



News Release

Connect with DOL at <http://blog.dol.gov>



TRANSMISSION OF MATERIALS IN THIS RELEASE IS EMBARGOED UNTIL
8:30 A.M. (Eastern) Thursday, May 21, 2015

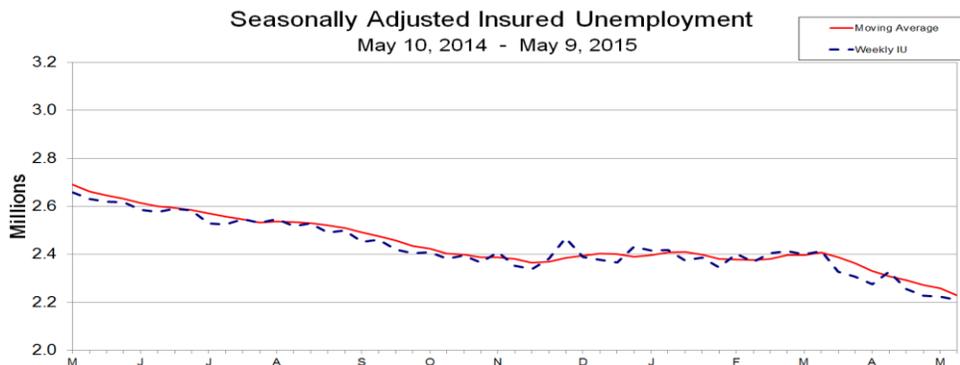
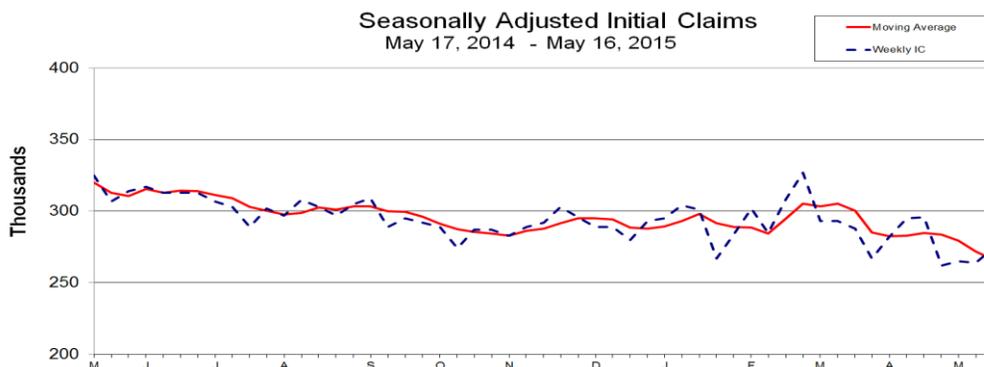
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE WEEKLY CLAIMS

SEASONALLY ADJUSTED DATA

In the week ending May 16, the advance figure for seasonally adjusted **initial claims** was 274,000, an increase of 10,000 from the previous week's unrevised level of 264,000. The 4-week moving average was 266,250, a decrease of 5,500 from the previous week's unrevised average of 271,750. This is the lowest level for this average since April 15, 2000 when it was 266,250.

There were no special factors impacting this week's initial claims.

