



Washington State Ferries

Strategic Workforce Planning

Implementation Roadmap

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Assessment Findings

Thematic Summary

Clear and consistent views on organizational strengths and challenges were surfaced during the assessment.



Staffing Model

Systemic issues within the current staffing model contribute to the overtime issue

Staffing Shortage

Staffing shortages require WSF to assign OT hours to meet operational needs

Career Advancement and Retention

Career advancement is slow and difficult, greatly impacting retention and the pipeline of workforce talent

Recruitment and Hiring







Hiring practices are not generating sufficient pools of qualified maritime candidates

Cultural Issues

Culture was frequently cited as a factor negatively impacting retention

Strategic Workforce Planning Recommendations

Summary of Recommendations

					
<p>Staffing Shortage</p>	<p>Staffing Model</p>	<p>Career Advancement & Retention</p>	<p>Recruitment and Hiring</p>	<p>Cultural Issues</p>	<p>Succession Planning</p>
<p>Expand staffing in areas where understaffing exists in order to lower costs and re-establish full vessel operations</p>	<p>Reimagine the staffing model for deck and terminal staff and allocate support resources to account for more accurate staffing needs</p>	<p>Create an employee engagement and retention strategy and plan</p>	<p>Enhance talent acquisition to include strategic recruiting efforts and strategic pipeline development and adding resources</p>	<p>Conduct an engagement survey and in-depth cultural assessment with resulting action plan to remediate cultural concerns</p>	<p>Develop a formal succession planning and knowledge transfer approach and model</p>

Collective Bargaining Agreement Impacts

- **Expanded Staffing**

- Some bargaining units may not prefer the reduced overtime for members

- **Staffing Model**

- The training required to effectively implement the new staffing model and new technology will need to be integrated into the Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs)

- **Career Development**

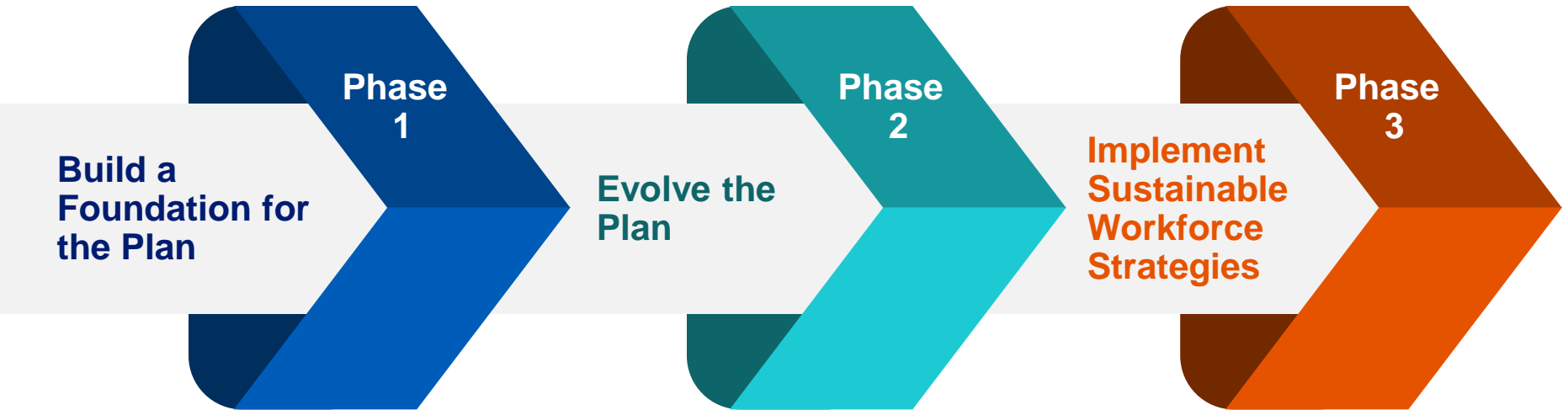
- The concept of evaluating individual performance is of concern to the labor unions
- A core question for labor partners is how performance management would be used
- Performance management would be considered an additional set of responsibilities requiring the need to be collectively bargained

- **Succession Planning**

- Succession planning is closely connected to performance management and has similar concerns among labor officials
- CBAs require that seniority and rank, rather than performance or potential, determine who is next in line for advancement and succession planning may require an adjustment in that model
- For knowledge transfer planning, would be considered an additional set of responsibilities requiring the need to be collectively bargained

Prioritized Road Map

- Segal recommends WSF follow three phases to prioritize recommendations.



