



Washington State Patrol Trooper Recruitment and Retention Study

DRAFT FINAL REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

December 15, 2015

Prepared for

Washington State Joint Transportation Committee

Prepared by



The PFM Group
Financial & Investment Advisors

Corporate Office

Two Logan Square
Suite 1600
Philadelphia, PA 19103
Phone 215-567-6100
Fax 215-567-4180

San Francisco Office

50 California Street
Suite 2300
San Francisco, CA 94111
Phone 415-982-5544
Fax 415-982-4513
www.pfm.com

Seattle Office

1200 Fifth Avenue
Suite 1220
Seattle, WA 98101
Phone 206-264-8900
Fax 206-264-9699



The PFM Group

Russ Branson

50 California Street

Suite 2300

San Francisco, CA 94111

(415) 982-5544

bransonr@pfm.com

Rick Braziel

2055 Fort John Court

Gold River, CA 95670

(916) 996-0614

rbraziel5030@gmail.com

Joint Transportation Committee

P.O. Box 40937

Olympia, WA 98504-0937

Alyson Cummings

(360) 786-7398

Alyson.Cummings@leg.wa.gov

Mary Fleckenstein

(360) 786-7312

Mary.Fleckenstein@leg.wa.gov



Executive Summary

The Washington State Patrol (WSP) is at a crossroads. In a changing cultural environment, the agency faces challenges involving both employee satisfaction and compensation competitiveness, all while attempting to be an employer of choice for those seeking law enforcement careers in Washington State. The WSP needs to take proactive steps in each of these areas in order to continue to meet its mission of maintaining safety on the State's highways and ferries.

The alternatives and recommendations detailed throughout this report address these concerns on an issue-by-issue basis, but the key requirement for the WSP and the Legislature is to take action in a comprehensive manner. Investing in greater compensation without also addressing employee satisfaction is unlikely to resolve the WSP's current retention and recruitment issues. At the same time, compensation issues are real and must also be addressed.

Recruitment and retention can both be improved through a comprehensive approach to address the agency's full range of opportunities. In turn, such actions can build on a proud set of organizational traditions and capacities to ensure a strong Washington State Patrol for many years to come.

Report Overview

In the years since the "Great Recession" ended¹, the Washington State Patrol (WSP) has seen an increased level of turnover among Troopers with less than ten years of service. In conjunction with normal service retirements, this trend has contributed to rising vacancy rates. Further, over the next decade, a growing number of commissioned personnel at all ranks will reach retirement eligibility and this is projected to place additional strain on staffing for the Field Force workforce – those 690 Troopers and Sergeants responsible for field operations on the State's highways and ferries.²

At the same time, 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. 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 the 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

¹ The "Great Recession" refers to the US recession that lasted from December 2007 through June 2009. The recovery from this recession lasted several years beyond that, and is still impacting some government organizations.

² Field operations work includes such things as patrolling the highways to enforce speed limits and other traffic laws, removing impaired drivers from the roadways, inspecting ferries and other vessels, and ensuring the general safety on all highways in the state.

enforcement agencies. In contrast, the WSP does not accept lateral hires, further elevating the importance of entry-level Trooper recruitment.

In this context, the Washington State Legislature requested an analysis of the recruitment and retention practices and experience of the WSP to identify potential barriers to recruitment and drivers of attrition, with the end goal of attracting and retaining the highest quality Trooper workforce.

This Report encompasses the findings and recommendations resulting from approximately five months of study, which includes extensive surveys of current and former Washington State Troopers at varying career stages, benchmarking to other State Police agencies nationally and local police departments across Washington, analysis of recruitment and retention data and other documents, process mapping and evaluation, multiple field visits, and scores of interviews.

In addition, while this final Report solely reflects the independent conclusions of the PFM project team, our evaluation benefited greatly from the review and feedback throughout our study period of a working group that included experienced representatives of the Joint Transportation Committee staff, House and Senate Transportation Committee and caucus staff, Governor's Office of Financial Management, Washington State Patrol, and the Washington State Patrol Troopers Association. We appreciate their insights, and hope that this study helps to inform and advance the important work ahead to strengthen the Washington State Patrol.

Projected Trooper Levels

Without corrective action, the current trends facing the Washington State Patrol give rise to significant concern regarding future staffing levels:

- Voluntary resignations among Field Force Troopers prior to retirement eligibility increased from just 9 in 2010 to 17 in 2014 and 35 in 2015 (through the end of October alone).
- Field Force Trooper retirements more than doubled from 8 in 2010 to 18 in 2015. In total, 49 commissioned personnel have retired in 2015 (through the end of October).
- Looking forward, nearly 40 percent of commissioned staff are eligible to retire within the next ten years
- Academy classes are filling at lower than normal historical levels, with the most recent five classes averaging 32 graduates, while the average for the prior 35 classes was 37 graduates. The latest class graduated just 25.

