Progress Narrative

Below are general updates about the activities of the organization.

**Management structure – Hauck & Associates**
AIRA is now managed by an association management company – Hauck and Associates. Association management companies are professional service firms that provide executive, administrative, and financial management; membership development; meetings management; and marketing and communication services. The new management structure provides AIRA with access to a number of services that are often needed by the organization, but can be cumbersome and costly to access. Hauck & Associates are located in Washington, D.C. and function as the physical AIRA headquarters.

Following the transfer of management from Public Health Solutions to Hauck & Associates; the Executive Director and staff have begun organizing the membership list, providing technical and programmatic support for the AIRA committees, transferring the website to a format that can be used by the new staff, and developing policies and procedures for daily operations.

**Staffing**
In November of 2010 Rebecca Coyle became the Executive Director for AIRA. Rebecca Coyle has worked within the immunization community for the past 9 years. She has worked in a variety of capacities and in multiple states. Most recently she was the Idaho Immunization Program Manager. Rebecca is physically located in Idaho and works remotely with the Hauck staff. Within Hauck & Associates there is a dedicated program support person, Jennifer Bank. She is located at the Hauck office in Washington. Jen has been with Hauck & Associates for more than two years. Jen is the “voice” of AIRA as she answers the phone calls from members and others; she has a background in meeting planning, sends out AIRA e-mails to members, and assists the Board and the Executive Director with other administrative duties.

**Future Staffing**
Since the transition to Hauck the association has been managed and supported by two primary staff. With increasing support needed to facilitate the organizational objectives and increased IIS activities as a result of Meaningful Use, ARRA HITECH, and an increased national focus on data exchange in the health setting; AIRA has identified the need to hire another staff person with experience and knowledge of IIS. This person will assist the Executive Director in supporting the AIRA committees, planning a national IIS meeting and managing web content.

**Executive Director Activities**
Since joining AIRA, the Executive Director has focused on increasing member communication with monthly updates sent to the members with timely IIS news, organizational updates, and educational interests and opportunities.
**Board Updates**
AIRA held their annual elections in October, 2010. The results of the election yielded a very strong group of IIS professionals with diversified backgrounds in IIS. The following are members of the Executive Committee:

- Emily Emerson, President – IIS Manager for the Minnesota Department of Health
- Vacant, President-Elect
- Sherry Riddick, Immediate Past President - Immunization Registry Operations Manager for Washington state’s CHILD Profile
- Mary Beth Kurilo, Secretary – Oregon Alert IIS Manager
- Mark Sawyer M.D., Treasurer – Professor of Clinical Pediatrics, UCSD School of Medicine
- Medical Director, San Diego Immunization Partnership
- Lora Santilli, Member at Large - Program Manager for the New York State Immunization Information System (NYSIIS), NYS Department of Health - Bureau of Immunization

Don Blose, Immunization Program Manager for the Oklahoma Department of Health served as the President-Elect until May 31, 2011 when he officially retired from his position at the Oklahoma Department of Health. The AIRA Board will be discussing the potential candidates at an upcoming Board meeting. Per the bylaws, a new President will be selected during the general election.

The remaining Board members are as follows:

- Katie Reed, Project Manager, EDS - HP
- Rob Savage, Northrop Grumman contractor supporting IISSB interoperability efforts
- Dorothy McCall, Manager Children Health Services
- Bea Salada, MCIR Coordinator, State of Michigan
- Frank Caniglia, Manager Pennsylvania Statewide Immunization Information System
- Gail Ogawa, Acting IIS Coordinator for the Hawaii Immunization Registry, Hawaii Department of Health
- Jammie Johnson, North Carolina Immunization Program
- Cecile Town, IHS Data Exchange Coordinator/CDC Research Officer

AIRA will conduct their annual elections in October, 2011.

**AIRA Committees**
AIRA recently restructured the committees to best align with the organizational objectives and needs of the IIS community. As a result AIRA now has four steering committees; they are the Assessment Steering Committee, Education Steering Committee, Modeling of Immunization Registry Workgroup (MIROW) Steering Committee, and the Standards and Interoperability Steering Committee. All committees have established and Board approved charters in place and are attached to this progress report. Highlights and updates for each steering committee are below.

**Assessment Steering Committee**
The AIRA Assessment Steering Committee (ASC) is a newly formed Steering Committee that combines prior Steering Committees into a consolidated group with the purpose of developing and testing IIS Standards of Excellence and indicators that provide IIS with a comprehensive self-assessment and measurement process that exceed minimal standards for overall IIS operations improvement. The primary focus of this group has been to develop a self-assessment tool that is useful and systematic in producing objective, quantifiable results.
The committee is currently developing an assessment tool with a scheduled draft due September 30, 2011. The committee began by using the previous Performance Improvement Tool as the basis for the new assessment tool. Smaller sub-groups were then created that analyze each standard for relevance and updates.