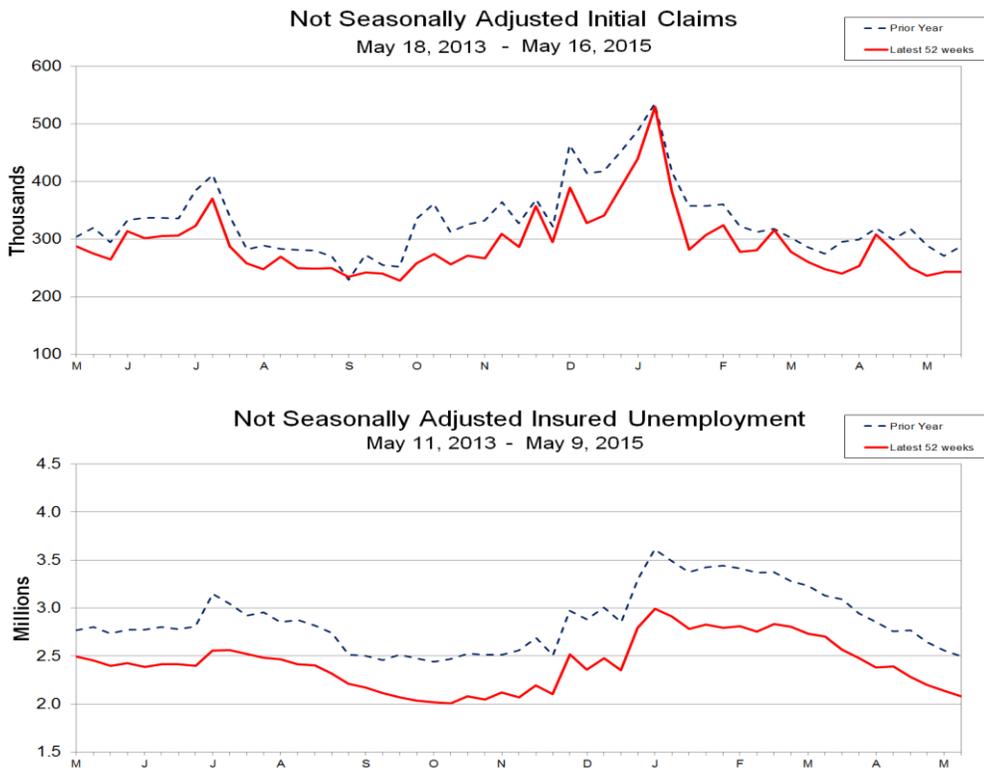
The advance seasonally adjusted **insured unemployment rate** was 1.6 percent for the week ending May 9, a decrease of 0.1 percentage point from the previous week's unrevised rate. The advance number for seasonally adjusted **insured unemployment** during the week ending May 9 was 2,211,000, a decrease of 12,000 from the previous week's revised level. This is the lowest level for insured unemployment since November 11, 2000 when it was 2,161,000. The previous week's level was revised down by 6,000 from 2,229,000 to 2,223,000. The 4-week moving average was 2,229,750, a decrease of 29,000 from the previous week's revised average. This is the lowest level for this average since November 25, 2000 when it was 2,211,250. The previous week's average was revised down by 1,500 from 2,260,250 to 2,258,750.



UNADJUSTED DATA

The advance number of actual initial claims under state programs, unadjusted, totaled 242,794 in the week ending May 16, a decrease of 88 (less than -0.1 percent) from the previous week. The seasonal factors had expected a decrease of 8,722 (or -3.6 percent) from the previous week. There were 287,398 initial claims in the comparable week in 2014.

The advance unadjusted insured unemployment rate was 1.6 percent during the week ending May 9, unchanged from the prior week. The advance unadjusted number for persons claiming UI benefits in state programs totaled 2,078,408, a decrease of 60,204 (or -2.8 percent) from the preceding week. The seasonal factors had expected a decrease of 48,908 (or -2.3 percent) from the previous week. A year earlier the rate was 1.9 percent and the volume was 2,494,495.



The total number of people claiming benefits in all programs for the week ending May 2 was 2,195,714, a decrease of 58,933 from the previous week. There were 2,620,550 persons claiming benefits in all programs in the comparable week in 2014.

No state was triggered "on" the Extended Benefits program during the week ending May 2.

Initial claims for UI benefits filed by former Federal civilian employees totaled 767 in the week ending May 9, a decrease of 72 from the prior week. There were 1,370 initial claims filed by newly discharged veterans, an increase of 31 from the preceding week.

There were 11,409 former Federal civilian employees claiming UI benefits for the week ending May 2, an increase of 22 from the previous week. Newly discharged veterans claiming benefits totaled 19,741, an increase of 260 from the prior week.

The highest insured unemployment rates in the week ending May 2 were in Alaska (3.5), Puerto Rico (2.7), California (2.6), New Jersey (2.6), Connecticut (2.3), Pennsylvania (2.3), Nevada (2.2), West Virginia (2.2), Wyoming (2.2), and Massachusetts (2.1).

The largest increases in initial claims for the week ending May 9 were in Georgia (+1,480), Florida (+1,087), South Carolina (+891), Illinois (+860), and North Carolina (+801), while the largest decreases were in New York (-1,696), Oregon (-931), New Hampshire (-726), Wisconsin (-605), and Missouri (-322).