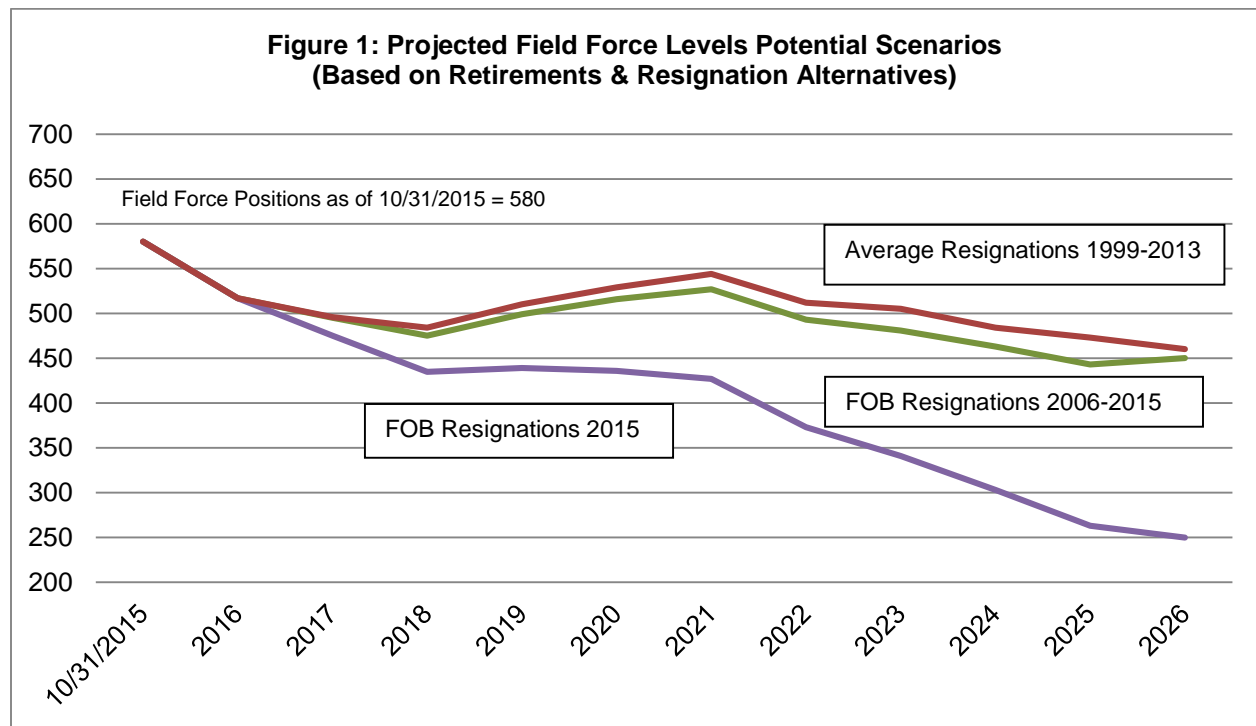
As shown in **Figure 1** below, these and other factors combine to produce three potential scenarios showing future declines in overall Field Office Bureau (FOB) Trooper levels if change does not occur. In the three scenarios shown below, the primary variable is the level of Trooper resignations, assuming average Trooper Basic Academy graduating rates and the separation of retirement-eligible commissioned staff.

Currently the WSP Field Force is authorized for 690 positions, of which 580 are filled. Figure 1 shows that under any of the three scenarios, 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.

The red line illustrates what will happen if the average resignation rate between 1999 and 2013 continues into the future. It shows that staffing drops from 580 to 460.

The green line illustrates what will happen if the resignation rate for the past 10 years continues into the future. It shows that staffing drops from 580 to 450.

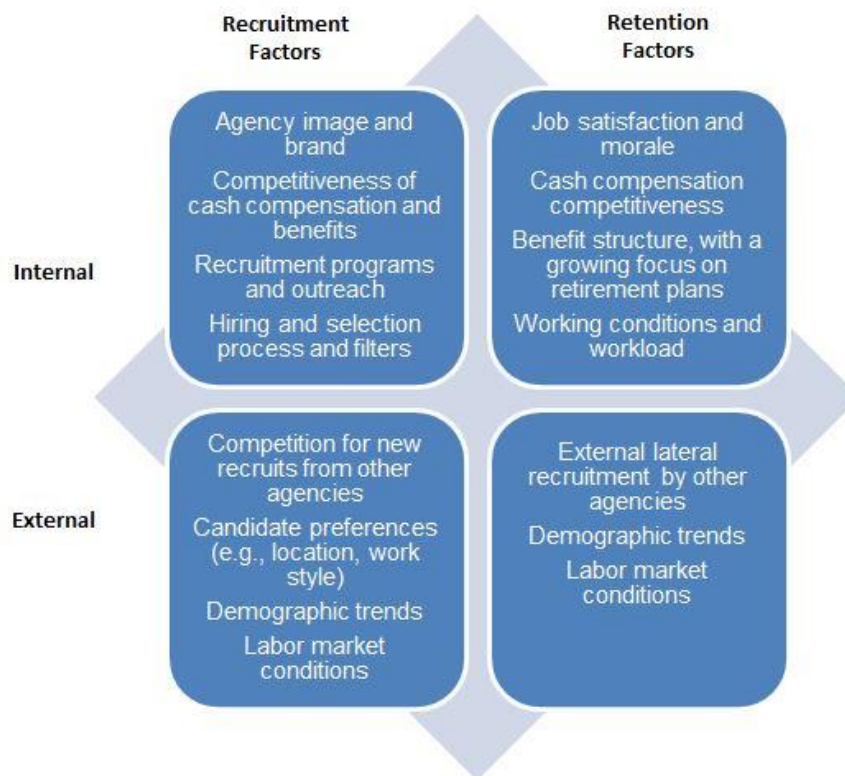
The purple line illustrates what will happen if this year's extremely high resignation rates continue into the future. It shows that staffing drops from 580 to 250.



Findings and Recommendations

For any organization, recruitment and retention experience are driven by a mix of internal and external factors as outlined in **Figure 2** below. Such organizational dynamics are complex, and in the case of the WSP, that complexity is amplified by having a workforce that is dispersed across the state, strong traditions that are often not aligned with a younger workforce, a changing economic climate, and a demand by all workers for an increased work-life balance.