**Education Steering Committee**

The AIRA Education Steering Committee (ESC) assesses the training & educational needs of the IIS community. Activities that have been conducted during the current project period include Webinars, workshops, newsletters, and a survey of the AIRA membership educational needs.

*Webinars*

AIRA has conducted three Webinars as of June 30th, 2011. The first webinar was held on 2/15/2011 on the topic of Interstate Data Sharing with 54 attendees. The second webinar was held on 6/8/2011 on the topic of using an IIS for VTrckS with 48 attendees. And the third webinar was held on 6/22/2011 on Interoperability & Meaningful Use with XX attendees.

*Education Survey*

AIRA last assessed the educational needs of its members in 2005. Since that time IIS staffing has changed and so has the technology impacting the IIS community. Due to the transition in AIRA management, staff were unable to develop and implement a new survey until March of 2011. To date, the survey has been developed and implemented. Results will be available June 30, 2011 and the Education Plan will be updated with the results of the survey by August 31, 2011.

*Workshops*

AIRA offered two workshops prior to the National Immunization Conference (NIC) on topics that are relevant to the ever changing IIS community. The morning workshop titled *A Primer for VTrckS, What You Need to Know When Using an IIS*, featured speakers from the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), Washington State and Michigan – the two VTrckS EXIS pilots. During the session the speakers focused on identifying whether or not to use an IIS for VTrckS or use the VTrckS external interface, the technical requirements necessary for implementing VTrckS using an IIS, and strategies utilized within the respective VTrckS pilot states to implement vaccine ordering using an IIS and the interface with VTrckS. The afternoon session titled, *IIS Interoperability & Meaningful Use, Making Meaningful Use a Meaningful Experience*, featured a variety of speakers from state IIS’ and IIS vendors and provided an overview of the Meaningful Use criteria for Stage 1 & Stage 2 of Meaningful Use, identified barriers to Meaningful Use and then broke into smaller work groups which chose one of the barriers to identify challenges, solutions and success measures.

*SnapShots*

SnapShots is the newsletter produced by AIRA for the IIS community. SnapShots features updates on technical information, success stories from state and local IIS’ and providers, and educational and professional opportunities for the IIS community. AIRA has completed two on-line publications and one print edition that was circulated at the National Immunization Conference. Copies of the newsletters are attached to this progress report.

**Modeling of Immunization Registry Operations Workgroup (MIROW) Steering Committee**

The purpose of the Modeling of Immunization Registry Operations Workgroup (MIROW) is to develop a best practice operational improvement guidebook for Immunization Information Systems (IIS) and to promote the implementation of best practices in the IIS community. MIROW provides a forum for collaboration among IIS stakeholders and experts to analyze existing practices, brainstorm new approaches, and develop consensus-based best practice guidelines. MIROW uses business analysis and modeling techniques to develop and document best practice recommendations based on a collaborative consensus-based decision making process. The best practice guidelines are independent of specific technology and implementation methods. The scope of work includes:
• Identification of topic areas which would benefit from best practice guidelines
• Convening subject matter experts through teleconferences and face to face meetings to develop best practice guidelines
• Documentation of best practice guidelines using standard business modeling techniques to provide a technology neutral baseline for operations improvements and information technology developments
• Promotion of consistency and comparability of IIS data through
  • dissemination and implementation of the best practice guidelines (e.g., webinars and conference presentations) and support of uniform alignment of IIS operations based on the best practice guidelines
• Increasing the credibility of IIS and the scientific validity of IIS through dissemination and implementation of the best practice guidelines

The MIROW Steering Committee was in the midst of developing the Chapter 5 guide, *Immunization Information System Collaboration with Vaccines For Children Program and Grantee Immunization Programs*, when the H1N1 influenza pandemic severely impacted the ability of the IIS community to complete the guide in the originally specified time. Following the resolution of H1N1, the MIROW committee was able to complete the Chapter 5 guide in April of 2011. This guide is now available on the AIRA website and is attached to this progress report. The complimentary mini-guide is currently in development and will be completed in August, 2011.

The topic for Chapter 6 has been identified and the scope for the new guide has been drafted. Currently, the MIROW Steering Committee is in the process of identifying and recruiting Subject Matter Experts for the next topic.

