



# Washington State Patrol

## Recruitment and Retention Study Progress Update to the Joint Transportation Committee

Presented by:

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*Senior Managing Consultant*

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*Retired Police Chief*



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# Washington State Trooper study

- To identify potential barriers to effective recruitment and retention of state troopers.
- Study started on July 17, 2015
- Draft final report due December 14, 2014
- Study budget: \$239,470



# Project Milestones

- Completion of the study is on target for a December 17<sup>th</sup> presentation to the JTC
- Follow-up presentations to House and Senate Transportation Committees if requested by the JTC

Milestone	Target Date	Engagement
Field Force White Paper	October 9 <sup>th</sup>	Workgroup Review
Recruitment White Paper	October 30 <sup>th</sup>	Workgroup Review
Retention White Paper	November 6 <sup>th</sup>	Workgroup Review
Final Report	December 14 <sup>th</sup>	Workgroup Review
Presentation to JTC	December 17 <sup>th</sup>	
Presentation to House and Senate Transportation Committees	January 2016, if requested	



# Project Team

- **Michael Nadol (Engagement Manager):** National expertise in public sector workforce analysis – including state-level compensation strategies and the evaluation of comparative law enforcement salaries and benefits for large and complex agencies including the Pennsylvania State Police and New York City Police Department
- **Russ Branson (Project Manager):** Over 25 years of experience in government finance, workforce management, and labor relations. Has worked throughout California, and recently with Skagit County and Bellingham in Washington State
- **(Ret.) Chief Rick Braziel (Subject Matter Expert).** Rick, a retired 33 year sworn law enforcement officer will serve as a subject matter expert on police department operation, recruitment, and retention best practices.
- **Karen Coffee (Subject Matter Expert):** Nearly 40 years of State-level Human Resources with the California State Personnel Board and Department of the Youth Authority. Past President nationally of the International Personnel Management Association Assessment Council, and a recognized expert in recruitment and merit selection processes
- **Seth Williams (Senior Project Support) –** Former State of New Jersey Deputy Director of Management and Operations, with a law enforcement focus. Has served as the lead analyst for criminal justice and public safety agencies in numerous engagements
- **Alyssa Mehalick (Project Analyst) –** Analyst in PFM's Management and Budget Consulting practice, serves as lead for the project analyses of WSP workforce, retention practices, and recruitment practices.



# Study Goals and Outcomes

- **Recruitment Evaluation**
  - Evaluate trooper recruitment and selection processes
  - Determine why cadets come and why they stay
  - Review training academy process and training costs
  - Compare to benchmark agencies and best practices
- **Retention Evaluation**
  - Understand why troopers stay and why they leave
  - Identify critical time in a career path for resignation
  - Gain an understanding of why Troopers have resigned from the WSP and the state of mind of current Troopers
  - Gather benchmark data to see if WSP's experience is typical or not
- **Recommend improvements in the recruitment, selection and training process**
- **Recommend strategies to improve retention**



# Workgroup Members

- Represents a broad cross-section interested parties
- Provides review only, not advisory

Legislative Staff	State Patrol Staff/Union
Joint Transportation Committee	Human Resources Division
House and Senate Transportation Committee	Government and Media Relations
Office of Financial Management	Budget and Fiscal Services
Caucus staff from four caucuses	WSP Troopers Association



# Interviews

- **WSP**

- Command Staff
  - Chief Batiste
  - Deputy Chiefs
- Union leaders
- Academy staff and cadets
- Troopers and Sergeants
- District commanders
- Human Resources
- Recruitment staff
- Budget officer

- **Outside Agencies**

- OFM HR staff
- OFM budget staff
- Chief labor negotiator
- Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC)  
Exec. Director
- CJTC recruits and instructors



# Surveys

- Survey data is key component of the Recruitment and Retention White Papers
- Survey responses are currently being analyzed for trends and underlying implications for the WSP

Survey Group	Number Surveyed	Responses Received
WSP Cadets	64	64
WSP Troopers & Sergeants	968	486
WSP Separated Troopers*	41	17
CJTC Recruits**	150	19
CJTC law enforcement agencies	285	37

• *Separated Troopers surveyed were those who left to take jobs at other law enforcement agencies from 2009-July 31, 2015. PFM is following up with recently separated Troopers as well.*

