System facts
- Created June 1, 1951
- Largest ferry system in the United States
- Nearly 25 million riders in 2018
- Second largest ferry system in the world for number of vehicles carried (nearly 11 million per year)
- Fleet of 23 auto-passenger ferries
- Operates 20 terminals on 10 routes
- Approximately 1,800 employees
- 16 unions and 13 collective bargaining agreements

Key functions
Transit agency
- Third largest transit system in Washington (#1 King County Metro, #2 Sound Transit)

Marine highway
- Part of state highway network, serving eight counties and British Columbia, Canada

Link in region’s multimodal connections
- Priority loading for freight, bicycles, vanpools and carpools
- Vehicle reservations on three routes

Mover of freight and goods
- WSF vessels are specially constructed to accommodate commercial vehicles

Tourism, economic development
- Major tourist attraction and icon of Washington state
- Critical link between more affordable housing on the west side of Puget Sound and key employment centers on the east side

Safe, secure travel
- WSF works with the Washington State Patrol and U.S. Coast Guard to implement security measures to ensure the safety and security of passengers
- As a port of entry and border crossing, WSF works with U.S. Customs and Border Protection to ensure the security of the U.S. border

Challenges
Operations and Maintenance
- Aging fleet: all but 13 vessels are over 30 years old
- Boats are in service 20+ hours a day, so it is difficult to find time for adequate maintenance
- Only one relief boat, restricting system capacity when vessels breakdown
- Drydock capacity in Puget Sound is limited and difficult to adjust for emergency repairs

Workforce development
- Succession planning remains a critical priority
- Approximately half of our vessel employees are 55 years old or older and may qualify for retirement in the next five to 10 years

Future planning
- Two new multimodal terminals under construction
- Fourth Olympic Class vessel entered service in 2018

2040 Long range plan
- Recently completed a Long Range Plan that plans for the future of the ferry system through 2040

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