



Office of the Washington State Auditor
Pat McCarthy

Accountability Audit Report

Washington Public Ports Association

For the period January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2021

Published April 17, 2023

Report No. 1032392



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**Office of the Washington State Auditor
Pat McCarthy**

April 17, 2023

Board of Directors
Washington Public Ports Association
Olympia, Washington

Report on Accountability

Thank you for the opportunity to work with you to promote accountability, integrity and openness in government. The Office of the Washington State Auditor takes seriously our role of providing state and local governments with assurance and accountability as the independent auditor of public accounts. In this way, we strive to help government work better, cost less, deliver higher value and earn greater public trust.

Independent audits provide essential accountability and transparency for Association operations. This information is valuable to management, the governing body and public stakeholders when assessing the government's stewardship of public resources.

Attached is our independent audit report on the Association's compliance with applicable requirements and safeguarding of public resources for the areas we examined. We appreciate the opportunity to work with your staff and value your cooperation during the audit.

Sincerely,

Pat McCarthy, State Auditor
Olympia, WA

Americans with Disabilities

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AUDIT RESULTS

Results in brief

This report describes the overall results and conclusions for the areas we examined. In those selected areas, Association operations complied, in all material respects, with applicable state laws, regulations, and its own policies, and provided adequate controls over the safeguarding of public resources.

However, we noted certain matters related to disbursements that we communicated to Association management and the Board of Directors in a letter dated April 11, 2023. We appreciate the Association's commitment to resolving those matters.

In keeping with general auditing practices, we do not examine every transaction, activity, policy, internal control, or area. As a result, no information is provided on the areas that were not examined.

About the audit

This report contains the results of our independent accountability audit of the Washington Public Ports Association from January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2021.

Management is responsible for ensuring compliance and adequate safeguarding of public resources from fraud, loss or abuse. This includes the design, implementation and maintenance of internal controls relevant to these objectives.

This audit was conducted under the authority of RCW 53.06.060, which requires the Office of the Washington State Auditor to examine the financial records of the Washington public ports association. Our audit involved obtaining evidence about the Association's use of public resources, compliance with state laws and regulations and its own policies and procedures, and internal controls over such matters. The procedures performed were based on our assessment of risks in the areas we examined.

Based on our risk assessment for the years ended December 31, 2021, 2020 and 2019, the areas examined were those representing the highest risk of fraud, loss, abuse, or noncompliance. We examined the following areas during this audit period:

- Accounts payable – general disbursements, credit cards, travel expenditures and electronic funds transfers
- Procurement – public works
- Compliance with public works projects – prevailing wages
- Open public meetings – compliance with minutes, meeting and executive session requirements
- Financial condition – reviewing for indications of financial distress

INFORMATION ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION

The Washington Public Ports Association was formed by the Legislature in 1961. The Association promotes the interests of the port community through effective government relations, ongoing education and strong advocacy programs.

The Board of Trustees governs the affairs of the Association. The Board consists of one member from each port and meets twice yearly. Trustees are chosen by a majority vote of their respective port commission. The Board of Trustees authorizes a six-member Executive Committee to oversee Association administration and management and hires an Executive Director to manage day-to-day Association activities.

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Information current as of report publish date.

Audit history

You can find current and past audit reports for the Washington Public Ports Association at <http://portal.sao.wa.gov/ReportSearch>.

ABOUT THE STATE AUDITOR'S OFFICE

The State Auditor's Office is established in the Washington State Constitution and is part of the executive branch of state government. The State Auditor is elected by the people of Washington and serves four-year terms.

We work with state agencies, local governments and the public to achieve our vision of increasing trust in government by helping governments work better and deliver higher value.

In fulfilling our mission to provide citizens with independent and transparent examinations of how state and local governments use public funds, we hold ourselves to those same standards by continually improving our audit quality and operational efficiency, and by developing highly engaged and committed employees.

As an agency, the State Auditor's Office has the independence necessary to objectively perform audits, attestation engagements and investigations. Our work is designed to comply with professional standards as well as to satisfy the requirements of federal, state and local laws. The Office also has an extensive quality control program and undergoes regular external peer review to ensure our work meets the highest possible standards of accuracy, objectivity and clarity.

Our audits look at financial information and compliance with federal, state and local laws for all local governments, including schools, and all state agencies, including institutions of higher education. In addition, we conduct performance audits and cybersecurity audits of state agencies and local governments, as well as state whistleblower, fraud and citizen hotline investigations.

The results of our work are available to everyone through the more than 2,000 reports we publish each year on our website, www.sao.wa.gov. Additionally, we share regular news and other information via an email subscription service and social media channels.

We take our role as partners in accountability seriously. The Office provides training and technical assistance to governments both directly and through partnerships with other governmental support organizations.

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