**Standards and Interoperability Steering Committee**

The AIRA Standards and Interoperability Steering Committee (SISC) is a newly formed Steering Committee that combines prior working groups into one formal committee. The purpose of the Committee is to provide technical support and guidance to interoperability efforts of AIRA members and the IIS community; provide technical support and provide guidance to the board and Executive Director as they prepare to represent the IIS community in wider health information community regarding interoperability issues; act as a liaison between national organizations involved with interoperability like the Office of the National Coordinator (ONC) and others; and be a technical resource for AIRA members and the IIS community. Since commencing in January of 2011, this committee provided comments to the Center for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) for the Meaningful Use Stage 2 proposed requirements. The comments submitted reflected the views of the IIS community and the impact the proposed Stage 2 requirements will have on the community. As an active member of the HL7 Organization, the SISC is the committee that will review the HL7 ballots as they relate to IIS. The SISC recently completed a review and provided comments for the proposed ballots. Currently the committee is reviewing the codes surrounding vaccine exemptions and deferrals and developing appropriate guidance for the IIS community.

**ARIA Annual Meeting & Reception**

On Tuesday evening during the NIC, AIRA hosted a reception for the IIS community and featured Jessica Khan, Technical Director for Health IT at the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services as the keynote speaker. Ms. Kahn was a very engaging and candid presenter and focused on the operational, policy and technical issues related to Meaningful Use, Medicaid partnerships, EHRs, and HIEs. A list of barriers identified during the IIS Interoperability & Meaningful Use workshop was provided to Ms. Kahn and she was able to provide answers and possible solutions for some of the barriers.
Following the presentation, service awards were presented to the following AIRA members for their service to AIRA: Lora Santilli, New York State, Rob Savage, Northrup Grumman, Mark Sawyer, San Diego County, and Sherry Riddick, Washington CHILD Profile.

**Website**
The AIRA website was developed in the early 2000’s and has experienced minor updates since that time. Following the transition to Hauck & Associates the code had to be converted to comply with the new hosting environment. However, the overall structure is no longer adequate to support the needs of the organization which need a dynamic site that can provide a web-based forum for sharing documents, and technical specifications, assist the IIS community with Meaningful Use and various other workgroup activities. AIRA plans to upgrade the website in the 4th quarter of this project year.

**IIS meeting in 2012**
With the move towards a National Immunization Conference being held once every other year rather than every year, AIRA feels very strongly that a national IIS meeting should be held in the absence of the NIC. In lieu of the regional meetings AIRA is pursuing a national meeting much sooner than originally planned and will concentrate efforts on this meeting as opposed to the regional meetings proposed. Currently AIRA and Hauck & Associate Staff are evaluating meeting locations, identifying potential sponsors and developing a planning committee.

**Budget**
For varying reasons including the transition to a new management structure, a slight delay in hiring an Executive Director, and objectives being carried out by other organizations, funds for the current budget period have not been expended at the rate initially planned. AIRA anticipates approximately $197,000 will need to be carried over to the FY2011-2012. AIRA plans to use the carryover funds for the IIS meeting that was originally planned for FY2013. The use of carryover funds in the second year will go a long way to achieving the goal of a national IIS meeting.
**Project Plan Progress**

**Part I – IIS Assessment**

**Goal:** Develop infrastructure and business plan to perform IIS assessments for the purpose of improving data quality (completeness, accuracy, and timeliness), functional capacity, and data usage. As stated in the FOA, the purpose of Part I is to develop an infrastructure for the assessment of IIS data or IIS functional capacity. In addition to the assessment of IIS data and functional capacity, AIRA proposes to assess the extent to which IIS data are used within immunization programs, public health and the private sector to support immunization program goals.

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<th>Objective</th>
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<th>Status</th>
<th>Progress &amp; Strategies for Completing</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Objective 1:</strong> Develop IIS assessment tools to measure 1) data quality (completeness, accuracy, and timeliness), 2) functional capacity, and 3) data usage.</td>
<td>Draft Assessment Tool by 9/30/11 Final Assessment Tool by 9/30/12</td>
<td>Green – On target</td>
<td>The AIRA Assessment Steering Committee (ASC) started with the previous Performance Improvement Tool as a base and is now working on a draft assessment tool.</td>
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<td><strong>Objective 2:</strong> Implement IIS assessment test pilot and analyze results in order to produce a final assessment tool.</td>
<td>Protocol &amp; Guidelines for implementing assessment by 12/31/11</td>
<td>Green – On target</td>
<td>This work will be conducted in the 2nd year of the Cooperative Agreement.</td>
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<td><strong>Objective 3:</strong> Develop business plan which includes recommendations for performing IIS assessment.</td>
<td>Business Plan for IIS Assessment Implementation by 9/30/12</td>
<td>Green – On target</td>
<td>This work will be conducted in the 2nd year of the Cooperative Agreement.</td>
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</table>
Part II – Education and Training