- Allocate budget and create a short-term staffing plan to address staffing shortages
- Continue to offer on call staff stable hours
- Continue to utilize the staffing model to forecast workforce needs
- Determine operational staffing needs for deck and engine
- Conduct a comprehensive review of WSF data management practices and establish a data governance approach
- Develop an employee engagement and retention strategy and plan
- Add more talent acquisition staff

- Procure technology to support the staffing model
- Identify resources with the requisite skills and competencies to support the new staffing model and technology
- Create an employer brand and EVP
- Develop a strategic recruiting and sourcing plan
- Establish succession planning for leaders
- Establish succession planning more broadly

- Create a change management strategy and communications plan to support the staffing model and technology
- Implement the EVP and strategic recruiting and sourcing plan
- Deploy knowledge transfer



Prioritized Road Map

Phase 1



Start	Category	Action Item
Q1 2022	Diversity and Inclusion	Select a third-party vendor to develop a formal DEI strategy for the organization
	Performance Management and Career Development	Conduct an assessment of current career ladders processes, practices, programs, and documentation. Consider conducting stakeholder focus groups to best understand how these are utilized today and any challenges that exist.
Q2 2022	Recruitment and Hiring	Create the budget request for the AB to Mate Credentialing and Pilotage Program including budget for a project manager to lead the initiative
Q3 2022	Recruitment and Hiring	Establish a working team within HR to develop the Employee Value Proposition
		Assess the current state of the employer brand, both internally and externally, including examining all new employee and recruiting processes, interactions, and branding materials
Q4 2022	Staffing Shortage	Stand up a cross-functional task force to oversee the documentation of business and system requirements and research of technology vendors. Consider utilizing outsourced resources or DOT technology resources if internal resources don't have the capacity or the competencies to do this work.
Q1 2023	Recruitment and Hiring	Conduct a leadership working team session to develop a training strategy for WSF
	Staffing Shortage	Establish a working team to determine the number of additional full time positions that will be added to the deck, terminal, and engine crews utilizing the work force staffing model developed by Segal and conduct 2 to 3 working sessions
		Determine the percentage of overtime WSF is willing to offer employees utilizing the work force staffing plan, including collaborating with labor unions
		Determine what will need to be done to continue to offer on call resources a stable amount of hours including updates to policies, budget requests, processes, updates to job descriptions, etc. (To ensure this is part of the base budget)
		Establish a data governance council and data integrity team charged with conducting a comprehensive review of WSF data management practices and establishing a data governance approach
Q2 2023	Performance Management and Career Development	Create a performance management process (in accordance with collective bargaining agreements) for all roles within deck, engine, and terminal aimed at developing employees and advancing their career goals
		For deck and engine staff determine who will serve as a single point of contact that can serve as a mentor and manager beyond leadership that is provided on the vessel. Update job descriptions if appropriate to outline new duties and responsibilities.
	Cultural Issues	Examine and analyze the effectiveness of the current employee engagement survey tool and determine any changes that will be needed
	Recruitment and Hiring	Establish focus groups among deck, engine, and terminal employees to define what is valued from an employment perspective and what should be included as part of the EVP
	Succession Planning	Select a formal succession model for leadership roles (e.g. Captains, Chief Engineers, Terminal Supervisors, etc.), such as the 9-box grid model. Consider utilizing a third-party vendor to with the selection and design.
Q3 2023	Compensation	Address compensation concerns by conducting a formal compensation analysis for the engine room. Determine if a third-party vendor should be engaged to conduct this analysis and if so, establish a budget and procure a vendor.

