

# A Note Concerning---

## THE COOPERATIVE LABOR TURNOVER STATISTICS PROGRAM

The Department of Labor has launched a program for the collection and publication of labor turnover statistics which will integrate the current activities in this field of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bureau of Employment Security, and State employment security agencies.

The BLS has been computing and publishing monthly labor turnover rates for manufacturing on a national basis for more than a quarter century. Over the years, rates have been prepared for an increasing number of individual industries and are now published for 120 industries in manufacturing, mining, and communication activities. The current BLS program, based on a national sample of approximately 10,000 establishments, is the successor to one established in 1926 by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. and transferred in 1929 to the BLS.

Since the early days of World War II, the State employment security agencies have been collecting labor turnover data from a large number of establishments, both for internal operating purposes and for publication as part of their labor market information releases. The information was needed to aid in the resolution of complex wartime manpower problems, and its collection has been continued since that time because of its importance in planning, carrying out, and evaluating employment security programs. Turnover information is included in the bimonthly Labor Market Reports received by the EES from some 150 major labor market areas.

The new program, which is operated jointly by the two Bureaus and the State employment security agencies, will integrate these activities into a single program from which labor turnover rates will be available for local areas, States, and the Nation.

Arrangements for introducing the program have been made jointly by the BLS and the EES on a State-by-State basis. When the turnover program is instituted in a State, responsibility for data collection for all establishments in the current national sample for that State is transferred from BLS in Washington to the State

employment security agency. The BLS notifies employers in the sample that the State employment security agency has taken over the collection of turnover statistics. The following month, the State agency also notifies them of the new program, solicits their continued cooperation, and, in cases where the establishment is currently reporting labor turnover and other data to the State agency, explains the new collection arrangements.

The program has been introduced in some 25 States (including major areas within these States) during the year. At the outset, area samples are developed to include all manufacturing and mining establishments which employ 20 or more workers and were included either in the sample for the Current Employment Statistics Program or in the employment service "major market" group (larger firms accounting for about 75 percent of the employment in each local office area). Eventually, it is hoped to extend the program to cover all nonagricultural industries in all States and the major areas within the States.

Data are collected by the State employment security agencies on a shuttle schedule. The State agencies edit the schedules and compute and release turnover rates for the State and local areas. Individual establishment data are forwarded to BLS in Washington for the preparation and release of national turnover rates.

This extension of the labor turnover statistics program eventually will permit publication of national turnover rates in greater industrial detail and for those industries for which such information is not now available. At the same time, through the combined technical resources of the two Bureaus and the State agencies, improvement is expected in the national, State, local area, and individual establishment data on labor turnover. This expansion and improvement of labor turnover statistics should greatly enhance their value as economic indicators, as guides to employers, labor organizations and others interested in labor market problems, and as an essential tool in employment security administration.