Figure 2: Internal and External Factors Affecting Recruitment and Retention

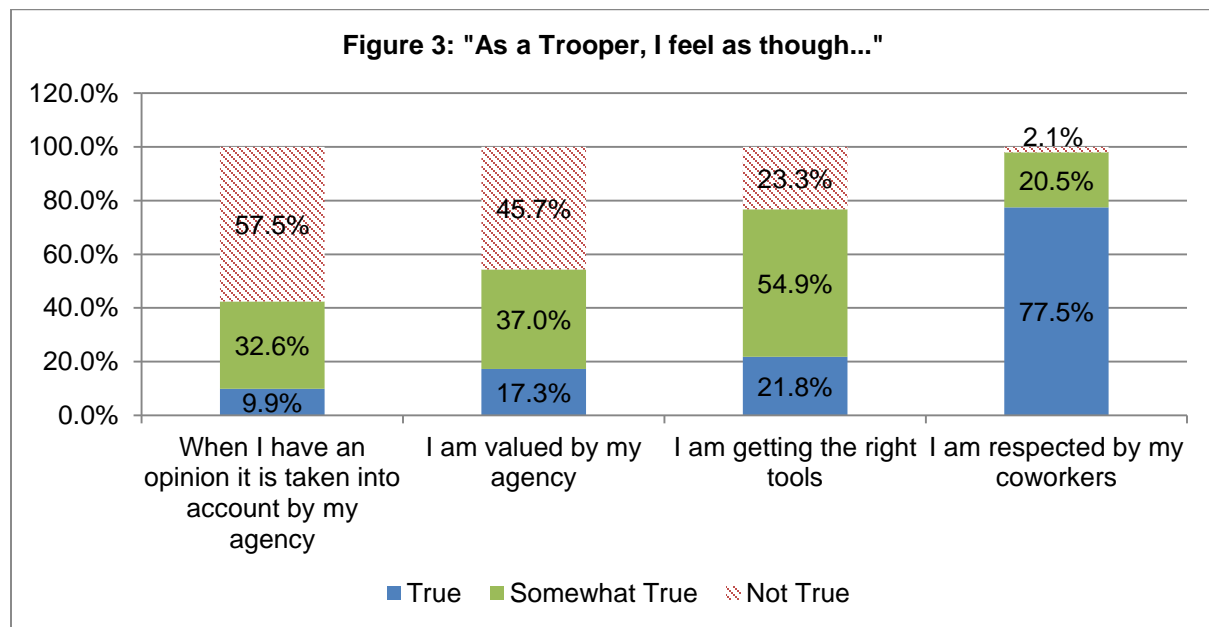


Recommendations in this report to address recruitment and retention issues should be viewed as a whole. No single recommendation has been identified that, if made in isolation, will fully resolve the WSP's retention and recruitment issues. The key will be for the Legislature and the WSP to take a comprehensive approach to addressing these issues.

Two major themes emerged from the analysis performed in this report in regards to Trooper retention: the importance of strengthening both employee satisfaction and compensation competitiveness. In addition, a number of important but secondary opportunities also emerged from this study including elements of the recruitment process and impacts of the WSP culture on recruitment efforts.

Employee Satisfaction. Surveys and interviews conducted for this study identified significant strain between WSP management and many Troopers and Sergeants in the field. This strain has the effect of spurring some Troopers to look for work outside of the WSP and others to retire as soon as eligible. For many who stay, there is a feeling of dissatisfaction and low morale that impacts the overall operations of the organization. While part of this dissatisfaction is related to compensation, as discussed below, much of the dissatisfaction is related to working conditions and workload, along with communications across the organization.

A key indicator of this dissatisfaction is shown in responses to specific survey questions regarding employee perspectives, as shown in **Figure 3** below. Overall, high percentages of current Troopers and Sergeants do not feel listened to or valued by the agency.



Dissatisfaction in an organization is often a driving force behind attrition issues, and part of the survey design was aimed at measuring satisfaction levels in the WSP. Based on survey responses and interviews from both current Troopers and Sergeants and separated Troopers, high levels of employee dissatisfaction exist in the WSP Trooper workforce.

In the survey of current Troopers, 88 of 482 respondents indicated they plan to leave the WSP for another law enforcement agency in the next two years, with another 24 indicating they plan to leave in more than two years. If this ratio of respondents holds for the entire Trooper and Sergeant workforce, WSP could be facing the loss of 225 more Troopers in the near future. WSP management needs to act now to stop this unsustainable level of Trooper resignations.

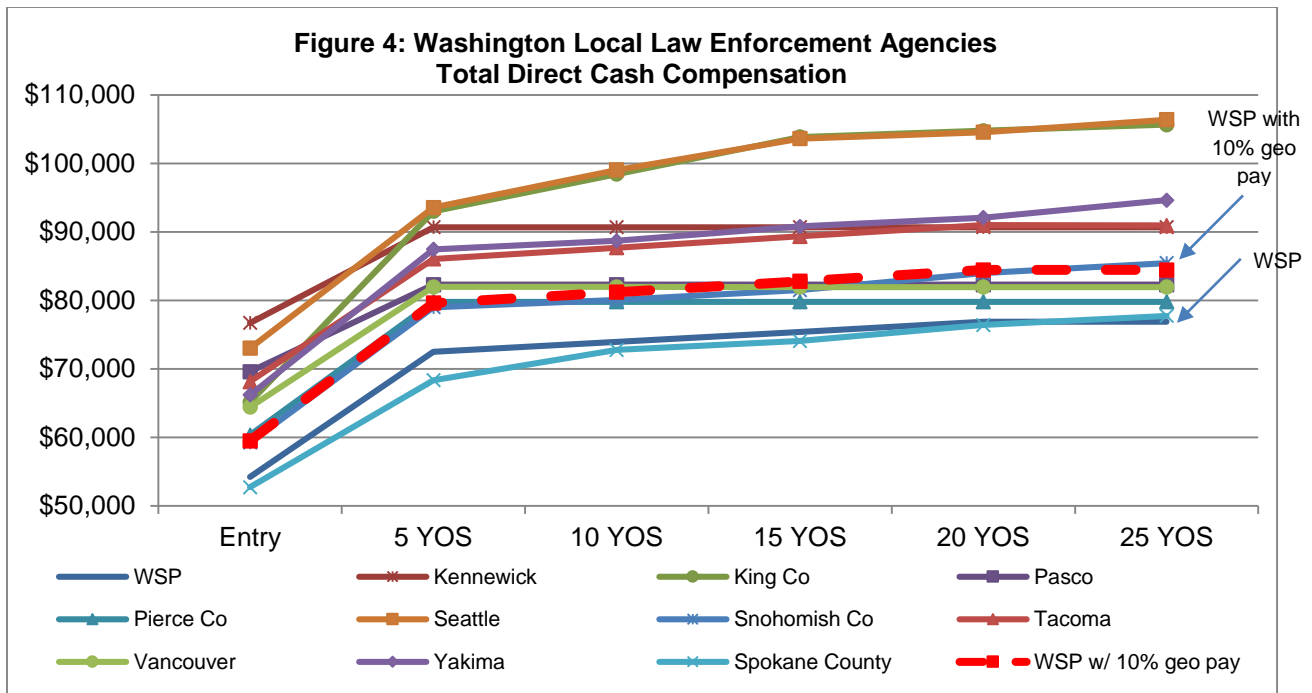
Many of this Report's recommendations addressing employee satisfaction are generally within the ability of the Legislature and the WSP to implement in the near future with limited cost. Key opportunities include the following:

- Commission an organizational assessment to identify where communication between management and staff has broken down, and make specific recommendations to improve management engagement with line staff.
- Conduct in-depth performance evaluations of all managers with the rank of Lieutenant and above, including 360 degree reviews³, in order to provide better feedback to managers with a goal of improving leadership performance.
- Change the metrics used to evaluate Trooper performance, to reflect public safety outcomes (e.g., reducing the number of highway fatalities) rather than the current focus on outputs (e.g., the number of tickets issued or traffic stops made).
- Engage Troopers in selection of new uniforms, addressing current comfort and style concerns (now underway)
- Evaluate alternative shift schedules toward providing greater alignment with workload demands. A pilot project is currently underway.