*\*\* CJTC recruit "number surveyed " is approximate*





# Local Benchmark Agencies

Sent benchmark data request to 11 Washington police agencies  
Six have responded

## Local Law Enforcement Comparator Agencies

	Population (2013)	Number of Sworn Officers (2013)
<b>Police Departments</b>		
Washington State Patrol	6,896,071	1,053
Seattle	636,270	1,294
Spokane	209,876	280
Vancouver*	165,613	187
Yakima	92,995	141
Kennewick*	76,115	93
Pasco*	66,289	71
Tacoma	201,893	334
<b>Sheriff's Departments</b>		
King County*	2,007,779	195
Snohomish County*	733,797	266
Pierce County*	811,730	297

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013 3-Year Estimates; Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Report 2013

Washington Local Law Enforcement Agencies





# State Patrol Benchmark Agencies

- State benchmark agencies chosen based on: Proximity, size, or known as a best-practice agency
- State benchmarks provide context to WSP recruitment and retention issues

State Law Enforcement Comparator Agencies		
Agency	Population (2013)	Number of Sworn Officers (2013)
Washington State Patrol	6,896,071	1,053
California Highway Patrol	38,000,360	7,236
Pennsylvania State Police	12,759,859	4,168
Michigan State Police	9,884,242	1,686
Ohio Highway Patrol	11,557,868	1,608
Arizona Highway Patrol	6,548,856	1,096
Minnesota State Patrol	5,382,376	537

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013 3-Year Estimates; Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Report 2013



# Major Findings to Date

## Compensation

- ✓ A field force Trooper costs between \$77,500 and \$89,068 per year to employ\*
- ✓ Current cash compensation is strong relative to the overall labor market, but low compared to local agencies surveyed
- ✓ Important benefits in WSP include
  - 25-and-out pension plan
  - Lower pension contribution
  - Take-home vehicles

(\* note: does not include Cadet pay or training cost)

## Vacancy and Attrition

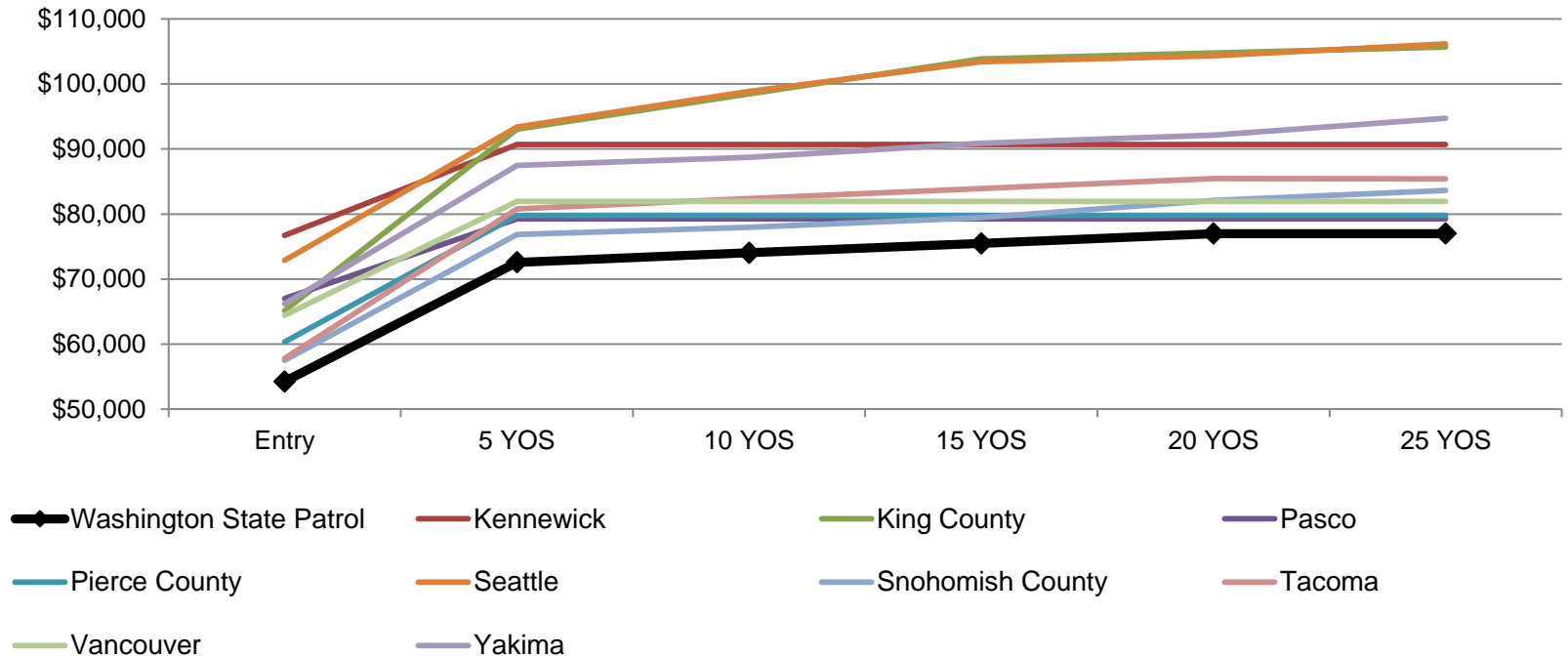
- ✓ Percent of total workforce turnover (attrition rate) compared to other law enforcement agencies is high in 2015
- ✓ Pre-2015 attrition rates are not dissimilar to WSP historical trends
- ✓ Hiring in local agencies has increased, providing opportunities for highly-qualified Troopers to leave WSP
- ✓ A retirement bubble starting in 2015 will hinder efforts to fully staff the WSP field force
- ✓ Resignations, even at historical levels, will erode current staffing levels
- ✓ Separated Troopers cited management and pay as top issues



