



WASHINGTON MILITARY ALLIANCE COMMUNICATIONS PLAN



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



TIP STRATEGIES, INC. is a privately held Austin and Seattle based economic development consulting firm committed to providing quality solutions for public and private-sector clients. Established in 1995, the firm's primary focus is economic development strategic planning.

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The **Washington Military Alliance** is a coalition of military and defense related stakeholder organizations, serving as an umbrella organization for the three main components of the sector representing industry, community support partnerships, and infrastructure support.

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INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

The Washington Military Alliance (WMA) serves as a consortium of more than 20 organizations that have a vested interest in the success of the military and defense sector in the state of Washington. As a diverse body acting as one voice, a clear and pre-determined approach to communication is essential to the organization’s sustainability and success.

The following communications plan (herein referred to as “plan”) provides a strategic framework for executing WMA activities and structuring information flow in a manner that maximizes key audience engagement and helps meet performance benchmarks as defined by the organization’s leadership and stakeholders. This plan will be an integral part of the current and developing WMA organizational doctrine, policies, priorities, and objectives.

The plan is designed to build upon the prior efforts and traditions of the WMA (see the “Washington Military Alliance History” section, page 4). Additionally, a Social Network Analysis (Appendix, page 22) was performed, which further helped to inform the strategies outlined in this plan.

The responsibility for effective strategic communication begins at the top with the board of directors and flows down the organizational hierarchy to committees, advisory councils, members, key stakeholders, and staff. This plan provides structure and guidance for effectively crafting and communicating messages that will filter through the organization to key audiences and the general public, ensuring each is well-informed about WMA’s mission, vision, goals, and related initiatives. Most importantly, the plan will outline long-term strategies for broadening the understanding of the critical role the military and defense industry plays in Washington and in the livelihood of its people.

VISION

Washington State leads the nation in serving its military and defense sector by providing a welcoming, collaborative, and supportive environment for current and future missions, installations, and defense industries and technologies.

MISSION STATEMENT

The WMA is a coalition of partner organizations collectively dedicated to enhancing the strength and health of military and defense related activities throughout the state. The WMA provides a framework for collaboration in the state among local governments, military installations, defense community support organizations, industry associations, state agencies, and economic development organizations to coordinate activities and resources in support of Washington’s military and defense sector and collect and disseminate economic information about its impact and fluctuations.

GOAL

To effectively communicate the WMA story and importance of the state's military and defense industry to key internal and external audiences in order to garner broad understanding, advocacy, and support. Reinforce key themes and messages aligned with the WMA communication strategy.

This goal was developed based on information gained over the course of the project. A membership survey conducted by TIP Strategies revealed that "advocacy" and "enhancing awareness about economic importance" are the most important priorities for WMA.

BACKGROUND/SITUATION ANALYSIS

The WMA was initially formed in 2011 in anticipation of a possible Defense Base Closure and Realignment (BRAC) for Washington State military installations. Its purpose was to find measures to mitigate potential reductions in federal defense spending that would impact Washington State-based defense contractors.

Governor Jay Inslee saw the need for an enhanced effort to support the sector and in 2013 re-convened the state's military and defense industry and validated the WMA through the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement and dedicated funding and staff to the effort.

The WMA includes representation from Washington State legislators, state agencies, local elected officials, regional community groups supporting local military installations, and organizations promoting military and defense economic development in Washington.

The WMA currently has four main objectives:

1. Promote military and defense infrastructure
2. Promote military and defense industry vitality
3. Facilitate military and defense partnerships statewide
4. Maintain and disseminate information on the state's military and defense sector

In late 2014, the WMA (through the Department of Commerce) applied for and was awarded a \$4.3 million United States Department of Defense (USDOD) Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) grant to assess and forecast the statewide economic impact of Washington's defense industry and plan local assistance for potential defense industry adjustments.

A primary goal of the grant is to formalize the WMA organization and prepare it to respond to and mitigate the potential impact of federal defense budget cuts on the State of Washington's economy, which has become increasingly dependent on military and defense contracts. An integral component of creating a successful and sustainable future for the WMA organization is generating detailed communication strategy, for which it can craft and disseminate messages to key audiences.

CONCLUSION

The strategies outlined in this plan are intended to serve as guidelines and are based on the best information available to-date. They do not have to be executed immediately. As with any organization, time, progress, and changing external conditions can alter an organization's strategic path. TIP Strategies structured this as a template and living document that can easily be updated and adapted to an evolving landscape.

The vision, collaboration, time, and energy of many individuals and entities has given the WMA a strong beginning. Thoughtful and inclusive planning has made the effort successful thus far and will continue to guide the organization in the future. This plan was written with that same spirit in mind, and we hope it serves as a building block for a vibrant and promising future.

WASHINGTON MILITARY ALLIANCE HISTORY

AN EARLY HISTORY, 2010–PRESENT

The history and accomplishments of the Washington Military Alliance (WMA) are essential considerations in planning the way forward. To understand how the WMA can strengthen its programs in the future, it is helpful to understand the organization’s origins and evolution.

OVERVIEW

History, in its simplest form, is an agreed-upon account of past events and how individuals and entities perceive and respond to them. Similarly, the early history of the Washington Military Alliance (WMA) is composed of a series of strategic, proactive responses to circumstances and discussions that were occurring outside of its control, and the resulting collaboration of a diverse group of visionary stakeholders with one voice to accomplish a common mission.

Today, the WMA is a fully-functioning consortium of over 20 organizations that actively works on behalf of the military and defense sector in the state of Washington. It includes representation from state legislators, state agencies, local elected officials, regional community groups supporting local military installations, and organizations promoting military and defense economic development, all of whom have made the commitment to partner and collaborate for a collective cause.

The following narrative describes in detail the formation and formalization of the WMA organization and the ensuing activities that shaped its progress to-date.

2010–2011

Beginning in late 2010, Governor Christine Gregoire became aware of discussions taking place in Washington, DC that indicated a possible action by the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC). Although details were unknown at the time, Gov. Gregoire was concerned the action would likely threaten the livelihood of the state’s military installations.

In early 2011, Governor Gregoire’s office made provisions for a grant fund to address the potential threats, establishing a budget of \$500,000 and plans to hire a full-time, state-level, military and defense industry policy advisor.

Later that same year, Governor Gregoire invited leaders from the state’s military and defense communities to a meeting in Olympia and called the gathering “Washington Military Alliance.” During the event, she informed attendees about the potential BRAC action, communicated her action of budgeting \$500,000 toward the planned

“By planning ahead, we can make sure Washington remains in a strong position to support our military and defense infrastructure, its diverse industry supply chain and the tens of thousands of jobs associated with this industry.”

- Governor Jay Inslee

“It is up to us to live up to the legacy that was left for us, and to leave a legacy that is worthy of our children and of future generations.”

- Governor Christine Gregoire

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initiative, and made clear her intent on hiring an industry policy advisor. She also took the opportunity to ask attendees of the meeting, especially those representing entities with a vested interest in the military and defense industry, to contribute financially to the effort.

As a result, \$250,000 in additional funds were raised. Roel Vanderlugt and John Lane, attendees of the “Washington Military Alliance” event, articulated the need for a comprehensive analysis of the military and defense community in Washington. At the time, Vanderlugt was the director of military affairs for US Congressman Adam Smith, and Lane was the executive policy advisor for Governor Gregoire. They argued that more data was needed to provide guidance for the group’s future activities. The resulting “WMA Report,” was funded by the money raised at the event. Capital Strategies was hired to prepare the report with Shay Hancock at the helm of the project.

