

January 11, 2016

**TO: Members of the Senate and House Transportation Committees**

**SUBJECT: Joint Transportation Committee Activity Update**

The Legislature directed the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) to undertake three studies in 2015 which address the operation and management of Washington's weigh stations; recruitment and retention of Washington State Troopers; and WSDOT's implementation of the design-build project delivery. JTC was further directed to study issues surrounding minority and women-owned business contracting in the transportation sector.

Attached are summaries of the work accomplished on the 2015 studies:

- Efficiency and effectiveness of weigh station management (p. 3)
- Washington State Trooper recruitment and retention (p. 5)
- Review of WSDOT's implementation of design-build project delivery (p. 8)
- Minority and women-owned business contracting in transportation (p. 10)

In addition to meetings associated with specific studies, the JTC met four times in 2015:

- July 23<sup>rd</sup> in Redmond
- October 22<sup>nd</sup> in Olympia
- November 17<sup>th</sup> in Stevenson, at the Washington Association of Counties annual meeting
- December 17<sup>th</sup> in Olympia

The JTC also organized a ferry tour on September 16 and 17, where legislators and staff, and members of the Transportation Commission were joined by WSDOT headquarters and ferry staff on tours of Vigor Shipyard and the M/V Chimacum under construction there; the new NW Region Traffic Management Center in Shoreline; Mukilteo's new terminal project and their downtown waterfront master plan; and Colman Dock. Participants also received briefings on the use of LNG in ferries, the ferry reservation system, vessel preservation and maintenance, and the WSF long-range plan.

Thanks to the twenty-seven members of the House and Senate who have participated in one or more JTC meetings and tours this interim. Your participation is invaluable, and contributes to the richness of discussion and the thoroughness of our work.

The [JTC website](#) provides links to all current and past studies, including meeting presentations and reports.

If you have any questions, please contact the JTC staff:

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Representative Judy Clibborn  
Co-Chair



Senator Curtis King  
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Representative Ed Orcutt



Senator Steve Hobbs

**Enclosures: JTC Studies**

# Update on 2015 Joint Transportation Committee Studies

January 11, 2016

## Efficiency and Effectiveness of Weigh Station Management

In 2015, the Legislature directed the Joint Transportation Committee to study Washington State weigh station planning, placement, and operations by the Washington State Patrol and Department of Transportation as they relate to roadway safety and preservation.

JTC hired Cambridge Systematics from Chicago to conduct the study. The study got underway on July 23, 2015.

The study began with a full-day tour of weigh stations in Western Washington on July 30<sup>th</sup> and a kick-off meeting with a work group including representatives from WSP, WSDOT, and legislative staff. White papers providing background and analysis about Washington's system of weigh stations were submitted in mid-September and mid-October. The consultant's draft findings and recommendations were presented to the JTC on November 17, 2015, and the draft executive summary was presented to the JTC on December 17, 2015.

### **Weigh Stations in Washington**

Weigh stations, also referred to as "inspection stations," are locations where commercial vehicle enforcement activities such as weighing vehicles and safety inspections occur. Historically, these sites focused on weight inspections. However, over time, the emphasis on driver and vehicle safety at both the State and Federal level has expanded the role of these sites beyond weight enforcement alone. For this reason, the term "inspection stations" is used throughout this study.

Washington's inspection station network contains a total of 63 sites. Fifty-two of the sites are fixed locations, of which 12 are equipped with electronic screening, and 11 of the sites are mobile enforcement locations that are commonly used by the Washington State Patrol. The 2010 closure of the Federal Way southbound inspection station, 2011 closure of the Everett southbound inspection station, and potential impacts of numerous DOT projects on other inspection sites created concern about the lack of a strategic approach to the management of the system.

Ensuring the safety of commercial and passenger vehicles, preserving the State's highway infrastructure, and freight mobility are three key priorities of the State of Washington. Roadside inspections and inspection stations are the nexus of where these priorities come together. In Washington, as in many states, the responsibility for commercial vehicle inspections is shared between the State Patrol and the Department of Transportation. The WSP enforces size, weight, and safety regulations; WSDOT builds and maintains the highway system, including inspection station infrastructure.

### **Findings and Recommendations**

*Finding 1: Communication* – A major finding of this study is that a joint enterprise requires effective communication procedures and current communication procedures between WSDOT and WSP, and within WSDOT, do not effectively incorporate the needs of the inspection station system.

*Recommendations:*

- Formalize protocols for ownership and communication within and between agencies,
- Develop joint agency commercial vehicle-related outcomes and objectives,
- Revisit agencies roles and update documentation such as the Memorandum of Understanding, signed by WSDOT and WSP on April 1, 2011, that detailed each agency’s responsibilities regarding the day-to-day operations and long-term funding and planning for the system of inspection stations, and
- Update the WSDOT Design Manual.