# Comparative Pay Levels

- WSP is at bottom of comparable agencies in direct cash compensation throughout a Trooper's career
- Adding in geographic pay (not shown) helps, but WSP is still among lowest paid

Figure 2: Washington Local Law Enforcement Agencies  
Total Direct Cash Compensation





# Additional Pay Opportunities

Field Operations Bureau Troopers – Specialty Pays						
As of 6/30/15	Field Training Officer	Bomb Technician	Canine Handler/Trainer	Detective (non-FOB)	Motorcycle Officer	SWAT Team
Additional Pay Rate	5.0%	5.0%	3.0% handler 5.0% trainer	3.0%	4.0%	3.0%
# Troopers Receiving	115	5	8	1	25	13
Average Additional Pay If Received	\$854	\$2,553	\$1,399/ \$2,870	\$1,583	\$2,019	\$1,272

FOB Troopers - Specialty/Certification Pays		
	Amount	# FOB Troopers Paid as of 6/30/2015
Armorer	2.0%	10
Executive Protection Unit	10.0%	1
Certified Technical Specialist	\$500	26
Certified Reconstructionist	\$750	17
Certified Drug Recognition Expert [1]	\$500	25

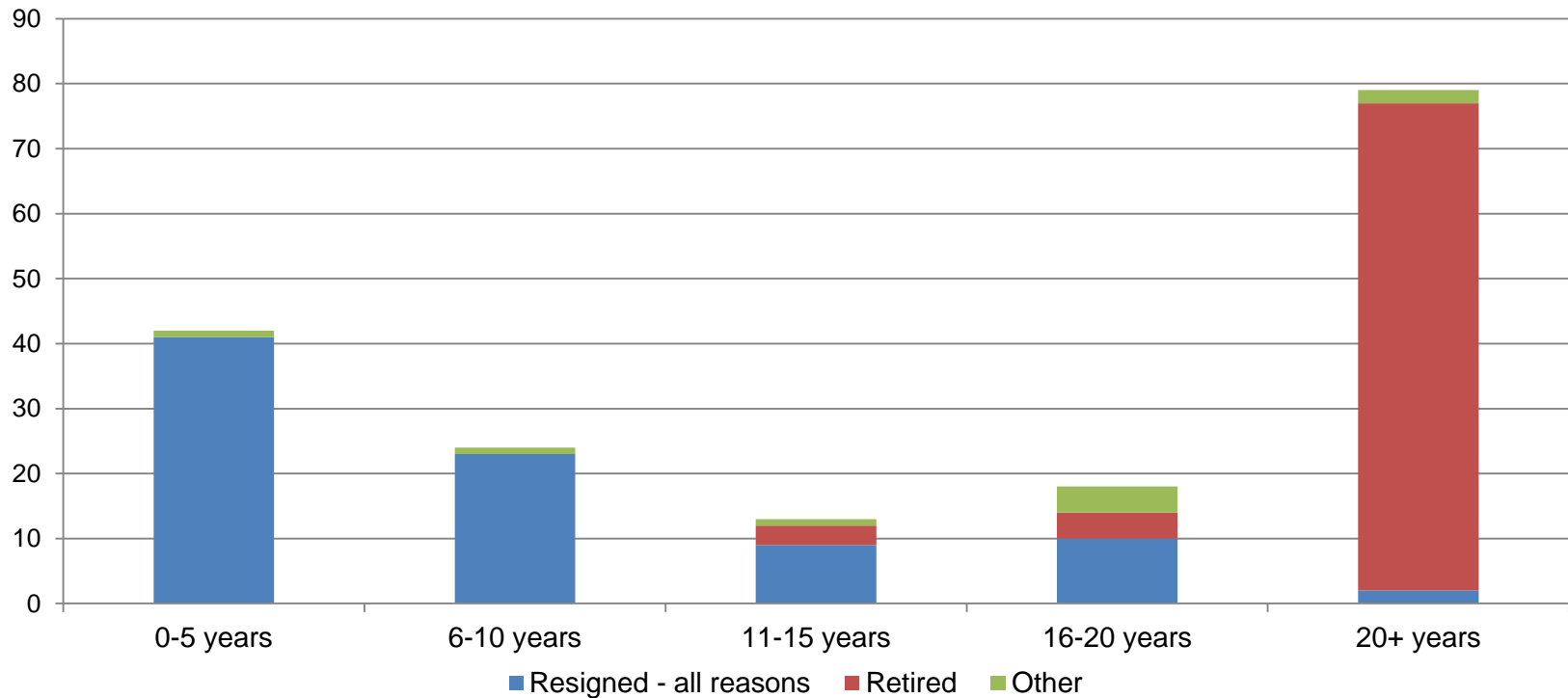
[1] Drug Recognition pay provided when employee completes a minimum of five (5) evaluations within a year



# Trooper Attrition by Tenure

- Troopers are most at risk for resigning in first five years of service
- After ten years of service, Troopers are more likely to stay until retirement

Field Force Trooper Attrition by Tenure and Reason  
(1/1/2010-9/30/2015)