Prioritized Road Map

Phase 1



Start	Category	Action Item
Q4 2023	Recruitment and Hiring	Conduct a detailed assessment of the current recruiting practices
Q1 2024	Succession Planning	Create a process and tool for conducting an inventory of critical skills, competencies, and required experience for key roles that will make up the knowledge transfer process
Q3 2024	Staffing Shortage	Continue to model data and anticipate staffing levels on an annual basis taking into consideration turnover and unplanned absences in a manual fashion until a new model and technology can be put in place
	Staffing Shortage	Provide administrative and operational support resources to collect data and update the model on an ongoing basis

Prioritized Road Map

Phase 2



Start	Category	Action Item
Q1 2022	Performance Management and Career Development	Establish a small working group made of HR and Operations leaders to develop career ladders and create strategies, processes, and programs to support growth opportunities to provide employees opportunities for advancement. In particular, provide an effective route to move from unlicensed deck to captain.
	Recruitment and Hiring	Provide an opportunity for experienced mariners with licenses to move into captain positions swiftly
Q3 2022	Diversity and Inclusion	Establish a training and development strategy that should take place to support the diversity, equity, and inclusion strategy and identify any additional resources or budget to support
		Create training curriculum to support the diversity, equity, and inclusion strategy
Q2 2023	Recruitment and Hiring	Determine the number of a talent acquisition resources needed to enable quicker time-to-hire and support the talent acquisition needs. Ensure these individuals have the skills and competencies in strategic recruiting and talent acquisition.
	Staffing Shortage	Conduct a comprehensive review of WSF data management practices and establish a data governance approach that includes aligning data collection with institutional reporting needs
		Conduct a comprehensive review of WSF data management practices and establish a data governance approach that includes integrating data sources where appropriate
		Conduct a comprehensive review of WSF data management practices and establish a data governance approach that includes identifying and rectifying data inconsistencies
		Create an RFP to bid for a new technology system and select a vendor
	Diversity and Inclusion	Establish specific goals and objectives WSF would like to achieve through its diversity and inclusion efforts
		Conduct an inventory and outline of all the current diversity and equity programs and practices with their intended outcomes for the organization
		Articulation of how the diversity, equity, and inclusion strategy will intersect with other key areas for the organization, such as recruiting and retention, succession planning, employer branding, and other areas
	Performance Management and Career Development	Implement the DEI strategy, plans, programs, and training
	Performance Management and Career Development	Determine if additional budget or resources will need to be procured to implement changes to career ladders and employee advancement. Make any budget requests.
Recruitment and Hiring	Develop a specific statement and articulate the employee value proposition	
	Develop and document employer branding strategy for both current and prospective employees	
	Create a strategy and implementation plan for ensuring the employee value proposition is consistent through all parts of the organization and during the recruiting experience	
	Determine if WSF will launching a formal employer of choice initiative to bolster recruiting efforts and allocate resources to support this effort	
	Create the budget request during the supplemental budget cycle	

Prioritized Road Map

Phase 2



Start	Category	Action Item
Q2 2023	Recruitment and Hiring	Establish formal partnerships with community organizations, businesses, marine academies, etc., as potential candidate sources
		Consider internship and apprentice programs that support internal recruiting and staffing needs
	Staffing Shortage	Examine the organizational model and determine if re-design will need to occur as a result of the additional staffing levels. Account for impacts to administrative and managerial staff to manage additional employees. Earmark budget to procure technology that will fully meet the operational needs of Ferries.
	Succession Planning	Create a strategy and supporting processes for integrating leadership succession planning into the operation, including identifying which roles will be included, who will be responsible, etc.
Q3 2023	Career Advancement & Retention - Compensation	As part of the compensation analysis, the compensation strategy and philosophy should be revisited to ensure that they are aligned with the strategic goals of the organization
		An effective market analysis should be conducted to ensure a competitive compensation structure, including comparisons to peer organizations, as well as national, regional, and local markets
		A detailed review of total compensation an employee receives as part of their employment compensation, including health and retirement benefits and other education benefits
	Performance Management and Career Development	Link performance management and career path programs to related training and development tracks and offerings
	Recruitment and Hiring	Identify specific goals for achieving employer of choice status
Continue to advance and evolve the new mate orientation training program; need to adapt the program to occur year round rather than once a year		
Transition the pilot program and fully implement the AB to Mate Credentialing and Pilotage Program		
Succession Planning	For staff that are not leadership positions assemble three working groups, one for deck succession and one for engine succession, and one for terminal succession to help design a broader succession framework	
	Conduct 3 to 5 working sessions to develop approaches and tools for identifying critical skills and competencies, and high potential or high performing individuals that could fill at-risk positions	
	Establish clear and consistent job profiles and link to core competencies	
Q4 2023	Performance Management and Career Development	Determine the key success factors for various roles
		Establish a mechanism and tool for gathering and storing/creating an inventory of the required knowledge, skills, abilities, and attributes for roles
		Implement a process for ensuring that leaders are held accountable for conducting performance management consistent with the newly outlined process. Document the new process and accountabilities.
		Determine an approach for conducting more informal check-in and feedback sessions to promote more regular performance feedback