“Washington State has eight bases that are part of our national defense! We are fortunate to host the men and women in uniform.”

*- Rich Hadley,
Greater Spokane, Inc.
and Association of
Washington Business*

The report provided an analysis of the state’s military installations, ascertained each individual installation’s compatibility with pending national defense budget cuts and troop reductions, outlined the major strengths of the individual bases, and measured the bases’ ability to accommodate the growth of current missions and to accept new missions. Most importantly at the time, the report recommended that a permanent, formal organization was needed to address the identified needs.

Below are recommendations relevant to the WMA’s formation:

“The State should appoint a central point of contact within the State’s leadership structure that would serve as the Governor’s Director of Military Affairs. This individual would serve as the head of the Washington Military Alliance (WMA) and would have the resources and responsibility to handle military policy matters for the Governor, as well as serving as a coordinating link between the Governor, the community groups, and the leadership of the military installations in the State. The overall objective would be to have someone that looks after the State’s military bases which account for an annual economic impact of approximately \$13 billion.”

“The State should formalize the WMA organization which, in turn, would ensure coordination of activities on a state-wide basis and a more effective utilization of the skills, abilities and contacts residing in these organizations. Additionally, the State should develop some type of grant funding to aid the community groups in the conduct of their activities and the publication of periodic documents which they disseminate promoting the military value and accomplishments of their respective bases. These groups schedule periodic trips to their installation’s command headquarters, as well as visits to Washington, DC to update appropriate Pentagon officials and the Washington Congressional Delegation and funding support would insure the continuation of these critical activities.”

A PDF of the full report is available online (www.ofm.wa.gov/reports/mil_report.pdf).

2012–2013

In late 2012, US Representative Jay Inslee was elected to Washington’s governorship. Governor Inslee saw the need for a continued and enhanced initiative to support the military and defense sector and expressed his desire to create a “sector-based economic development strategy” to aid in the effort.

In December 2013, Kristiné Reeves was hired by the Washington State Department of Commerce as the Governor's Sector Lead and Director, Military & Defense Sector, and was charged with writing the economic development sector-based strategy.

Reeves came to the State of Washington from US Senator Patty Murray’s office and had a long history of experience in national and state-level politics. She was an ideal fit for the role, considering she had observed the discussions surrounding the WMA from inception, knew the individuals and entities involved, and understood the dynamics at play. Reeves was also known for her gift of communication, relationship cultivation, strategic thinking, and consensus building. Reeves subsequently compiled what she envisioned as an effective strategy for continuing the momentum of the WMA movement and continued success of the state’s military and defense industry.

Reeves’ research revealed that every other major industry sector in Washington State was represented by an industry association, except the military and defense industry. This further confirmed that a formal, permanent organization was needed.

Instead of inventing a new group, Reeves suggested the most logical and efficient way to create the type of organization the “WMA Report” recommended was to formalize the “Washington Military Alliance” partnership that then-Governor Gregoire had previously convened.

The WMA stakeholders agreed and decided to move forward. The group also decided that it was important to refrain from asking for money again for two years, until they could identify additional funding sources. Reeves’ position would be funded until then by the original budget set aside by Governor Gregoire and reauthorized by Governor Inslee, but other monies would have to be allocated to fund the organization’s future operations.

“Without a unified voice, we put at risk the invaluable economic assets in our state and the families’ livelihood associated with them.”

- Patrick Pierce,
Board of Directors,
Puget Sound Regional Council

Later that same year, Governor Inslee re-convened the state’s military and defense industry to validate the WMA organization as stated in the sector-based strategy and signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) (www.wamilitaryalliance.org/about-us/moucharter). This was a significant milestone, as this action formalized the establishment of the organization and outlined its purpose, objectives, funding, responsibilities, leadership, membership, committee, and council structure. As outlined in the sector-based economic development strategy and discussions to that point, the new version of the WMA would be dedicated to the health of the defense industry, community support partnerships, and infrastructure support.

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Founding members of the new organization were named as follows:

- Association of Washington Business (AWB)
- Economic Alliance Snohomish County
- Economic Development Board of Tacoma-Pierce County
- Economic Development Council of Seattle-King County
- Greater Spokane Inc./Forward Fairchild
- Island County Economic Development Council
- Kitsap Economic Development Alliance
- Military Affairs Committee - Economic Alliance Snohomish County
- National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA)
- Naval Air Station Whidbey Task Force (NASWTF)
- Pacific Northwest Defense Coalition (PNDC)
- WA Procurement and Technical Assistance Center (PTAC)
- Puget Sound Naval Bases Association (PSNBA)
- Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)
- South Sound Military Communities Partnership (SSMCP)
- Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber of Commerce
- Tri-City Development Council (TRIDEC)
- Thurston County Economic Development Council
- Greater Yakima Chamber of Commerce
- Yakima County Development Association

"We need a statewide voice to articulate the importance of the military and defense industry."

- Glenn Coil, Economic Alliance of Snohomish County

"The economic impact of the military and defense industry on Kitsap County exceeds \$6 billion annually and makes up nearly 50% of our economic output and employment base."

- John Powers, Kitsap Economic Development Alliance

Without the involvement, partnership, and collaboration of these organizations, the formalization of the WMA would not have been possible.

Inslee's MOA also outlined that the objectives of the WMA in an organizational capacity would be to promote military and defense infrastructure, promote military and defense industry vitality, facilitate military and defense partnerships state-wide, and maintain and disseminate information on the state's military and defense sector.

In December 2013, Kristiné Reeves was named executive director of the newly-formed Washington Military Alliance organization, and her employment would continue to be housed at the State of Washington. As the WMA's primary point of contact, Reeves was tasked with providing leadership and coordination of support activities that would be channeled through other agencies and organizations. As such, Reeves was to act as the face and voice of the WMA to the public, community partners, Pacific Northwest, and state.

2014–2015/OEA GRANT

Shortly after joining the WMA as its first executive director, Reeves became aware of a Defense Industry Adjustment (DIA) grant held within the United States Department of Defense’s (USDOD) Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA). Its purpose is to assist communities impacted by USDOD program changes, defense industry cutbacks, base closures, force structure realignments, base expansions, and incompatibilities between military operations and local development. Reeves recognized the fit with the WMA’s mission, and recommended that the organization apply.

As the largest and most complex grant within the OEA program, the application process was comprehensive, and required a great deal of time, effort and understanding. Reeves took on the task of writing the grant and completed it in a very short period of time.

In October 2014, the WMA (through the Washington Department of Commerce) was awarded a \$4.3 million USDOD OEA grant to assess and forecast the statewide economic impact of Washington’s defense industry and plan local assistance for potential defense industry adjustments.

“The military and defense sector is an economic backbone for many Washington communities and a driver of economic development statewide,” Governor Inslee said during an announcement about the grant award. “As the DoD reduces military assets around the country, we want to make sure we are prepared and ready.”

A press release of the announcement is available online (www.governor.wa.gov/news-media/gov-inslee-announces-43-million-federal-grant-prepare-state-impacts-military-downsizing).

Thanks in part to Reeves’ hard work and dedication, the organization was recognized by OEA as a national example and “gold-standard” for grant-writing. Reeves credits the grant award achievement to the involvement, buy-in and dedication of every stakeholder in the WMA network.

