



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**BOARD OF PILOTAGE COMMISSIONERS**

2901 Third Avenue, Suite 500 | Seattle, Washington 98121 | (206) 515-3904 | [www.pilotage.wa.gov](http://www.pilotage.wa.gov)

## **Washington State Pilotage - FAQs**

### *When is the next exam?*

While an exact date has not yet been scheduled, we have targeted April 5, 2021 for the next exam. The last Washington State Marine Pilot Exam was held November 5, 2018.

### *Where is the exam?*

The Washington State Marine Pilot Exams are held in Seattle, WA.

### *What is the exam process?*

The exam process involves submitting the application with required attachments, meeting the qualifications to take the exam, taking a written exam, and participating in a simulator evaluation.

The first step in the exam process is make sure you qualify. Check out the exam page on our website at <http://pilotage.wa.gov/exam-information.html>. Here you will find links to WAC 363-116-0751 Qualifications for Pilot Applicants and other pertinent information.

The next step is application. The application package is available on our website 4-6 months before the exam. You can also contact the Board office for a copy at either (206) 515-3904 or [PilotageInfo@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:PilotageInfo@wsdot.wa.gov).

If the Board determines that you are qualified, based on [WAC 363-116-0751](http://www.wa.gov/wac/363-116-0751), then you will be scheduled to sit for the written exam. The exam is 150 multiple choice questions and is proctored by the Board's exam consultant. The Board will set a cut score after the written exam under the guidance of the exam consultant. If you score above the cut, you will move on to the simulator evaluation phase of the exam

The simulator evaluation typically takes place at Pacific Maritime Institute (PMI) in Seattle. The Board will set the cut score for the simulator evaluation under the guidance of the exam consultant. If you score above the cut, you will be placed, by rank, on a list to be called into the training program for the district you selected when a position becomes available.

If you are not successful, you are encouraged to apply for the next exam. The Board must hold an exam no more than four years after the previous exam was given.

*I have reviewed the current sea service qualification summary and I still have questions about my ability to qualify. Is there someone I can discuss my qualifications with prior to applying?*

Yes, please contact us! We strongly encourage you to reach out to Board staff and ask questions early in the process so that we can help you understand your eligibility for this exam or future exams. WAC 363-116-0751 states "The board will not provide applicants with a final determination verifying service until it receives an application form. An applicant will not get official notification of whether he/she qualifies to sit for the examination until the board reviews a formal application." However, it is referring to a FORMAL notification after Board action. We are available to help guide you through the processes prior to a formal board decision regarding eligibility.

*Where do I get materials to study?*

The Board will post an exam [reference materials](#) list on our website 4-6 months before the exam. Applicants are encouraged to form study groups!

*Are the exam questions public information?*

No. The exam questions are confidential.

*How much does it cost to take the exam?*

Exam costs vary from year to year and we do not yet know the fee structure for the 2021 exam. However, costs for the 2018 exam were as follows: \$400 for the application, \$1,500 for the written exam, and \$2,000 for the simulator evaluation.

*If I applied but was determined to be ineligible for this exam cycle, would I receive any of the fees back? How about if I did not pass the exam?*

Per WAC 363-116-078(2)(b), the Board may, at its discretion, refund all or part of the examination administration fee for a pilot applicant who is unable to sit for the written examination. If however, you do not pass the written or the simulator portion of the exam you are not eligible for a refund.

*Do you need pilotage in the area in order to take the exam?*

No. While it's a good idea to get as much federal pilotage as you can before the training program, you don't need any to qualify for the exam. Most trainees get their federal pilotage while they are training.

*How is the exam graded?*

The test is developed, administered, and graded by a professional exam psychometrician. The Board sets the cut score for both the written exam ([WAC 363-116-076](#)) and simulator evaluation ([WAC 363-116-077](#)) under the guidance of the exam consultant.

*Is there a maximum age to take the pilot exam or to become a pilot?*

Per [RCW 88.16.090](#) the minimum age to be licensed is 25 and the maximum age is 70.

*How many pilot trainees do you anticipate accepting into the program?*

There is no set number. The test results and cut score dictate how many there will be. As a reference, 16 successful candidates were called into the training program from the 2012

trainee waiting list. So far, 10 from the 2016 trainee waiting list have been called into the training program, and 9 from the 2018 trainee waiting list.