Prioritized Road Map

Phase 2



Start	Category	Action Item
Q4 2023	Cultural Issues	In addition to measuring engagement, institute a formal cultural action planning approach as part of a process that incorporates a coordinated and structured approach for addressing survey results in a meaningful way
	Recruitment and Hiring	Develop a strategic recruiting and sourcing strategy and plan that includes recruiting strategies and approaches for filling positions from a reactive model to fill vacancies as they occur, to a proactive recruiting model
		Determine what new processes and programs will need to be developed to support the recruiting and sourcing strategy and plan and create documentation outlining the details of the programs and processes to support the recruiting strategy and plan
	Staffing Shortage	Establish an approach and methodology for determining the number of staff that will be allocated to each vessel and terminal location with the increased staffing levels
		Identify the skills and competencies needed to support the new staffing model and technology
Succession Planning	Revise or implement performance management approaches to support the new leadership succession planning framework, including enhancing feedback mechanisms for managers and leaders	
	Develop a training and development strategy and plan for supporting succession planning including robust leadership development program for senior leaders and for mid-level managers, establishing mentorship and job shadowing, participating in cross-functional committees, and leadership experiences	
	Ensure appropriate resources to support the design, implementation, and maintenance of succession planning effort and make any budgetary requests to support the effort	
Q1 2024	Cultural Issues	After completion of the survey, establish a formal process for confirming priorities and areas of focus
		Identify an approach for addressing organization-wide issues and opportunities surfaced in the survey and determine how budgetary requests will be requested to support these initiatives on an ongoing basis
		Engage leaders and staff through working groups and other forums to develop targeted plans and initiatives to address survey results and improve employee engagement
	Staffing Shortage	Analyze operational staffing needs for deck crews beyond the coast guard minimums, accounting for manpower needed to fully operate the vessels, conduct training and workforce development, and provide for margin in case a staff member is unable to come to work for the day
		Identify operational staffing needs for terminal staff beyond what has been allocated based on historical budget calculations, ensure there is adequate staffing to provide supervisory support and takes into consideration customer demand
		Identify operational staffing needs for engine staff beyond what has been allocated based on historical budget calculations, ensure there is adequate staffing to provide supervisory support and takes into consideration customer demand
	Succession Planning	Assess the abilities and career interests of employees
Conduct gap analyses for deck, engine, and terminal roles to inform recruiting and training strategies		
Identify training and development priorities and needs, and revise programs accordingly		
Determine criteria and process for evaluating internal talent pools and whether an external search is needed		

Prioritized Road Map

Phase 2



Start	Category	Action Item
Q1 2024	Succession Planning	Establish internal mentoring and rotational programs to develop talent as appropriate
		Consider what impacts the succession strategy will have on the DEI objectives and integrate into the DEI strategy and plan
		Identifying the core tasks that support the key roles that will be included as part of the knowledge transfer process
		Designing strategies and programs to support the transfer of critical skills and knowledge to successors, which may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring and/or Apprentice Programs (formal or informal) • Establishing work shadowing programs • Guided experience program that features those with first-hand knowledge to provide hands-on training to successor • Employing cross-training initiatives • Establishing communities of practice programs of collaborative learning groups that allow employees to meet and broadly share knowledge to groups over a longer period of time (can be supported by technology or digital platforms) • Communication of "Best Practices" • Leveraging E-learning and Instructor-led training
		Identifying tools and technology to house inventory, and monitor and track skills needs and gaps on an ongoing basis
		Align knowledge transfer efforts and priorities with the impacts of any potential turnover
Q2 2024	Compensation	Determine what changes will occur and request any additional budget to support the changes