“If not for our stakeholders’ hard work and involvement, and Governor Inslee’s action of formalizing the WMA, we wouldn’t have been awarded the OEA grant,” Reeves says.

A primary goal of the grant was to further formalize the WMA organization and prepare it to respond to and mitigate the potential impact of federal defense budget cuts on the state’s economy, which had become increasingly dependent on military and defense contracts. The grant would be broken down into three key phases: assessment and forecasting, implementation, and future strategy and planning.

The first phase of “Assessment and Forecasting” was further broken down into three components: organization, community, and stakeholder management; assessment and forecasting capacity; and state analysis. The first component included creating a short-term operations plan, communications strategy, social network map of Washington’s Military and Defense sector, and a long-term strategic plan. The final deliverable of the component is a work plan of the Defense Industry Adjustment Program as a whole. The second component included mapping the

“The promise of the WMA is a meeting of the most important local minds representing the military and defense industry across the state.”

- James Evans,
Washington Military Alliance;
Washington Department of
Commerce

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defense industry supply chain and developing an interactive modeling tool and a directory of Washington State companies doing military and defense work. The third component was centered on understanding the state's response to downsizing. A state process map for planning and support of downsize response capacity and a needs assessment would be needed for this component.

The second phase of "Implementation" would be the largest of the three phases. It included all pilot programs, outreach and other 'on the ground' activity. The components of this phase included: defense manufacturing and defense services supply chain pilot programs, a seamless transition pilot program, a transition technology tool development, and various additional education, outreach and awareness programs.

The final phase of "Future Strategy and Planning" included four components: identifying and planning for industry growth areas, and focusing on technology transfer, entrepreneurship and commercialization; identifying growth areas within other targeted sectors in the state; developing a program to accelerate technology transfer, entrepreneurship and commercialization; and implementation planning.

Financial match support, required as a part of the grant, was made possible by the City of Bremerton, the Economic Alliance of Snohomish County, and the Kitsap Economic Development Alliance. The grant is scheduled to conclude in September 2016.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Moving forward, the WMA will continue to operate under the governor's MOA, serving as an advisory board to assist state, federal, and local officials with policy decisions. It will also take on additional functions that have been identified as areas of need to maintain and grow the military and defense sectors in the state.

The WMA structure will retain existing participants in the MOA and will allow for the addition of other supporting organizations. Just as when the WMA MOA was established, the effort will continue to be staffed by personnel from the Washington State Department of Commerce Military and Defense Sector Program. The new structure allows the WMA to operate as a formal organization.

The WMA will lead programs and initiatives, as well as execute on agreed upon roles and actions, to support the military and defense industry across the state in the same spirit in which it was formed, but within an organized and efficient structure. This new WMA structure will provide an enhanced mechanism to deliver on its mission and to enhance its impact across the state.

"WMA's success comes from collaboration and coming together with one voice to accomplish a common mission."

- Kristiné Reeves,
Executive Director,
Washington Military Alliance

"The future is bright!"

- Patrick Pierce,
Board of Directors,
Puget Sound Regional Council

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

GOAL

To effectively communicate the WMA story and importance of the state's military and defense industry to key internal and external audiences in order to garner broad understanding, advocacy, and support. Reinforce key themes and messages aligned with the WMA communication strategy.

This goal was developed based on information gained over the course of the project. A membership survey conducted by TIP Strategies revealed that "advocacy" and "enhancing awareness about economic importance" are the most important priorities for WMA.

KEY AUDIENCES

The work of the WMA is driven by the direction and activities of two distinct groups: 1) members and stakeholders; and 2) legislators and associated activities within the military/defense industry. These can be broadly categorized into "internal" and "external" audiences.

Internal Audiences: The objective is to maintain an open dialogue with these audiences to ensure they 1) clearly understand the WMA mission, vision, and goals and can effectively deliver those messages at all levels; and 2) provide ongoing input and feedback to guide the work of the WMA.

- Membership
- Key Stakeholders
- Advisors
- Subject Matter Experts

External Audiences: The objective is to maintain ongoing engagement with these audiences in a manner that 1) raises awareness and encourages support for the WMA mission; 2) compels desired action on behalf of the WMA; and 3) builds critical mass of the organization.

- Military Installations
- Department of Defense
- Defense Contractors or Related Businesses
- Elected Officials
- Local Governments
- Educational Institutions
- Workforce Boards
- Prospective Members
- Prospective Relocating or Expanding Businesses
- General Public

SHORT-TERM STRATEGIES (INTERNAL EMPHASIS)

These strategies refer mostly to internal communication within the WMA stakeholder network and are primarily related to ongoing organizational planning and development. Some strategies overlap in emphasis and timeframe. In any organization, effective internal communication precedes successful external communication, and is especially crucial in a coalition with diverse members and stakeholders such as this.

The following section outlines the WMA's short-term, mid-term, and long-term communication strategies in order of priority, and if applicable, accompanying recommendations for key messages, target audiences, communication tools and/or channels. Previous communication strategies, tools, channels, and outcomes will be described and evaluated if utilized.

STRATEGY S1: CREATE OFFICIAL PRIMARY AND SECONDARY CHANNELS FOR ALL LEVELS OF COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION.

The WMA leadership respects its internal audiences' time and preferences for receiving and transmitting communication. It is important to establish known channels for different types of communication and information retrieval, and use them consistently. In a recent survey conducted by TIP Strategies, respondents indicated their most preferred method for receiving communication from the WMA as face-to-face meetings and email/newsletter communication, although social media, publications, webinars, conference calls and traditional media were all noted as "acceptable." TIP Strategies recommends utilizing email/newsletters for regular communication and news updates. Organization news should be aggregated on a weekly basis and posted to the website and social media, and emailed to members on a quarterly basis as needed. As discussed at the WMA board retreat on November 20, 2015, the email newsletter can be a simple listing of links to relevant stories.

Although not measured in the survey, TIP Strategies recommends a system for urgent or emergency communication or situations where immediate action is needed. This could be a manual or automated texting or email system, whereby opted-in users can receive instant notifications via text or email.

Target audiences: Board, Members, Advisory Councils, Key Stakeholders, and Technical Experts

STRATEGY S2: CREATE AND INTEGRATE A MARKETING COMMITTEE INTO THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE.

Considering the WMA does not have a dedicated marketing or communications staff member, this type of sub-committee is highly recommended. Like other organizational committees, this one would be appointed by the WMA executive committee, led by a designated chairperson, and filled by members and stakeholders who have a vested interest in the success of the communications strategy.

Target audiences: Members, Key Stakeholders, and Technical Experts

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STRATEGY S3: INTEGRATE AND FOLLOW THE MEDIA RELATIONS RAPID-RESPONSE COMMUNICATIONS PLAN AS STATED IN THE ORGANIZATION'S ADOPTED OPERATIONS PLAN.

The WMA will serve as the primary point of communication and information for the defense and military sector in the state of Washington. As so, the WMA must be prepared at all times to quickly respond to national announcements regarding the military and defense industry and their potential impact on the state with the unified voice of its membership.

As previously indicated by a WMA analysis, the state of Washington is home to a significant number of both military installations and defense contractors. The ongoing uncertainty regarding federal defense spending and military force structure could have adverse impacts on the state.