***What is the process to become a pilot after you pass the exam and make it into the training program?***

The training program consists of 3 phases: Observation, Training, and Evaluation. Each phase consists of roughly 100 trips. In addition to the trips, there are local knowledge and conning quizzes that must be taken for each route. These quizzes are done in the BPC office.

To be eligible for licensing, a trainee must: complete the conning quizzes and local knowledge exams, successfully complete the 3 phases of the training program (Observation, Training, and Evaluation), attend Portable Piloting Unit (PPU) training, and must have all necessary federal pilotage endorsements on their Master Mariner Credential (MMC). Other requirements for licensing can be found in [WAC 363-116-080](#).

***How long is the training period?***

Trainees have up to 36 months to complete the program. However, the average completion time is usually around 18-24 months.

***What is the schedule while in the training period?***

To earn a full stipend, trainees must take 18 trips during any given month. The trips are selected and arranged by the trainees, and are scheduled at the trainees' discretion as long as they are following the State's [rest rules](#) and additional rest rules, if any, for the particular pilotage district they are training in.

***Is it feasible to hold a second job while training?***

While receiving a stipend from the BPC, trainees are not allowed to hold other employment. Please contact the BPC for more information.

***What is the compensation as a trainee?***

Trainees receive a monthly stipend of up to \$6,000. For additional information regarding the stipend, please review the [Policy Statement](#) found on our website.

***What is the compensation as a pilot?***

There are two different districts in Washington State: Puget Sound and Grays Harbor. Pilots in the Puget Sound Pilotage District are members of Puget Sound Pilots, an association of independent contractors. Pilots in the Grays Harbor Pilotage District are employees of the Port of Grays Harbor. Compensation for each district is different. The BPC's [Annual Reports](#) are a good resource for compensation information in each district.

***What is the difference between the Board of Pilotage Commissioners (BPC), Puget Sound Pilots (PSP) and Port of Grays Harbor Pilots (PGH)?***

The role of each entity is commonly confused. The BPC is a state agency which provides regulatory oversight of pilotage in Washington State. The BPC proposes legislation, adopts rules and enforces adherence to the Pilotage Act, trains and licenses marine pilots, reports and investigates incidents, and grants exemptions to qualified vessels from pilotage.

PSP and PGH provide efficient pilotage services, which includes safely and independently pilot vessels, dispatch pilots, operate pilot boats, administer benefits and retirement packages, provide tariff billing, revenue collection, and pilot boat expenses, and coordinate continuing education for pilots.

*What is the schedule while working as a pilot?*

In the Puget Sound Pilotage District, pilots work 2 weeks on, 2 weeks off. In the Grays Harbor Pilotage District, pilots currently work 1 month on, 1 month off.

*Does the program support diversity?*

ABSOLUTELY! We have a non-discriminatory open application exam process. The BPC, in partnership with Puget Sound Pilots, established the Joint Diversity Committee in 2016 which has established connections with multiple women's maritime organizations. The committee examines barriers for women and ethnic minorities in the maritime industry, and looks for ways to increase pathways and exposure for those groups. The training program went through psychometric enhancements and validation in 2017 ensuring that all trainees receive the same opportunity to reach the same level of knowledge and expertise.

*What is the Puget Sound's safety record?*

Former USCG Commander, Captain Joe Raymond, Sector Puget Sound, offered the following comments regarding our region:

*"When I first came here four years ago, I asked my staff to pull the safety stats and compare us to the other big ports around the country; New York, Houston, Galveston, New Orleans, LA Long Beach, San Francisco. The differences are really stunning. I will say, without hesitation, that Puget Sound is the safest large port in the country. And that's something to be very proud of." – Captain Joe Raymond, January 19, 2017*



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**BOARD OF PILOTAGE COMMISSIONERS**

2901 Third Avenue, Suite 500 | Seattle, Washington 98121 | (206) 515-3904 | [www.pilotage.wa.gov](http://www.pilotage.wa.gov)

