**PROPOSED STUDY QUESTIONS**

**Hybrid Electric Ferries: Design-Build Contracting and Procurement**

Washington State Ferries' long-range plan includes plug-in hybrid electric vessels

Washington State Ferries (WSF) is a division of the State Department of Transportation. WSF's 2040 long-range plan is to increase the fleet from 23 to 26 vessels and shift most of the fleet to plug-in hybrid electric vessels. Statute requires WSF to use design-build contracting methods for new ferries.

**2022 Supplemental Transportation Budget changed focus of JLARC's review**

The 2021 Transportation Budget included a JLARC study of WSF's contract and cost estimates used for the first Olympic-class hybrid electric vessel. That procurement has since been delayed. As a result, the 2022 Supplemental Transportation Budget changed the study to focus on the design-build contracting approach for all classes of hybrid electric ferries, best practices, and opportunities for cost and operational efficiencies.

**This study will evaluate WSF's design-build contracting practices and policies**

JLARC staff are working with consultants who have relevant expertise to answer the following questions:

1. What are WSF's policies and practices for procuring new hybrid-electric ferries through design-build contracts?
   a. Are WSF's policies and practices consistent with state and federal statutes and regulations?

2. How do WSF's policies and practices for design-build contracts for hybrid-electric ferries compare to domestic and international best practices?
   a. Are there best practices for addressing other related requirements or interests, such as build local requirements or use of small, minority-owned, or women-owned businesses?
   b. What are the advantages and disadvantages of these best practices, including potential costs or savings?

3. What design-build contracting best practices or industry standards can be used to decrease vessel construction costs or ensure operational efficiencies?
   a. Do WSF's cost management practices align with industry best practices, domestically and internationally, or other appropriate standards?

**Study Timeframe**

Preliminary Report: June 2023  
Proposed Final Report: September 2023

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**JLARC Study Process**

- Study Mandate: Budget, Legislation, committee direction
- Proposed Study Questions
- Legislative Auditor's Preliminary Report
- Legislative Auditor's Proposed Final Report
- Final Report: Option to append committee comment
- Committee votes to distribute completed audit

**Joint Legislative Audit & Review Committee**

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