



# STATE OF WASHINGTON BOARD OF PILOTAGE COMMISSIONERS

**BPC Mission:** to ensure against the loss of lives, loss of or damage to property and vessels, and to protect the marine environment by maintaining efficient and competent pilotage service on our State's inland waters.

## THE BPC PILOTAGE QUARTERLY

Summer 2024



### Announcements

**Puget Sound Licensures**  
CONGRATULATIONS  
to  
Captains George  
Fleischfresser and Billie  
Sturgell  
for their licensures in the  
Puget Sound  
Pilotage District!

### 2024 Marine Pilot Exam Wrap-up

The 2024 Washington State Marine Pilot Exam process concluded at the June 20 BPC meeting with the adoption of the 2024 final ranked training program waiting list (right).

Congratulations to those who made it onto the list! And for those that didn't, we hope you will consider trying again in the future!

The Written Exam was conducted virtually on April 8, 2024. Twenty aspirants who Successfully passed the Written Exam were then invited to participate in the Simulator Evaluation the week of April 22, with 13 successfully completing the entire exam process.

#	Captain	District
1	Ryan Campbell	PS or GH
2	Derek Britton	PS or GH
3	Lucas Shuler	PS or GH
4	Richard Boullion	PS or GH
5	Daniel Bolton	PS
6	Jason Woodworth	PS or GH
7	Drew Butterfield	PS or GH
8	Nick Ahrens	PS or GH
9	Samuel Anderson	PS or GH
10	Darius Rogers	PS or GH
11	Christopher Adams	PS or GH
12	Christian Omdal	PS
13	Conor Sullivan	PS or GH

In 2024, the BPC implemented several changes to the exam process:

- Introduction of a public-facing Aspirant Handbook
- Exam content outline and blueprint posted to BPC website
- Virtual live proctoring of the Written Exam
- Remote Proctoring Guideline provided to eligible aspirants
- One-on-one meetings with psychometric consultant available to aspirants for any concerns related to exam process

The BPC's exam consultant, Dainis & Co., conducted a Job Task Analysis (JTA) with the participation of actively working and retired marine pilots to develop a comprehensive overview for the role of a Washington State Pilot. They then used the JTA as the foundation for the exam development.

*The exam process is a heavy lift for the BPC. We would like to acknowledge the contributions of the committees, Board members, staff, consultants, and most importantly, the pilots! Pilots are the subject matter experts and their participation in the exam process is vital to the building the list of qualified candidates.*

**THANK YOU ALL!**



From left: BPC Chair Sheri Tonn, Captain Fleischfresser, and Lindsey Howard. And Captain Fleischfresser with BPC Training Program Manager Jolene Hamel at the May 2024 meeting.



Above: Captain Sturgell along with his family virtually attending the June 2024 meeting. And left: Captain Sturgell.



# Farewell to Captain Laird Hail

The BPC wishes to take a moment to honor Captain Laird Hail, recently-retired Director of the Puget Sound Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) at Coast Guard Sector Puget Sound. As a Coast Guard Academy graduate, Captain Hail spent 26 years in the Coast Guard in command of various Coast Guard Cutters. After officially retiring from the Coast Guard, he moved into his role at the VTS.



Image courtesy of Bremerton-Olympic Peninsula Council League of the US.

Captain Hail has been a valuable partner of the pilots, the Canadian Coast Guard, and the BPC in the safe navigation of vessels in the Salish Sea. He has been a regular at our monthly meetings for many years, bringing vital information regarding our state's waters. Many thanks to Captain Hail!

New VTS Director Genaro Villegas joined our August meeting to introduce himself. We welcome him and look forward to our continued partnership with VTS.

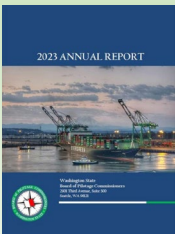
## Number of Pilots

In April, the BPC began the process of determining the number of pilots in the Puget Sound Pilotage District. At the request of the Board, the Pilot Safety Committee (PSC) analyzed 5 years of pilot assignment data, quantifying the number of licensed pilots, the amount of Not Fit for Duty time, the number of on-watch assignments, the number of training days, and the number of upgrade trips – all the things that take up pilots' time. The group voted to recommend a Target On-Watch Assignment Level (TAL) of 123 assignments per pilot per year to align with the BPC's stated goal of limiting off watch assignments to a rate of 5% or less per year. In June, the Board unanimously voted to set the TAL at 123 assignments per pilot per year, which does not include any callbacks.

In August, the Board considered the BPC Staff Recommendation, which was based on staff review of the submittals and rebuttals. The recommendation was to increase the authorized number of pilots to 60, based on available data, trends in assignment levels, and expected retirements (both mandatory and elective). After dissemination of the data and discussion, the Board then voted to increase the Authorized Number of Pilots for the Puget Sound Pilotage District from 56 to 60 and for the PSC to investigate comp day usage, potentially developing safeguards and guidelines – 7 in favor and 2 opposed. Detailed information of this process can be found at <https://pilotage.wa.gov/number-of-pilots.html> and <https://pilotage.wa.gov/2024---2025.html>.

## 2023 BPC Annual Report

The [2023 BPC Annual Report](#) is now available! Our Annual Reports are a great way to learn about the important work we do throughout the year as well as general information about Washington State Pilotage. Learn about our exam, training, and licensing process and DEI initiatives. Our reports also contain financials for both districts. Do you have a comment about the reports? Let us know at [PilotageInfo@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:PilotageInfo@wsdot.wa.gov).



Have you noticed? We've refreshed our logo!



Before



After

The BPC Pilotage Quarterly is a publication of the Board of Pilotage Commissioners. It is available online at [www.pilotage.wa.gov](http://www.pilotage.wa.gov). To join our distribution list, email [PilotageInfo@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:PilotageInfo@wsdot.wa.gov), or call (206) 515-3904.

## District Snapshots

### Puget Sound



#### Retirements:

Captain Kearns – July  
*Thank you for your service!*

#### License Upgrades to Unlimited:

Captain McGrath – April  
Captain Seamans – June  
*Well done, Captains!*

#### Training Program:

Currently training are Captains Michelson, Wood, and Sabbath.

Captain Shuler will begin training September 1.  
Captains Britton, Boullion, and Woodworth will begin training on October 1.

### Grays Harbor



#### Training Program:

Captain Ryan Campbell will begin training in Grays Harbor by May 1, 2025.