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)**

Concerning the Washington State Marine Pilot Exam

---

**Qualifications**

**What are the new requirements for master/mate time?**

*These requirements have changed since the 2018 exam, providing more flexibility in counting time as a mate. The new requirements (see [WAC 363-116-0751](http://www.wac.gov/WAC363-116-0751)) for the Ship Assist category calls for 2 years as master or 4 years sailing as a mate/master with a minimum of 1 year as master. In the ATB category, the new requirement calls for 4 years sailing as a mate/master with a minimum of 1 year as master. If you have specific questions about your qualifications, please contact the BPC.*

**Based on the varying sea time requirements for different types of vessels, how is sea time calculated if an applicant's sea time is on various vessel types?**

*A combination of an applicant's sea time is reviewed to make sure that the breadth of experience meets the qualifications. Applicants should feel free to contact the BPC if they are unsure about their qualification time.*

**How did widening the requirement for tugs increase the State's exposure to a more diverse pilot group when a number of future good hires are available in the lower ranks of unlimited tonnage vessels.**

*We are always looking at ways to broaden the applicant pool while maintaining our high standards for safe pilotage.*

**With the new qualification requirement of combined barge/tug capacity, how can applicants represent that in their sea time letters? Will a list of the barges the company uses suffice?**

*Make sure that employer-confirmed sea time includes the tonnage of the barge/tug in question.*

## **Application**

**When applying for the exam, does an applicant pay the application fee immediately? When are the written exam and simulator evaluation payments due?**

*The payment instructions will be included with the application package published on our website on November 16, 2020. Only the application fee is due with the application. The written exam fee is due 10 days after an applicant is notified that they have been approved by the Board to sit for the written exam. If an applicant is successful in the written exam and moves on to the simulator evaluation, they will pay for the simulator evaluation at the simulator orientation, which takes place after the written exam.*

**Is the reference from our employer mandatory, or can one just submit references from professional colleagues? Not all applicants may want their employer to know they are considering a different line of work.**

*We are currently reviewing the reference instructions and if changes are made, they will be reflected in the documents issued on November 16, 2020.*

**In what format should sea time be submitted? In a company letter from HR?**

*We do not require a standard format. Please note, however, that we do confirm sea time and must be able to decipher what is submitted.*

**If Grays Harbor is an applicant's first choice but the Port is at their maximum for pilots, are applicants able to maintain their call position for Puget Sound?**

*Applicants can choose to train in either district and have the option to decline whichever district they receive an invitation from to await an invitation for the other district.*

---

## **Exam - General**

**How will COVID-19 affect the exam and what contingency plans have been made?**

*The BPC is prepared for a safe setting for the written exam and simulator evaluation, and appropriate social distancing. We are aware that people are concerned about what might happen if they get COVID ahead of the exam. We encourage aspirants to quarantine ahead of time to avoid possible exposure.*

**What is the likelihood of there being another exam after this one if an aspirant does not have the necessary masters time by April?**

*The BPC must hold an exam at least every 4 years. We will be better able to predict when the next exam would need to be held after we see how many applicants pass the written exam and simulator evaluation and are ranked on the trainee list.*

**How does a pilot aspirant find out about taking an exam prep course?**

*The BPC does not recommend any specific prep course.*

**How can applicants make themselves available for study groups?**

*You can always contact the BPC. However, this year on the application form, there is an option to release your information for contact with other applicants.*

**How many trainees do you expect to take on after the 2021 exam?**

*There is no set number of how many trainees can make the list as long as you pass the cut score for both the written exam and simulator evaluation.*

**Are there two separate tests, one for Puget Sound and one for Grays Harbor?**

*No, there is one test with the option to apply for either Puget Sound, Grays Harbor, or either district. The test is not location specific and is not a test of knowledge of local waters.*

**Can aspirants or applicant visit with Puget Sound Pilots or the Port of Grays Harbor prior to the exam?**

*Although we absolutely encourage visits, with COVID-19 restrictions there may be some limitations on access, such as no visits to the pilot station at this time. We encourage you to reach out to each entity or Board staff to see what their restrictions include.*

**What are the prospects of a position becoming available in the Grays Harbor Pilotage District?**

*Unlike Puget Sound, which has several openings currently, Grays Harbor is not currently seeking another pilot trainee. However, they have two possible pilot retirements within the next decade.*

**With a smaller amount of annual movements in Grays Harbor, how many pilots will be required moving forward?**

*Grays Harbor is currently authorized for 3 pilots and is engaged in expanding port operations.*