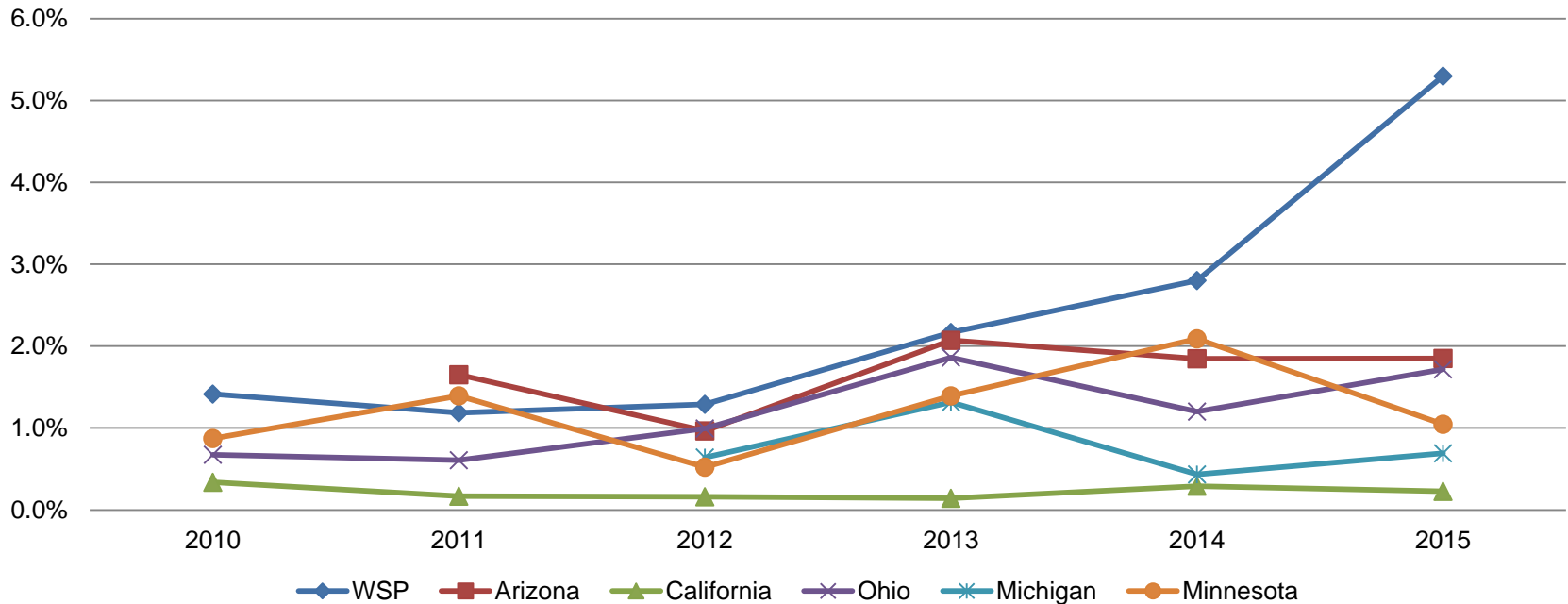




# Comparative Quit Rates

- Until 2014, quit rates (the ratio of resignations to staffing levels) for the WSP have been similar to other State Patrol agencies.

