Mission Statement:
The Vessel and Terminal Security Division will provide exemplary public safety services to Washington State’s mass transportation systems and critical infrastructure sites.
Background

Washington State Ferries operates the largest ferry system in the country:

- 11 million vehicles annually
- 24 million passengers annually
- 24 vessels – 20 ferry terminals
- 500 sailings every day

By comparison - SeaTac Airport handles 27 million passengers annually
Background

- Washington State Ferry routes are considered extensions of the State Highway System

- This places the responsibility for providing law enforcement services with the Washington State Patrol
1993

• WSP began providing services to the WSF as the VATS Pilot Project

• 30 Troopers and 3 Sergeants were provided by Field Operations Bureau Districts surrounding Puget Sound splitting duties between traffic control, terminal security, and working the road

• VATS mission dealt mainly with traffic control at major terminals
1997

- The department’s Canine Unit began with the deployment of two explosive detection teams on October 8, 1997. These first two dogs, the training, and equipment were purchased with a grant from the Department of Transportation (DOT) to provide coverage and security for the Washington State Ferry System (terminals and ferries) and other transportation-related premises.
The WSP VATS Mission changed – like all transportation systems, WSF was considered vulnerable to terrorist attack.
• More troopers were needed to provide enhanced security for WSF – focusing on not only traffic law enforcement, but also emergency preparedness and response

• Limited number of explosives detection canine teams were available for the new mission
2004

- The 2004 Legislative Session approved 2 additional Sergeants and 13 Cadets for a WSF Video Monitoring Center

- 1 Sergeant and 7 troopers added for an additional EOD K-9 unit

- 12 VATS troopers reassigned as 2 Sergeants 10 EOD K-9 K-9 handlers

- WSP worked closely with mutual aid partners to provide resources for MARSEC
Other significant dates

August 2, 2004
- 7 EOD K-9’s added

October 4, 2004
- 2 EOD K-9’s added

November 15, 2004
- 9 EOD K-9’s added
March 1, 2005

• VATS was established as a new division within the WSP

• Troopers and sergeants once decentralized throughout the Field Operations Bureau were consolidated into one Division
Strategy linked to TEAM Washington

1. Protect the Washington State Ferry vessels, terminals, and riders from disruptive, criminal, and terrorist acts.

2. Enhance the Washington State Patrol’s response capabilities to Washington State Ferry emergencies.

3. Develop the relationships necessary to facilitate the Vessel and Terminal Security Division mission.

The Seattle Times: Head of state ferries resigns after 2 1/2 years

Thursday, September 9, 2004, 12:00 a.m. Pacific

Permission to reprint or copy this article/photograph must be obtained from The Seattle Times. Call 206-464-3113 or e-mail reprints@seattletimes.com with your request.

Head of state ferries resigns after 2 1/2 years

By Susan Gillmore
Seattle Times staff reporter

Mike Thorne, head of the Washington State Ferries, is stepping down after 2 1/2 years. He has decided not to run for re-election to the Ferry Commission, which oversees the ferry system. Thorne, 63, said he wants to pursue other projects.

Thorne will leave the agency in January, his staff said. He has been an intern at the ferry port in Port Angeles and was appointed to the top ferry post in January 2002.

The job has been fraught with controversy. Initiative 902, which would have increased the ferry system's operating funds by $130 million over three years, was defeated by voters in the November 2002 election. The initiative would have raised the state's sales tax by 1 cent.

The ferries have been without fuel since January 2003, when the state stopped paying for ferry operations. Thorne said the ferry system is running at a deficit of about $7 million a month.

The Seattle Times: Why feds believe terrorists are probing ferry system

Sunday, October 10, 2004, 12:00 a.m. Pacific

Permission to reprint or copy this article/photograph must be obtained from The Seattle Times. Call 206-464-3113 or e-mail reprints@seattletimes.com with your request.

Why feds believe terrorists are probing ferry system

By Mike Carter
Seattle Times staff reporter

Copyright 2004, The Seattle Times Co.

Groups of men, including one tied to a federal terrorism investigation, have videotaped Washington ferry operations, prompting federal authorities to conclude the system has been under surveillance as a possible target for an attack.

U.S. Attorney John McKay, officials in the U.S. Coast Guard and other members of Seattle’s Joint Terrorism Task Force all share that conclusion.

“We may well be the target of preoperational terrorist planning,” McKay said.

A confidential FBI assessment of the threat to the state ferries is partly behind an increase in security for large-capacity ferries nationwide, McKay and others say.

The state ferry system is the nation’s largest, carrying 26 million passengers last year. It began implementing new security requirements — including tripleting the number of cars screened for explosives — this weekend.

For its assessment, the FBI gathered 157 accidents and near misses that law enforcement officers, ferry workers and passengers have reported as suspicious.
WSP Response: Layered Security

- Aviation
- K-9 Teams
- CIU
- VATS Troopers
- Video Monitoring - Trooper Cadets
- Commercial Vehicle Inspection
- Interagency Mutual Aid
- SWAT
- Bomb Squad
Layered Security - Aviation

- WSP aircraft patrol vessels & terminals looking for potential threats – such as:
  - Suspicious vehicles
  - Vessels

- Aircraft are equipped with FLIR cameras
Layered Security – K9 Teams

• Numerous explosive canine detection teams deployed throughout the WSF system
  • Handlers and canines attend 400 hours of training prior to being certified
  • All canines are trained to respond in a passive manner when they locate the source of an explosive odor
Layered Security - CIU

- CIU detective work in plain clothes, gathering critical information on suspicious activity.
- Detectives are assigned to and work closely with local, state and federal terrorism task forces investigating and sharing information about terrorist activity.
Layered Security – VATS Troopers

- Traffic Control
- Security Screenings
- Bicycle Patrols
- Vessel cabin patrols
Layered Security - Cadets

- Video Monitoring
- Traffic Control
- Spotting for canine teams
Layered Security – Commercial Vehicle Inspection

- Specially trained Troopers inspect trucks and all applicable paperwork that should correspond with the load within the truck.
Layered Security – Interagency Mutual Aid

- VATS relies on our Mutual Aid partners as first responders for incidents at WSF facilities and incidents involving WSF infrastructure
Layered Security - SWAT

- WSP SWAT Team has been trained to handle situations on vessels and terminals
- SWAT works closely with local law enforcement partners and the USCG MSST
Layered Security – Bomb Squad

• WSP has 4 bomb teams – Olympia, Marysville, Bremerton and Kennewick

• Teams all have special equipment such as – bomb suits, X-Ray, disrupters
WSF Security Committee

• United State Coast Guard
  • Captain Steve Metruck, Captain of the Port Puget Sound

• Washington State Ferries
  • Mr. Mike Anderson, Executive Director

• Washington State Patrol
  • Chief John Batiste
Current Initiatives

• Maritime Tactical Support Group
• WSF Intelligence Group
• WSP Triton Team Deployments
• Local LEA Partnerships
• Ferry Passenger Partnership Program
Thank You – Questions?