of activity providing advice and recommendations with regard to sort of research planning, methodology issues. And through teleconferences and some face-to-face meetings, the likely product there is some suggested research models, big picture sorts of things, or what are the fundamental research questions here along with the suggestions about sequence.

What would be the appropriate -- if you have to stage the research as you usually do, what would be the appropriate sequence in doing that that would be efficient getting where you need to go from a research standpoint?

The second area is roundtables and professional development. We discussed a number of activities there as they relate to the research aspects. There are other roundtable and professional developments that don't have to do with research. And it looks like through Allan our next effort in that area is going to be around job sampling issues and things of that sort.

The final area is providing advice and feedback and review of specific documents that are research oriented that are presented to the Research Subcommittee. Two activities there, one that's -- both of which have been mentioned a lot. The OIS Study I and that NAS report, which has just been released. And in both cases our role is to provide comments and feedback which we have done.

And in terms of a specific deliverable there, we're currently working on a kind of research proposal framework as an example of how one might broaden the scientifically oriented research proposal that would communicate the basic facts of the research in a relatively small but at the same time straightforward document.

And that's pretty much what we've been doing.

Any questions?

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: No questions? Okay.

We're moving right along through the agenda. I'm going to go ahead -- and I don't know. I think we moved through that a little faster than we anticipated, Debra. I don't know if your PowerPoint is even up yet. Let me -- a couple more minutes on that.

Mark.

MEMBER WILSON: I would like to do one thing here. Welcome Shanan Gibson to our committee. She’s just recently joined us. So we appreciate her help and insight.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Thank you. Thanks for the reminder on that. One of the things that has happened in this process is the recognition that a lot of activities of the Research Subcommittee would overlap with that of the Taxonomy Subcommittee. So those have been merged. And also Sylvia’s no longer on the Research Subcommittee. So those are the two changes to that subcommittee.

Maybe we could just start very briefly maybe talking overall what are the goals of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee. And as your PowerPoint gets on the screen, then we can go through that in detail.

Thank you, Debra.

MEMBER LECHNER: The Ad Hoc Committee consisted of myself and Shanan Gwaltney Gibson and Robert Fraser. And our purpose was just to identify issues for Social Security Administration that they should consider as they recruit and train job analysts. And so we identified a variety of categories of considerations and some of those being what professional disciplines and backgrounds would be appropriate for job analysts, what kinds of things should SSA consider in terms of geographic distribution of these analysts in terms of where they’re located to do their work.

We also talked about different recruitment methods. How would we go about --– or how would SSA go about recruiting job analysts. And then once they were recruited, what should be -- what should the training include. And then realizing that there are not only different training content but there is different venues, different ways to train these folks. And so what would be some of the cost considerations of the different types of training venues?

And then I think everybody felt that certification was certainly a very important part of this process. So we talked about what would we require for certification, how that could be done. So there’s some thoughts about that.

And then once folks were recruited and trained, we went a little bit beyond and talked a little bit about operations and management of this force of analysts that are out there. Once they are on board, how do you manage them?

And then made some comments about employer participation because we felt like that was relevant to this whole area of job analysis and then data management.

So those few bullets or last few areas were a little bit beyond the scope of what we were asked to do initially. But we thought that these were areas that were going to have an impact on this whole job analysis process.

On Page 2 we talk about professional disciplines and background in more detail. And I put together a list that, I guess, for the folks that are listening, I'll read out loud. But vocational evaluators, physical and occupational therapists and their licensed or certified assistants, human resource professionals, ergonomists, occupational health nurses and occupational health physicians, safety professionals, industrial and neuro-psychologists, exercise physiologists, athletic trainers, case managers, and insurance adjusters. And I probably left someone off the list that we would -- so we are certainly open to other disciplines that we may have overlooked. So open for feedback on that.

And this is not to say that these are the folks that we think should -- or the only folks that we think should be certified. But just historically as we thought about folks that have been involved in job analysis, historically these are some of the professionals that are out there currently doing job analysis.

And then one of things that occurred to us as we -- and I think it’s been evident in some of our discussions here that each of these disciplines looks at job analysis a little differently and approaches it a little differently. And so whereas physical and occupational therapists tend to focus more on physical demands of work, a neuro-psychologist might emphasize the cognitive or psycho-motor demands a little bit more. If you’re a safety professional, you might focus a little bit more on the contextual or environmental demands. And ergonomists tend to focus on the fix, how to fix physical demands that are excessive.

And so what SSA will need, I believe, is someone -- or we believe. As a committee we thought that we’re going to need trained analysts who can do some crossover in areas that are not totally -- might not totally be their comfort zone cause you’re going to need physical demands analyzed and cognitive demands. And so the analysts will have to be trained in areas that are not in their primary field of interest or background.

And then geographic distribution we felt would really be dictated a lot by the SSA’s demands in that, for example, there may be certain pilot studies that would be done in certain areas of the country so that some of the initial research may dictate where these folks need to be geographically located. And I think, as the research progresses and as the process develops, the geographic distribution will be dictated a lot by that.

In terms of recruitment methods we felt a variety of methods were available and the things that we noted were exhibiting at professionals conferences, presenting at professional conferences. So once the process is fully developed or more clearly developed, sharing that with professional organizations in terms of presentations would probably be something that would be of interest to the professional organizations that are involved.

And then -- just advance the slide here.

And then we talked about providing notification in professional newsletters, doing mass e-mails to professional lists of professional organizations, publication on professional list serves. And then direct mail to members of professional associations or their license boards, if there are license boards for the different types of professionals.