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE DATA FOR REGULAR STATE PROGRAMS

WEEK ENDING	May 16	May 9	Change	May 2	Prior Year¹
Initial Claims (SA)	274,000	264,000	+10,000	265,000	325,000
Initial Claims (NSA)	242,794	242,882	-88	236,421	287,398
4-Wk Moving Average (SA)	266,250	271,750	-5,500	279,500	320,250
WEEK ENDING	May 9	May 2	Change	April 25	Prior Year¹
Insured Unemployment (SA)	2,211,000	2,223,000	-12,000	2,229,000	2,659,000
Insured Unemployment (NSA)	2,078,408	2,138,612	-60,204	2,199,757	2,494,495
4-Wk Moving Average (SA)	2,229,750	2,258,750	-29,000	2,271,750	2,690,000
Insured Unemployment Rate (SA)²	1.6%	1.7%	-0.1	1.7%	2.0%
Insured Unemployment Rate (NSA)²	1.6%	1.6%	0.0	1.6%	1.9%

INITIAL CLAIMS FILED IN FEDERAL PROGRAMS (UNADJUSTED)

WEEK ENDING	May 9	May 2	Change	Prior Year¹
Federal Employees (UCFE)	767	839	-72	920
Newly Discharged Veterans (UCX)	1,370	1,339	+31	1,561

PERSONS CLAIMING UI BENEFITS IN ALL PROGRAMS (UNADJUSTED)

WEEK ENDING	May 2	April 25	Change	Prior Year¹
Regular State	2,132,228	2,193,566	-61,338	2,553,457
Federal Employees	11,409	11,387	+22	13,759
Newly Discharged Veterans	19,741	19,481	+260	25,126
Extended Benefits³	0	0	0	59
State Additional Benefits⁴	7,871	8,052	-181	9,711
STC / Workshare⁵	24,460	22,161	+2,299	18,438
TOTAL	2,195,714	2,254,647	-58,933	2,620,550

FOOTNOTES

SA - Seasonally Adjusted Data, NSA - Not Seasonally Adjusted Data

1. Prior year is comparable to most recent data.
2. Most recent week used covered employment of 134,074,626 as denominator.
3. Information on the EB program can be found here: [EB Program information](#)
4. Some states maintain additional benefit programs for those claimants who exhaust regular, extended and emergency benefits. Information on states that participate, and the extent of benefits paid, can be found starting on page 4-5 of this link: [Extensions and Special Programs PDF](#)
5. Information on STC/Worksharing can be found starting on page 4-9 of the following link: [Extensions and Special Programs PDF](#)

UNADJUSTED INITIAL CLAIMS FOR WEEK ENDED MAY 9, 2015

STATES WITH AN INCREASE OF MORE THAN 1,000

State	Change	State Supplied Comment
GA	+1,480	Layoffs in the health care and social assistance, manufacturing, administrative and support and waste management and remediation service, and trade industries.
FL	+1,087	Layoffs in the manufacturing, wholesale trade, retail trade, and service industries.

STATES WITH A DECREASE OF MORE THAN 1,000

State	Change	State Supplied Comment
NY	-1,696	Fewer layoffs in the construction, professional, scientific, and technical service, and retail trade industries.

Seasonally Adjusted US Weekly UI Claims (in thousands)

