

2024 Year in Review



2024 was a year of change and growth at Washington State Ferries. Three strategic priorities guide WSF as it builds trust and improves reliability in the system: Service Excellence, Improved Communication and Empowered People. This year in review highlights the system's many accomplishments of 2024.

Service Excellence



Service Excellence signifies providing reliable and safe service every day.



Building our future workforce

We're focused on developing the next generation of employees. We continued to sponsor two-year scholarships with Maritime Institute of Technology and Graduate Studies to train licensed deck officers. A new apprentice program at Eagle Harbor Maintenance Facility brought in new hires to help fix terminals and vessels, keeping them in service. At our career day, over 100 high school students got a behind-the-scenes look at job opportunities. We also gave vessel and terminal tours and went to job fairs around the country to show what our employees do and help students and job seekers learn about what it takes to work at WSF. Building our future workforce" section to the text below? As we focus on hiring non-traditional mariners, women, minority groups and the LGBTQ+ community, we offered people of color 27.9 percent of our available roles, a nearly 7 percent increase from the previous year.



Rebuilding the fleet

We made significant progress to rebuilding, expanding and electrifying our fleet to make service more reliable. We're vetting three potential shipbuilders for five new 160-vehicle vessels in anticipation of a contract award in early 2025. Meanwhile, *Wenatchee* is undergoing upgrades to extend its life and convert to hybrid electric. It's expected to return to service in summer 2025. Without investment in vessel preservation, maintenance and replacement, a risk to service grows every year.



Maintaining our ferry terminals

Our ferry terminals are the front doors to our marine highway. We opened a wider, seismically safe elevated pedestrian walkway at our Bainbridge terminal. At Southworth, crews replaced decaying timber decking beneath the sidewalk leading to the ferry with steel and new concrete. And thanks to some creative thinking, we rebuilt a trailer used during construction at Colman Dock into a new office for terminal staff at Coupeville.

By the Numbers



19 million riders • Completed **142,139** trips
392 departures per day • **769,647** service miles
530 whale sightings • **114** lifesaving events
98.3% completed sailings • **31,675** hours of training
9,072,325 vehicles carried • **435.5** Dispatch calls per day
91,381 calls answered by customer service
17 open houses & public meetings
1,633,866 galley customers served
148,860 soft pretzels sold
54,004 X followers • **39,228** Facebook followers

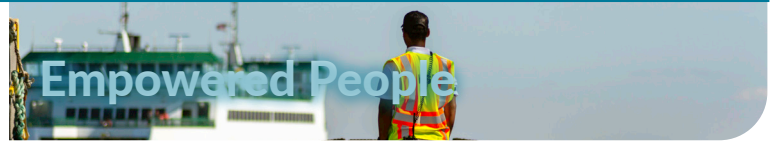
Fewest cancelled sailings since 2020

Year	Cancellations
2019	1364
2020	2140
2021	2827
2022	2972
2023	4324
2024	2610



Prepared for anything

One of our most important responsibilities is to assist in rescue operations. Training and coordination with the U.S. Coast Guard ensures we are ready as first responders. Here are a few of the outstanding efforts by our crews in 2024: The *Walla Walla* crew witnessed an overturned vessel, launched a rescue boat and recovered three people. The *Samish* crew jumped into action as a passenger went into labor near Lopez Island. The crew moved the woman to the medical room where she gave birth to baby Arlo, with help from both staff and passengers. And on Halloween, an able-bodied sailor was driving to work when he came upon a car flipped over and on fire. He used his personal fire extinguisher to put out the flames and assisted in getting the passenger out of the vehicle. Amazing job to our crews for this lifesaving work!



Improved Communication helps build trust and makes it easier for people to plan their trips.

Sharing service plans

We released our Service Contingency Plan that shares key information on our plan for adding service to unrestored routes when possible. Until new ferries arrive at the end of the decade, this outline—which will be updated in 2025—will be used to guide decision-making on adding temporary service when vessels and crews are available.

Informing the public

Our staff understands the importance of robust customer communication. We promoted the WSDOT app, which includes “Vessel Watch,” rider alerts and social media to provide passengers with timely and accurate information. In response to customer feedback, we also introduced a virtual waiting room to our vehicle reservations website to provide real-time information on estimated reservation wait times.

Involving our communities

Community engagement is vital to our decision making. We rely on public input to shape the way we communicate, construct and operate. With only two boats on our Fauntleroy-Vashon-Southworth route, we started work to update the two-boat emergency sailing schedule to increase reliability. We now run a third boat when possible. To update our Anacortes/San Juan Islands schedules, we worked with a community advisory group and held an online open house that saw over 4,700 visitors to gather feedback. Thanks to our community partners, we began a new winter schedule in December and will introduce updated spring/fall and summer schedules in 2025. We also held advisory group meetings on our Fauntleroy terminal replacement project to go along with an online open house. We met regularly with our 11 Ferry Advisory Committees, which help advise us on issues specific to individual routes and communities.

Empowered People ensures that employees have the training and support they need to handle challenges.

Recognizing excellence

We started a “Shared Values Coins” program to honor employees who exemplify our shared values of serve, respect, grow, trust and navigate. Staff received coins for actions such as going above and beyond in customer service, being positive role models and thinking critically in stressful situations. We awarded 160 coins to deck, engine room and terminal employees in 2024!

Engaging our employees

We took steps to make WSF a more attractive place to work by talking with employees about workplace culture. We hired a Cultural Strategy & Employee Experience Manager and a Cultural Engagement Specialist. These roles will help create a positive, welcoming workplace by starting programs to improve job satisfaction and overall well-being. We also started open door hours, where staff can meet with WSF leaders informally each month. As our service continues to stabilize, workplace culture is a key priority in 2025.

Focusing on our experiences

We currently host two types of employee experience groups: route focus groups and the Diversity Advisory Group. Route focus groups give staff a chance to work together on route focused issues and innovate on topics that matter most to them. The Diversity Advisory Group gives staff a safe space to share experiences while helping promote and sustain a culture valuing diversity, equity and inclusion. These groups’ work has brought systemwide change, from how we manage passenger conduct to better collaboration between terminal supervisors and licensed deck officers during service disruptions.

Thinking ahead

Our leadership reorganized to consolidate its 11 departments into five new strategic leadership teams. The teams focus on our top priorities. Developing and supporting effective leadership is vital as we lay the groundwork for long-term resilience. These moves allow us to be fleet-footed in our decision-making as we sail into 2025 and beyond.

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