And then there are different costs associated with these, each of these methods. Obviously electronic methods are going to be probably more cost effective. And SSA may want to pilot test a few strategies to see which methods work best, which methods are more effective in getting results.

And then the training content, we felt that obviously there needs to be an understanding of the operational definitions that are being used and have a description of the job analysis process included in the training. And so if there are particular interview techniques or if a videotaping is used or observations or force and distance measures to have a systematic process by which those things are done so that it ensures reliability and validity. And that needs to be carefully explained in the training process.

And then how to -- teaching the trainees how to classify the data once they've collected it and then how to use the associated software. And our committee sort of operated with the assumption that there would be associated software that job analysts would use.

Then the next thing we considered as, okay, what could be the possible venues for training. Certainly live or fact-to-face training is probably the most traditional type of training. Written home study is another option. Teleconference or audio training is another. And then there is synchronous and asynchronous web based training, with synchronous being more like the virtual classroom where there's a live instructor online with students. Whereas asynchronous being more the stand alone course that someone could go in and take the course at -- and have it be sort of paced at their -- I won't say their leisure cause we all felt that we liked the flexibility of asynchronous training. But there had to be some parameters put on it so that the learning occurred over a set period of time with the test taken within a certain period of time and those kinds of things.

And then we also felt that training could occur in any combination. So you could have -- you could combine live and asynchronous web based training. Or you could combine some written home study work with synchronous web based training. So there's just a variety of combinations that could be put together depending on what you found or what was found in some of the pilot studies.

And we played around a little bit with, okay, what are some of the issues? Scheduling, flexibility being one. Real-time interaction with a live instructor being another thing. And ease of updating the course.

And this table just sort of gives you an idea where if you're looking at home study or asynchronous web based training because there's no set schedule that offers more flexibility for training. Whereas if you are looking at a live course or synchronous web based training or an audio conference, you have real-time. The students or the trainees have real-time online with the trainer. So you've got more -- certainly in face-to-face or live trainings you have that face-to-face interaction. But with audio conferencing and synchronized web based conferencing, you've got at least the audio real-time feedback.

And then in terms of ease of update the home study asynchronous, having a little bit more of an advantage because you don't -- you can update the content without having so much to update the trainers. In other words, with live training with teleconference audio or synchronized web based, you've got to update your materials and you have to train your trainers in the new update.

So we had a lot of debate about, okay, what's going to be the most cost effective approach. And some cost considerations in subsequent slides. But just trying to balance the learning effectiveness versus the cost effectiveness.

And we felt like that there could be a lot learned from pilot studies, initial training sessions, and feedback from attendees as well as the grades and scores on the practical and written exams.

The cost considerations that we identified were things like developing videotapes for training and certification. One of the things that would be required almost in any mode of the training because you would want students to be able to see and view jobs being performed and practice the analysis technique so that video tapes would be probably utilized, we thought, in almost all the different types of training.

And then using -- in a previous study that was done with the Department of Labor, we used -- our video tapes were also used for the certification, the practical exam part of the certification process. And then most courses are going to have manual handouts, certain PowerPoint presentations. Paper forms may be used in addition to the software just depending on the whole process. And then tests would have to be developed.

Other cost considerations would include honorarium and/or salary for live trainers or mentors. We discussed the concept of, even if there weren't live teaching sessions, we might want to have some live mentoring sessions that could occur either audio or web based or live.

If there are live sessions, there are going to be travel costs for trainers. And then server costs for hosting and training and collect -- hosting, training, and the collected data. Development of a stand-alone web based course is going to have certain costs to it that the others might not.

And then we got into a significant discussion about open source versus proprietary learning management systems. And there’s just -- that’s probably a topic for a whole other Ad Hoc Committee to look at, what’s available, what’s out there.

I did a little bit of online poking around in terms of comparisons of element systems, learning management systems, and I’ve done -- the next slide kind of shares some of that information with you. But that’s just -- the links that I have on the next slide are just the tip of the iceberg. There’s just an overwhelming amount of information out there and an overwhelming number of different learning management systems out there.

And then there’s -- of course the other costs is the associated software development. And that’s not really within the scope of the training, per se. But in some of my past experience the training is very closely linked to the software development because you are training the attendees or the trainees in how to use the software.

And then grading tests, you’ve got to decide how those are going to be graded, how many re-tests you're going to allow for people who fail the first time, and then how you're going to distribute and award certificates, and using both pen and paper tests as well as practical exams.

And here's some of the online resources that I stumbled across last night as I was doing a little looking about, you know, so what is out there on the Internet comparing these learning management systems. And I just threw a couple on a slide. The third one down gives a good explanation of the different features that someone should consider as they are selecting learning management systems since this is a new area.

Also something that I personally am not familiar with is does -- I mean I know that SSA does a lot of training, internal training, already. Do you already have a learning management system in process? Is that something that could be -- is there something in other areas of the SSA that could be utilized for this process? And I don't know that yet.

Another website, the fourth one down there, described a lot of the major issues to consider when selecting a learning management system. And then the final one talked about, it was a MIT report that did a very in-depth comparison of learning management systems, but it's a bit dated. It was done in 2006 and there's just tons more technology out there today. But they stated that the initial part of that report is that it's periodically updated. So SSA may want to contact MIT to see when they have their next planned update of this comparison report.

MEMBER SCHRETLEN: I have a question.

MEMBER LECHNER: Yeah.

