Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission

# Increasing Training Capacity: Preliminary Report

Prepared by Precision Edge Performance LLC
WSCJTC Contract No. 2024-C101

# Executive Summary

The Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission (WSCJTC) is tasking Precision Edge Performance LLC to provide recommendations to the Governor and appropriate committees of the Washington State Legislature for:

1. Identifying the demand for additional basic law enforcement academy courses and advanced training needs.
2. Developing a plan to provide basic law enforcement academy training to limited law enforcement and tribal law enforcement officers, including additional capacity for training classes.
3. Developing a plan for providing at least two basic law enforcement training academy classes per year to candidates who are not yet employed with a law enforcement agency. The plans will include:
   a. A recruitment strategy that emphasizes recruitment of diverse and capable candidates.
   b. Pathways from training to employment with a law enforcement agency.
   c. Recommendations addressing capacity for and the delivery of training.

A feasibility analysis will be conducted to identify, analyze, and properly organize an overview and comparison of the requirements, current capabilities, and additional assets (i.e., training instructors and budgets), entities (i.e., employee unions), or components (i.e., scheduling of training classes) that must be taken into consideration when developing comprehensive, sustainable plans that allow for increased training capacity.

This Preliminary Report details the plan for collecting and analyzing data intended to inform recommended courses of action for law enforcement training capacity. This report includes the following sections:

1. Introduction. Sets the foundation and expectations for the project.
2. Methodology. Details the approach and data collection methods that will be used.
3. Current Status. Details the status of the work being conducted.
4. Next Steps. Identifies the next steps as the project progresses.
5. Conclusion. Identifies additional considerations that will further inform the Final Report.

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# 1. Introduction

The Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission is tasking Precision Edge Performance LLC with conducting a feasibility analysis from September 2023 to September 2024 to identify, analyze, and properly organize an overview and comparison of the requirements, current capabilities, and additional assets (i.e., training instructors and budgets), entities (i.e., employee unions), or components (i.e., scheduling of training classes) that must be taken into consideration when developing comprehensive, sustainable plans that allow for increased training capacity.

The data derived from this analysis can be used to help WSCJTC and the Legislature make effective decisions related to training capacity solutions and/or management interventions directed at increasing training capacity and decreasing the number of law enforcement vacancies within the state of Washington.

## 1.1 Purpose

This project seeks to assist WSCJTC in providing recommendations to the Governor and appropriate committees of the Legislature for:
1. Identifying the demand for additional basic law enforcement academy courses and advanced training needs.
2. Developing a plan for providing basic law enforcement academy training to limited law enforcement and tribal law enforcement officers, including additional capacity for training classes.
3. Developing a plan for providing at least two basic law enforcement training academy classes per year to candidates who are not yet employed with a law enforcement agency. The plan will include:
    a. A recruitment strategy that emphasizes recruitment of diverse and capable candidates.
    b. Pathways from training to employment with a law enforcement agency.
    c. Recommendations that address capacity for and delivery of training.

## 1.2 Context

The need for law enforcement officers to be properly trained, placed within an agency, and supported as their career progresses, is a critical facet of public safety and community engagement. Job-specific training, agency human resource requirements, and training logistics limitations have a wide and nuanced scope, which can make developing sustainable, cost-effective law enforcement training programs challenging. With the additional requirements related to increasing diversity in hiring practices, accommodating budget changes, and fulfilling agency placement requirements, the equation for developing, implementing, and sustaining effective, high-quality training becomes even more complex! Some factors are obvious (i.e., training instructor personnel requirements, facility capacity limits, etc.), while others are not as clearly identifiable (i.e., the impact of employee union rights, employee transition to assigned agency, etc.).

If these factors are not considered when developing plans for training programs, the second and third-order effects can cause unwanted, costly problems in the future. For example, increasing training capacity to rapidly fill agency vacancies may provide an influx of more officers in the short term, but may cause a significant imbalance related to capacity for keeping up with annual training recertification requirements, budgets for technology and equipment needed for conducting training, or budgets for employee benefits and retirement pensions. To minimize unwanted negative complications in the future, a systems-based approach will be used to identify law enforcement agency training needs with the goal of developing a recruiting strategy, designing efficient pathways from training to employment, increasing training capacity, and improving efficiency of training delivery.