The membership of the WMA is spread across the state and individual volunteer members are often not immediately available due to their full-time responsibilities and obligations. The WMA exists in many ways to mitigate impacts to the military and defense sector in the state and, therefore, needs to communicate what it sees happening and what it is doing to keep the state's defense sector healthy. In order to be prepared to respond to any news that might positively or negatively affect the state of Washington, the WMA will employ the following media relations rapid response guidelines.

Tools to support the organization's media relations will include:

- An internal media contact policy, limiting public comments from the WMA to only a specific set of leaders within the organization (e.g., the executive director and the executive committee). These leaders should either have media communications experience or have been provided media relations training.
- A media contact list for quick communications to the media in the region.
- A press release template for consistency of content and for ease of future creation and distribution. This will include the role of the WMA (who it is, what it does, and why) and a description of the military and defense sector in the state, including its economic impact.
- If negative or positive news is anticipated, the executive director should prepare an appropriate press release and talking points, articulating the position of the WMA. If possible, these communications pieces should be discussed with the executive committee.
- The executive director is given the permission to communicate in print, electronic, radio, or television on behalf of the WMA membership in the event of a significant announcement affecting the state's military and defense sector. The executive director will follow up with the executive committee to inform them of the communication and share the communication and circumstances with the WMA Board as soon as possible.

Target audiences: Board, Members

STRATEGY S4: IMPLEMENT AND FOLLOW THE ADOPTED COMMUNICATIONS DECISION GUIDELINES.

A rapid-response communication strategy has been developed and will be followed when immediate reaction from the organization is called for; however, when developing messaging that isn't immediately time-sensitive, the WMA will follow a clear decision matrix to prevent crossed messages and avoid internal conflict.

- The WMA will communicate as an independent group and not speak on behalf of the State of Washington or the Department of Commerce.
- When it is a statewide story impacting the defense and military sector and the WMA is developing the communication or has been asked for input, the WMA will play the leading role.
- Statewide organizations that are members of the WMA will respond or communicate independently on behalf of their organization and not speak for the WMA.
- When appropriate, the WMA will support and/or collaborate with statewide members, as long as there is consensus regarding the communication.
- Long range communication pieces and strategies will be shared with the WMA board to seek their input and approval prior to their release.
- WMA members will be called upon to articulate the communication piece when possible.
- When there is a communication that focuses on a region within the state or a specific military installation, the WMA will play a supporting role to the local organization(s) representing the community.
- When there is disagreement within the organization and there is not a majority consensus regarding the communication piece or issue, the WMA will remain silent.
- No WMA member will speak on behalf of the WMA without specific approval from the Executive Committee.
- The WMA will begin to generate more media attention with ongoing success. The WMA will leverage its relationship with the media to assist its members, as long as their messaging conforms to the mission and goals of the WMA.

Target audiences: Members

STRATEGY S5: IMPLEMENT AND FOLLOW THE ADOPTED ADVOCACY POLICY.

The WMA is not primarily a legislative lobbying organization. However, when appropriate, the organization will speak on behalf of the membership regarding the overall health of the defense industry, military installations, and the companies that support them.

The WMA will:

- Remain as an advisor to the Governor
- Educate and advise at the federal and state level
- Not advocate at the local level

Target audiences: All Internal and External

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STRATEGY S6: REINFORCE AGREED-UPON MESSAGES AND MAINTAIN CONSISTENCY AT ALL POINTS OF CONTACT.

TIP Strategies recommends developing and adopting agreed-upon standard language to use in all collateral materials. The organizational descriptions used on the “about us” section of the website, posted press releases, the one-pager, and various internal documents, each vary in language and explanatory terms. Consistent use of standard language will help internal audiences articulate and deliver the same messages to their constituencies and reduce confusion. For example, as noted in the WMA board retreat on November 20, 2015, WMA’s primary purpose is to “educate, inform, and advocate.”

Target audiences: All Internal and External

STRATEGY S7: DEVELOP A WMA BUSINESS CARD. (SHORT-TERM & LONG-TERM)

TIP Strategies recommends creating a standard-size business card that has the WMA logo, tagline, mission, vision, web address, and social media icons to distribute to internal and external audiences. This is a simple, inexpensive concept that can have profound effects. While some might not be apt to keep a brochure or promotional item, they will hold on to a business card.

Target audiences: All Internal and External

STRATEGY S8: DEVELOP A PROFESSIONALLY-DESIGNED AND PRINTED GENERAL BROCHURE. (SHORT-TERM & LONG-TERM)

While the “one-pager” does a sufficient job of providing an overview of the organization, the WMA needs a timeless, professionally-designed and printed general brochure for broad internal and external distribution. The piece will contain the same information as the one-pager with a few modifications and include more images and graphics. It will also be sized for easy reading and transport, and will be converted into an electronic version as well.

Target audiences: All internal and external audiences

MID-TERM STRATEGIES

STRATEGY M1: DEVELOP AN ANNUAL REPORT.

This was discussed as a priority at the WMA board retreat on November 20, 2015, and is a recommended tool for internal and external communication. Annual reports provide a comprehensive assessment of the organization’s yearly activities, and are an effective preclusion to member renewals, dues increases, or various major “asks.”

A week after sending out the printed or electronic version of the annual report, TIP Strategies recommends sending out an email “fast facts” of the highlights of the annual report. For those who don’t read it cover-to-cover, this is an effective way to communicate the desired high points of the year.

Target audiences: All Internal and External

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STRATEGY M2: DEVELOP A MEMBER LOG-IN PORTAL ON THE WEBSITE.

A user-protected log-in would allow easy, secure dissemination of confidential and/or time-sensitive information and information exchange between members. It would also allow users to opt-in to push notifications, which would alert members when new information is posted.

Target audiences: Members

STRATEGY M3: DEVELOP A SCHEDULE AND METHODS FOR OBTAINING REGULAR INPUT AND FEEDBACK FROM INTERNAL AUDIENCES.

Internal audiences are the lifeblood of the WMA. The organization's success depends on consistent and timely input and feedback from its constituencies. TIP Strategies recommends creating a schedule for disseminating regular questionnaires and/or written and electronic surveys, or conducting focus groups and/or one-on-one interviews. The results, as well as plans of action, would then be reported back to the respondents.

Target audiences: Members and Key Stakeholders

LONG-TERM STRATEGIES

In the following section, long-term communication strategies of the WMA will be described in order of priority, along with recommended key messages, target audiences, communication tools and channels, when appropriate. If applicable, any previously-utilized communication tools and channels will be briefly described along with the anticipated or actual outcome.

STRATEGY L1: CREATE AN INTERNAL MESSAGING DOCUMENT FOR TRAINING/PREPARATION OF WMA ADVOCATES. (SHORT-TERM & LONG-TERM)

Develop a one to two page talking points document to act as the basis for all external messaging and communications. The talking points should be shared as a tool for all personnel, including volunteers, to clearly articulate the value proposition of the region to businesses considering investment, as well as the value of the organization and how it's different from other organizations and economic development efforts. This document will help ensure that all personnel remain consistent in their communications.

Talking points should include:

- A description of the need for ongoing jobs and investment in the sector to ensure a healthy future
- A summary of the WMA Story—who the organization is and what it does
- A Summary of the value proposition of the state to businesses
- A summary of the strategic goals as defined in the WMA planning process
- Commonly asked questions and answers about economic development and why it's important

Target audiences: Members and Key Stakeholders

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STRATEGY L2: CREATE A TAGLINE OR POSITIONING STATEMENT.