MEMBER SCHRETLEN: What exactly is a learning management system? What does that involve?

MEMBER GIBSON: Within university systems we have learning management software which is what we run our distance education classes over. It's where the syllabus is, the PowerPoint presentations are, where the students go in and take the tests. It's a website which has all these different sections which essentially replace the classroom. So Moodle, Sakai, WebCT, Blackboard, those are probably your four big ones that are either by fee or free.

MEMBER SCHRETLEN: So you upload the content, but the program or the software provides the sort of infrastructure for presenting and then testing --

MEMBER GIBSON: You can put in deadlines. You can put in dates. You determine what is displayed, what is not.

MEMBER SCHRETLEN: I see.

MEMBER GIBSON: I can show you one when we're done if you'd like to see one.

MEMBER LECHNER: And there are probably at a minimum 90 different learning management systems. I was stunned when I went out to look last night. That's quite a lot of them. Quite a lot of options out there, some of them free, some of them not.

And then the certification process identifying generalized work activities and the frequency and duration with which those activities are performed, observing, video taping, quantifying, classifying the physical demands and the cognitive and environmental, the behavioral demands of the job. So the certification eventually needs to touch on -- for the testing that's required for the certification needs to touch on all those areas, both in a written and a practical exam sort of approach. It also needs to address does that trainees know how to competently how to use the software.

And then there's this whole issue of periodic recertification. I think the legal, medical community is very tuned in to recertification. And I think a lot of times on depositions in trials and so forth, the evaluators have to testify as to how frequently they're recertified.

In terms of operations and management once you have this group of analysts that are trained, it's scheduling and prepping those individuals to go into specific employer sites. Once they've done their analysis process, created a report, there's the whole process of retrieving and archiving the data and performing some type of quality review. Because I think even if you train and certify analysts, you periodically need to check the quality of their work, either systematically or on a random basis.

And then our thoughts on employer participation are that the whole process of doing job analysis does affect an employer's productivity. So and employers are increasingly sensitive about their trade secrets. So those two issues are going to create -- I think will create some significant barriers to folks wanting -- or employers being willing to participate.

As well as there's the issue of safety. So in particular in some industrial environments the employers are very cautious about who they allow to come in and escorting folks so that no injuries occur to the analysts while they're on site. And Unions of course can be very sensitive about job analysis.

And then there is various types of insurance that become important so that analysts that go on site have to be insured from a workers -- certainly from a workers compensation perspective. As well as when this is done in the private sector, the company providing the job analysis has to show that they've got general liability insurance as well. And errors and omission insurance and so on and so forth.

So I think, you know, our thoughts as a committee were that SSA is going to have to put some thought into some marketing strategies, if you will, to entice employers, perhaps create some incentive. We talked a little bit about the whole concept of the possibility of maybe if employers could have some sort of benchmarking, some access to benchmarking information that is anonymous. That might make it an attractive perspective, or an attractive proposition, for them to participate because most companies are into benchmarking and continuous improvement. And if they could see how their jobs compare from physical, cognitive demands standpoint to others in their industry, that might be some sort of incentive.

And then our other thoughts in terms of data management, there is always an issue with job analysis when an external agency comes in or an external entity comes in. Who's going to own the data once it's collected? Who's going to have access to that data once it's collected? How confidential is it going to be? How will the database be developed and maintained and protected?

And then we've already talked about the -- I've already talked about the idea about the confidential benchmarking as a possibility and just the importance of having a really clear idea of purpose and use of the data before the database is developed so that once it's developed it's going to be easy to get the data out of it.

So those were our preliminary thoughts and ideas. And we open it up for discussion, question?

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Gunnar and then Mark.

MEMBER ANDERSON: I thought that was a very thorough and comprehensive review. I have a couple of questions.

One is how hard do you think it is to learn how to do this? And what type of background do you anticipate that they will have? Do you think you're limited to the groups that you were talking about? Or do you think that this is something that someone with reasonable intelligence could actually learn fairly easily? Cause what I see here is a job that is a temporary job. It won't exist eternally because I don't think the plan is to extend the collection of this data over decades. So that's one question.

The second question is whether you think you need to have the same people collecting data as analyzing the data. I don't see that as an absolute necessity, but I don't know what your thoughts on this are.

MEMBER LECHNER: In terms of how hard it is or how long it takes to train individuals, I can only speak from the experience that I have and that's training folks primarily in analyzing the physical component of the job. And the two training courses that we've developed take -- both of them take about eight to 10 hours for someone to go through the course completely and do the practical and written exams.

And you know, we've experimented some with the different levels of professionals. I think everything from a safety professional. Most of the folks that have historically been involved in this area have had some sort of college degree and ranging from a BS degree all the way up to an M.D., Ph.D. level people. So --

MEMBER ANDERSON: But there are so many unemployed people now that that was my thought that if you broaden it you might have an easier time recruiting people.

MEMBER LECHNER: Right. And then about collecting data versus analyzing data, certainly a lot --

in the process that we have used, a lot of the data analysis gets done by computer algorithm. So I would say that you don’t have to have the same person do -- I mean you could have someone input the -- go out and collect data, input it, and have -- develop some computer algorithms in terms of the analysis perspective and then have a good quality review. And you might be able to use less highly trained folks.

I think the key is that the folks who are taking the training be able to understand the nuances of the operational definition. And so you have to write them specifically for certain training and background and use appropriate terminology.