## 1.3 Problem Identification

Primary problem areas were identified to establish the focus of the analysis. This step was critical for defining the specific objectives, strategy, and methodology for this project. The problem areas were noted, refined, and approved in collaboration with WSCJTC and serve as the foundation for this report. The primary problem areas are as follows:
1. There are many unfilled positions/vacancies at law enforcement agencies throughout the state.
2. There is a long waitlist for Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLEA), limiting the number of certified Officers available to fill vacancies throughout the state.

## 1.4 Objectives

A review of the identified problem areas, RFP No. 2023 - Plan to Train, collaboration with WSCJTC representatives, and independent research were used to determine the objectives for this project. Identification of the current and desired state, plus current and future needs of WSCJTC's training pipelines provided information that guided the development of these objectives.

The following objectives were developed for this project:
● Determine if the current BLEA, facilities, equipment, and other supporting resources are sufficient to train the number of BLEA enrollees that require certification and provide additional advanced training throughout their career.

- Assess the impact on WSCJTC's current infrastructure of adding two additional BLEA courses per year, including the additional resources required for recruiting and hiring BLEA attendees that are not sponsored by state law enforcement agencies.
- Determine if the current structures, processes, resources, and other considerations associated with BLEA training are optimized for increasing training capacity.

## 1.5 Project Milestones

There are four distinct phases of this analysis:
1. Project kickoff and identification of stakeholders.
2. Analysis of existing programs and development of data collection tools.
3. Collect and analyze data.
4. Development of training plans and final report.

During the first phase, an initial project kickoff meeting will be conducted to determine the scope of the project and a plan will be created for developing associated data collection tools. This project will take a systems-based approach, allowing all aspects of the organization and human performance needs to be considered. During the second phase, WSCJTC's current programs will be reviewed and analyzed from a training logistics and human resources (HR) perspective. Additionally, the training and employment needs of law enforcement agencies throughout the state of Washington will be evaluated.

The third phase of this project will focus on data collection and analysis. Interviews will be conducted with WSCJTC personnel to better understand the wide-spread impact of increasing training capacity at the organizational and administrative level. Additionally, an online, agency-wide survey will be launched to law enforcement agencies throughout the state to gain a better understanding of the magnitude of vacancies and training needs at agencies. Observation of training will also be conducted to evaluate where and how training capacity could be increased. Quantitative and qualitative data will be analyzed using thematic analysis methodology to synthesize data into common themes to provide a comprehensive picture of the costs, benefits, and implications of increasing training capacity.

During the fourth phase, detailed findings from the analysis and recommended Courses of Action (COAs) will be submitted in a final report. Non-training factors that potentially influence the effectiveness of the training process (i.e., resources and staffing, communication between WSCJTC and receiving agencies, contracts, training equipment, etc.) will be included to better identify impediments to increasing training capacity.

# 2. Methodology

During this analysis process, Precision Edge Performance LLC will apply a systems-based approach to examine the complex relationships and interdependencies within the training system; short- term and long-term needs of the WSCJTC, statewide agencies, individual officers; and any underlying assumptions that need to be considered while developing the data-driven plans for increasing training capacity.

## 2.1 Approach

A standardized Human Performance Improvement (HPI) Model will be used to analyze six distinct areas that impact increasing training capacity:

- Structure and processes
- Resources
- Information exchange
- Knowledge and skills
- Motivation
- Wellness

Collecting and analyzing data in these specific categories ensures the human factors that impact and influence the required end states are addressed and incorporated. This is especially important since improved efficiency, increased repeatability, and increased predictability of training outcomes are more likely when human nuance is considered.

## 2.2 Data Collection Methods

This project will employ four primary methods of data collection: existing documentation; interviews; surveys; and observation.

### 2.2.1 Existing Documentation

Analysis of existing documentation provides important insights into organizational strategic planning and values, current procedures and processes, and additional context related to factors that impact recruitment, hiring, and training methods and strategies.

### 2.2.2 Interviews

Interviews are an important data collection tool because they provide valuable, detailed information related to optimals; actuals; causes; and solutions. Interviews are unique in that they allow the interviewer to ask probing questions to gain a deeper understanding of the interviewee's perspective.