**Is there a recency sea time requirement once placed on a waiting list?**

*Not for the Board. However, an applicant's MMC must be in valid status upon commencement of the training program.*

**If an applicant passes written exam and simulator evaluation, and they don't get called into the training program within 2 years, will they need to retest?**

*Per the Pilotage Act, [RCW 88.16.190\(4\)](#), the Board cannot issue a training license more than four years after an exam. Historically, all successful candidates have been called into the training program prior to*  
FAQs – Washington State Marine Pilot Exam – Board of Pilotage Commissioners

*the four-year deadline.*

**Is there another way, besides the application, for an applicant to get their name on the study group list? If for example, one could be at sea and unable to submit the application immediately but would like to get studying in a group sooner.**

*BPC can connect applicants with study groups. Please contact Jolene Hamel.*

---

## Written Exam

**Will the written exam be multiple choice or written answers?**

*The written exam is multiple choice.*

**Most of the references from the 2018 reading list include offshore mooring information. Will that be covered in the exam?**

*The 2021 exam reference list will be available on November 16, 2020 on our website. We recommend reviewing that list as opposed to looking at previous exam references.*

**When will the Reference List for the 2021 Exam be released/distributed?**

*Exam reference materials, along with the application package, will be available on the BPC's website on November 16, 2020.*

*Visit <https://pilotage.wa.gov/exam-information.html>.*

**How many applicants do you expect to sit for the exam?**

*We really do not know until applications are received. For the 2016 and 2018 Exams, we had about 25 applicants.*

**Is there a good practice quiz BPC would recommend?**

*The BPC cannot recommend any specific practice quizzes. The references list we will provide on November 16, 2020 will provide the right material(s) to study.*

**Will applicants be allowed to bring a calculator to the written exam or will there be calculators available? What other tools should an applicant bring? Protractors, triangles, etc.?**

*A list of instructions will be distributed prior to the written exam and simulator evaluation. Calculators, if needed, have been provided during past exams.*

---



## Simulator Evaluation

### **Does the simulator evaluation incorporate local knowledge?**

*No. The simulator evaluation does not test local knowledge.*

### **Should applicants living out of state expect to be available all days April 12-15 for the simulator evaluation or can specific dates be scheduled ahead of time?**

*If an applicant is successful in the written exam, they will advance to the simulator evaluation.*

*Successful applicants will be given their time slot during the simulator orientation session held the week of the written exam. The applicant will only need to be in Seattle during their time slot the week of the simulator evaluations.*

### **Does the BPC recommend a certain simulator for practice purposes?**

*While the BPC cannot recommend any specific simulator, a list of simulators around the United States is available on our website. The simulator evaluation for our exam will take place at Pacific Maritime Institute in Seattle, WA.*

### **Is there any chance the simulator exam will run more than four days?**

*The amount of days devoted to the simulator evaluation will be based on how many applicants qualify. An applicant's specific time slot will be provided on orientation day.*



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**BOARD OF PILOTAGE COMMISSIONERS**

2901 Third Avenue, Suite 500 | Seattle, Washington 98121 | (206) 515-3904 | [www.pilotage.wa.gov](http://www.pilotage.wa.gov)

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)**

Concerning the Washington State Pilot Training Program

---

**How does a pilot trainee obtain Federal Pilotage for their preferred district?**

*Applicants are not required to have local knowledge or federal endorsements for an area before they begin training in either of Washington's pilotage districts. While federal pilotage is not part of the State's pilot training program, a trainee can work on their federal pilotage endorsements alongside their state training. Successful candidates on the Pilot Training Program waiting list are encouraged to begin work on their federal endorsements as soon as feasible, however. Information about required trips in this area can be obtained from the USCG or from BPC staff. All Federal pilotage for the district must be completed before state licensure.*

**How do pilot trainees get training program trips?**

*Trainees have access to the PSP dispatch list and will communicate with both the pilot assigned to a particular assignment and fellow trainees to schedule trips. In Grays Harbor trainees have access to ship arrivals and departures through the Port of Grays Harbor or the licensed pilot.*

**Is Washington State and the USCG working on making a plan for having testing more accessible for pilot trainees, especially during COVID?**

*The USCG Regional Exam Center (REC) Seattle reopened to the public from their COVID-19 closure on September 14, 2020. They are processing exams and charts as quickly as possible. The BPC appreciates our USCG partners for recognizing their vital role in getting pilot trainees licensed.*

**How do pilot trainees balance family life and training life during the training program?**

*Although this is a rigorous training program, one of the best features is that pilot trainees set their own schedule. As long as they can complete the training program in the maximum 36 months, they can build the program to reflect their needs. We have had trainees plan a wedding during their training, we have*

single parents, and “training babies” born throughout trainees’ programs.