In an age of information overload, the simplest forms of communication are oftentimes the most resonant. When used consistently, these tools can be extremely powerful in reinforcing an organization's core purpose to both internal and external audiences. The two are very similar, although taglines are usually shorter and a permanent component of the logo or graphic standards.

Key Messages: WMA is a clearinghouse and unifying voice for the vitality of the military and defense industry in Washington. The WMA gives its partners a stronger voice and more enhanced resources than they have on their own.

Potential Taglines:

1. Protecting and Serving Washington's Military and Defense Industry.
2. Many Partners, One Voice.

Potential Positioning Statements:

1. The WMA protects and serves its military and defense industry partners through education, information and advocacy.
2. The WMA is a coalition of diverse partners, unified as one voice, for the vitality of the state's military and defense industry.

Target audiences: All Internal and External

STRATEGY L3: MAKE CONTENT ENHANCEMENTS TO THE WEBSITE.

The WMA website has excellent bones, is professional-looking, and is an accurate reflection of the image the organization is trying to build. TIP Strategies recommends just a few modifications for enhancement:

- Add a main menu tab and sub-pages that promote the benefits of locating or expanding a military/defense-related business in Washington State and the positive aspects of doing business in the State of Washington.
- List major military/defense-related employers in the state, the jobs they have created, and the capital they've invested.
- Expand each existing section to add as much detail as possible.
- Add graphics and images to internal pages. As a rule of thumb, each page should have a related graphic or image.

Target audiences: All Internal and External

STRATEGY L4: ADOPT A FORMAL FUNDING PROGRAM THAT WILL HELP SUPPORT THE ORGANIZATION. (SHORT-TERM & LONG-TERM)

The funding program will be a support structure made up of contributions from the public sector, the organizations engaged with the WMA, along with ongoing funding from the State of Washington. This structure will have two

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tiers of membership (board level and membership level) with associated benefits including voting rights, recognition, access to industry data, and others. Some organizations may lack the funding resources to make financial contributions and could instead participate in the WMA via in-kind contributions.

In an effort to inform and recruit prospective members, TIP Strategies recommends that a membership promotional packet should be generated. It should be in the form of a simple, clear compilation of documents that describe the organization with relevant quotes from current members, and includes the organization bylaws, operations plan and an application form.

In addition to state funding and membership fees, the WMA will pursue outside grants to support specific initiatives. The organization may also generate revenue by hosting sponsored events and offering industry data and information products.

This formal fundraising structure will be determined by the board of directors during the first year of the body's existence. Existing revenue will maintain the WMA's first year of operations in the interim.

Timeline for Fundraising Activities:

- Q1.** Establish membership levels, and draft associated benefits and membership material.
- Q2.** Identify potential members and begin outreach.
- Q3.** Begin to collect membership revenue.
- Q4.** Continue to identify new members and fundraising activities.

Target audiences: Prospective Funders

STRATEGY L5: CULTIVATE RELATIONSHIPS WITH KEY MEDIA OUTLETS.

[Public relations creates a brand; marketing and communications support it.](#)

Brands and images are primarily built through unpaid public and media exposure, and supported by strategically executed communications, marketing and advertising. This is especially true for newer organizations and companies. Considering the WMA's limited resources, TIP Strategies recommends an aggressive media relations effort to garner positive public exposure for the organization.

Designing key tools and template materials designed for the media will enable the WMA staff to easily promote activities and successes, inform journalists of story opportunities and ensure consistency of message.

Tools to support the organization's media relations strategy should include:

- Establishing a media contact list for quick communications to the media in the region, as referenced in the rapid-response communication plan (Short-Term Strategy #3)
- Create a press release template for consistency of content and for ease of future creation and distribution. This template will be used with every significant WMA news story.

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- Conduct press conferences for major organizational events and news stories and develop creative invitations to send to media outlets.

Target audiences: Media

STRATEGY L6: CONSIDER ORGANIZING A WMA “MEDIA EVENT.”

In the same spirit of media relations, consideration might be given to organizing an event that would garner broad media exposure to help build the WMA brand. Below are a few ideas of how this might be executed:

- Utilize partner connections and social media outreach to organize a WMA-sponsored downtown rally on Veterans Day each year. Invite the mayor to speak about the importance of the Washington military and defense sector to our state and nation. Position a large WMA display behind the podium.
- Sponsor a statewide coat or canned-food drive for homeless or impoverished veterans in the winter. Develop creative media kits and give media interviews on the day of the event.
- Create and coordinate hashtag campaigns on social media to tie-in to these and other events.

Target audiences: Media and General Public

STRATEGY L7: EXPAND SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE AND DEVELOP AN AMBASSADOR PROGRAM.

WMA has an established Facebook and Twitter presence. Studies have consistently shown that high-level decision makers use LinkedIn more than any other social media platform. Consideration should be given to establishing a social media presence on LinkedIn, as well as creating LinkedIn discussion group(s) related to hot topics in the military/defense sector.

Consideration should also be given to developing a social media ambassador program within the WMA coalition. Board members, committee members, advisors, key stakeholders, members and any others who are known to use social media frequently and have a significant following should be identified and invited to participate. These individuals and/or entities should also qualify under the external communications policy as outlined below.

A template and calendar should then be developed with WMA social media handles and/or accounts, standards for posts and re-posts (re-tweets), and other policies as determined. Periodic meetings (no more than quarterly) should then be scheduled to discuss upcoming activities and initiatives. This program could also be integrated as a sub-committee under an existing committee or council, such as the marketing committee.

Target audiences: All Internal and External

STRATEGY L8: DEVELOP AN EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS POLICY FOR DESIGNATED WMA SPOKESPERSONS.

TIP Strategies recommends establishing a detailed criteria for who, what, why, when and where of speaking publicly on behalf of the WMA. The number of designated WMA spokespersons should be limited, as it prevents confusing and uncoordinated messages to the public.

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These individuals and/or entities should also promote the organization and link the organization to the leaders involved with the WMA by the following:

- Include WMA board affiliation in their professional bios and on their social media pages with a link to the organization's website when appropriate. Social media icons should also be created that can be seamlessly added to the signature lines of board members' and others' emails.
- Develop a simple index/business card with talking points that provide guidance in advocating for the organization

Target audiences: Board, Members, and Key Stakeholders

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES CHART

Strategy (In order of priority)	Description	Responsibility	Tool/Channel	Target Audiences	Timeframe	Budget (Annual Basis)	Staff Time (Annual Basis)
Short-Term 1	Create official primary and secondary channels for all levels of communication and information dissemination.	Staff	Email, Newsletters	Board, Members, Advisory Councils, Key Stakeholders, & Technical Experts	Immediate	\$0	Completed
Short-Term 2	Create and integrate a marketing committee into the organizational structure.	Board & Staff	N/A	Members, Key Stakeholders, & Technical Experts	Immediate	\$0	< 1 hour
Short-Term 3	Integrate and follow the media relations rapid-response communications plan as stated in the organization’s adopted operations plan.	Board & Staff	Internal media contact policy, media contact list, press release, ED media communication	Board, Members	Immediate	\$0	< 1 hour
Short-Term 4	Implement and follow the organization’s adopted communications decision guidelines.	Board & Staff	N/A	Members	Immediate	\$0	< 1 hour
Short-Term 5	Implement and follow the adopted advocacy policy.	Board, Staff & Members	N/A	All	Immediate	\$0	< 1 hour
Short-Term 6	Reinforce agreed-upon messages and maintain consistency at all points-of-contact. (Internal and External)	Staff & Marketing Committee	All communications materials	All	3 months	\$0	3 hours
Short-Term 7	Develop a WMA business card. (Internal and External; Short-Term and Long-Term)	Staff	Standard-size business card	All	3 months	\$300	4 hours
Short-Term 8	Develop a professionally-designed and printed general brochure. (Internal and External; Short-Term and Long-Term)	Staff	Professionally-designed and printed piece	All	3 months	\$800	8 hours
Mid-Term 1	Develop an annual report. (Internal and External)	Staff	Professionally-designed and printed piece, e-version	All	6 months	\$4,250	30 hours