Comparative Quit Rates  
Among State Patrol Agencies

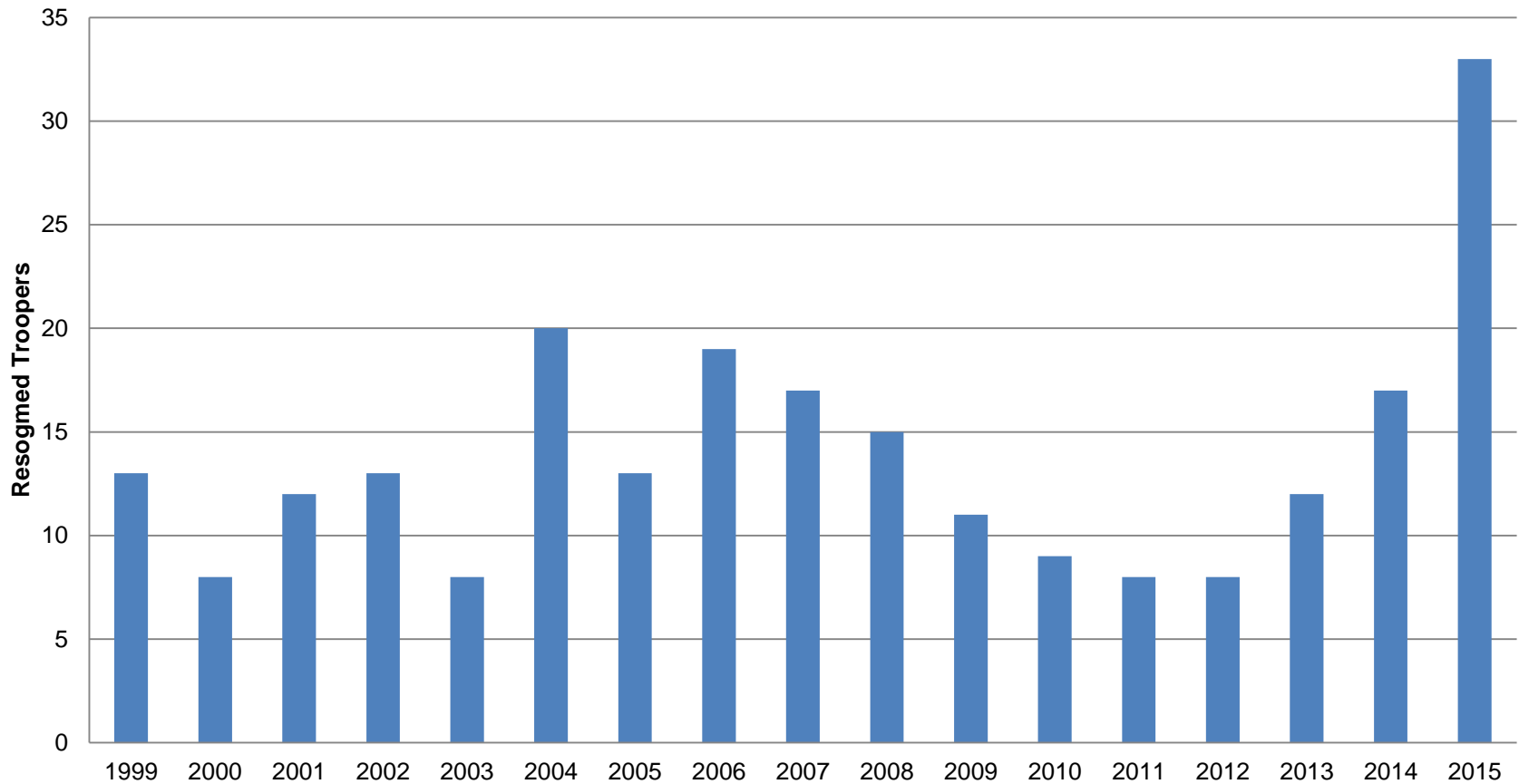




# Historical WSP Resignations

- Resignation levels have been volatile since 1999
- The current 2015 rate is unusually high

Figure 8: WSP Trooper Resignations



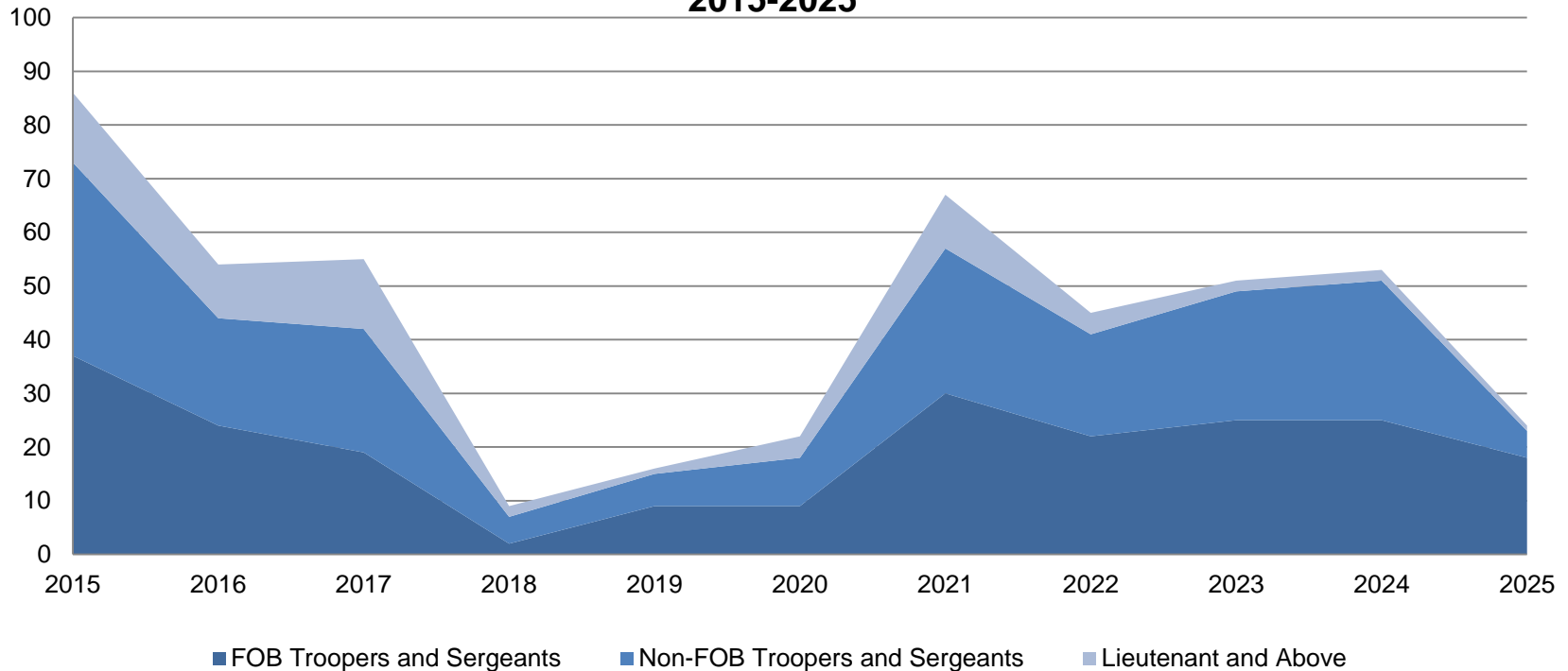




# Coming Retirement Bubble

- Retirement-eligible commissioned staff is increasing dramatically
- Retirements in commissioned staff lead to promotions, and field force vacancies
- Since 1990, the most WSPRS retirees in one year have been 48, with an average of 33. In 2015, over 80 commissioned staff become retirement-eligible