Implementation of these recommendations is essential in order to address the current employee satisfaction issues, and is equally important to address both retention and recruitment problems.

Compensation Competitiveness. Compensation is also an important issue for the FOB Troopers and Sergeants. Over the last several years, growth in compensation at many competitive local law enforcement agencies has outpaced the WSP, leaving the WSP at the bottom in terms of direct cash compensation, as illustrated in **Figure 4**. When factoring in the 10 percent geographic pay received by Troopers stationed in King County, the WSP's total direct cash compensation improves, but only to about the middle of the comparison group. While a recent 7% Trooper pay increase helped to narrow this gap -- and some Troopers also earn up to 10% geographic pay in certain higher cost areas of the state -- the WSP continues to lag in salaries.

³ A 360 degree review solicits feedback from the manager, subordinates, superiors, and peers.



On a total compensation basis, the WSP does offer a somewhat more generous pension, along with a take-home vehicle for Troopers and Sergeants that a few local agencies provide. Nonetheless, in the context of current recruitment and retention challenges, compensation competitiveness is of concern.

If viewed to be well below competitive law enforcement agencies, compensation can have a compounding effect on employee dissatisfaction and if compensation differentials grow too large, many employees will feel compelled to consider moving to a different agency. Additionally, potential recruits to the WSP may also opt for higher paying local law enforcement jobs and not consider a Trooper career.

To address these concerns, this Report outlines a set of options for the State to consider in the context of a revised long-term compensation plan, as highlighted below.

All Troopers:

- Increase geographic assignment pay in regions with high attrition, targeting dollars to the regions with the greatest competition.
- Roll selected premium and differential pays into base salary, thereby creating a more attractive starting salary for recruitment purposes.
- Provide future across-the-board wage increases to further improve overall pay competitiveness, calibrating the size of such adjustments to take into account the impact of the other compensation initiatives outlined above.

Early-Career Troopers:

- Increase pay for Cadets and early-career Troopers. To pay for this additional cost, offer a new retirement plan for new hires, one that is more similar to the LEOFF retirement plan for local law enforcement officers. This means new WSP hires will be eligible to retire with 30 years of service, rather than the current 25 years of service in the WSPRS Trooper retirement plan. Actual savings will need to be actuarially determined). Over the long-term, the extended pension age will provide for longer careers more in line with contemporary retirement practices. In the short-term, the savings generated would be directed primarily to those experiencing the change in pension benefits.

Mid-Career Troopers:

- Establish Senior and/or Master Trooper levels to provide more compensation and additional opportunities for advancement linked to performance and professional development goals.

Retirement-Eligible Troopers:

- Provide a retention bonus, increased longevity pay, or targeted pension benefit enhancements to encourage retirement-eligible Troopers to stay beyond retirement age. This will particularly help address WSP's near-term staffing pressures.

Any revised compensation plan will ultimately be refined to meet the State and Trooper's needs through the collective bargaining process. The WSP does not have the ability to unilaterally make changes in compensation.

New Trooper Recruitment. Recruitment of Cadets for the Trooper Basic Academy is the sole source of replenishment of Troopers in the WSP. In order to meet the replacement demands projected from near-term attrition, the WSP needs to increase the number of Cadets who complete the Trooper Basic Academy and are commissioned as Troopers.

The **recruitment process** spans four discrete areas: understanding who the ideal candidate is and what they want from a law enforcement job, outreach and marketing to the target Cadet, the process of selecting Cadets for the Trooper Basic Academy (e.g. exams, background checks, etc.), and the training process itself. WSP's hiring needs require that recruitment efforts work at an optimal level and be responsive to the changing needs of the new workforce. Throughout the course of this study, we have seen that the WSP staff has been actively improving the overall recruitment process to make it shorter for recruits and more productive for the agency.

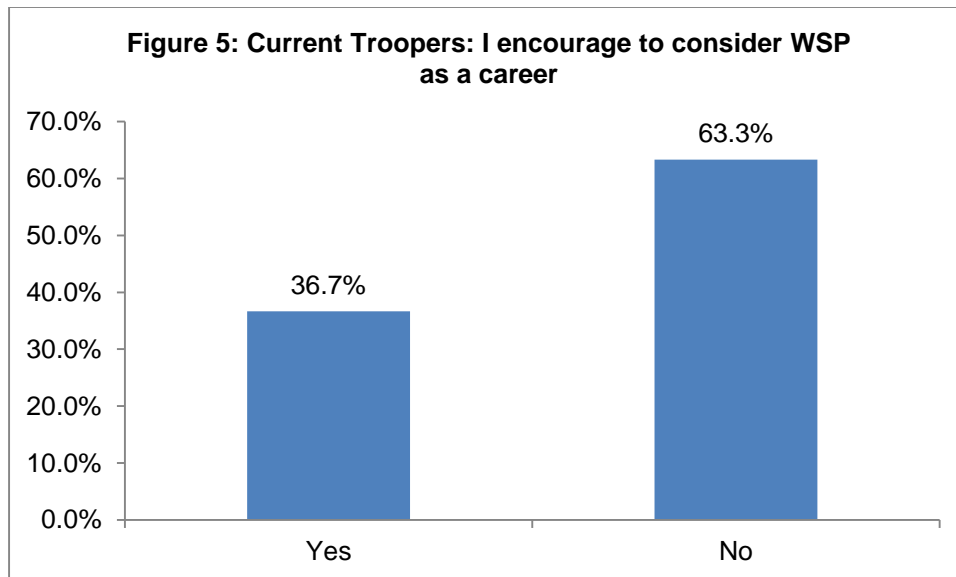
The most recent recruiting process for the 30th Arming Class (the class began November 23rd), and has generated a total of 53 Cadets, who, over seven to eight weeks, will go through the evaluation and training process in preparation for the Basic Trooper Academy.