Week Ending	Change from			Insured Unemployment	Change from			IUR
	Initial Claims	Prior Week	4-Week Average		Prior Week	4-Week Average		
May 10, 2014	296	-27	321.50	2,659	-12	2,690.00	2.0	
May 17, 2014	325	29	320.25	2,631	-28	2,661.50	2.0	
May 24, 2014	307	-18	312.75	2,620	-11	2,645.25	2.0	
May 31, 2014	314	7	310.50	2,618	-2	2,632.00	2.0	
June 7, 2014	317	3	315.75	2,586	-32	2,613.75	2.0	
June 14, 2014	313	-4	312.75	2,576	-10	2,600.00	2.0	
June 21, 2014	313	0	314.25	2,591	15	2,592.75	2.0	
June 28, 2014	313	0	314.00	2,584	-7	2,584.25	2.0	
July 5, 2014	307	-6	311.50	2,530	-54	2,570.25	1.9	
July 12, 2014	303	-4	309.00	2,525	-5	2,557.50	1.9	
July 19, 2014	289	-14	303.00	2,547	22	2,546.50	1.9	
July 26, 2014	302	13	300.25	2,532	-15	2,533.50	1.9	
August 2, 2014	297	-5	297.75	2,546	14	2,537.50	1.9	
August 9, 2014	308	11	299.00	2,518	-28	2,535.75	1.9	
August 16, 2014	303	-5	302.50	2,528	10	2,531.00	1.9	
August 23, 2014	297	-6	301.25	2,491	-37	2,520.75	1.9	
August 30, 2014	305	8	303.25	2,500	9	2,509.25	1.9	
September 6, 2014	309	4	303.50	2,452	-48	2,492.75	1.9	
September 13, 2014	289	-20	300.00	2,460	8	2,475.75	1.9	
September 20, 2014	295	6	299.50	2,421	-39	2,458.25	1.8	
September 27, 2014	292	-3	296.25	2,404	-17	2,434.25	1.8	
October 4, 2014	289	-3	291.25	2,409	5	2,423.50	1.8	
October 11, 2014	274	-15	287.50	2,383	-26	2,404.25	1.8	
October 18, 2014	287	13	285.50	2,395	12	2,397.75	1.8	
October 25, 2014	287	0	284.25	2,365	-30	2,388.00	1.8	
November 1, 2014	283	-4	282.75	2,408	43	2,387.75	1.8	
November 8, 2014	289	6	286.50	2,352	-56	2,380.00	1.8	
November 15, 2014	292	3	287.75	2,339	-13	2,366.00	1.8	
November 22, 2014	303	11	291.75	2,383	44	2,370.50	1.8	
November 29, 2014	296	-7	295.00	2,469	86	2,385.75	1.9	
December 6, 2014	289	-7	295.00	2,388	-81	2,394.75	1.8	
December 13, 2014	289	0	294.25	2,377	-11	2,404.25	1.8	
December 20, 2014	280	-9	288.50	2,366	-11	2,400.00	1.8	
December 27, 2014	293	13	287.75	2,431	65	2,390.50	1.8	
January 3, 2015	295	2	289.25	2,415	-16	2,397.25	1.8	
January 10, 2015	304	9	293.00	2,418	3	2,407.50	1.8	
January 17, 2015	301	-3	298.25	2,376	-42	2,410.00	1.8	
January 24, 2015	267	-34	291.75	2,386	10	2,398.75	1.8	
January 31, 2015	284	17	289.00	2,346	-40	2,381.50	1.8	
February 7, 2015	302	18	288.50	2,402	56	2,377.50	1.8	
February 14, 2015	285	-17	284.50	2,369	-33	2,375.75	1.8	
February 21, 2015	308	23	294.75	2,405	36	2,380.50	1.8	
February 28, 2015	327	19	305.50	2,414	9	2,397.50	1.8	
March 7, 2015	293	-34	303.25	2,399	-15	2,396.75	1.8	
March 14, 2015	293	0	305.25	2,413	14	2,407.75	1.8	
March 21, 2015	288	-5	300.25	2,327	-86	2,388.25	1.7	
March 28, 2015	267	-21	285.25	2,308	-19	2,361.75	1.7	
April 4, 2015	282	15	282.50	2,275	-33	2,330.75	1.7	
April 11, 2015	295	13	283.00	2,327	52	2,309.25	1.7	
April 18, 2015	296	1	285.00	2,256	-71	2,291.50	1.7	
April 25, 2015	262	-34	283.75	2,229	-27	2,271.75	1.7	
May 2, 2015	265	3	279.50	2,223	-6	2,258.75	1.7	
May 9, 2015	264	-1	271.75	2,211	-12	2,229.75	1.6	
May 16, 2015	274	10	266.25					

