



Workforce Train & Educ Coord Board
2023-25 First Supplemental Budget Session
Maintenance Level - TE - WaTech Small Agency IT Service

Agency Recommendation Summary

The Workforce Board (WTB) requests funding to onboard the WaTech Small Agency IT Services to bring the agency's IT in alignment with modern standards and practices. Ongoing funding is needed to utilize WaTech Small Agency IT Services. These services would allow WTB to meet current IT and cybersecurity needs and integrate into the state enterprise environment for better connectivity with other state and local agencies.

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$0	\$335	\$335	\$335	\$335	\$670
Total Expenditures	\$0	\$335	\$335	\$335	\$335	\$670

Decision Package Description

What is the problem, opportunity, or priority you are addressing with the request?

The Workforce Board (WTB) is requesting \$335,000 annually, in ongoing funding to contract with the state's WaTech Small Agency IT Services to provide comprehensive IT and cybersecurity services and ensure compliance with all state IT and security policies. WTB currently has one facilities management FTE, who supports the entirety of the IT needs of our office (all desktop support, IT security, network administration, software, website, and hardware upgrades). Essential business functions, as well as all the standard state IT and cybersecurity practices, need much more support than current staff capacity allows. Small Agency IT Services will adequately fill the agency's needs.

Small Agency IT Services include the following products:

- User hardware (desktop/laptop computers, peripherals such as monitors, keyboard, mice, etc.) and technical support.
- Microsoft M365 (which includes email and office productivity tools) licensing and support.
- Cloud platform integration and support. This service helps small agencies connect their existing applications and data sources to cloud-based solutions, such as Software as a Service (SaaS) and Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS).
- Integration with state identity and authentication services enabling single sign-on access to applications such as HRMS, the Learning Center (TLC), and agency-owned business applications.
- Mobile device management (mobile phones and tablets).
- Network hardware and support.
- IT consultation for hardware and software purchases and IT projects.
- Assistance with navigating WaTech Enterprise Services.
- A full range of technical and security support.

Small agencies have limited resources to manage the increasing demand on IT to effectively support agency business needs. Small agencies using the WaTech service benefit from specialized technology professionals across a broad range of IT support expertise to include IT security, network support, and desktop services. By pooling these resources, WaTech can more efficiently provide these services. By dedicating resources and providing better access to IT services, WaTech will ensure that our small agency's needs are not only supported but supported more consistently.

Having WaTech Small Agency IT Services will put the WTB at a lower risk with cybersecurity and keep us in compliance with state IT standards. It further will allow WTB to focus on our business of providing service to our customers with our other IT needs outside of WaTech's services, including the Career Bridge website and private career school licensing and regulation. This will also reduce the risk of relying on a single FTE to keep our systems up and running in the new hybrid work environment.

What is your proposal?

WTB is requesting funding to join the WaTech-provided Small Agency IT Services. Doing so will allow WTB to focus on agency business needs and provide better alignment with IT best practices and policies. Using the WaTech provided Small Agency IT Support will increase the

overall IT security of our agency and reduce risk not only for WTB but the entire state.

What are you purchasing and how does it solve the problem?

WTB will be purchasing the WaTech Small Agency IT Support Service. This service is tailored to meet the IT needs of small agencies. Our current IT needs for services has outgrown the capacity of our single IT staff. We are requesting to move those duties to WaTech to allow us to focus on our other IT and program needs.

What alternatives did you explore and why was this option chosen?

We explored hiring additional staff to support our standard IT and cybersecurity needs. However, even if we received funding to hire additional staff, it is not likely that 1 FTE would have the skills and ability to perform all tasks needed.

The consequences of not funding this proposal are an increased risk in cyber security and the agency not being in compliance with state IT standards. We also run the risk of no IT support if our 1 staff is out of the office.

We feel that the best, most cost-effective option is to join the WaTech small agency IT support services, this will reduce the risk to our agency and allow our current FTE to focus on our business applications development and support.

We explored contracting with other entities outside of the state system. This option was more expensive, potential vendors were not fully aware of state standards and practices, and an outside vendor would not have access to aspects of the state's IT Infrastructure that impact our operations (such as the VPN and data vault). If we are not funded for this proposal, we will have to maintain the status quo with the limited capacity we have now. This has left our agency in a very vulnerable position, including times when our agency has been without IT support due to staff being unavailable.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

No answer was provided.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

The current cost of this services is by \$925.74 per FTE per month. At 30 FTE at WTB, the cost would be \$27,772/month based on current pricing. The service is included in the Central Service Model and actual cost is based on the total number of FTEs supported. WaTech expects the average cost per FTE to continue to decrease as more agencies are added to the service.