Opportunities identified for improving the recruitment process are more related to fine tuning, rather than redoing, processes. Addressing employee dissatisfaction and compensation will

help strengthen recruitment as well. The following are some substantive recommendations to improve the selection and training process:

- Currently WSP rejects all candidates who have any misdemeanor convictions or past drug use. This is too harsh. Change it to a case-by-case review of an individual's circumstances, in order to determine if the candidate is fit for a law enforcement career
- Review the psychological testing portion of the selection process to bring the testing protocols more in line with contemporary national standards; currently the WSP fail rate is well above statewide and national norms.
- Contract with outside psychologists to increase testing capacity during peak hiring times
- Merge the Arming Class and Trooper Basic Academy into a single class to reduce total Academy time.
- Consider repurposing Cadets who are too young or otherwise not ready to be a Trooper into District-level positions with duties now performed by Troopers but do not require commissioning to perform enforcement activity.
- Run two academies per year to fill current and projected vacancies in the field.

A majority of Troopers who come into the WSP are influenced to apply by someone they know who works at WSP. This personal connection is common among law enforcement officers in all agencies. A key question that was asked of current Troopers was about encouraging people to consider the WSP as a career. As shown in **Figure 5**, over 64 percent of current Troopers answered “no” – they would not encourage someone to consider a career at WSP. In a similar question asked of Troopers who separated from the WSP, nearly two-thirds answered “no.” This connection between recruitment and employee dissatisfaction also shows the connection between retention and recruitment issues.



The WSP is at a crossroads. In a changing cultural environment, and facing the erosion of employee satisfaction and compensation competitiveness, the WSP needs to make immediate changes to ensure that it can continue to meet its targeted staffing and service levels.

The list of recommendations provided below, and detailed throughout this Report, address such important concerns and opportunities on an issue-by-issue basis. However, it is important that both WSP and the Legislature take action in a comprehensive manner. Neither compensation increases alone nor improvements in employee satisfaction and communications -- without compensation increases -- will fully resolve the agency's current retention and recruitment challenges.

By undertaking a comprehensive set of actions however, the WSP can build on its proud traditions and incorporate new ways of doing business to better align with the current workforce.

Report Recommendations

All recommendations included in the Report are provided below. Some recommendations are shown in an abbreviated format. More detailed findings and recommendations are provided throughout the report, and provided in whole in **Appendix A**.


Each recommendation also includes visual cues to help identify key implementation issues:


New Funding Required: 

Legislative Approval Required: 

Change to Existing Laws Required: 


EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION

Finding #1 (Employee Satisfaction)	A majority of the Troopers and Sergeants surveyed indicated management and morale issues within the WSP. These perceptions have led to job dissatisfaction and have magnified pay issues.
Recommendation 1.1 	The State should commission an organizational assessment to identify specific management strategies and recommendations that will improve overall engagement with line staff.
<i>Cost</i>	<i>The cost of an organization study will vary based on scope, but should be in the range of \$75,000 to \$150,000. Analysis and surveys from this JTC study should help to defray the cost of a future analysis more directly focused on improving Trooper engagement.</i>
<i>Implementation Hurdles</i>	<i>Funds need to be appropriated by the Legislature. The study will work best if WSP management actively works with the study consultant to implement changes.</i>

Finding #2 (Employee Satisfaction)	Both separated and current Trooper surveys indicate a perceived disconnect from the realities of day-to-day field operations on the part of some supervisors and upper management. This disconnect appears to be contributing to the recent resignations of Troopers for other law enforcement agencies.
Recommendation 2.1 	The WSP executive staff should work with its Human Resource Division and/or the State Human Resources Division within the Office of Financial Management to conduct performance evaluations, ⁴ of all management staff with the rank of Lieutenant and above. This should include 360 degree reviews. The results of these evaluations should be used to identify opportunities to improve management performance.
<i>Cost</i>	<i>The cost of performing evaluations and 360 degree reviews should be minimal; however, such an undertaking can be time consuming and will create an expectation of change within the agency.</i>
<i>Implementation Hurdles</i>	<i>WSP executive leadership must be willing to undertake and act on this type of performance evaluation.</i>

⁴ A 360 degree review solicits feedback from the manager, subordinates, superiors, and peers.

Finding #3 (Employee Satisfaction)	A focus on outputs with FOB Troopers (e.g., specific goals for traffic stops) as a measure of Trooper performance is contributing to a disconnect between Troopers and management, as well as a perception that management does not understand the difficulties of the Field Force Trooper job.
Recommendation 3.1	Performance metrics provide important feedback, and their active use should be continued, but refined. As this occurs, and as specific measures are reevaluated, the WSP executive team should reinforce the focus of Trooper work activity around improving public safety outcomes (e.g., reduced traffic fatalities) rather than focusing on specific enforcement outputs (e.g. issuing tickets).
<u>Cost</u>	<i>No identified cost.</i>
<u>Implementation Hurdles</u>	<i>Must be embraced by WSP executive staff.</i>



Finding #4 (Employee Satisfaction)	The WSP uniforms have not been updated since they were designed prior to the 1960s. The WSP is now reviewing options for modern wash-and-wear fabrics, and is planning a more comprehensive review of uniforms in the near future.
Recommendation 4.1 	The WSP should engage commissioned employees across all ranks to review uniform options and recommend changes to style and fabric for executive management consideration. Engagement of Troopers in this evaluation can begin to address the communication problems identified in the survey responses of current Troopers.
<u>Cost</u>	<i>Moving to new uniforms will have a one-time cost of approximately \$1.67 million to replace all components for the current 1,005 commissioned staff who wear a uniform (approximately \$1,660 per employee).</i>
<u>Implementation Hurdles</u>	<i>The WSP executive team is currently reviewing uniform options. Funding will need to be appropriated by the Legislature.</i>