### 2.2.3 Surveys

Online surveys will be used to gather additional information related to recruitment methods and hiring strategies from law enforcement agencies throughout the state. Surveys allow a large quantity of data to be collected quickly. An online survey tool will be used to develop questionnaires that will be electronically sent to agencies. The WSCJTC and agency point of contacts will help to distribute the online survey via email.

### 2.2.4 Observation

Observations provide an opportunity for real-time data to be collected about training facility usage, the learning environment, and the utilization of resources. Direct observation of training will be planned and conducted at training facilities.

# 3. Current Status

At the time of this Preliminary Report, Phase 1 is successfully completed. This project is in the second phase which is focused on analysis of existing programs and development of data collection tools. The WSCJTC's current programs are being reviewed and analyzed from a training logistics and HR perspective.

There are four primary activities being conducted: review of WSCJTC provided documents; review of documents from other sources; interviews being conducted with WSCJTC personnel; and initial development of data collection tools.

## 3.1 WSCJTC Provided Documents

To date, the following WSCJTC provided documents have been identified, collected, and are being reviewed:
1. WSCJTC Strategic Plan 2023-2025
2. WSCJTC One-Pager Overview
3. WSCJTC Informal Plan for Recruitment
4. WSCJTC compiled list of Chiefs and Sheriffs in Washington State
5. A Report on the Job Task Analysis Study of Entry Level Law Enforcement Officers in the state of Washington, prepared for WSCJTC by Systems Design Group
6. Documentation related to Job Task Analysis methodology (i.e., email invitation to participate, participants list, etc.)
7. BLEA registration records (January-September 2023)
8. BLEA training schedule
9. WSCJTC Capital and Functional Needs Study, prepared by Washington Department of Enterprise Services, Engineering, and Architectural Services Program
10. Feasibility Study—BLEA at USAF/Spokane CO SO Training Facility in Medical Lake, WA, and related contract agreements
11. Spokane BLEA Instructor Survey Results

## 3.2 Documents from Other Sources

Documents from outside agencies and organizations help to provide additional contextual information, historical perspective, and best practices that can be used to inform plans to increase training capacity within WSCJTC. There are several documents from outside sources that are being reviewed. These documents include, but are not limited to:
- Revised Code of Washington (RCW)
  - Chapter 43.10. Criminal Justice Training Commission - Education and Training Standard Boards

- - ■ RCW 43.101.080. Commission powers and duties - Rules and
        Regulations.
      - ■ RCW 43.101.157. Tribal police officer certification.
      - ■ RCW 43.101.200. Law enforcement personnel - Basic law enforcement
        training required - Commission to provide.
      - ■ RCW 42.101.220. Training for corrections personnel.
  - ● Washington Administrative Code (WAC)
    - ○ WAC Chapter 139-05
      - ■ WAC 139-05-200. Requirement of basic law enforcement training for
        officers.
      - ■ WAC 139-05-210. Process for equivalency.
      - ■ WAC 139-05-220. Backgrounding requirement for admission in the
        basic law enforcement academies.
      - ■ WAC 139-05-230. Physical requirements for admission to the basic
        law enforcement academy.
      - ■ WAC 139-05-240. Completion requirements of basic law enforcement
        academies.
      - ■ WAC 139-05-242. Readmission to the basic law enforcement academy.
      - ■ WAC 139-05-250. Basic law enforcement curriculum.
      - ■ WAC 139-05-300. Requirement for in-service training.
      - ■ WAC 139-05-920. Requirement of training for agriculture officers.
      - ■ WAC 139-05-925. Requirement of training for railroad police officers.
    - ○ WAC Chapter 139-07
      - ■ WAC 139-07-010. Conditional offers of employment.
      - ■ WAC 139-07-020. Background information.
      - ■ WAC 139-07-030. Psychological examination.
      - ■ WAC 139-07-040. Polygraph examination or other truth verification
        assessment.
    - ○ WAC Chapter 139-10
      - ■ WAC 139-10-210. Requirement of basic corrections training for
        correctional personnel.
      - ■ WAC 139-10-220. Completion requirements for corrections officers.
  - ● Information on the federal Police Corps initiative
    - ○ Police Corps: Some Problems Solved, But Most Positions Remain Unfilled,
      prepared by the United States General Accounting Office
    - ○ The Police Corps: A Report to the President, the Attorney General, and the
      Congress, prepared by the United States Department of Justice