So that if you were trying to train a physical therapist or an occupational therapist and you wanted them to be able to rate an arm movement, you could use terms like flex and extension. But if you were trying to train a safety professional, you might ask them to say, okay, well, when the person raises their arm -- their hand up to their shoulder height that’s what this is for. So you have to change your terminology and make sure you understand and are training to the level of audience with the least background if those are the folks that you’re deciding to use.

MR. HUNT: Just a follow-on, I guess, to

Gunnar's question. I was -- I guess the word was shocked -- at that first list of professional disciplines and backgrounds. Athletic trainers? Can you expand on that to give me some --

MEMBER LECHNER: There are -- athletic trainers end up in settings in the clinic that, for example, clinics that focus on industrial rehabilitation or rehabilitation of the injured worker. So there are sub-groups and I think a smaller section of athletic trainers. It's certainly not every athletic trainer out there because most of them specialize in sports medicine and are on the field during sports games. But some of them interestingly enough have sort of migrated over into industrial rehabilitation and work in physical therapy clinics as sort of as ancillary assistants. And they get involved in job analysis in that way.

MEMBER ANDERSON: In some states they're actually allowed to independently charge for physical therapy.

MEMBER GIBSON: I would say these are not necessarily -- this is not necessarily a list of people we were saying should do this. We were trying to identify a list of people who might be interested in pursuing training as a means of augmenting what their other professional status is which we had identified as being in line with this model.

MEMBER LECHNER: And I think Gunnar is right to -- you know, we want -- as long as you can expand the opportunity as widely as possible because a lot of the folks on this list, depending on what happens in health care, what the trend is for physical and occupational therapists. They are so -- at least I can speak from that because that's what I know. They are so busy with their traditional type of work which is rehab that it's very hard to recruit those individuals to be interested in this on a wide scale. So that's -- and because of that, athletic trainers and exercise physiologists have kind of migrated and filled that role in a lot cases.

MEMBER ANDERSON: I was just trying to make sure that the net is widely cast because I think that's the best way of getting recruits. And there is a lot of people out there that I could think of. There's a lot of unemployed engineers. There's a lot of unemployed teachers. There's a bunch of nurses who are unemployed. And there's no reason why they couldn't learn how to do this. In fact, I'm convinced they can.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Having chaired a credentialing organization and being intimately involved with this process in terms of certification, I think one of the main questions I needed to have answered is what is the scope of practice for the field job analysts. And in that will come from the instrument that will dictate what is the information that is going to be collected. And from answering that question then you can dictate or look at expectations in terms of domain levels and the domain levels that could be tested to.

But that seems to be the first question that we're all talking around is what is the scope of practice. And that's -- I'm going to introduce a term he's never heard of, but that's done by something called the job analysis. It's also called the role or function studies. So that's the third kind of job analysis that we usually hear about out there in the field that's different that what you and I do or what the second kind of job analysis that we have around that table.

It sounds like we're talking about scope of practice and identifying the scope of practice and what goes toward the meeting of the scope of practice. And usually from the development as well as domains and sub-domains, the exams will come out of that and so will the training.

And so, for example, if you're a certified rehab counselor, you could go to the Commission on Rehab Counselor Certification and look at the 12 domain levels that come from their scope and practice, the job analysis that happens every five years. You can go to the council on the rehab education and look up 12 domain areas that all the core credited programs have to teach toward so that the training is in line with the credentialing. So I think that's -- we're kind of talking around that.

Go ahead, Tom.

MEMBER HARDY: I thought this was a wonderful report. I really enjoyed reading it. And I was going to direct you guys to -- for some ancillary stuff. I found this, a August 27, 2007 report to Social Security on use of functional vocational expertise and for a totally different purpose. But in the appendices what they did was they were looking to cast a wide net to get professionals to assist in doing their recommendation. What they did was they came up with basic professional education levels and then subsequent preparation for all the areas that we're talking about. And even went out and got estimates of how many people were available in each discipline, in each area, to do work for Social Security.

And I would suggest you guys take a look at this because some of this research is already done. And they even talked about going out and trying to find social workers in other allied fields to do some of this work as well.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Abigail.

MEMBER PANTER: I think as long as there’s a good description of the analyst characteristics then we’ll be in good shape. Just because at some point it has to all be described as who, what, who is that core of individuals who are -- and it has to be a good description of it.

MEMBER LECHNER: Yeah, and I think it’s probably another one of those areas where there’s a careful balance because I can see the practical advantages of casting a wide net as Gunnar has suggested. But we also have to maintain the -- you know, it’s not necessarily the label that gives you the competency or the credentials that give you the competency. But there’s a perception of competency. And so it’s important that, I think, the Social Security Administration maintain a certain perception of competency by using individuals that or professions that would be respected.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Mark.

MEMBER WILSON: Very useful report. And it’s obvious that you’ve given them a lot of information to consider which I think is very valuable. First of all, I wanted to make one -- make sure I understood something about the slide that’s up there now that kind of relates back to one of Gunnar’s questions. You’re talking about data management here. Is this data that comes out of the training exercise? Is that what you mean by data management?

MEMBER LECHNER: It could be that, but what I had primarily in mind was the management of the data that’s collected by the job analysts that will, you know.

MEMBER WILSON: If that was the case, then I’d be careful here in terms of what it would be in terms of reporting or analysis or whatever simply from the standpoint that we’re going to allegedly be making the argument that their role in this process is to be an unbiased observer. They don’t necessarily know how the information is going to ultimately be used and things of that sort. So unless we had an extended discussion here, I’d probably come down on the side of they shouldn’t be involved in this issue of data.