**What is the stipend for pilot trainees in Washington State?**

*The current stipend is \$8000.00 per month and is dependent on meeting a set number of trips a trainee must take during that month. Regular, full-time training is currently 14 trips/month which provides the full \$8000 stipend. During the COVID pandemic the BPC has provided a full stipend even though training trips have been limited.*

**Does Washington State provide medical insurance to trainees during the training program?**

*Trainees are not employees of Washington State. Therefore, medical insurance is not available through the BPC. We encourage aspirants and applicants of the Puget Sound Pilotage District to look through health insurance options at Washington Health Plan Finder. The Grays Harbor Pilotage District is different. Trainees have the option of becoming employees of the Port of Grays Harbor during training, which provides access to the Port’s medical insurance and other benefits.*

**For captains coming from US Flag Vessels, how was entering the trainee program, boarding foreign flag vessels, and adjusting to their protocol and communication practices?**

*There is always an adjustment period in the beginning of the training program. The good news is that no matter your experience, the volume and variety of different vessels and waterways will prepare trainees for all the various protocols and styles.*

**Do the GH pilots live locally or are they coming in from afar when on duty?**

*Grays Harbor pilots have both lived local and also traveled in from other areas when on duty.*

**Is there a strategic location pilot trainees should choose to live for best access to jobs?**

*Washington State pilots (and current pilot trainees) live across the region. We encourage pilot candidates to get to know the area and find what is best for them and their circumstances.*

**How do pilots handle having up to four trainees on a job? Is this the maximum number or is there an effort to limit trainee numbers aboard?**

*We have always limited the number of trainees onboard a vessel and limited it even further to maintain COVID-19 protocols. We continue to monitor the progress of trainees in the training program at any given time. Under normal circumstances there are about ten trainees at a time.*



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**BOARD OF PILOTAGE COMMISSIONERS**

2901 Third Avenue, Suite 500 | Seattle, Washington 98121 | (206) 515-3904 | [www.pilotage.wa.gov](http://www.pilotage.wa.gov)

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)**

Concerning Pilotage in Washington State

---

**General**

**Who determines how many pilots to bring in? If it is the pilots by vote, is this a 2/3 majority or a simple majority?**

*The BPC, pursuant to [RCW 88.16.035\(1\)\(d\)](#), determines the number of pilots necessary to be licensed in each district to optimize the operation of a safe, fully regulated, efficient, and competent pilotage service. The BPC considers many factors, which are outlined in [WAC 363-116-065](#), when setting the number of pilots. The number of pilots is not set by the pilots.*

**What other costs come out of pilot fees and what percentage are they? Do you foresee those costs increasing over time?**

*Please review the financial report(s) included in our Annual Reports on for details of pilot fees. Pilot costs vary year to year, so it is impossible to foresee variances. The reports can be found at <https://pilotage.wa.gov/annualreports.html>.*

**Once a trainee is licensed, are they required to live full time in Washington state?**

*There is no Washington state requirement that state-licensed pilots must live in the state.*

**Puget Sound Pilots (PSP)**

**How long before a PSP pilot is vested in the retirement program?**

*Pilots are vested into the PSP retirement program 6 months after they become members.*

**How much is the buy in to the association?**

*The buy-in/buy out amount varies based on a 3-year average of pilot income and is paid over 72 months.*

**Do pilots get to sell their share when they retire?**

*No, PSP members do not own "shares".*

**Does PSP provide medical insurance?**

*Yes, PSP currently provides medical insurance for members of the association.*

**What is the PSP work schedule?**

*Generally speaking, PSP's work schedule is two weeks on and two weeks off. However, technically speaking, pilots are on-duty 15 days and off-duty 13 days when factoring in the overlapping period of time on change day when pilots going off-watch overlap with pilots coming on-watch.*