**Finding 2: Asset Management** – Inspection stations, regardless of size or technologies, should be managed like any other type of asset. WSDOT already applies asset management principles to pavement and bridges, and needs to apply this framework to truck inspection stations. WSP will need to become more conversant with this approach so that it can more effectively work with WSDOT in making capital investment decisions.

*Recommendations:*

- Create joint agency outcome-based performance measures,
- Apply an asset management framework to truck inspection stations, and
- Maintain and publish a biennial needs list.

**Finding 3: System Planning** – The inspection station system is not adequately accounted for in WSDOT planning. There is no long-term vision or goals and stations are built and replaced on an ad-hoc basis, typically without reference to the system needs as a whole or future trends.

**Recommendation:** WSDOT and WSP should develop a *Joint* Statewide Inspection Station System Plan, as a stand-alone plan or incorporated into existing planning efforts, such as freight mobility planning.

**Finding 4: Data** – WSDOT and WSP have insufficient data or data-sharing arrangements to make strategic decisions regarding the inspection station system.

*Recommendations:*

- Develop a data sharing agreement between WSDOT and WSP, and
- Collect and maintain shared data.

Study materials are available [here](#).

<b>Study origin:</b>	2015 Transportation Budget, ESHB 1299, Sec 204(3)
<b>Report:</b>	Final report due December 14, 2015.
<b>Appropriation:</b>	\$125,000 (contract signed for \$119,989)
<b>Project Manager:</b>	Beth Redfield (360) 786-7327; Alyson Cummings (360) 786-7398 as back-up
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## **Recruitment and Retention of Washington State Troopers**

The 2015 Legislature directed the JTC to analyze the recruitment and retention of Washington State Patrol (WSP) Troopers, in order to identify potential barriers to: effective recruitment, candidates' successful completion of training, and the retention of trained Troopers of various tenure. All with the goal of identifying how to best attract and retain the highest quality Trooper workforce.

The study was focused on Field Force personnel – the 690 Trooper and 91 Sergeant positions that are responsible for carrying out WSP's primary goal of providing a safe motoring environment for the public. The Trooper workforce has been dealing with growing attrition challenges, and a looming retirement bubble will add to that problem.

A Work Group composed of legislative, OFM and WSP staff and stakeholders provided resources, data and feedback to the study consultants. However, all findings and recommendations of the study are those of the consultants.

**Study conclusion:** WSP is at a crossroads. In a changing cultural environment, WSP faces serious challenges involving both job satisfaction and compensation competitiveness. The consultants made a series of findings and recommendations to address recruitment and retention problems on an issue-by-issue basis, but concluded that a comprehensive solution is needed to effectively resolve these issues. Compensation issues are real and must be addressed, but compensation alone will not solve the problem. Workload and working conditions must also be addressed in order to attract more recruits and stop or at least reduce the current high levels of resignations.

### **The JTC study**

JTC hired The PFM Group (PFM) from Philadelphia to conduct the study. PFM engaged in three days of in-person interviews in August, and met with WSP command staff, union leaders, Troopers, Sergeants, District commanders, Human Resources staff, Recruitment staff and the Chief Financial Officer; OFM Human Resources and budget staff; the Chief State labor negotiator; and Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC) recruits and Executive Director.

As part of the study, PFM surveyed WSP Cadets, Troopers, Sergeants, and separated Troopers, as well as CJTC recruits and local Washington State law enforcement agencies. All 64 Cadets surveyed responded to the survey, as did nearly 500 of the 870 Troopers and Sergeants. This high survey response provided a key data source for the study.

### **Findings and Recommendations**

Across the state of Washington, competition for qualified law enforcement personnel has heightened, as local agencies have ramped up hiring due to the end of recession-era freezes and cost containment. Often these local agencies offer higher salaries and geographical certainty, compared to WSP which places Troopers statewide (based on location preference by seniority). Local agencies also actively recruit for both newcomers to policing and more experienced, lateral hires from other law enforcement agencies. In contrast, WSP does not accept lateral hires, further elevating the importance of entry-level Trooper recruitment.

**Workforce: Unsustainable attrition must be addressed.** Currently the WSP Field Force is authorized for 690 positions, of which 580 are filled. If current trends continue, within the next ten years, WSP will suffer an

unsustainable drop in the level of Field Force staffing, threatening their ability to complete their mission.