MEMBER LECHNER: I’m not quite sure I understand what you’re saying, Mark.

MEMBER WILSON: That in terms of training analysts, this whole issue would be something I wouldn’t deal with with them. Their job is to, as others have said, to learn how to use the instrument that’s developed and provide accurate and consistent stuff. But to not get into these kinds of issues unless -- and it could be

I’m missing something.

MEMBER LECHNER: No, this was intended not -- it’s something that the trainees should learn. This was intended as a separate issue that SSA will have to deal with once the data is collected.

MEMBER WILSON: Oh, okay. So this is not A relevant guide. All right, so it’s just --

MEMBER LECHNER: Yes. Like I said when I introduced the topics that we covered that there were a couple of things that sort of percolated up to our minds in terms of considerations that are sort of this step beyond. Okay, once you have the analysts trained, how are you going to manage them and how are you going to manage the data?

MEMBER WILSON: Right, okay. Now I -- thank you. In terms of comments I had two. Again like I said and others have said, I very much appreciate this. And I hope that your committee will also look at two additional things that you sort of tangentially touched on a couple of times. But I think, especially with regard to training, need to be directly addressed in terms making recommendations. And the first one is around the fidelity of the training. And the second one would be around any training evaluation metrics that you think would be appropriate.

I think both of those would be very useful in terms of what level of fidelity you would want to carry out this training. And you touched on that at a couple of points. But it would be nice to make some specific statements in that area.

And then the same thing with regard to training evaluation metrics. How do we know if this training is successful, not at the individual level in terms of an assessment but at the level of the evaluation of the training program. I think both of those would be areas which you have the expertise obviously and it would be useful to provide some suggestions.

MEMBER LECHNER: I think one of the ways we've looked at that in the past has just been to look at the interrater reliability of trainees. And, yeah, I think one could also look at the test, re-test reliability.

Is that the kinds of things you're talking about when you're trying to figure out is the training successful?

MEMBER WILSON: Those could be examples. And if you look at the various training evaluation models, there's, you know, Kirkpatrick and others who sort of outline basic kinds of training. But all I was suggesting is that since you're looking at these issues, it would be useful for you to provide any recommendations you think are appropriate with regard to how do you evaluate this training program, up to and including outcome sorts of things. Do we get better product from using untrained analysts?

Reliability becomes a trick issue in terms of looking at analysts' performance because the issue is unless -- and actually the Research Committee responded to some of these issues which is interesting to bring out. If they watch exactly the same incumbent in the same circumstance, then one would expect them to be in very high agreement. But if you send two different analysts out to two different organizations to look at the same title, one explanation of that might be that our analysts are being unreliable. But another could be that two people with the same title are doing different things.

But, yeah, those would be examples of metrics and the kinds of things that you might want to --

MEMBER LECHNER: What are you referring to when you say fidelity cause that could mean a lot of different things to different people?

MEMBER WILSON: Yeah, fidelity in the training literature generally refers to the extent to which it's realistic. You know, high fidelity training environment would be one, you know, flight simulation where you're in a simulator where it's actually moving as you know.

Low fidelity is the -- fidelity also has two components. There's physical fidelity, you know, the flight mechanism. If you turn, then whatever sort of thing you're in -- if you've seen some of these flight simulators, they're actually more expensive than the plane because they have all these computer controlled hydraulics and things that move about. And that's some of what's important here.

But I think also the sort of psychological fidelity. Do you feel threatened or do you feel under pressure? Or whatever the environment is where the work is going to be performed. The idea is that the training environment and the actual performance environment are as close as possible physically and psychologically. That has potential implications for how things are done and what learning management systems are used and things like that. And I say this all -- I'm scheduled to go to several Moodle workshops over the next couple of months. So I'm particularly aware of learning management system issues.

MEMBER LECHNER: Yeah, and I think this is another one of those areas where SSA may need to balance cost effectiveness versus effectiveness of the training. Just because we've done -- I think that there is no question that if we're doing an online, any kind of online, or remote training where trainees are not physically in the workplace, there's -- you don't get any of those -- a lot of those fidelity issues are sacrificed. But to do live training and have people out there physically in industry carries another whole host of costs and challenges that go with it. I've had the experience of doing both and that one's a challenge.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Bob and then Sylvia and then Tom.

MEMBER FRASER: In the case of our work here it can get a little trickier in terms of training cause we also have these cognitive and behavioral criteria. Then there's also the entree, the access point to business. And do they finesse that? Have we taken care of that, you know, how that works? Cause that's going to increase the training time and probably the sophistication of personnel that you seek cause you want them to be able to hit the ground running and have some appreciation of cognitive and emotional and personal kinds of issues.

Second thing I think we touched on in our last phone conversation was we're probably going to need some type of resource site to help these people out when they get-- well, I had difficulties in business -- who are dealing with some criteria or assessing a certain type of job. And that could be several personnel available cause we have several hundred of these people around nationally. There's going to be issues so that --

MEMBER LECHNER: And that's something that we've certainly found that you've got to have like a help desk that's available to people as they go in to answer questions because there are definitely going to be those.

MEMBER WILSON: One instance ironically in a lot of contexts using computers and all this mediated instruction and things would be lower fidelity in most work settings. But here it might actually be to our advantage because it very well could be the case that when they're actually providing the data and whatever that's all going to be computer mediated too.

MEMBER LECHNER: Yeah, you just don't get the heat of the battle experiences, you know, dodging the bullets in the field.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Sylvia.