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Strategy (In order of priority)	Description	Responsibility	Tool/Channel	Target Audiences	Timeframe	Budget (Annual Basis)	Staff Time (Annual Basis)
Mid-Term 2	Develop a member log-in portal on the website.	Staff	N/A	Members	8 months	\$1,000 annually	12 hours
Mid-Term 3	Develop a schedule and methods for obtaining regular input and feedback from internal audiences.	Staff	Surveys, focus groups and interviews	Members & Key Stakeholders	6 months	Nominal	20 hours
Long-Term 1	Create an internal messaging document for training/preparation of WMA advocates. (Internal & External; Short & Long-Term)	Board & Staff	PDF	Members & Key Stakeholders	8 months	\$0	5 hours
Long-Term 2	Create a tagline or positioning statement.	Board, Staff & Communications Firm	All communications materials	All	10 months	\$3,500	10 hours
Long-Term 3	Make content enhancements to the website.	Staff	Website	All	12 months	\$0	80 hours
Long-Term 4	Adopt a formal funding program that will support the organization. (Short-Term and Long-Term; Internal and External)	Board & Staff	Informational piece	Prospective Funders	12 months	\$0	25 hours
Long-Term 5	Cultivate relationships with key media outlets.	Staff	Media kit	Media	12 months, Ongoing	\$0	60 hours
Long-Term 6	Consider organizing a WMA "Media Event."	Staff	Public event	Media & General Public	12 months	\$5,000	100 hours
Long-Term 7	Expand social media presence and develop an ambassador program. (Internal and External)	Board & Staff	Social media	All	10 months	\$0	10 hours
Long-Term 8	Develop an external communications policy for board and volunteers. (Internal and External)	Board & Staff	Affiliate website, bio, email, business card	Board, Members, & Key Stakeholders	10 months	\$0	16 hours

APPENDIX: SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS

Social network analysis is a technique used to map relationships between units within a defined group or structure. The technique uses specialized software to analyze relationships or interactions (edges) that connect individuals or organizations (nodes) within a network. Data for the analysis of networks is collected using a variety of methods, including surveys and personal interviews, observation, and data mining.

APPROACH

Given the large number of surveys required by the various components of the state's Defense Industry Adjustment grant, this analysis was based on publicly available records in order to help minimize survey fatigue associated with the project. Specifically, we compiled data from Internet searches on staffing, governance structures (i.e., board and executive committee members), and membership for the following organizations identified as part of the WMA membership survey:

- Aerospace Futures Alliance of Washington (AFA)
- Aircraft Carrier Industrial Base Coalition (ACIBC)
- Armed Forces Communication & Electronics Association International (AFCEA)
- Association of Washington Business (AWB)
- Department of Commerce, Military and Defense Sector
- Pacific Northwest Aerospace Alliance (PNAA)
- Pacific Northwest Defense Coalition (PNDC)
- Puget Sound Ship Repair Association (PSSRA)
- The Washington Maritime Federation
- Washington Aerospace Partnership (WAP)
- Washington Biotechnology & Biomedical Association (WBBA)
- Washington CleanTech Alliance (WCTA)
- Washington Technology Industry Association (WTIA)

Staff members and board/executive committee membership for each organization were analyzed using NodeXL, an Excel add-in for network analysis. Although general membership data was collected where available, only the WMA membership was ultimately included in the analysis. General membership data was not analyzed for the remaining organizations for two reasons. The first relates to the objective of the analysis, which is to highlight individuals that are active in the military and defense sector in order to facilitate communication between the WMA and its stakeholder network. While becoming a member of an organization clearly indicates a level of interest, membership alone does not necessarily correlate with high levels of involvement or influence. By focusing only on individuals in leadership positions—i.e., those serving as staff to the organization or as members of its governing

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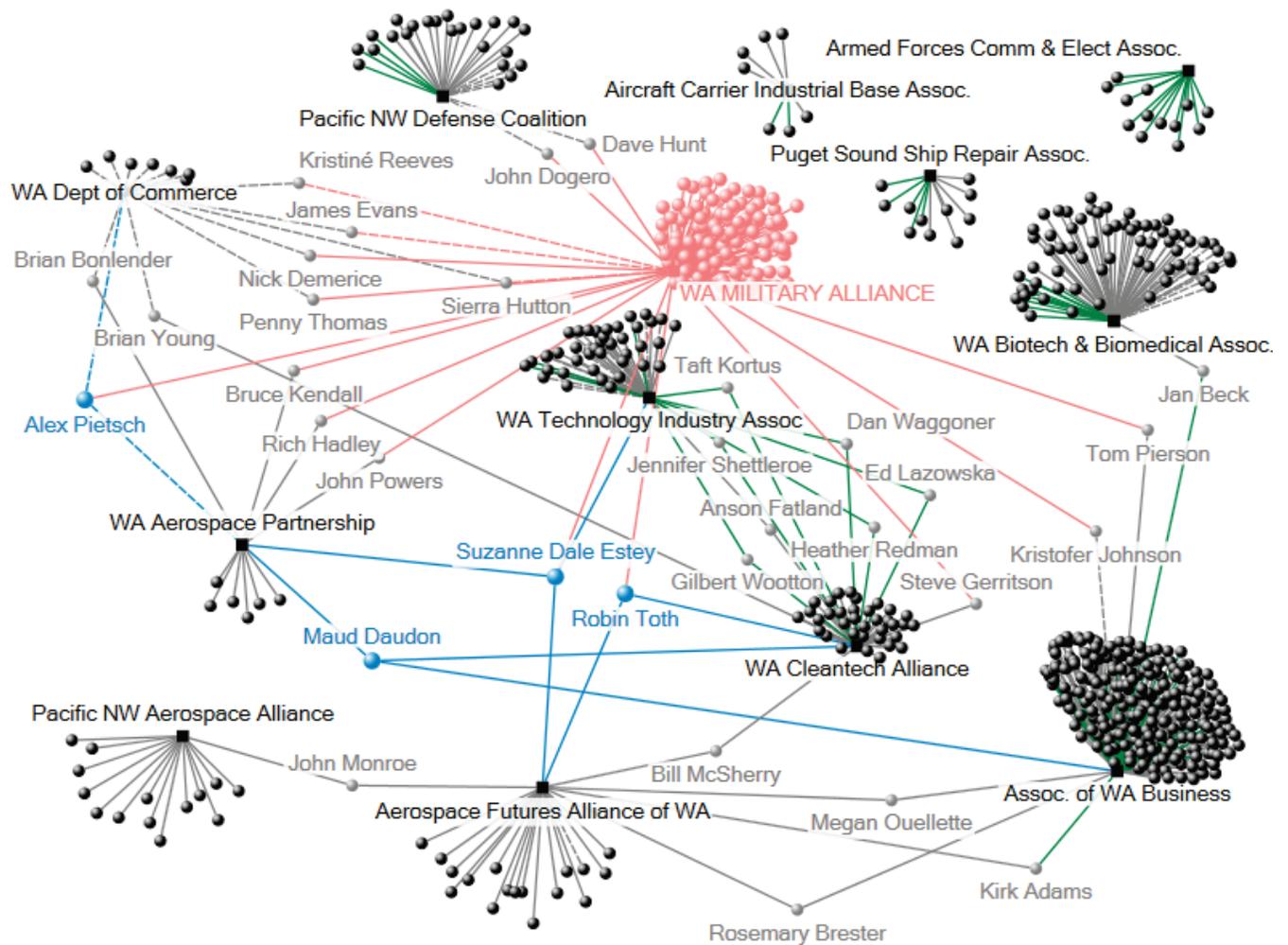
board or executive committee—the analysis is better aligned with this objective. Second, comparable data were not published for all groups. Some did not list membership data; others offer membership at the corporate level, with no individual listed as the membership holder. The resulting network graph of staff members and board and committee members is shown in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1. NETWORK OF SELECTED MILITARY AND DEFENSE-RELATED ORGANIZATIONS IN WASHINGTON STATE