## 3.3 WSCJTC Personnel Interviews

To better understand potential impact of increasing training capacity, the perspectives of a wide variety of personnel sources (e.g., trainees, supervisors, subject matter experts, etc.) should be considered. Training instructors, training managers, support staff, and administrative leadership whose job role and function are directly or indirectly impacted by increased training capacity, will be contacted and interviewed to determine the implications of increased training capacity at an

administrative and supervisory level. At the time of this report, 23 individuals have been identified; 12 individuals have been contacted; 7 have been interviewed; and 3 are scheduled for interviews.

## 3.4 Initial Development of Data Collection Tools

To standardize data collection methods, specific protocols and tools have been created. The WSCJTC personnel interview protocol is complete. This interview protocol includes an introduction to ensure all interviewees receive the same explanation regarding the scope of the project. Interview questions were grouped into the six distinct analysis areas that are being evaluated (Structure and Processes; Resources; Information Exchange; Knowledge and Skills; Motivation; and Wellness). Although some general questions were asked to each interviewee (i.e., What resources do you need to perform your job duties?), other questions were customized based on their role and area of expertise (i.e., What are the primary challenges you face when it comes to managing the facilities and infrastructure within CJTC?). These questions were provided to participants 24-hours ahead of their scheduled interview.

Additionally, development of an online survey has been started. Due to the number of law enforcement agencies within the state, this survey will help to increase the amount of data that is collected. The survey will include general demographic questions (i.e., How long have you worked in your current role?) and questions specific to each of the identified target populations (i.e., Do you have a formalized process for determining vacancies within your agency?). To increase relevance for survey participants and decrease the time it takes to complete the survey, a "display logic" function will be used to ensure each target population is presented with survey questions that are most relevant to them.

# 4. Next Steps

The work that will be performed over the next few months will be focused on carrying out a multi-pronged approach to collect data from a variety of different sources. The intent of this approach is to gain as much meaningful information as possible related to the feasibility of increasing training capacity within WSCJTC. This approach ensures a holistic, objective picture is captured, and all issues and solutions that will impact increasing training capacity now or in the future can be assessed. Moving forward there are several notable activities that will take place.

Because WSCJTC administrative and managerial staff (i.e., instructors, training managers, support staff, etc.) are directly and/or indirectly impacted by increased training capacity, interviews will continue to be conducted with a wide variety of WSCJTC personnel. Though 23 individuals have been identified and 12 have been contacted at the time of this report, there are still various job roles and functions that need to be evaluated to truly understand the impact of increasing training capacity with WSCJTC.

Another piece of essential information to consider is the training and employment needs of law enforcement agencies. All agencies may not have the same needs, so having a better understanding of their current and future needs and how WSCJTC can best support them is critical to providing useful, actionable recommendations for increasing training capacity. Over 200

agencies have been identified that will be contacted to gain further insight into law enforcement training and employment needs throughout the state.

Data collected regarding facility usage and resource management will also be evaluated during on-site training observation. Coordination related to the training schedule and training blocks that will be observed will be determined on a case-by-case basis depending on the training site.

There are also many external organizations that directly impact, support, or influence WSCJTC's ability to increase training capacity. During the preliminary work executed in this effort, there have been several external organizations identified that will be contacted during this project. These organizations include, but are not limited to:
- Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs
- Washington Council of Police and Sheriffs
- Washington Fraternal Order of Police
- Washington Police Union
- Washington State Department of Labor and Industries
- Washington State Office of Financial Management, State Human Resources Division

Additionally, research will be conducted to determine if there are any law enforcement organizations throughout the country that are currently adopting state-level recruiting, hiring, and training protocols that could inform best practices for WSCJTC.

# 5. Conclusion

Increasing training capacity is a complex problem with high and wide impacts. Thus, job-specific training and agency human resource requirements, training logistics and resource limitations can make developing sustainable, cost-effective law enforcement training programs challenging. To minimize unwanted negative complications in the future, a variety of factors need to be considered. This analysis will consider the critical factors that impact increasing training capacity to best inform recommendations for WSCJTC.