Attrition is coming from several sources:

- Voluntary resignations (prior to retirement age) have increased significantly in recent months. There have been 35 in 2015 (through the end of October), compared to just 27 total over the previous six-years.
- Retirements have more than doubled in the past five years and there is a growing retirement bubble; nearly 40% of commissioned staff will be eligible for retirement over the next ten years.
- Recent WSP recruitment efforts have not yielded increased numbers of Cadets to fully replace these current and projected vacancies and, in fact, the number of graduates of the last several Academy classes has been below historical norms.

**Recruitment and Retention: Low job satisfaction is a widespread problem, and compensation lags at all levels.**

The surveys and interviews conducted during the study found current Troopers and Sergeants have low job satisfaction, causing issues with both recruitment and retention. The three keys to job satisfaction are working conditions, compensation and workload; the study found problems in all three areas. To address these problems, 23 findings and 25 recommendations were made. Highlights are included below.

**Working Conditions**

*Finding:* High percentages of current Troopers and Sergeants do not feel heard or valued by the agency.

*Recommendations:*

- Commission an organizational assessment to identify where communication has broken down between management and staff, and make specific recommendations to improve overall engagement with line staff
- Conduct performance evaluations of management staff, that take into consideration Trooper feedback
- Change the metrics used to evaluate Trooper performance, to reflect outcomes rather than outputs
- Provide Troopers more control over their schedule (shift bidding); currently Troopers have a frequent change in schedule, from days to nights every 28 or 56 days
- Engage Field Force Troopers in recommending changes to style and fabric for uniforms, which are outdated, non-functional, uncomfortable for the work they do, and difficult to maintain (wool)

**Compensation**

*Finding:* Even with recent salary increases, and geographic pay in some counties, WSP compensation lags local law enforcement agencies.

*Recommendations:* Address compensation issues in a comprehensive manner that encourages retention and improves recruitment competitiveness

- Increase and expand geographic assignment pay
- Roll some premium and differential pay into the base salary
- Provide across-the-board pay increases to increase pay competitiveness
- Change the retirement plan for new Troopers to be similar to the LEOFF plan for local police officers, and apply fiscal savings to Cadets and early-career Troopers most affected by this change.
- Establish Senior and Master Trooper positions to create advancement opportunities for mid-career Troopers
- Provide retention bonuses for retirement-eligible Troopers (those with 25 years of service), or other enhancements to encourage longer tenure at WSP

**Workload**

*Finding:* Due to high vacancy rates, the existing workforce is asked to do more and take less time off.

*Recommendations:* Addressing these workload concerns is essential in order for the Field Force to effectively accomplish its mission. This requires improvements in the retention of current Troopers, and in the successful recruitment of new Troopers. Retention issues are discussed in the recommendations above which address working conditions and compensation. Below are recommendations addressing recruitment.

Academy graduation rates need to be increased. This can be accomplished as follows:

- Change some recruitment practices to increase the number of Cadets. This includes updating the psychological evaluation to reflect current state-of-the art practices, and eliminating the automatic disqualification of candidates due to past drug-use or misdemeanor conviction
- Increase the number of Cadets in each Trooper Basic Academy class and/or the number of Academy classes, to increase the average annual Cadet graduation rate to 63 (from 50).
- Reach out to more non-traditional candidates, including minorities and women
- Merge the Arming Class and the Trooper Basic Academy into a single class to reduce total Academy time.

Study materials can be found [here](#).

<b>Study origin:</b>	2015 Transportation Budget, 2ESHB 1299, Sec. 204(1)
<b>Report:</b>	Final Report due December 14, 2015
<b>Appropriation:</b>	\$250,000 (contract signed for \$239,470)
<b>Project Manager:</b>	Alyson Cummings (360) 786-7398, with Mary Fleckenstein (360) 786-7312, back-up
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## **Review of WSDOT Implementation of Design-Build Project Delivery**

In 2015, the Legislature directed the Joint Transportation Committee to study WSDOT's implementation of design-build project delivery, and to recommend improvements to maximize cost and schedule efficiencies and ensure that risk is borne by the appropriate party. A review panel of state and national experts has been appointed to assist the consultant team with the study.

The consulting team led by Hill International from Philadelphia began the 14-month study at the end of September, and their final report is due on December 1, 2016.

### **Background**

Design-build (DB) is a method of project delivery in which an agency executes a single contract with one entity (the Design-Builder) for design and construction services to provide a finished product based on owner-specified performance requirements.

WSDOT has had the authority to use design-build since 1998, when the authority was limited to two pilot projects over \$10 million. That authority has been expanded in the ensuing years, and today WSDOT is strongly encouraged to use design-build on projects over \$2 million with highly specialized construction activities, where there is an opportunity for greater innovation and efficiency, or when it would significantly shorten the time it takes to deliver a project.

WSDOT has delivered or is in the process of delivering 29 projects using design-build, ranging in cost from \$3 million to \$1.09 billion.