MEMBER KARMAN: Thanks, Deborah and Bob and Shanan, for pulling this together. I thought I would just give a little bit of connection, connective tissue perhaps, to some of what I covered in the Director's report with regard to the job analyst business process we're looking to develop over the next few months -- well, next nine months.

And this, the Ad Hoc Subcommittee’s work, and I’m mentioning this mainly because that may be a question in the mind of some of the Panel members and perhaps some of the people who are calling in and listening that we did put in a request for information out in the public with regard to an upcoming RP wherein we would be looking for an entity to come in and help us develop a business process. So I think all of these issues that you guys are covering are going to be really good starting point for Social Security to be providing direction guidance to the contractor.

So I say that as by way of explanation for those who were hearing what I had said before and then now hearing what is going on with the Ad Hoc Subcommittee to see how those connect.

And I’m glad to hear about the scope of work issue -- scope of work, listen to me -- the scope of practice issue because I think to some extent, some of these questions or the points that have been brought up might well be addressed by not only having the work analysis instrument at least mapped out but also having a sense of then, given that, what kind of expertise are we looking for.

And I recognize when you all had that list at the beginning that it was just a suggested list of here’s some, you know, types of professions or backgrounds that are typically do job analyses and might well be places where Social Security could look for individuals. But also getting at what Gunnar was saying in terms of is it possible then, given scope of practice, it might be established for job analysis for our purposes, that we would be able to bring on board individuals who are just simply capable of learning how to do this, given the protocol and training that we have. So I think that will be -- this will be a really good start.

So I just thought I would provide that clarification in case that was at issue for anybody.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Thanks. It might also help to find if there are various levels within that scope for different --

MEMBER KARMAN: Which would get at a variety of different trainings -- modules, for example. And you might want to have one module of training. And I’m not saying that the Ad Hoc Subcommittee has to literally develop any of that or come to those -- get to the point of getting through exactly what levels of training would be needed and all that because of course the contractors from developing the business processing. That sort of thing would be in a position to get to that level of detail.

But just for the Panel to be thinking about the fact that it's possible then, given the scope of practice, that we may have -- several levels of training might be needed because people who already have certification in another area might in fact be able to learn how to do our job analysis more quickly than somebody who has never done it, that kind of thing.

I don't know if that's what you meant, Mary, but...

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Yes, I think that will help identify those areas in terms of training coming in or levels of experience coming in and what's needed in terms of the different levels.

So, Tom, Mark, Abigail.

MEMBER HARDY: I keep going back to a legal defensibility argument. And if I'm rationally looking at areas where we're going to be vulnerable, Step 1 is going to be our data collection. And so I would kind of urge to be more restrictive in looking at who is able to do this for us as opposed to being a more wider net.

And I'm not saying that a college degree is not a wonderful thing, but saying a person with a college degree may be proficient enough to evaluate a person's negotiating skills and some of the esoteric cognitive behavioral things we're talking about. Keeping this into a more narrow range where we've got people with some experience, credentials, possibly higher education may be a better way to go for a gold standard, which I think all the work we're doing should always be held to.

MEMBER LECHNER: I agree that we're going to have to be really careful about that. And I think one of the challenges that this whole area of cognitive functioning is going to create -- and I'm certainly speaking from one with -- from a perspective of someone who does not do that part of it on a regular. But I can look, see, observe physical functions. It's a little bit more difficult with cognitive functions. So that may take on a whole realm of qualifications that some of the folks on this list could fall out as legitimate evaluators of certain types of functions.

MEMBER KARMAN: You know, actually that's why I was glad this scope of practice issue came up because I think as soon as we -- not as soon as -- but when we have a prototype work analysis instrument and we have that there in front of us as a guide for what skill set, what training, what certification would be needed in order to be sure that you have somebody who's using that instrument appropriately, gathering the data appropriately, that would get at, I think, a fair amount of, well, is it reasonable to expand on this, you know, to cast a wider net, for example.

Because when I think what Tom was mentioning with regard to cognitive and mental cognitive issues, I'm assuming that based on the instrument we'll be looking at tasks that -- or activities that are done in the job which are associated with certain mental cognitive abilities. Not that we're literally -- that the job analysts would literally be going out and assessing that person. So I don't know. I mean I think that having the work analysis instrument is probably going to be big.

MR. ANERSON: Tom, I think that in order to satisfy what you're talking about, you're going to have to evaluate the quality of the product, not the qualification of the person who's doing it. Because that's irrelevant if the quality of the product is not good.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Abigail, go ahead. And then Mark. Sorry.

MEMBER PANTER: I don't think it's totally irrelevant, because when we look at other systems that exist, one issue is who are the analysts and who -- in all of this who -- how were they sampled. So it comes back in the end of who is this group. So I think that whatever decisions are made, if it's broader or narrower, that it's a very -- it needs to be a very deliberative process to figure out what is the sampling of the analyst group and who exactly are they to figure out -- go deeply to figure out who are they and what are their years of experience and how did they do on the certification first time, second time, so on.

MEMBER LECHNER: I think it's interesting just in the years of our doing training when we go back and look at who does well on training and who scores the highest on certification exams and who isn't able to pass the exams. You know, I get a lot of questions, well, can somebody that's just out school a year or just a new graduate can they do this. And so we -- and I also get questions because there's a lot of rivalry between physical and occupational therapists about who can do this the best.