Finding #5 (Employee Satisfaction)	The WSP Field Force schedule calls for rotating between night shift and day shift every 28 to 56 days. Alternative shifts are allowed in some Districts under provisions outlined in the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) with the WSPTA. Troopers do not gain more control over their schedule with greater seniority, and the current practice of shift rotation does not take into consideration staffing requirements based on call volume or other measures of workload activity.
Recommendation 5.1	WSP management should encourage the development of experimental shifts - designed by detachment personnel - to create more stability in and Trooper control over choosing their schedules. ⁵
<u>Cost</u>	<i>Different schedules could result in more or less overtime depending on how they are implemented. No cost is projected at this time.</i>

⁵ In accordance with section 12.11 of the collective bargaining agreement


<i>Implementation Hurdles</i>	<i>Requires support from WSP management at HQ, Districts and Detachments (group of Troopers assigned to a specific geographic location within a District).</i>
-------------------------------	--

COMPENSATION

Finding #6 (Compensation)	The WSP compensation package plays a role in the overall job satisfaction of WSP Troopers and is a major factor cited in recent separations from the WSP. Further, current Troopers also cite pay and benefits as an issue that could move them to leave the WSP (both retirements and resignations) in the near future.
Recommendation 6.1 	Working with the Office of Financial Management, WSP should develop a long-term compensation plan to address issues of pay competitiveness within the context of the State's ability to pay. Creating such a compensation plan, even if it takes several years to fully fund and achieve, can help to address existing dissatisfaction and concerns.
<i>Cost</i>	<i>Based on the total budgeted Trooper and Sergeant positions, each one percent pay increase will cost approximately \$925,000 per year on an ongoing basis inclusive of all pay categories (including a 17% allowance for pension and other payroll costs). Increases at the Trooper and Sergeant levels may cause compression issues at Lieutenant and above that if addressed, would lead to additional costs.</i>
<i>Implementation Hurdles</i>	<i>Increasing compensation levels may require the State to identify new funding for the WSP.</i>
Finding #7 (Compensation)	Certain District offices in the State have been losing more Troopers than others. This is due in part to Troopers leaving for higher-paying law enforcement positions in or near those same Districts.
Recommendation 7.1 	The WSP should review its geographic pay practices to both expand counties they cover as well as to potentially increase the rates for geographic pay. Providing higher pay on a geographic basis could provide additional incentive to stay with the WSP for Troopers where pay is a primary issue. This will also help attract new recruits from more populated areas where there are many other law enforcement choices.
<i>Cost</i>	<i>Increasing geographic pay makes the most sense in King County where pay differentials to the Seattle Police Department and King County Sheriff's Office are over 15 percent and in District 5 where pay differences to Vancouver are nearly 13 percent. Increasing geographic pay in King County (District 2) will cost approximately \$103,000 per one percent increase (including 17% for pension and other payroll costs). A one percent geographic pay allowance for District 5 Troopers would cost approximately \$63,000 per one percent per year (not all counties of the District will necessarily be included).</i>
<i>Implementation Hurdles</i>	<i>Requires negotiations over the CBA with the WSPTA, and approval by the Legislature.</i>

Finding #8 (Compensation)	The WSP provides opportunities for specialty and certification pays. While these are ways to boost pay for employees who have special knowledge or provide special services, only a small percentage of Field Force employees actually receive these extra pays, and those that do are typically more senior Troopers that would benefit from implementation of various other compensation recommendations.
Recommendation 8.1	The WSP should consider merging specialty pays, certification pays, and shift differentials into base pay . This will serve to increase the base pay levels presented in pay comparisons, while limiting pay differences among Troopers.
Cost 	<i>To the extent that some premiums are not now pensionable or included in the overtime base, shifting such elements of pay could marginally increase pension and overtime costs. If a cost neutral shift is intended, this factor should be accounted for when determining the size of the resulting base pay adjustment.</i>
Implementation Hurdles	<i>Requires negotiations over the CBA with the WSPTA, and approval by the State Legislature.</i>
Recommendation 8.2	Institute a new promotional class of Trooper . The WSP could offer a promotional opportunity for Troopers to an advanced level (a Senior and/or Master Trooper, for example) with additional duties and expectations.
Cost 	<i>The total cost of this recommendation would depend on how many Troopers would qualify into such levels, and whether or not any existing premiums would be folded into the new level (e.g. if points toward Master Trooper status for educational attainment and/or field training officer (FTO) duties were part of advancement under such a program, then existing, separate premiums might be eliminated).</i>
Implementation Hurdles	<i>Requires negotiations over the CBA with the WSPTA, and approval by the State Legislature.</i>

RETIREMENT


Finding #9 (Retirement)	The issues motivating current early and mid-career Troopers to resign from the agency are also influencing retirement-eligible Troopers' decisions regarding when to retire. Despite the fact that they likely have many years of employment opportunity before they want to fully retire, many current WSP Troopers nearing retirement indicated their plan is to stay with the WSP only until they reach normal service retirement requirements (25 years of service).
Recommendation 9.1 	Evaluate and implement appropriate options to extend a career past retirement eligibility. Options include: increased pay for retirement-eligible Troopers (e.g., longevity steps); offer a retention bonus; increase retirement eligibility to 30 years of service (legislative change for future hires; must include offsetting new advantages and satisfy legal review for current employees); increase pension accrual after 25 years of service; evaluate a limited-duration DROP (deferred

	retirement option program); and/or create a Trooper Reserve program. More detailed descriptions start on page 101.
<i>Cost</i>	<i>Varies by option—see recommendations starting on page 101</i>
<i>Implementation Hurdles</i>	<i>Most options require negotiations over the CBA with the WSPTA, and approval by the State Legislature.</i>

RECRUITMENT

Finding #10 (Retirement)	WSP struggles with attracting candidates who desire to stay in one geographical location, thus limiting the potential applicant pool. This can manifest both in not knowing where they might be stationed once becoming a Trooper as well as the possible need to move in order to promote.
Recommendation 10.1	The WSP should create a system that allows candidates during the initial application process to prioritize district assignments and, prior to employment or early in the training process, to be assigned to a district. This assignment may not coincide with the Cadet’s initial choice if assignments are not available in that location. For example, the Spokane District has over 70 current Troopers who desire to transfer to that district, and it would not be appropriate to place a new recruit there.
<i>Cost</i>	<i>No anticipated costs</i>
<i>Implementation Hurdles</i>	<i>Will require a change in the current timing of the WSP practice to make current Trooper transfer requests prior to placing Cadets. That process will now need to be completed in advance of the hiring for each Cadet class (rather than during the Academy class).</i>