### **The JTC study**

The study is designed to accomplish the following:

- Examine WSDOT's implementation of design-build project delivery to-date
- Evaluate whether WSDOT's use of design-build can be improved to ensure better project delivery and more efficient expenditure of the taxpayer dollar, maximizing cost and schedule efficiencies, and ensuring that project risk is borne by the appropriate party
- Examine whether WSDOT's current design-build project selection criteria appropriately determines the optimal contractual delivery method
- Educate legislators and other stakeholders on the appropriate use of design-build to deliver high quality large, medium and/or small projects, while achieving excellent stewardship of the taxpayer dollar
- Develop strategies for WSDOT and the construction industry to successfully adapt to the changes in the scope or implementation of WSDOT design-build project delivery as recommended in the study.

A design build review panel of experts has been appointed to assist the consultants with the study. It is composed of two nationally recognized experts in the field of design-build project delivery from the consultant team: Mike Loulakis, JD and Greg Henk, PE; and four Washington-state experts: Bob Adams representing the Association of General contractors, John Ferguson representing the American Council of Engineering Companies of Washington; Vince Oliveri representing the Professional and Technical Employees Local 17, and Linea Laird, WSDOT's chief engineer.



## Study progress to-date

In the first three months of the study, the consultant team hosted a day-long work session with the review panel where they discussed industry perspectives on WSDOT's use of design-build as well as a broader discussion of WSDOT's policies and procedures, program staffing, project selection methods, their procurement processes, and project management.

The consultants completed a white paper comparing design-build project delivery with the more traditional design-bid-build delivery method, the advantages and disadvantages of each, and key project and agency characteristics to consider when evaluating which delivery method to use. The paper is available at the link below.

The consultants have begun a detailed review of a representative subset of WSDOT's 29 design-build projects, and began research on and interviews with a cross-section of DOTs with mature and emerging design-build programs.

## Next steps

Two white papers are due in early 2016:

- Best practices in design-build project delivery (January, 2016)
- WSDOT's current use of design-build (February, 2016)

The review panel will meet several more times with the consultant team, and contribute to the development of white papers and reports.

The consultants will propose process and organizational improvements, and strategies for both WSDOT and the private sector to adopt the report recommendations. They will present an update to the JTC in the summer of 2016, and the draft report at a half-day meeting in the fall of 2016. The final report is due on December 1, 2016.

Study materials can be found [here](#).

<b>Study origin:</b>	2ESSB 5997, Sec. 3; and 2ESSB 5988, Sec. 201
<b>Report:</b>	Due December 1, 2016
<b>Appropriation:</b>	\$450,000
<b>Project Manager:</b>	Mary Fleckenstein (360) 786-7312, with Beth Redfield (360) 786-7327 as back-up
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## Minority and Women-Owned Business Contracting in Transportation

In 2ESSB 5988, the new law transportation budget bill approved in 2015's third special session, the Legislature directed the JTC to study the issues surrounding minority- and women-owned business contracting related to the transportation sector. No funding was provided for the study.

The Executive Committee governing the Joint Transportation Committee decided to accomplish this directive with a work session, which was held at the December 17, 2015, JTC meeting in Olympia. That 75-minute work session included presentations on how the state and federal process is designed to work; the minority communities' experience with the process; and Governor Inslee's two-pronged Business Diversity Initiative to address participation in state contracting by small, minority-, women- and veteran-owned businesses. Materials related to the work session can be found [here](#).

The Governor's two initiatives include the following:

1. In July 2015 the Governor formed the Subcabinet on Business Diversity -- 12 state agencies tasked with identifying opportunities for and barriers to participation in state contracting by small, minority-, women-, and veteran-owned businesses. They are working with key community members to develop a cohesive statewide strategy. There is no timeline for completion of their work. Their first task is to understand why only a limited number of small and diverse businesses participate in state contracting. <http://omwbe.wa.gov/governor-business-diversity-initiative/>
2. In October 2015, the Governor announced he would undertake a state-wide disparity study to identify how state government is doing in contracting with including minority- and women-owned businesses. The study is expected to get underway in early 2016. <http://omwbe.wa.gov/governor-business-diversity-initiative/disparity-study/>

Given these two efforts by the Executive Branch, the JTC Executive Committee decided to take no further action relative to the unfunded JTC study at this time, choosing instead to wait and see the results of the Governor's efforts before deciding what if any additional legislative studies are needed.

<b>Study origin:</b>	2ESSB 5988, Sec. 201(2)
<b>Report:</b>	No deadline
<b>Appropriation:</b>	No funding
<b>Project Manager:</b>	Not yet identified
<b>HTC staff:</b>	Not yet identified
<b>STC staff:</b>	Not yet identified