



Recruitment and Retention

The Washington State Patrol (WSP) has 1,127 commissioned positions. Based on current employee tenure data, 112 of the current commissioned officers were eligible to retire by June 30, 2017.

The WSP is experiencing a higher than desired vacancy in commissioned officer positions (90 currently in field force and more than 130 commissioned vacancies agency wide). This requires a demanding training schedule to surpass the current attrition rates.

In 2015, the WSP was losing nine troopers a month through either retirement or resignation. A majority of the resignations were troopers going to other law enforcement agencies that paid higher salaries.

Since 2015, the commissioned recruitment and retention picture has improved drastically. These improvements are directly attributed to enhanced trooper salaries and improved employee morale, subsequent to the January 2016 WSP Trooper Recruitment and Retention Study commissioned by the Washington State Joint Transportation Committee.

In the spring of 2016, legislators passed a one-year 5.8 percent raise for troopers which slowed down the number of resignations and retirements. In July 2017, the 5.8 percent raise went away and a new 20 percent raise took effect for all ranks, with an additional 3 percent raise in 2018. This trooper raise has significantly curtailed the exodus of troopers.

In August 2015, the agency transitioned to Public Safety Testing (PST) to increase the number of applicants tested. PST has the ability to test 20-30 times per year at more than 15 locations around the state. Each PST site generates 8-50+ applicants and WSP recruiters are allowed to be present at testing sites to cross recruit.

Commissioned officer attrition is currently at three per month which is significantly lower than the nine troopers a month the agency experienced in 2015.

Our Trooper Cadet training program begins with a 7-week arming class. We can start the class with 60 cadets. With projected graduation rates of 90%, we will likely graduate 54 cadets per arming class. The second phase of training is Trooper Basic Training Class (TBTC) and in this case would start with 54 cadets. Graduation rate for Trooper Basic Training is 80% which results in 43 commissioned troopers at the end of training. We can only host two TBTCs per year due to the training schedule and facility availability. We are currently funded for one TBTC per year.

The starting class size is heavily dependent upon our Human Resource Division's ability to recruit and hire applicants. With current attrition at 3 commissioned personnel per month (36 per year) we must strive to hold two TBTC classes per year. This results in commissioning 70-86 new troopers each year. With the vacancies at 130 agency wide and an additional 3 people per month, it will take some time to get the agency vacancies to a more manageable level.

WSP is funded approximately \$3.3 million per year for one Arming and one Trooper Basic class. This funding includes salaries, benefits, equipping (uniforms, etc.) and per diem for 48 cadets for nine months of training. This does not include the costs for the instructors and facilities at the Training Academy, or vehicles.

Expenditure estimates include adding one Arming class and one Trooper Basic Training Class at the Shelton Training Academy. The funding requested is for the 35th Arming class and the 111th TBTC.

Expenditures include salaries and benefits for the Trooper Cadets (beginning with 60 cadets and graduating 46 based on current graduation rates) and equipment for the cadets such as uniforms, guns, etc. Vehicles are shown at a cost of \$1,900,076 (\$41,306 x 46 graduates). We have included \$107,062 in per diem for the cadets who are assigned away from their home during their coaching trip (30% of the 48 field training cadets x statewide average rate for lodging and meals \$163.18 for 45 days of coaching), and relocation costs of \$36,800 for cadets who will relocate after graduation (40% of the 46 graduating cadets x \$2,000 each).

We cannot sustain manageable operations by only graduating one class per year as we will barely be above the attrition for the year.