**Please explain personal days, vacation, and leaves of absences, How long can a leave of absence be and how does that affect medical insurance and retirement vesting?**

*PSP bylaws and operating rules, which can be found the [BPC Annual Report](#), document a rotational 7-day period of earned time off every 5 months. Major medical absences and use of earned callback days for other personal leave is subject to review for approval by PSP Board of Directors. Pilots who are absent from pilotage duties for 60 days or more must request permission from the Board of Pilotage Commissioners.*

**Is there a better place vs. a worse place to live for dispatching?**

*No. Pilots live all around the Puget Sound Pilotage District area.*

**Please describe the dispatching and travel, and how they figure into rest periods.**

*Pilot dispatching includes call time, prep time, travel, and rest intervals as defined in Puget Sound Pilots [Operating Rules](#), Pilotage Act ([Chapter 88.16 RCW](#)), Pilotage Rules ([WAC 363-116](#)) and Board of Pilotage Commissioners' [Policy Statement](#).*

**Please explain what a call back is. Can a pilot on his/her time off refuse to be called back to work? What about being out of the area for your off weeks?**

*Call back work is voluntary. Pilots volunteer to work callbacks during times of peak demand. It is possible to be out of the area, however, please keep in mind that pilots volunteering to work callbacks during times of peak demand still need to comply with PSP operating rules..*

**If working a call back, what is a pilot's daily pay rate vs. their normal 2-week work schedule? How does that effect retirement contributions and sharing in association expenses?**

*When a pilot works a callback day, they earn equivalent time off known as comp days in lieu of extra*

*pay. Comp days may be used for relief during the pilots scheduled on-watch period for sick leave, personal matters, fatigue, and exhaust any remaining balance before retirement.*

**Once the training is completed, are all pilots equal? Are they equal in dispatch, pay, votes, and retirement plans act? Is there any kind of seniority for dispatch purposes or anything else? If there is any multi-tiered system, please describe it.**

*All pilots receive the same compensation and benefits regardless of their license levels.*

**Is there a risk of a competing pilot group forming in Puget Sound? Has there been one in the past?**

*We are unaware of any current risk. A small group formed in the early 1980's called the Port Angeles Pilots. However, they dissolved within a couple of years and rejoined Puget Sound Pilots.*

**How does the long-term manning vs. projected traffic look?**

*We currently are experiencing a level of shipping traffic and surges that cannot be fully covered by the on-duty pilot roster. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, vessel schedules and forecasts have been and continue to be unpredictable.*

**How many days is a pilot required to work per year and can they plan their time off to spend with family in advance?**

*Puget Sound Pilots generally work 181 days per year based on a traditional mariner day-for-day schedule. The pilot dispatch rotation schedule allows pilots to plan, however, their volunteer participation in call back work is another factor of consideration and potential disruption to plans.*

**What is the pilot retirement forecast for the next decade?**

*As outlined in [RCW 88.16.090\(2\)\(ii\)](#), mandatory retirement is at age 70. There will continue to be retirements and opportunities for replacement pilots in Puget Sound throughout the decade.*

**How does PSP's schedule compare to other West Coast pilot groups?**

*The Board of Pilotage Commissioners does not have the schedules for other West Coast Pilot groups to make that comparison. In general, comparisons are difficult due to the geographic differences. Puget Sound Pilots follow a traditional mariner day-for-day schedule.*

**What does the term "three nights and out" refer to?**

*After three consecutive night assignments, Puget Sound pilots shall have a mandatory rest period of at least 12 hours, including at least one period between 2000 and 0800. This mitigates circadian misalignment associated with pilots having too many consecutive night assignments.*

**How is the 2 weeks on 2 weeks off pilot schedule maintained? If it requires more pilots, what actions are being taken to increase the amount of pilot trainees?**

*The number of trainees in the program reflect the likelihood of available training trips. COVID has placed limitations on those numbers. The Training Evaluation Committee (TEC) continuously reviews trip*

*availability and matches the number of trainees to that availability.*

**Regarding work schedule as a pilot, is it the intention for the schedule of pilots to remain equal time on and equal time off in the future?**