Understanding Ideal Candidates

Finding #11 (Recruitment)	The WSP Cadet enters into the agency at a lower starting salary than they will receive when commissioned as a Trooper. The WSP Cadet and Trooper pay levels are low compared to other law enforcement agencies and likely discourage some qualified applicants from applying to the WSP.
Recommendation 11.1 	<p>The WSP should consider increasing pay to levels that improve the WSP’s competitive position relative to local law enforcement agencies. Increasing Cadet pay is one way to address this, and movement toward a single rate for the first year of service (both at the Academy and afterward) could be a means to achieve this.</p> <p>At the same time – given such factors as the global pay disparity between the WSP and competitive agencies, the relatively short time a new hire remains a Cadet, the focus of job seekers on longer-term opportunities, and competing demands for limited budgetary resources – the project team recommends seeking to adjust overall Trooper compensation within a broader strategic framework that encompasses a full career, not just Cadet pay.</p>


<i>Cost</i>	<i>Depends on overall change to Cadet and Trooper compensation. Moving Cadets to entry-level Trooper pay alone would cost approximately \$350,000 - \$400,000 per year depending on how many Cadets are hired into the WSP and how long they take to complete the training program.</i>
<i>Implementation Hurdles</i>	<i>The WSP Chief has the authority to set Cadet salaries within the total authorized budget of the agency.</i>

Finding #12 (Recruitment)	The WSP has a carefully cultivated paramilitary culture that is reflected in recruitment outreach and reinforced in the Trooper Basic Academy. Current applicants to law enforcement agencies, however, are less likely to embrace this paramilitary style. Even the WSP’s current recruits are significantly less drawn by this factor than were current Troopers when they joined the Patrol.
Recommendation 12.1	The WSP needs to take a close look how it can align its culture to the contemporary approach favored by many current recruits while still maintaining its “service with humility” mission. The issue of cultural realignment impacts the entire recruitment process and is central to other recommendations provided in the Recruitment chapter of this Report.
<i>Cost</i>	<i>Unless the WSP utilizes outside resources to address cultural changes, there is no cost to this recommendation.</i>
<i>Implementation Hurdles</i>	<i>Culture is difficult to change and can take a concerted effort over many years. A culture change would need to be embraced by WSP’s executive management.</i>

Outreach and Marketing


Finding #13 (Recruitment)	The WSP uses traditional law enforcement outreach and marketing strategies that rely on personal interaction between a potentially qualified candidate and WSP personnel. These strategies include job fairs, military installation visits, and general public appearances.
Recommendation 13.1 	The WSP should develop a comprehensive outreach and marketing strategic plan that expands on the success of current strategies and looks for ways to tap into groups of individuals that do not currently show an interest in the WSP or law enforcement as a career, such as women and minorities. This will require the use of non-traditional marketing and outreach methods.
<i>Cost</i>	<i>Outside consultant support may be valuable in evaluating marketing successes in other locations. Expanded marketing and outreach efforts could need additional resource allocations.</i>
<i>Implementation Hurdles</i>	<i>Staff time is limited, and funding will need to be identified if an outside consultant is utilized.</i>

Finding #14 (Recruitment)	The most successful recruitment tool is personal relationships with WSP Troopers. To improve on recruitment outside of traditional strategies, many agencies across the country have developed
-------------------------------------	--

	youth-oriented law enforcement academies or magnet schools to create a pipeline of potential candidates starting as early as grammar school.
Recommendation 14.1 	The WSP should consider reinstating the Explorer program or a similar youth outreach program, in order to expose teens to the possibility of a career with the WSP. This may require the expansion of work currently done by recruiters in District offices.
<i>Cost</i>	<i>Trooper time to manage the program at the district level. Could also use retirees for non-benefit-qualified work. Pay for Administrative Assistant or Program Specialist job classes ranges from \$15.00 to \$22.00 per hour. Eight people working half-time on the Explorer program would cost up to \$225,000 per year.</i>
<i>Implementation Hurdles</i>	<i>Limited staff resources due to recent attrition issues. Need to address employee satisfaction issues to make this most successful.</i>

Finding #15 (Recruitment)	Survey results identify WSP personnel as influential in the recruitment process. The ability to expand recruitment relationships will require effort by more Troopers than are currently assigned recruiting duties in the Districts.
Recommendation 15.1	Identify staff who have the skills, ability, and desire to function as both formal and informal recruiters. Not everyone desires to be a recruiter nor does everyone have the skills to undertake that role. The pool of Troopers used for recruitment activities should be increased and the role enhanced to include higher levels of youth and community engagement.
<i>Cost</i>	<i>Minimal cost expected. Requires training time and material.</i>
<i>Implementation Hurdles</i>	<i>Need to address employee satisfaction issues to make this most successful.</i>

Finding #16 (Recruitment)	Patrol recruitment staff currently poll applicants about how they found out about the WSP, but they do not keep statistics on the success of each outreach and marketing method as they relate to attracting applicants who eventually become Troopers.
Recommendation 16.1	Recruitment staff should continue tracking how applicants find the WSP as well as how successful each outreach method is in terms of yielding new Troopers
<i>Cost</i>	<i>No identified cost.</i>
<i>Implementation Hurdles</i>	<i>None identified.</i>

Finding #17 (Recruitment)	Potential law enforcement candidates are researching potential employers online before applying for a position or accepting a conditional job offer. As identified in survey results, the primary research tool is the website.
Recommendation 17.1 	The WSP should redesign its website to engage viewers with an emphasis on creating a positive and welcoming environment. The


	WSP should include videos that demonstrate the full range of duties performed by the Patrol.
<i>Cost</i>	<i>Varies based on approach used and availability of existing staff. Engaging outside web-design help could be in the range of \$25,000 or more.</i>
<i>Implementation Hurdles</i>	<i>Website changes need to be consistent for the agency, and must be approved, ultimately, by executive management.</i>