Initial Claims Filed During Week Ended May

9

Insured Unemployment For Week Ended May 2

INSURED UNEMPLOYMENT

STATE	INITIAL CLAIMS CHANGE FROM							CHANGE FROM					ALL PROGRAMS EXCLUDING RAILROAD RETIREMENT
	STATE	LAST WEEK	YEAR AGO	UCFE 1	UCX 1	STATE	(%) 2	LAST WEEK	YEAR AGO	UCFE 1	UCX 1		
Alabama	3662	698	-72	15	20	22525	1.2	367	-4213	139	212	22876	
Alaska	1155	72	-230	6	3	10926	3.5	-326	-3764	112	76	11114	
Arizona	4499	-64	-354	10	17	33892	1.4	-18	-6628	144	205	34241	
Arkansas	2953	638	416	6	10	20178	1.8	-761	-1514	121	200	20499	
California	45289	-261	-4515	157	215	397919	2.6	4020	-53924	2504	3958	404381	
Colorado	3039	302	355	4	48	32128	1.4	-753	-5564	238	828	33194	
Connecticut	2822	-201	-297	4	13	37896	2.3	-2404	-8266	86	159	38141	
Delaware	617	10	-121	2	0	6031	1.5	-1360	-1393	15	39	6085	
District of Columbia	354	67	-43	9	0	7573	1.4	-279	-2269	378	22	7973	
Florida	9503	1087	-4166	29	97	60083	0.8	-1968	-35070	208	541	60832	
Georgia	7031	1480	-827	29	73	35786	0.9	617	-9399	250	624	36660	
Hawaii	1506	145	-143	4	21	7980	1.3	-39	-2118	89	193	8262	
Idaho	1095	-49	-69	2	4	8269	1.3	-592	-2316	72	45	8386	
Illinois	10032	860	-212	16	16	114263	2.0	-4661	-33238	439	551	115253	
Indiana	3234	-186	-612	13	11	23505	0.8	-642	-11204	100	116	23721	
Iowa	2537	354	332	6	8	17259	1.2	-423	-2564	67	91	17417	
Kansas	2263	312	223	1	4	15025	1.1	-159	-3926	83	163	15271	
Kentucky	2672	98	-734	16	18	21975	1.2	-819	-4882	183	388	22546	
Louisiana	2838	340	629	7	11	22873	1.2	234	3976	35	74	22982	
Maine	946	-148	-33	0	2	9774	1.7	-1078	-2911	23	58	9855	
Maryland	3750	300	-426	22	24	39378	1.6	-929	-11123	347	341	40066	
Massachusetts	4962	52	-686	15	19	68251	2.1	-8151	-8801	224	498	68973	
Michigan	5588	152	-2040	13	21	56877	1.4	-7822	-24742	200	333	57410	
Minnesota	3422	-186	-1111	8	9	38193	1.4	-1926	-14153	111	200	38504	
Mississippi	2223	625	-1175	7	5	11876	1.1	-315	-5034	130	82	12088	
Missouri	3942	-322	-794	12	7	29192	1.1	-1073	-7502	197	158	29547	
Montana	824	-84	-98	6	3	7669	1.8	-410	-1279	157	56	7882	
Nebraska	1109	286	21	2	5	5684	0.6	-170	-1566	42	20	5746	
Nevada	3068	-121	74	0	13	25778	2.2	-550	-4303	126	181	26085	
New Hampshire	573	-726	-219	1	2	6173	1.0	287	-1577	13	13	6199	
New Jersey	7338	113	-741	19	30	97224	2.6	-3552	-19175	309	399	97932	
New Mexico	1062	-39	-201	3	8	12781	1.7	-1445	-2980	133	103	13017	
New York	14909	-1696	-3315	35	63	158212	1.8	-7821	-28244	564	955	159731	
North Carolina	4941	801	-398	11	39	33715	0.9	-728	-20199	167	438	34320	
North Dakota	445	-10	184	1	2	3627	0.8	-149	1157	14	13	3654	
Ohio	7249	494	-561	10	40	60723	1.2	-2621	-10774	146	471	61340	
Oklahoma	2063	109	449	12	14	21732	1.4	464	5467	76	181	21989	
Oregon	3960	-931	-475	41	24	31902	1.9	-631	-6698	470	243	32615	
Pennsylvania	15647	184	-1684	72	59	125848	2.3	-1276	-30468	608	763	127219	
Puerto Rico	2183	416	-42	6	10	23824	2.7	-1039	-4398	73	230	24127	
Rhode Island	867	48	-303	5	3	9104	2.0	-2537	-1642	30	56	9190	
South Carolina	3364	891	537	7	17	15012	0.8	174	-2098	62	184	15258	
South Dakota	191	19	-77	6	2	1470	0.4	-119	-180	55	5	1530	
Tennessee	3468	43	-1120	7	26	24099	0.9	-499	-6261	178	222	24499	
Texas	17348	120	1218	52	176	163074	1.5	-3607	15580	648	2928	166650	
Utah	1391	27	-255	18	8	11004	0.9	-269	-1587	92	59	11155	
Vermont	504	-11	-32	0	1	5039	1.7	-967	-720	21	10	5070	
Virgin Islands	25	-25	-20	0	1	666	1.8	-234	-322	12	10	688	
Virginia	3463	97	-821	7	37	27464	0.8	-216	-7827	278	713	28455	
Washington	6831	513	-816	21	91	52894	1.8	1403	-9733	350	1108	54352	
West Virginia	1379	229	191	1	4	14608	2.2	-291	-706	95	83	14786	
Wisconsin	6209	-605	-2837	10	10	43689	1.6	-3209	-19286	124	109	43927	
Wyoming	537	144	190	1	6	5970	2.2	127	1737	71	33	6074	
Totals	242882	6461	-27856	767	1370	2138612	1.6	-61145	-420624	11409	19741	2169767	