*At present there is no discussion of changing the current structure of the pilots' schedule.*

**As the ships continue to grow, are the Puget Sound ship assist tugs meeting/exceeding that growth?**

*The number of assist tugs is controlled by market, not by the BPC.*

**Do you foresee the total number of pilots growing or is the BPC comfortable with the current size of the group?**

*Currently, there are 56 authorized pilot licenses in Puget Sound, but only 50 licensed pilots. Increasing the number of authorized licenses will not be considered until the current number of available slots are full. At the current training rate this could take several years.*

**Does PSP have a buy-in similar to other pilot groups?**

*PSP does have a buy-in. However, the buy-in is done over a 6-year (72 months) period while pilots are working towards an unlimited license, not all at once.*

**Will there be a move to align WA's assignment lengths with other west coast jurisdictions?**

*The unique geography of Puget Sound and the port locations within the districts are the primary factors contributing to assignment lengths.*

**How do PS pilots handle the long stretch at sea speed from West Point to the station? This combined with the size of the district, creates long travel time. How often are pilots resting at home during their assignment? Are they often left alone with only the mate and helmsman with the master below? Does this stretch add to a level of boredom later in a pilot's career?**

*The transit length requires continual situational awareness on the part of pilots. The BPC has not had indications of pilot boredom on their routes. Pilots are personally responsible for obtaining adequate rest while at home.*

## **Port of Grays Harbor (PGH)**

**How does the PGHs' pilot schedules compare to other West Coast Pilot Groups?**

*The Port of Grays Harbor has typically operated with two licensed Pilots. Pilots who work in the Grays Harbor Pilotage District work one month on, one month off, which is not the standard schedule for most pilot groups. A schedule for three licensed Pilots has not been determined at this time.*

**Regarding work schedule as a pilot, is it the intention for the schedule of pilots to remain equal time on and equal time off in the future?**

Yes.

**Once the training is completed, are all pilots equal? Are they equal in dispatch, pay, votes, and retirement plans act? Is there any kind of seniority for dispatch purposes or anything else? If there is any multi-tiered system, please describe it.**

*Grays Harbor pilots are employees of the Port of Grays Harbor and the Port determines their pay which has been the same for each pilot. Port employees become members of the Washington State Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) from their date of employment. It takes five years for pilots to have unlimited licenses, but based on the current ship tonnage, pilots are able to pilot most ships entering Grays Harbor within two years. Pilots are self-dispatched and talk directly to ships' agents.*

**As the ships continue to grow, are the Grays Harbor ship assist tugs meeting/exceeding that growth?**

*The Port of Grays Harbor has an exclusive agreement with Brusco Tug & Barge to provide safe and adequate ship assist.*

**How does the long-term manning vs. projected traffic look?**

*The Port of Grays Harbor has averaged 92 vessel arrivals per year over the last ten years. Over that same period, these arrivals have translated to an average of 230 shifts or 115 shifts per pilot per year. The Port's goal is to maintain pilot staffing at that level long term.*

**Do you foresee the total number of pilots growing or is the BPC comfortable with the current size of the group?**

*Currently, there are 3 authorized pilot licenses in Grays Harbor. As of today, there are 2 licensed pilots, and 1 trainee. One pilot intends to retire in 2021.*

**What is the pilot retirement forecast for the next decade?**

*As outlined in [RCW 88.16.090\(2\)\(ii\)](#), mandatory retirement is at age 70. There is one mandatory retirement occurring at the PGH within the next decade.*

**Does PGH provide medical insurance?**

*PGH pilots are employees of the Port of Grays Harbor and receive a benefit package including medical insurance.*

**How long before a PGH pilot is vested in the retirement program?**

*Port employees become members of the Washington State Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) from their date of employment. PERS provides a defined benefit retirement plan upon retirement. The retirement program vests after 5 years.*



**Please explain personal days, vacation, and leaves of absences. How long can a leave of absence be and how does that affect medical insurance and retirement vesting?**

*This question is best answered by the Port of Grays Harbor, whom would love to meet with any/all potential Grays Harbor aspirants personally to help them really understand the intricacies of a smaller port and state benefits. Vacation and sick leave are granted with pay to full-time and part-time regular employees in accordance with Port Policy. Leaves of absence and the terms within are negotiated individually.*