

THE WASHINGTON STATE MANUFACTURING COMMISSION

The Washington State Manufacturing Commission is a statewide consortium, created to form a unified voice serving the numerous and varied sub-sectors within the manufacturing industry for enhanced competitive positioning. The organizations that comprise this council represent business, state government and education.

The primary call-to-action is the development of a brain trust or information cooperative that capitalizes on the numerous approaches and resources contained therein and are aimed toward addressing the current and forecasted operational challenges facing Washington state manufacturers – touching first on issues of credentialing and exports.

(For a detailed list of council members please see attachment A.)

COUNCIL ORIGIN

The council was called to order on March 1, 2010, by the Association of Washington Business Institute (AWBI) in response to a downturn in the economy that continues today. Washington State's manufacturers are facing challenges as the global market has become more competitive at a time of national and state economic uncertainty – magnified by increased operational expenses, the rapid advancement of technology and the increased need for a qualified and skilled workforce.

To address these concerns, many organizations within the state are actively engaged and dedicating resources towards identifying applicable solutions to the challenges of today's marketplace. Manufacturing skills credentials and exports have been identified as primary areas of interest, along with best-practice standards detailing effective operational procedures, program development and supply chain management tactics.

INFORMATION COOPERATIVE

Commission members from across the state offer a unique point of view on the myriad industry sectors, for a comprehensive understanding of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the state. Through pooling experience, information, local insight and business acumen, the Washington State Manufacturing Commission is well positioned to enhance and create strategic initiatives that will promote manufacturing.

This unified effort towards common goals, along with a reliable and equal distribution of information, is intended to eliminate silos that interrupt information flow in favor of an efficiency that offers a timely and comprehensive perspective for applicable strategic integration. In order to further enhance efforts, the resulting information will be available to all business leaders, state officials and educators for review and application.

MANUFACTURING SKILLS CREDENTIAL

As manufacturing prepares for advances in technology, a well-trained workforce is a top priority. Efforts today will build a stronger workforce, create new jobs, attract outside resources and promote industry growth — enhancing Washington’s competitiveness.

To deliver upon this objective, the council will be tasked with reviewing and assess the National Association of Manufacturing (NAM) manufacturing skills credential for statewide implementation. Members are tasked with periodic updates on the availability of training through the state education system, identifying needs and industry clusters, providing insight for program and system enhancements, upholding and promoting the credential, reviewing outcomes and helping to determine next steps.

WASHINGTON EXPORT

The state holds an underutilized or untapped advantage for many businesses; it’s well positioned to allow expansion into the global market. Washington is a major port to the United States and is home to some of the world’s leading manufacturers that have established reliable supply chains. To date, most small- to mid-sized manufacturers have not leveraged this competitive advantage although economists predict growth in international trade.

The council is dedicated to enhancing and/or working to develop support systems that allow companies easy access to education and assistance regarding export. To deliver upon this objective, members will identify, assess, evaluate and make recommendations regarding the state’s current infrastructure, outreach efforts and entrepreneurial programs made available to Washington businesses.

AWB INSTITUTE

The Institute will manage the maintenance of the Washington State Manufacturing Commission until further determination by the commission members. Operations will include the collection, review and storage of member-provided data that will drive strategic initiatives. An online forum will be hosted by the Institute allowing for regular distribution of data, reports of findings, and a general review of outcomes or status updates between scheduled council meetings. Regular meeting times will be set bi-monthly, will be chaired and hosted by AWBI and will include progress reports on data contribution, program development and assessments. Maintenance costs will be reviewed if applicable.