**Goal:** The purpose of Part II of this program is to develop and provide infrastructure and management for the development of education and training materials for IIS professionals and related partners. AIRA will perform activities that develop and deliver training and education products to IIS and their partners related to the planning, implementation, and ongoing management of immunization information systems. Educational curriculum will be aimed at increasing skills and knowledge of IIS staff needed for the successful management of an immunization information system program. Additionally, curricula will be developed for IIS staff of all types to meet needs identified in the AIRA Education Plan.

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<td><strong>Objective 1:</strong> Increase IIS grantees’ skills and knowledge needed for the successful management of IIS by partnering with the Public Health Informatics Institute to assist in the development of management tools for the development of Request for Proposal (RFP).</td>
<td>Written curriculum by 10/31/11 One webinar following the completion of the RFP tool Repository of tools and materials posted on AIRA’s website by 12/31/11 Article in Snapshots by 4/30/12</td>
<td>Yellow – In Progress</td>
<td>The Education Steering Committee has developed and disseminated the survey of educational needs to the AIRA membership. The results of this survey will be used to update the Education Plan. The survey will be analyzed by June 30, 2011 and the Education Plan will be updated by 8/31/2011. Once the survey results are analyzed AIRA will have a clear idea of the management tools and resources IIS managers and staff need. AIRA will contact PHII and other partners regarding available IIS management resources once the survey is analyzed.</td>
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<td>Objective 2: Increase IIS grantees’ skills and knowledge needed for the successful management of IIS, specifically in the development of IIS Project Management skill sets, including vendor oversight, through development of a “Project Management 101” course.</td>
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| Written curriculum by 12/31/11  
Two webinars conducted and recordings posted to AIRA website, one by 6/30/12 and one by 9/30/12  
Article in Snapshots by 12/31/11 | Green – On target | A majority of this work will be conducted in the 2nd year of the Cooperative Agreement. |
### Objective 3: Update the AIRA education plan, Meeting the Education and Information Needs of the Immunization Information Systems (IIS) Community, to determine current training needs of IIS community.

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<td>Updated Education Plan by March 31, 2011</td>
<td>Green – On target</td>
<td>The Education Steering Committee has developed and disseminated the survey of educational needs to the AIRA membership. The results of this survey will be used to update the Education Plan. The survey will be analyzed by June 30, 2011 and the Education Plan will be updated by 8/31/2011. AIRA conducted two workshops prior to the NIC. Both were very well attended with more than 40 participants at each session. The first session was titled A Primer for VTrckS What You Need to Know When Using an IIS, and the second session was titled IIS Interoperability &amp; Meaningful Use. With the move towards a National Immunization Conference being held once every other year rather than every year, AIRA feels very strongly that a national IIS meeting should be held in the absence of the NIC. In lieu of the regional meetings AIRA is pursuing a national meeting much sooner than originally planned and will concentrate efforts on a this meeting as opposed to the regional meetings proposed. More information about these activities are detailed in the progress narrative and the 2011-2012 Cooperative Agreement application. As of 6/30/2011 AIRA has conducted three educational webinars.</td>
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<td>Two workshops each year to be held in conjunction with (usually before) the NIC which historically occurs annually in the spring. One in-person regional meeting by December 31, 2011, and a second regional meeting by June 30, 2012. In addition to the three webinars for Objectives 1 and 2, six additional webinars will be conducted, so that a total of webinar each quarter will be performed.</td>
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Two workshops each year to be held in conjunction with (usually before) the NIC which historically occurs annually in the spring. One in-person regional meeting by December 31, 2011, and a second regional meeting by June 30, 2012. In addition to the three webinars for Objectives 1 and 2, six additional webinars will be conducted, so that a total of webinar each quarter will be performed.
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<td><strong>Objective 4</strong>: Plan a two-day educational forum with topics relating to immunization information system operations, development, management, quality assurance, provider participation, and integration in the Immunization Program, using CDC’s Vaccine University as a model.</td>
<td>Formal work plan for development and implementation of an IIS University, i.e. a training forum for IIS staff, completed by 3/31/12.</td>
<td>Green – On target</td>
<td>On target – with the move towards a National Immunization Conference being held once every other year rather than every year, AIRA feels very strongly that an IIS training forum should be held in the absence of the NIC. Therefore, AIRA is proceeding with the development and implementation of a national meeting to be held prior to 10/1/2012. Preliminary locations are being evaluated as is funding.</td>
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Part III – Operational Guidelines

**Goal:** The purpose of Part III of the program is to support the development of consensus-based operational guidelines for IIS that address specific operational and technical issues critical to the successful management of an IIS.