Figures Appearing In columns showing Over-The-Week Changes reflect all revisions in data for prior week submitted by State agencies.

1. The Unemployment Compensation program for Federal Employees (UCFE) and the Unemployment Compensation for Ex-servicemembers (UCX) exclude claims filed jointly under other programs to avoid duplication.
2. Rate is not seasonally adjusted. The source of US total covered employment is BLS.

TECHNICAL NOTES

This news release presents the weekly unemployment insurance (UI) claims reported by each state's unemployment insurance program offices. These claims may be used for monitoring workload volume, assessing state program operations and for assessing labor market conditions. States initially report claims directly taken by the state liable for the benefit payments, regardless of where the claimant who filed the claim resided. These are the basis for the advance initial claims and continued claims reported each week. These data come from ETA 538, Advance Weekly Initial and Continued Claims Report. The following week initial claims and continued claims are revised based on a second reporting by states that reflect the claimants by state of residence. These data come from the ETA 539, Weekly Claims and Extended Benefits Trigger Data Report.

A. Initial Claims

An initial claim is a claim filed by an unemployed individual after a separation from an employer. The claimant requests a determination of basic eligibility for the UI program. When an initial claim is filed with a state, certain programmatic activities take place and these result in activity counts including the count of initial claims. The count of U.S. initial claims for unemployment insurance is a leading economic indicator because it is an indication of emerging labor market conditions in the country. However, these are weekly administrative data which are difficult to seasonally adjust, making the series subject to some volatility.

B. Continued Weeks Claimed

A person who has already filed an initial claim and who has experienced a week of unemployment then files a continued claim to claim benefits for that week of unemployment. Continued claims are also referred to as insured unemployment. The count of U.S. continued weeks claimed is also a good indicator of labor market conditions. Continued claims reflect the current number of insured unemployed workers filing for UI benefits in the nation. While continued claims are not a leading indicator (they roughly coincide with economic cycles at their peaks and lag at cycle troughs), they provide confirming evidence of the direction of the U.S. economy.

C. Seasonal Adjustments and Annual Revisions

Over the course of a year, the weekly changes in the levels of initial claims and continued claims undergo regularly occurring fluctuations. These fluctuations may result from seasonal changes in weather, major holidays, the closing of schools, or other similar events. Because these seasonal events follow a more or less regular pattern each year, their influence on the level of a series can be tempered by adjusting for regular seasonal variation. These adjustments make trend and cycle developments easier to spot. At the beginning of each calendar year, the Bureau of Labor Statistics provides the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) with a set of seasonal factors to apply to the unadjusted data during that year. Concurrent with the implementation and release of the new seasonal factors, ETA incorporates revisions to the UI claims historical series caused by updates to the unadjusted data.

[Weekly Claims Archives](#)

[Weekly Claims Data](#)

U.S. Department of Labor news materials are accessible at <http://www.dol.gov>. The Department's [Reasonable Accommodation Resource Center](#) converts Departmental information and documents into alternative formats, which include Braille and large print. For alternative format requests, please contact the Department at (202) 693-7828 (voice) or (800) 877-8339 (federal relay).

U.S. Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration
Washington, D.C. 20210
Release Number: USDL 15-996-NAT

Program Contacts:
Tom Stengle (202) 693-2991
Tony Sznoluch (202) 693-3176
Media Contact: (202) 693-4676