**Projected Retirement of WSP  
Commissioned Personnel  
2015-2025**

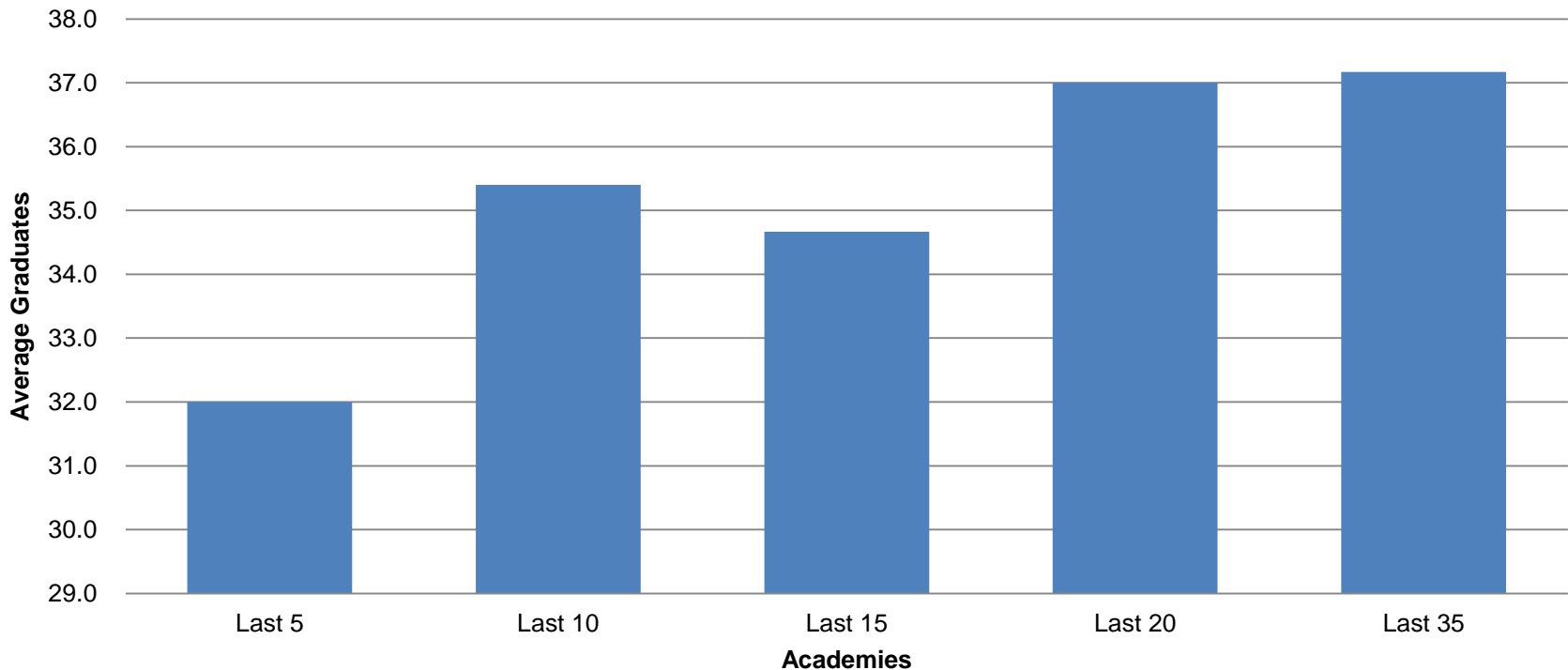




# Attrition Replacements

- The WSP Training Academy is the sole source of replacements for commissioned staff attrition
- Since 1990, class graduations averaged 37, falling to 32 in the last five classes (2012 -2015)
- Historical levels of graduation rates are not sufficient to replace expected vacancies