And when we went back and looked at some of that data over the years, what you think makes a good analyst isn't always what makes a good analyst or a good evaluator. And one of the things that we noticed, because our process is software driven and it's very analytical, the age of the therapist was a higher predictor. The older therapists were the ones that were more likely to fail the test and not achieve certification. So you can't -- sometimes the assumptions that you think would play out, don't really play out.

MEMBER GIBSON: I think the one thing we have to keep in mind, as Sylvia kind of talked to this, is ultimately once there is a tool and there is an intended process, a business process, the same things that drive good education will drive good training. And that is on one hand to identify what are the types of knowledge that are being sought here. If we want declarative knowledge, we want procedural knowledge, we want contextual knowledge. And not use a bunch of pedagogy terms, but that’s how we look it because that drives the nature of how you train people and how you teach them.

And then we do need to have that really good idea of the learners’ backgrounds because the backgrounds of the learners dictate how you address these training issues. And so a lot of that will probably be handled by a private outside group. But until we have this, we really can’t -- a lot of this is hypothetical.

MEMBER KARMAN: Yeah.

MEMBER GIBSON: But those things are always going to be constants: what is the knowledge they obtained and what are their backgrounds coming in so that the training is developed accordingly.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Mark has been sitting on his hands for the last few minutes, so I’ll have Mark. And then Tom has also been sitting on his hands. So Mark and Tom.

MEMBER WILSON: Thank you. In listening to the discussion, I thought of a couple of things. And I think as usual Tom’s question is very important and there are a number of facets. One of the reasons that I talked about the fidelity and evaluation issues, I think get at this in terms of, if the source is going to be impeached, their general qualifications would not seem to be as relevant as their specific qualifications relative to the training. And so that’s why I brought that up.

But that being said, what Tom and others said, I think, is important here in terms of there’s a concept in training called positive and negative transfer. And if you’re used to doing job analysis, which we know now means different things with different techniques and different approaches, there might actually be some negative transfer there. It may be more difficult for people who are used to a particular approach to learn something that’s slightly different.

On the other hand, there’s sort of a face validity component to this that if, especially to the extent that you’re making any kind of professional inference here which hopefully would be kept at a minimum, the having prior training and expertise that’s relevant to whatever the task is, especially as you mentioned in some of these more abstract cognitive interpersonal domains that so much prior experience might be very relevant or at least needs to be considered.

And I’m glad we’re having this discussion on the record cause I think it’s very important to ascertain who the trainees are, how they’re going to be trained, evaluated. How the training process might be perceived by the legal community to me is a very important question.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Tom.

MEMBER HARDY: Well, I approach a disagreement with Gunnar with fear and trepidation, right off the bat. But I wanted to say that I recognize what Sylvia is saying and it’s my favorite word -- and, Debra Tidwell, I’m using it. It is iterative. And as we start seeing what this product looks like, we’re going to be able to say, well, you know what? That’s kind of goofy. You don’t need to worry about this and this may all be nothing we have to worry about.

But going back and keeping again in mind that there is a cost involved with everything that we’re talking about doing, I still have to say that you can have Tom, who’s got his BA in English lit, go out and do a job analysis or you can have Tom, who’s got his Masters degree in counseling who’s a CRC, NCC, and has 10 years of experience, go out and do some data collection. Tom with his BA is going to cost a little bit less than Tom with his Masters. Howsoever, Tom with his J.D. coming in and saying, you know what, there's a cost benefit analysis that we have to make. And I recognize that.

And it may be that as we go along we find out that, yes, Tom with his BA can do that just fine. But I would also say let's step back and keep in mind that at some point Tom with his J.D. is going to come along and take a look at how you did it. And that's something that we should keep in mind. And again assert that the higher credentials might be in our best interests down the line. That's all.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Dave.

MEMBER SCHRETLEN: Yeah, I think, you know, the scientist in me agrees with Gunnar that -- and in fact there are a lot of data on this. I've seen studies of it in the distant past; I've haven't seen anything recently. But also I've got a lot of direct experience with it that, when you train physicians and Ph.D. level people to do rating scales, they're usually less effective and they do have less reliably and less validly than people with fewer years of training. It's sort of a remarkable phenomenon.

I've always interpreted it as that physicians and, say, doctoral level people think they know it all. They don’t need to -- in a sense they override the rating criteria and they interpose their own judgment to the detriment of the instrument.

But on the other hand, the non-scientist side of me agrees with Tom. And that is that this whole project is under an intense level of scrutiny and the appearance matters. And I think the appearance in some ways in a courtroom will win out over scientific integrity at the end of the day. And so I think we need to pay close, close attention to the appearance of the -- and ideally what you want are highly qualified people who are also well trained and competent. But I agree with Allan. When I saw athletic trainer, I thought, uh-oh, that’s just not going to play well looking back.

MEMBER LECHNER: And they are -- I guess I should have said certified athletic trainers, they are ATCs. So it’s not like you have a fitness trainer out there doing it. But a number of those professionals have migrated in the direction of this whole concept of the industrial athlete and so they --

MEMBER SCHRETLEN: And just to make sure it’s crystal clear, I’m not saying I don’t think they can do a fine job. In fact as I said sort of following up on my earlier comments, they might be able to do a better job.

But I guess the question is really how does it look.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Gunnar.

MEMBER ANDERSON: Well, I think it’s time to stop this discussion. But if you want the form filled out well, don’t ask a doctor. (Laughter and background comments.)

Along the other line I think if we can find the highest qualified people and we can find them in sufficient numbers to do this, by all means that’s what we should do. My fear is that we’re going to have a hard time finding people. And that’s why I wanted to make sure that, if we have that hard time, we’re willing to broaden the search.