Selection Process



Finding #18 (Recruitment)	Candidates have been removed from the selection process through the pre-polygraph interview for disqualifying conduct before the circumstances surrounding the conduct can be evaluated on an individual basis. Although it is not official policy, it appears that it has been WSP’s practice to reject candidates at the pre-polygraph interview when the candidate admits to ‘disqualifying conduct’ such as misdemeanor convictions or past drug use.
Recommendation 18.1	Except as required by law, the WSP should change their criteria from an absolute rejection of a candidate for any and all misdemeanor convictions and drug use to a case-by-case review of the individual’s circumstances. This allows for consideration of extenuating circumstances without lowering any ethical standard. The background check follows the polygraph exam, and issues raised in the polygraph can be followed up and addressed, if necessary.
<i>Cost</i>	<i>No expected cost</i>
<i>Implementation Hurdles</i>	<i>None identified.</i>

Finding #19 (Recruitment)	WSP fails 38 percent of its recruits on the psychological exam -- a level well above the national and local law enforcement average of 5 percent ⁶ and above the State Patrol benchmark agency failure rate of 18 percent. Also, the tests WSP uses for the psychological evaluation are not the current national standard tests, which are normalized for law enforcement personnel.
Recommendation 19.1	The WSP should review the psychological testing portion of the selection process to bring the testing protocols in line with contemporary national standards as well as to determine possible causes for the high failure rate.
<i>Cost</i>	<i>Potential small cost in changing psychological tests.</i>
<i>Implementation Hurdles</i>	<i>Testing methodology is determined by the WSP’s Psychologist</i>

⁶ “Psychological Testing and the Selection of Police Officers: A National Survey”

Finding #20 (Recruitment)	All psychological testing is done by the WSP's Psychologist. Testing occurs during recruitment periods for the Arming Class, which can create a backlog for testing that results in a bottleneck in the selection process.
Recommendation 20.1 	The WSP should contract with outside psychologists to assist the WSP's Psychologist during peak hiring times and eliminate delays in the overall process.
<i>Cost</i>	<i>Additional cost for contract Psychologists range from \$350 to \$500 per applicant tested. Total cost will vary based on number of applicants assigned to contractors.</i>
<i>Implementation Hurdles</i>	<i>The testing process is currently the responsibility of the WSP's Psychologist.</i>

Training Process

Finding #21 (Recruitment)	The WSP's practice of conducting an Arming Class separate from the Trooper Basic Academy is done primarily to fill 15 security positions (eleven in the Governor's Mansion and Office, and four contractual positions). This can leave Cadets uncertain about timing to become a Trooper and extends their time at the lower-paying Cadet position for an additional nine months.
Recommendation 21.1 	The WSP should merge the Arming Class and Trooper Basic Academy into a single class and move all Cadets through this program and into Trooper positions as soon as possible. Merging the Arming Class and Trooper Basic Academy into a single course will provide the WSP with more flexibility in terms of the number of training academies it can run, but will also require a different model to staff the contracted security positions, such as hiring retired Troopers.
<i>Cost</i>	<i>Merging the Arming Class and Trooper Basic will result in a shorter training period, by eliminating the week between the two classes. If the WSP increases the number of Academy classes and Cadets trained, there will be a corresponding increase in costs. The marginal cost of training a Cadet is approximately \$56,600. The cost of increased Cadets in the Trooper Basic Academy was formerly offset by accrued vacancy savings in the current biennium. The Legislature has already reduced the WSP budget by the anticipated vacancy savings, when enacting the 2015-17 budget. As a result, the cost of additional hiring will require additional appropriations.</i>
<i>Implementation Hurdles</i>	<i>Operating two academies per year places more stress on the training Academy instructors.</i>
Recommendation 21.2 	The WSP should continue using the Cadet job classification to allow for entry level employment into the agency, but should consider repurposing Cadets who are too young (Troopers must be 21, Cadets can be hired at 19), or otherwise not ready to be a Trooper, into District-level positions that perform duties currently performed by Troopers that do not require law enforcement officer certification.

<i>Cost</i>	<i>Cadet positions will operate under the total full-time equivalent (FTE) authorization for the FOB. Funding for security positions filled by retired Troopers or a separate security class could be slightly less or more than the pay of a Cadet depending upon the service job class selected (Security Guard 1-3 or Campus Security Officer). Cadet positions would remain on the Cadet pay scale during the time in the field or could be provided an increase once training is completed.</i>
<i>Implementation Hurdles</i>	<i>May require new model to staff the contracted security positions, such as hiring retired Troopers.</i>

Finding #22 (Recruitment)	The WSP has a current vacancy problem that is exacerbated by record-level resignations and a retirement bubble starting in 2015. The only replacement for departing Troopers is graduates from Trooper Basic Training. In order to replace Troopers leaving the WSP and keep the number of Field Force Troopers at levels needed to fulfill their mission, the WSP must increase the number of training Academy graduates. Currently, the WSP runs one Academy every 9 months.
Recommendation 22.1	The WSP should run two academies per year for a period of time in order to replace current and projected vacancies in the field. The agency has run academies twice a year in the past, and this increase in capacity will improve the pipeline to replace retiring Troopers.
<i>Cost</i>	<i>The reason for running two academies is to fill vacancies in the field. The cost of increased Cadets in the Trooper Basic Academy was formerly offset by accrued vacancy savings in the current biennium. The Legislature reduced the WSP budget by the anticipated vacancy savings, when enacting the 2015-17 budget. As a result, the cost of additional hiring will require additional appropriations.</i>
<i>Implementation Hurdles</i>	<i>Running two academies per year impacts the scheduling related to the selection process and the use of the Academy facilities by both WSP and outside agencies</i>

Finding #23 (Recruitment)	The WSP Trooper Basic Training is perceived by some potential applicants to be a warrior style of training. The WSP Academy emphasizes restraint in action, and focuses on a service model for Troopers; however, certain elements of the training Academy —early training protocols that focus on discipline, and housekeeping rules— have led to this perception which has caused some potential recruits to bypass the WSP.
Recommendation 23.1	The WSP should review elements of the training protocols that create a perception of the warrior-style of academy and deemphasized them. Guardian elements of the Academy and the job should be emphasized. This will serve to mitigate potentially negative perceptions of potential Cadets and better reflect the actual Academy training style.
<i>Cost</i>	<i>No direct costs associated with this transition.</i>
<i>Implementation Hurdles</i>	<i>None identified.</i>