Workforce Assumptions:

We would keep our current staff levels to support our mission and IT services not covered in this proposal.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

This request supports the Governor's goal: Efficient, Effective, and Accountable Government by creating operational efficiency opportunities and improving constituent access to services.

Agencies must adhere to OCIO security standards and policies for protecting and managing state IT assets.

These enterprise security services that are provided by WaTech are also a core component for enhancing the state's current cybersecurity posture and are directly tied to the implementation of ESSB 5432 (2021).

This request supports the [Enterprise IT Strategic Plan 2023-25](#) with the following Goals:

1. Goal 1: Create a government experience that leaves no community behind.
2. Goal 2: Better data, better decisions, better government, better Washington.
3. Goal 3: Innovative technology solutions create a better Washington.
4. Goal 4: Transform how we work. Best workforce ever.

ESSB SB5432 requires the Office of Cybersecurity (OCS) to develop an enterprise security services catalog. The endpoint security protection service implemented as part of this initiative is an enterprise security service in that catalog.

Performance Outcomes:

- WaTech as a security partner: Having WaTech available as a partner for WTB would lower the State Security Risks, as it gives WTB access to the cohesive WaTech IT platform and allows WTB to leverage WaTech expertise in non-WaTech systems.
- Allowing WTB to focus on its portfolio: This would provide a more robust IT resource for WTB staff, allowing them to concentrate on services WaTech doesn't provide, like supporting our broad software portfolio. WTB utilizes common programs like the Adobe suite, statistical analysis software like R and SAS, and specialized software like the EDVera licensing system and our custom public-facing website Career Bridge.
- IT security audit compliance: WaTech is requesting additional IT Security Audit support for small agencies in a decision package for 2024. By using the WaTech Small Agency IT Services, supported small agencies can act on audit observations and recommendations, significantly improving their overall security posture. Security audit reports provide invaluable insight into potential cyber risks to their systems and data. This additional support will identify risks and vulnerabilities and lead small agency staff through remediation activities. This audit support would also track audit findings and the Plan of Action and Milestones (POAM) as agencies work toward improving their security and compliance. Currently this work is provided as an extra duty for an agency staff member who, in most cases, is not an expert in IT security compliance or audit remediation. This added capability would free up these staff members to focus on providing business value to their customers.
- Privacy policy compliance: As part of WaTech's decision package, they are requesting Privacy Officer support for small agencies. By providing a Privacy Officer to support small agencies, compliance with privacy policies should increase and reduce the number of privacy-related incidents. Higher compliance rates indicate improved privacy practices. For example, only 25 agencies used de-identification standards in 2020 to better protect data when data sharing; that number rose to 34 agencies in 2022.
- Cost efficiencies: The average cost per FTE will drop as additional agencies are added to the Small Agency IT Services. Over the past four years, the average rate to provide this support has dropped by more than 20 percent while continuing to provide increased levels of service to supported agencies. This trend should continue as additional agencies are added to the service. By WaTech providing an Auditor to perform triennial security audits of supported small agencies, cost efficiencies would be generated for all small agencies and Washington state. An expenditure of \$24K (average cost of obtaining a qualified auditing entity) places significant pressure on small agency budgets and can force an agency to choose between delivering services to their stakeholders or satisfying compliance requirements.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

Not applicable for this decision package. This is a request for IT services only.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

Not applicable for this decision package. This is a request for IT services only.

Target Populations or Communities:

Not applicable for this decision package. This is a request for IT services only.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

Not applicable.

State Workforce Impacts:

Not applicable.

Intergovernmental:

Not applicable.

Stakeholder Response:

Not applicable.

State Facilities Impacts:

Not applicable.

Changes from Current Law:

Not applicable.

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

No answer was provided.

HEAL Act Agencies Supplemental Questions

Not applicable.

Reference Documents

[Appendix5IT ML addendum.docx](#)

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

Yes

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. E	\$0	\$335	\$335	\$335	\$335	\$670

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