Prioritized Road Map

Phase 3



Start	Category	Action Item
Q2 2022	Recruitment and Hiring	Create targeted branding campaigns outlining the benefits of a career at WSF vs. a maritime role that requires travel for extensive periods of time
Q3 2022	Recruitment and Hiring	Host networking and educational events and activities within the local community to showcase WSF as an employer As part of the recruiting strategy, create plans to leverage/expand social media recruiting and promotion of employer brand (LinkedIn, Glassdoor, Facebook, etc.)
Q1 2023	Staffing Shortage	Identify administrative and overhead needs necessary to implement the staffing plan, including HR
Q2 2023	Diversity and Inclusion	Establish key performance indicators for ensuring the programs and practices are having their intended effect on culture. Consider aligning to the climate and engagement survey.
	Staffing Shortage	Document all the decisions made by the working team the short-term staffing plan to add additional full-time positions to the deck, terminal, and engine crews. Document number of employees that will be hired, their level, and anticipated timeframes for hiring the staff.
	Performance Management and Career Development	Create a communications plan and begin implementing changes for career advancement and career growth opportunities
Q3 2023	Recruitment and Hiring	Develop a targeted plan with supporting resources for achieving and maintaining employer of choice status Develop job descriptions and hire additional talent acquisition resources needed to enable quicker time-to-hire and support the talent acquisition needs. Ensure these individuals have the skills and competencies in strategic recruiting and talent acquisition.
	Staffing Shortage	Create budget request to support the short-term staffing plan, including administrative support, engine room and deck Create a recruitment and onboarding plan with timeline
	Performance Management and Career Development	Develop a training strategy and training curriculum for managers on how to effectively conduct the performance management process Provide training to managers on how to effectively conduct the performance management process
Q4 2023	Recruitment and Hiring	Integrate the recruiting strategy with the internal development programs and career paths Determine if establishing an employee referral program or any revisions are needed for additional employee referral programs Incorporate appropriate elements of the employer brand into role descriptions and job announcements
	Staffing Shortage	Conduct a comprehensive review of WSF data management practices and establish a data governance approach that includes identifying and training data stewards from varying parts of the organization Create a staffing plan and allocate budget resources to support the new technology. Consider long-term staffing needs, such as systems analysts, and administrative staffing in the staffing planning and incorporate into the staffing plan. Consider short-term staffing needs to support the implementation, such as IT project management and change management support and incorporate into the staffing plan Create a staffing plan for supporting the new staffing model. Consider a data analyst, data modeler, or similar to help manage and operationalize the new staffing model across the organization

Prioritized Road Map

Phase 3



Start	Category	Action Item
Q1 2024	Performance Management and Career Development	Develop an approach for managers to provide feedback on performance management process and incorporate any changes as necessary
	Cultural Issues	Establish a regular schedule and cadence for conducting follow-up surveys
	Staffing Shortage	Establish a budget for any additional resources that will be needed to provide change management support for the new staffing model and technology implementation and create the budget request
	Succession Planning	Develop all processes, programs, materials, and curriculum to support leadership succession efforts
Q2 2024	Staffing Shortage	Create an audience and impact analysis to fully understand the impacts throughout the organization
		Develop a change management strategy to ensure readiness and adoption for all changes
		Create a communications plan to keep all stakeholders informed of changes throughout the implementation
		Determine a learning strategy and plan for ensuring all stakeholders are trained on new systems and processes
	Succession Planning	Establish metrics to benchmark progress and success
		Create a communications strategy and plan for rolling out the new succession planning and knowledge transfer processes to the organization
Q3 2024	Compensation	Create a comprehensive change management strategy if appropriate, for the compensation changes
		Develop a communication strategy and plan for the compensation changes

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