

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON  
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

**WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND  
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION,  
Complainant,  
v.  
PUGET SOUND PILOTS,  
Respondent.**

**Docket TP-220513**

**REBUTTAL TESTIMONY OF  
CAPTAIN DEBORAH D. DEMPSEY  
ON BEHALF OF PUGET SOUND PILOTS**

**MARCH 3, 2023**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

I. IDENTIFICATION OF WITNESS ..... 1

II. PURPOSE OF TESTIMONY ..... 1

III. CONCLUSION.....4

I. IDENTIFICATION OF WITNESS

1  
2 **Q: Please state your name and position for the record.**

3 A: My name is Captain Deborah D. Dempsey. I am a retired Columbia River Bar Pilot.  
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5

6 II. PURPOSE OF TESTIMONY.

7 **Q: What is the purpose of your testimony?**

8 A: The purpose of my testimony is to rebut the testimony of PMSA witness Kathleen Nalty  
9 that compensation is not one of the key strategies necessary to diversify a pilot corps and her  
10 statement regarding the diversity, equity and inclusion (“DEI”) efforts of the Washington Board  
11 of Pilotage Commissioners as follows: "I don't believe it is necessary to increase compensation  
12 of Pilotage Commissioners as follows: "I don't believe it is necessary to increase compensation  
13 to effectuate changes or that an increase in compensation will increase or advance DEI."  
14

15 **Q: In her testimony addressing how to diversify a work force, Ms. Nalty emphasizes the**  
16 **importance of DEI training within an organization, inclusiveness, outreach and mentoring.**  
17 **Based on your lengthy experience working with the BPC in its DEI efforts over the last 15**  
18 **years, what did you observe about PSP's commitment to DEI training, inclusiveness,**  
19 **outreach and mentoring?**  
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21 A: I know from my many interactions with PSP and its leadership over the last 15 years and  
22 in particular during my years on the BPC DEI Committee that the Puget Sound Pilots are  
23 strongly committed to diversifying their pilot corps through all of the strategies recommended by  
24 Ms. Nalty. DEI training, outreach and mentoring have been in place for years at PSP and the  
25 report by PSP Executive Director Charles Costanzo (Exh. CPC-23) recapping PSP’s DEI efforts  
26

1 in 2022, which include adoption of the first ever maternity policy for a US pilot group,  
2 demonstrate that PSP is a national leader in pilot corps diversification efforts.

3  
4 **Q: To date, have PSP's efforts to diversify its pilot corps been successful?**

5 A: Unfortunately, no. While PSP's DEI efforts have been ongoing for years and have  
6 become increasingly visible, the group has only one female pilot and no other pilots from  
7 underrepresented communities. In my opinion, PSP's DEI efforts including its nation-leading  
8 maternity policy have strong potential to attract multiple female candidates and candidates from  
9 underrepresented communities to take the 2024 pilot trainee examination, but only if PSP's low  
10 level of compensation and benefits is increased to a nationally competitive level.  
11

12  
13 **Q: According to Ms. Nalty, an increase in pilot net income and benefits in this rate case**  
14 **is unnecessary to advance PSP's pilot corps diversification efforts. Why do you disagree**  
15 **with that position?**

16 A: With all due respect to Ms. Nalty's expertise in the DEI field, she has no experience with  
17 the maritime industry or what goes into a top mariner's decision-making process when  
18 considering the potential career move from employed captain to the pilotage profession with all  
19 of its extra responsibility and risk. All bridge officers aboard US vessels, whether oceangoing  
20 cargo ships, ferries or towboats, know that becoming a state-licensed pilot is the pinnacle of a  
21 maritime career. In considering where to apply for a pilot trainee position, key considerations  
22 will be compensation and benefits and the stability of the regulatory system funding the pilotage  
23 ground. As a former member of the Oregon Board of Maritime Pilots, I know from personal  
24 experience that prospective trainees will examine not only pay and benefits, but the conditions  
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1 surrounding the regulation of a particular pilot group. As part of this process, potential trainees  
2 will actually attend one or more meetings of the pilot commission in a particular state to observe  
3 the regulatory process on a first-hand basis. If the level of pay and benefits on a particular  
4 pilotage ground is relatively low and there is also an acrimonious relationship between the pilot  
5 group and the trade association representing largely foreign flag shipowners, I know from  
6 experience that those are negative takeaways for prospective trainees. In my opinion, if PSP is to  
7 attract a significant number of female and underrepresented candidates to take the next pilotage  
8 exam in 2024, it is critical that the UTC not only increase PSP's pay and benefits to a nationally  
9 competitive level, but resolve the currently contentious issues between PSP and PMSA on a  
10 long-term basis and put in place the tariff-adjustment mechanisms that have proven so successful  
11 throughout the country in reducing the need for expensive and hotly contested general rate cases  
12 involving pilotage systems.  
13

14  
15 **Q: If the UTC follows your recommendations to increase PSP net pay and benefits to a**  
16 **nationally competitive level and to resolve the contentious issues in this case for the long**  
17 **term, do you have a projection regarding the impact of those decisions on the recruitment**  
18 **of women and underrepresented applicants to take the next Puget Sound pilot trainee exam**  
19 **in 2024?**  
20

21 **A:** Yes. In my opinion, if the UTC increases PSP pilot income and benefits to a nationally  
22 competitive level and this rate case resolves other contentious issues for the long term, I believe  
23 there would be a significant increase in PSP pilot corps diversity with as many as three to five  
24 highly qualified female or other unrepresented applicants taking the next pilot trainee exam in  
25 2024. My opinion is based upon my contacts with mariners over the last several years, my  
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1 continued involvement in DEI outreach efforts, the overall attractiveness of Puget Sound as a  
2 region of this country and the remarkable efforts that PSP has made as a pilot corps to develop a  
3 deserved reputation for inclusiveness, DEI outreach, progressive pilot group policies and strong  
4 mentoring.

5 **III. CONCLUSION.**

6 **Q: Does this conclude your testimony?**

7 A: Yes.  
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