STAFFING AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES (BOARD AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS)

LEGEND

- WMA member
- Board member of stakeholder organization
- Staff person (red for WMA)
- Executive committee member of stakeholder organization
- WMA member
- Single organization (other than WMA)
- Two organizations
- More than two organizations



Source: Websites and publications of listed organizations; TIP Strategies, using NodeXL (<http://nodexl.codeplex.com>)

Note: Suffixes, titles, and honorifics (e.g., Dr., PhD) were excluded due to discrepancies and differences in the level of detail provided among the various organizations. A table showing the affiliation/employer of listed individuals is shown on page 24.

FIGURE 2. EMPLOYER/AFFILIATION OF NAMED INDIVIDUALS IN NETWORK GRAPH
IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER BY LAST NAME

Name (Last, First)	Employer/Affiliation*
Adams, Kirk	Seattle Lighthouse for the Blind
Beck, Jan	Novo Nordisk
Bonlender, Brian	Department of Commerce
Brester, Rosemary	Hobart Machined Products, Inc.
Dale Estey, Suzanne	Economic Development Council of Seattle and King County
Daudon, Maud	Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce
Demerice, Nick	Department of Commerce
Dogero, John	Pacific Northwest Defense Coalition
Evans, James	Department of Commerce
Fatland, Anson	Washington State University
Gerritson, Steve	Economic Development Council of Seattle and King County
Hadley, Rich	Greater Spokane Incorporated
Hunt, Dave	Pacific Northwest Defense Coalition
Hutton, Sierra	Department of Commerce
Johnson, Kristofer	Association of Washington Business
Kendall, Bruce	Economic Development Board for Tacoma-Pierce County
Kortus, Taft	Moss Adams LLP
Lazowska, Ed	University of Washington
McSherry, Bill	The Boeing Company
Monroe, John	The Boeing Company (retired)
Ouellette, Megan	Alaska Airlines, Inc.
Pierson, Tom	Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber
Pietsch, Alex	Department of Commerce
Powers, John	Kitsap Economic Development Alliance
Redman, Heather	Indix
Reeves, Kristiné	Department of Commerce
Shettleroe, Jennifer	Attachmate
Thomas, Penny	Department of Commerce
Toth, Robin	Greater Spokane Incorporated
Waggoner, Dan	Davis Wright Tremaine
Wootton, Gilbert	Accenture
Young, Brian	Department of Commerce

*As reported in membership rosters.

OBSERVATIONS

Several points are revealed by the network graph:

- The WMA membership has direct linkages with the majority of key stakeholder organizations.** Of the organizations analyzed, all but five had at least one person that served in a leadership role who was also a member of the WMA. Of these five organizations, two have indirect connections. The Washington Biotech & Biomedical Association is connected indirectly via Jan Beck who serves as an executive committee member of the Association of Washington Business and is also a board member of the WBBA. The leadership of the Pacific Northwest Aerospace Alliance does not appear to have any direct links with the WMA, but has indirect connections via the Aerospace Futures Alliance of Washington. The other three organizations—the Aircraft Carrier Industrial Base Coalition, the Armed Forces Communication & Electronics Association International, and the Puget Sound Ship Repair Association—do not appear to have any individuals in a leadership role who are currently WMA members.
- The WMA is well connected to the Washington Aerospace Partnership, but less so with other aerospace organizations.** Given their common roots—both are staffed by Department of Commerce personnel—the integration of the WMA and WAP is to be expected. However, the WMA’s connection to other aerospace organizations in the state and in the Pacific Northwest region appears to be much less robust. Based on the information compiled for this analysis, Suzanne Dale Estey (of the Economic Development Council of Seattle and King County) and Robin Toth (of Greater Spokane, Inc.) are the WMA’s only direct connection to the AFA and the PNAA.
- A handful of individuals are highly connected.** Of the more than 600 relationships analyzed, 29 people were associated with two organizations (indicated by light gray dot in Figure 1). Of these dual-membership individuals, the majority were members of two similarly focused organizations (e.g., PNAA and AFA or WTIA and WCTA), but were not associated directly with the WMA. Only four people were connected with three or more organizations (indicated by blue dot in Figure 1), and all but one are members of the WMA. These highly connected individuals—or perhaps more accurately, their job titles—should be given priority in the development of communications strategies. Affiliations for each of the four are outlined below.

Name	Employer	WMA Member?	Affiliations
Alex Pietsch	Department of Commerce	Yes	<i>Staff:</i> Commerce and WAP
Maud Daudon	Seattle Metro Chamber of Commerce	No	<i>Board member:</i> AWB, WAP, and WCTA
Robin Toth	Greater Spokane Inc.	Yes	<i>Board member:</i> AFA and WCTA
Suzanne Dale-Estey	EDC of Seattle and King County	Yes	<i>Board member:</i> AFA, WTIA, and WAP

- Several highly specialized defense-related organizations may not be well connected to either the WMA or other stakeholder organizations.** As mentioned previously, three organizations had no demonstrated connectivity with the WMA or with each other, based on the information compiled: the Aircraft Carrier Industrial Base Coalition, the Armed Forces Communication & Electronics Association International, and the Puget Sound Ship Repair Association. This finding should be viewed with caution as

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membership information was not publically available for any of these organizations. However, even if there are connections at the member level, the lack of connections at the leadership level suggests an opportunity to include board members and/or staff for these organizations as part of the WMA membership.

- **Other highly-focused organizations have significant overlaps.** In contrast with the three defense-specific organizations mentioned previously, other topical organizations have significant cross-pollination. WTIA and the WCTA share seven board members/executive committees. A look at the available membership data (not shown in Figure 1) reveals that several members of the AFA are also members of the larger regional organization, the PNAA. However, connection between these two organizations and WAP appears less robust based on the information compiled. The AFA leadership also shares several connections with the leadership of the Association of Washington Business, though the three individuals who serve on the board of both organizations would represent a very small portion of the AWB's large board.

