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CPWR, the research and training arm of the Building and Construction Trades Dept.,
AFL-CIO, is uniquely situated to serve construction workers, contractors, practitioners,
and the scientific community. This report was prepared by the authors noted.
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Abstract

Workers Defense Project undertook a pilot study beginning in March 2012 with the support of the

Further, protocol for all aspects of the study: random selection of worksites, internal documentation of study progress and finance tracking, communication with research teams, data entry, and data analysis were developed. Before and during the pilot survey period, WDP created training materials for surveyors, piloted and revised training agendas and content, and selected and piloted its data analysis system. Similarly, WDP created training materials and piloted trainings for interviewers. WDP now has final versions of all training materials, including instructions for conducting trainings, as well as a method for data collection and analysis that has been thoroughly tested.

During the pilot survey period, WDP surveyors completed 18 surveys with workers, 16 of which were entered into Qualtrics, the web-based program WDP selected for survey data entry. Two surveys could not be entered because some survey questions were altered significantly between the beginning and end of the pilot period. WDP interviewers completed four interviews with: an English-speaking worker, a Spanish-speaking worker, a developer, and a general contractor.

Finally, WDP was able to add the violation observation component to its study, improving the breadth of information the research study will be able to report. An initial checklist was developed and revised with the help of a group of University of Texas students who conducted 50 observations around Austin on construction sites of different sizes and types to ensure the instrument captured relevant information about safety violations on all worksites.

The pilot study enabled WDP to successfully complete the final statewide study. In total, nearly 1,200 surveys were completed in three months in five cities around the state. Thirty-five interviews with workers, developers, general contractors, and subcontractors contributed to the quantitative data gathered by the surveys. WDP was able to develop a comprehensive picture of the Texas construction industry, its problems, and potential solutions to improve working conditions and the ability of honest employers to compete.

Relevance and Application

Build a Better Texas: Construction Working Conditions in the Lone Star State will inform policy work WDP conducts on the local, state, and national level in 2013 and beyond. Its sister report, *Build a Better Nation: A Case for Comprehensive Immigration Reform* will be used to educate legislators, labor unions, and community groups about the need for immigration reform that benefits workers. The findings from these reports highlight the urgency of the need for changes in policy and enforcement surrounding construction in the state.

Publication/Presentation

WDP released *Build a Better Texas* on January 29, 2013 with a press conference at the Texas state capitol building. WDP's partner organizations around the state had press conferences to announce the report release in Houston, Dallas, and the Rio Grande Valley as well. The report is available online at <http://www.workersdefense.org/build-a-better-texas-report/>. *Build a Better Nation* was released February 13, 2013.