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| **Objective 1:** AIRA will partner with PHII to promote the new functional requirements that enable IIS to support improving immunization rates in the United States, improving vaccine accountability, and supporting public health’s role in the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) meaningful use rules. | Review of new requirements by 4/30/11  
Posting of new functional standards on the AIRA website following their approval 12/31/11  
Provide technical support on implementation as needed | Green – On target | On-target – members of AIRA and the Executive Director served as subject matter experts (SME) on the panel that PHII assembled to review and update the functional requirements. In addition the SME provided final review of the requirements.  
The AIRA website is in need of more functionality and capabilities than the current website design allows. A more robust site that would support the ongoing efforts of the IIS community is necessary at this time. AIRA has assembled a work group that will oversee the review of web content and the re-design process. Following the updating of the website design the final functional requirements will reside on the AIRA website. |
| **Objective 2:** Identify, develop, promote and evaluate consensus-based operational guidelines that promote standardization and quality improvement of IIS. | Two new IIS operational improvement guidelines will be developed, draft by 9/30/11 and final by 12/31/11, second guideline drafted by 9/30/12  
Metrics to objectively measure integration of these operational guidelines by 9/30/12  
Two new mini-guides will be developed and published, one by 9/30/11 for the previous topic on tracking VFC status, and one by 9/30/12 for the topic developed in 2011. | Yellow – In Progress | The MIROW Steering Committee has completed the final CHAPTER #5, Immunization Information System Collaboration with Vaccines For Children Program and Grantee Immunization Programs. This new chapter is now posted on the AIRA website. The mini-guide is currently being developed and will be completed by 9/30/11.  
The topic for Chapter 6 has been identified and the scope for the new guide has been drafted. Currently, the MIROW Steering Committee is in the process of identifying and recruiting Subject Matter Experts for the next topic.  
Due to the significant delays in the development of Chapter 5 (H1N1), AIRA is proposing an amended list of activities in the 2011-2012 Cooperative Agreement application. |
### Objective 3: Continue involvement in efforts to assure interoperability between IIS and other health information systems. Assure that IIS functional responsibilities are supported by new architectures (HIE, NHIN, RHIO, etc) by:

- Assisting in the implementation of HL7 messaging by IIS and their partners.
- Representing the IIS community in Standards Development efforts and Standards implementation efforts.
- Supporting vocabulary standardization efforts

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<td>Update the AIRA website to accommodate the repository of Meaningful Use materials by 9/30/2011</td>
<td>Green – On target</td>
<td>Many of the original activities identified in the Cooperative Agreement for this objective are currently being conducted by CDC. As a result the deliverables have changed since the original application. The Standards &amp; Interoperability Steering Committee (SISC) in conjunction with the Board of Directors have evaluated the participation needs of many partner organizations, work groups and panels, and have evaluated and determined the appropriate AIRA representation for these efforts. Thus far AIRA has provided a representative for the Joint Public Health Informatics Taskforce (JPHIT), the Public Health Informatics Institute (PHII), the HL7 Organization, the Public Health Data Standards Consortium, and Every Child By Two. AIRA has provided a SME representative to the following CDC Expert Panels: Transport Layer, EHR-IIS Interoperability, Clinical Decision Support, and Patient De-Duplication. In addition to the AIRA representative, many AIRA members are serving as SME on these panels. The Meaningful Use criteria for the Stage Two comment period was evaluated by the SISC, and comments were provided to CMS. As part of the AIRA membership to the HL7 Organization, the SISC has evaluated and provided comments that represent the IIS HL7 community on the HL7 proposed ballots. AIRA reviewed and commented on the testing tools for MQF testing tool for messages.</td>
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<td>Provide comments as requested and appropriate to various organizations regarding Meaningful Use and interoperability</td>
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Part IV – Ongoing Program Evaluation

**Goal:** The purpose of this part of the program is to conduct continuous evaluation activities to assess the effectiveness of the activities performed in Parts I, II, and III.

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<td><strong>Objective:</strong> Develop a plan to identify and implement evaluation to objectively assess the level of effectiveness of the products and activities detailed in the Project Plan</td>
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<td>Green – On target</td>
<td>AIRA has developed and submitted a draft evaluation plan to CDC.</td>
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