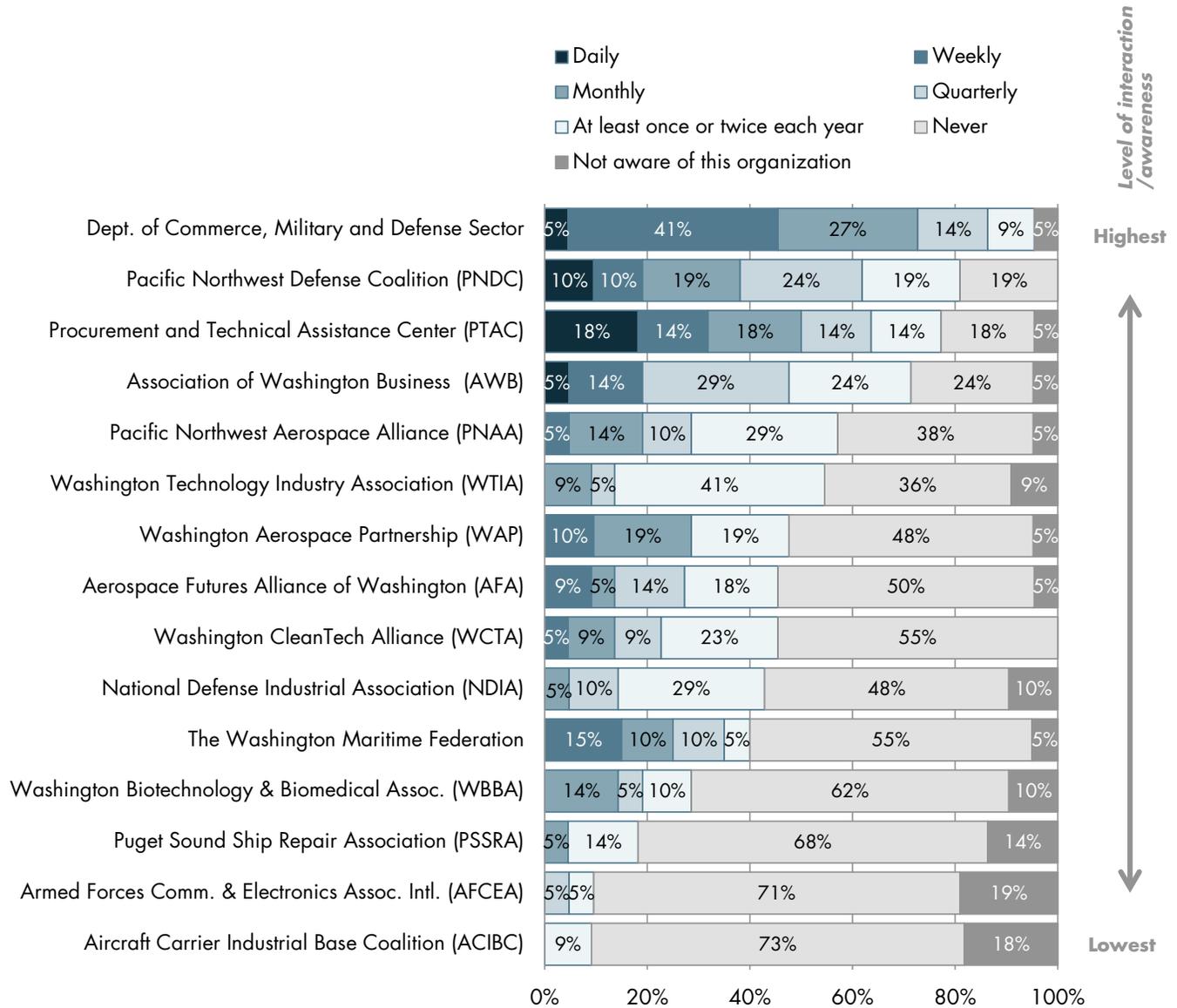
NETWORK INTERACTIONS

In addition to the network analysis, other aspects of the planning process inform our understanding of communication patterns among stakeholders. Chief among these is the survey of WMA members conducted at the outset of the engagement. As part of this relatively brief online survey conducted in May 2015, respondents were asked how frequently they communicated with the major stakeholder organizations on military- or defense-related issues. Although the number of respondents was small, the frequency of contact reported (shown in Figure 3, page 27) provides insight into the likely flow of information within the network and mirrors the findings from the network graph.

The Department of Commerce, Military and Defense Sector had the highest overall level of interaction, with only one respondent (5 percent) indicating they were unaware of the organization and the vast majority (73 percent) reporting at least monthly contact with the department. This is not surprising given that the department is the liaison for the WMA and was the sponsor of the survey. Procurement and Technical Assistance Centers (PTACs) had the most frequent interactions with survey participants, with nearly one in five (18 percent) reporting daily interaction. However, several survey respondents were affiliated with organizations that house the PTACs, which likely influenced the response. The Pacific Northwest Defense Coalition had similar overall levels of interaction, with quarterly being the most commonly reported timeframe.

In general, the level of interaction went down as the focus of the organization became more specialized. For example, respondents were least likely to interact with the Aircraft Carrier Industrial Base Coalition (ACIBC) and the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association International (AFCEA), with nine out of ten respondents indicating they were either not aware of the organizations or "Never" interacted with them on military- and defense-related issues. This finding corresponds with the lack of integration in board and executive committee membership observed in the network graph.

FIGURE 3. WMA MEMBERS’ INTERACTION WITH KEY STAKEHOLDER ORGANIZATIONS
 FREQUENCY OF INTERACTION ON MILITARY- OR DEFENSE-RELATED ISSUES



Source: TIP Strategies online survey of WMA General Membership, May 2015. [n=22].

Note: Organizations are sorted in ascending order based on the share of respondents who indicated they were “Not aware of this organization” or that they “Never” communicated with the organization on military- or defense-related issues.

CONSIDERATIONS

The social network analysis raises several points for consideration with regard to the WMA's communications plan. These include:

- Maintaining and enhancing cross-representation among organizations within the stakeholder network should be a stated objective. The social network analysis highlights areas of existing connectivity within the network, as well as areas where little integration appears to exist. Findings should be used to help increase cross-representation among the WMA and stakeholder organizations where no connection currently exists. Likewise, leveraging highly connected individuals within the network—and the communication channels they have access to—will maximize resources, enable broad and rapid dissemination of information, and help facilitate “cross-pollination” of ideas and initiatives.
- An analysis of corporate memberships could be instructive. As stated previously, several of the organizations included in this analysis offer corporate memberships. In the absence of a named individual (the unit of analysis required for analyzing social networks), these corporate members could not be evaluated. Analyzing corporate membership is further complicated by the lack of standardization in the way names are entered from one organization to another (e.g., Boeing, Boeing Co., The Boeing Company). Other issues included names that were incomplete, outdated, or did not reflect changes in ownership. If there is interest in gaining a better understanding of connections among this part of the network, the WMA could work with organizations that offer corporate memberships to compile and standardize this information in a manner that would facilitate analysis.
- The state's Procurement and Technical Assistance Centers could provide a key communication channel. The frequency of contact highlighted by the WMA membership survey suggests the PTACs could play an important role in supporting the WMA's communications strategy. The number of responses was too small for generalization to the broader membership. In addition, a number of the survey respondents were part of organizations that housed the PTACs, which is likely to have skewed the findings to some degree. However, the survey results still point to a level of engagement that is above a number of other groups. This fact, coupled with the geographic coverage offered by the program, could make the PTACs an important partner in the WMA's information dissemination strategy.