**Average Academy Graduates  
(70th to 104th Training Academies)**

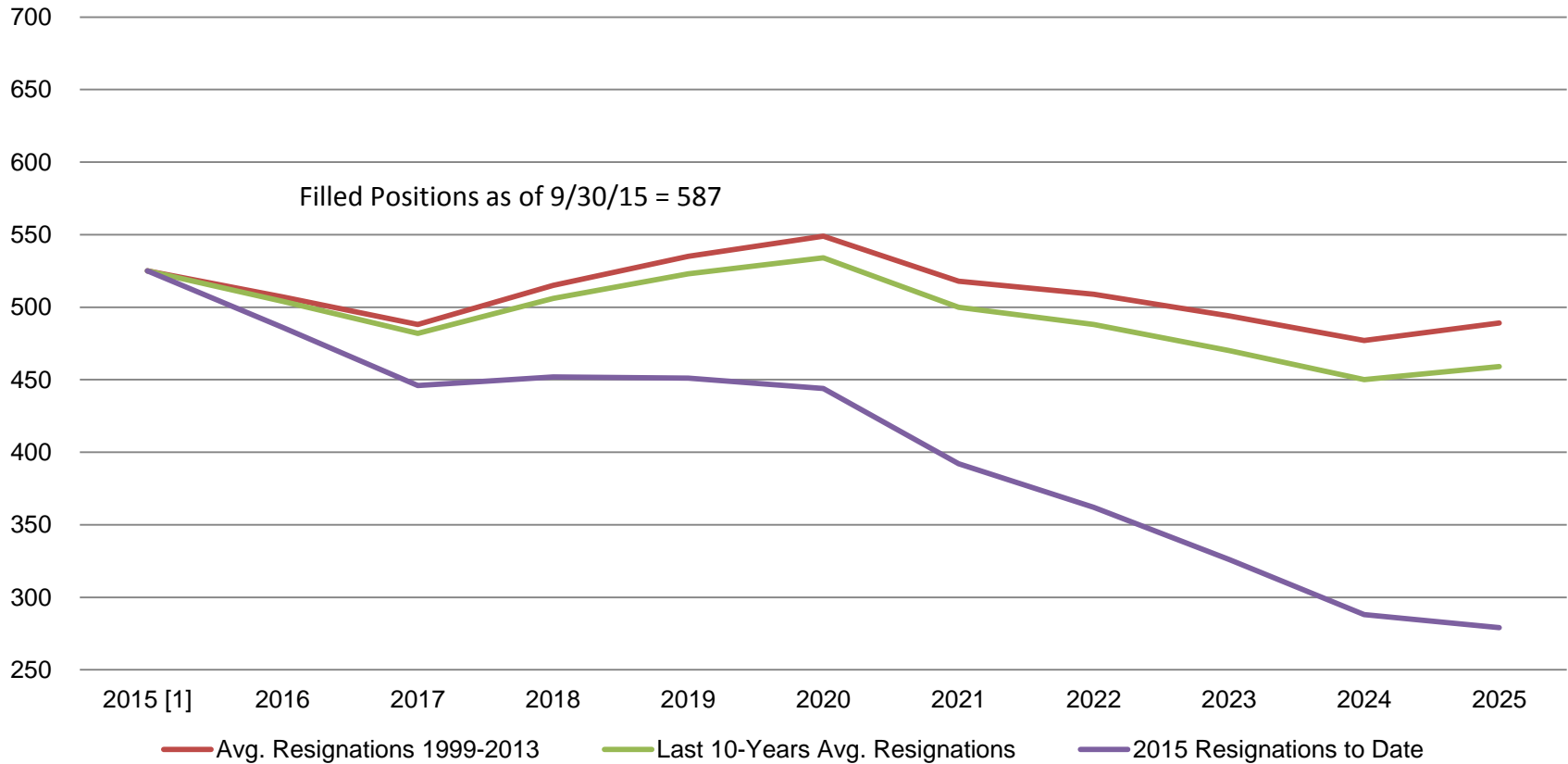




# Project WSP Trooper Levels

*Retirement bubble along with resignations will push Trooper levels down over next 10 years*

**Figure 13: Projected Trooper Levels  
(Based on Retirements & Resignation Alternatives)**





# Remainder of Study

- **Recruitment**

- Identify methods to increase interest in WSP among qualified applicants
- Improve selection process to increase total hired
- Evaluate WSP training and graduates needed to maintain Trooper levels

- **Retention**

- Evaluate reasons for high resignation rate
- Propose options to increase retention
- Review opportunities to operate with fewer Troopers, if necessary
- Identify best practices from other state patrol agencies