MEMBER KARMAN: You know also I think what I was trying to get at earlier was that the results of the certification process, the training and certification, those results should also speak volumes to what process we intend to have in place to ensure that the data are collected in a quality manner. And whatever skill sets individuals need to have in order to even start, that’s something to be determined yet.

But I absolutely am hearing -- and I think getting at what Tom was saying earlier, I’m certainly not saying that we shouldn’t worry about it if it turns out that, gee, we look at the instrument and it seems pretty straightforward. I think we should worry about it even if it the instrument is straightforward. It doesn’t matter. I mean I think you have to worry about it. But that doesn’t mean that whatever we’re discussing here has to happen in one direction or other. It’s just a matter of until we have that together. But we should be concerned about it. So I agree.

MEMBER HARDY: And as far as people available, I’m going back to the study I found. I don’t know how reliable their numbers are, but they were estimating 15,000 occupational therapists being available in the country out of the 90,000 they see as certified. And 30,000 physical therapists out of the 150,000. And 131,000 voc rehab counselors. And it’s like I have no idea of what this is. It’s something that just came across, but --

MEMBER LECHNER: I think those numbers are way optimistic.

MEMBER HARDY: Okay.

MEMBER LECHNER: For example, there is a sub-section of the American Physical Therapy Association that’s devoted to therapists who are interested in work related issues, industrial rehabilitation. And I think if we’re lucky we have 500 to 600 members.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: And I can speak to the rehab counseling, the 131,000. That's highly aggregated data. That data includes para-professionals. That includes job coaches. That number is not accurate in terms of rehab counselors. They have, I think, 1,100 in Idaho. And I tell you there aren't 1,100 in Idaho. There may be about 150. And so you have to really look at that data and see what those numbers mean.

MEMBER HARDY: There's 40 in Montana.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Forty in Montana. You've met them all?

MEMBER HARDY: I met them all.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Okay. (Laughter) A couple of things that kind of come to me as I'm listening to this is there are other national databases that people entering information into that database require certification to maintain the quality of that database. So I'm thinking of like the oncology database. And so there might be through medical informatics other sources like that, other models out there that could already be explored where data quality of that database is incredibly important and there's already a certification process.

So what are the methods that have been considered and are ongoing for the -- not just the initial training but also the ongoing training and certification to maintain that database quality because I think we all think about this, being on the front of it, as the initial data collection. But if it is going to be an organic process, it’s kind of an ongoing process. And so looking at other existing systems such as that.

There were a couple of people who wanted to say something. Allan, were you one?

MR. HUNT: Just a remark as your Labor Economist that, if you can get this going within the next two years, you’re not going to have that big a problem finding people so we’re still going to be above nine percent unemployment.

MEMBER SCHRETLEN: And how many people are we talking about?

(Inaudible background comment.)

No, no, no, I mean how many people do we want to hire. We don’t even have a ballpark.

MEMBER GIBSON: Until we have a sampling model for how much data that has to be collected, it’s really hard to figure we’re going to -- how many analysts we need and geographically how they have to be dispersed. So I think that’s actually part of that bigger sampling question.

MEMBER SCHRETLEN: So we don’t know whether it’s actually closer to 20 or 2,000.

MEMBER GIBSON: It's probably not 20.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Or 2,000.

MEMBER LECHNER: And I think that kind of goes back to a lot of the points in the report where as a committee we were intentionally vague about some things because we don't have the results of the -- we don't know the process yet. We don't know the sampling plan. So we left some things intentionally vague because of that.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Bob.

MEMBER FRASER: Just one thing that by the trips down the pool is people willing to leave an office site, like PTs, OTs, speech -- I can't get anybody to leave the hospital to go out to examine the situation. So it tends to be someone in private practice with flexibility and it trims the pool.

MEMBER LECHNER: Yes, I run into that same issue. A lot of the health professionals are not comfortable being in an industrial environment.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Okay. Are we done with the questions, comments?

I want to thank the Ad Hoc group for their tackling of this since I think we all agree that this is a very important aspect of the process. It is where the rubber meets the road in terms of data quality for the kind of official information system we're looking at that will -- meaning in terms of the match between function and the world of work. So it becomes very, very important in terms of the work you're doing and how SSA feels about this process.

I'm going to ask Debra Tidwell-Peters whether we have anybody signed up for public comment. We don't, okay.

So we have some time set aside for today for public comment. We don't have anybody signed up for public comment.

Is there any other outstanding business on today's agenda? Okay, hearing none, I'm going to remind everybody that for tomorrow we start at 8:30 in the morning. And we have a couple of things on the agenda in terms of the review of the National Academy of Science's report on deliberation and feedback on that and the Administrative agenda.

So hearing none -- Tom, go ahead.

MEMBER HARDY: I make a motion that we adjourn for the day.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Do I have a second?

MEMBER GIBSON: Yes.

CHAIR BARROS-BAILEY: Second by Shanan. All those in favor. (Background ayes)

Okay, that was unanimous. We are adjourned for the day. Thank you.

(Whereupon, this session was adjourned at 3:39 p.m.)

C E R T I F I C A T E

This is to certify that the attached transcript in the matter of:

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION DEVELOPMENT

ADVISORY PANEL QUARTERLY MEETING

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

JUNE 9, 2010

were held as herein appears, and that this is the original transcription thereof for the file of the Office of Complaint Investigations.

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