



Washington State Office of
**MINORITY &
WOMEN'S**
Business Enterprises

2013

Annual Report



The Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises
Annual Report

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Message from the Director

Dear Stakeholders,

Thank you for helping make Your OMWBE enjoy another exciting and successful year of great growth and opportunity. You and the OMWBE staff continually embraced change and growth for the betterment of our state and our communities. First, and foremost, I am honored and very humbled that Governor Inslee selected me as the new Director of this dynamic agency. In addition, I am equally as honored to join one of the most dedicated, hardworking, and loyal staff in state government. Born out of the state's continuing effort for equality and justice, I am passionate about the vision and mission of OMWBE to provide an equal playing field for those that historically have met societal barriers.



2013 continued positive progression and momentum for OMWBE. The certification process became more customer focused and streamlined to meet timely expectations. The staff diminished a significant backlog and touched over 1700 certification files with only a staff of 20. The staff worked to improve our information technology upgrades to introduce a new comprehensive database of our firms that is searchable by public and private partners. In addition, OMWBE worked on technology changes big and small to make our work more transparent, including launching a more user-friendly website and providing fillable forms to make the process easier for qualified small businesses.

OMWBE has made great strides and we are looking forward to building upon the foundation built over the last year. The goals for the next chapter of OMWBE are simple: get back to the basics. We strive to be the one-stop shop for small business fully realizing our motto, "embracing small business, empowering entrepreneurs." We will accomplish this effort working to realize four major components that create the successful legs of the "stepping stool" to help minority, women, and social and economically disadvantaged businesses.

1. Continue to grow, improve, build integrity, and accountability in the certification process to ensure that qualified firms are properly recognized.
2. Expand our outreach efforts to assist firms in connecting to the contracting opportunities in Washington State.
3. Reinvigorate our vital role of monitoring and assisting agencies in complying with the W/MBE goal set for the state. Through Results WA, we will strive to become a leader in the nation on economic equity and access.
4. Continue to address and strive to minimize barriers faced by minority, women, and socially and economically disadvantaged businesses.

These goals may seem simple on the surface but it will take hard work and dedication internally and externally to ensure we continue to move forward down a path of success. As 2013 comes to an end, I see 2014 as a year for great opportunity. We will be reorganizing the agency to ensure we are more accountable, efficient, and lean. We will increase outreach events and statewide presence in order to increase the number of certified firms. We will lead important economic equity issues through Results WA. Lastly, we will remain good partners – to government agencies, the business community and the general public.

The staff in our office has done an incredible job this past year. They have provided exceptional customer service to both new and returning businesses and have helped to make Washington a great place to do business.

This report will provide you a brief snap shot of some of the work that was accomplished in 2013. Please don't hesitate to contact me should you need additional information.

I am thankful for a productive 2013 and I am looking forward to working with you to ensure a successful 2014. As always, please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions, comments or concerns.

Respectfully Yours,

Alexis Oliver, Director

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OMWBE Advisory Committee

The OMWBE Advisory Committee is an invaluable stakeholder group that assists the agency director in achieving the spirit and letter of RCW 39.19. The Advisory Committee:

- Provides a link between the community, government, and advocates
- Represents and supports certified firms
- Fosters effective working relationships with stakeholders
- Provides education and training opportunities
- Shares and solicits best practices for the growth and development of minority and women business enterprises

The committee is composed of the following dedicated individuals:

Member’s Name	Organization
Ollie Garrett	Tabor 100 / PMT Solutions
Regina Glenn	Pacific Communications Consultants, Inc.
Colleen Hall Barta	CH Sustainable Design and Support Services
Grover Johnson	A. Philip Randolph Institute, Tacoma Chapter
Leslie Jones	Sound Transit
Frank Lemos	LDC, Inc.
Luis Navarro	Port of Seattle
Brenda Nnambi	Department of Transportation
Irene Reyes	Excel Supply Company, Inc.
Vicky Schiantarelli	Seattle Public Utilities
Cheryl Smith	Department of Commerce

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Mission. Vision and Value Pillars

Mission

Our mission is to optimize and ensure equity and opportunity for small businesses owned by minorities, women, and the disadvantaged through education, certification, and outreach.

Vision

We will be Washington State's primary source for the education and certification of minority, women, and disadvantaged businesses. We strive to eliminate economic discrimination in the procurement process and government contracting opportunities. OMWBE encourages meaningful outreach and empowerment for the small business community.

Value Pillars

OMWBE exists to fulfill its mission to educate and empower small and disadvantaged businesses in small business and procurement opportunities. To achieve this, we focus on eight pillars:

- Collaboration
- Customer-Driven
- Dedication
- Empowerment
- Equity
- Innovation
- Integrity
- Transparency

Collaboration: Working as a team, we partner with small businesses, contractors and stakeholders to increase opportunities in government contracting.

Customer-Driven: We proactively pursue suggestions, ideas, and creative approaches, leading to continuous improvement in everything we do.

Dedication: We are proudly committed to providing outstanding customer service.

Empowerment: Enabling customers to independently realize their potential and transform ideas into desired outcomes.

Equity: We are committed to breaking down institutional barriers and respectfully embracing cultural differences to provide more responsive service.

Innovation: Utilizing technology and process improvement to optimize inter and cross agency productivity/performance.

Integrity: Maintaining strong ethical practices, honest values and open trust.

Transparency: Leading by example, we are committed to an open government that is accessible to anyone, anytime, anywhere; and responsive to new ideas and demands.

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History

This year OMWBE celebrated its 30 Year Anniversary. The OMWBE first opened its doors in July 1983. The Office, proposed as an executive request bill by Governor John Spellman, was created to ensure that a reasonable amount of the state's contracts for goods, services and public works were awarded to minority and women-owned businesses. The legislature agreed that minority and women-owned businesses were significantly under-represented and denied equitable, competitive opportunities in state contracting. Senate Bill 3230, which created the OMWBE, was designed to reduce societal discrimination by setting forth a policy that more participation by minority and women-owned firms is desirable at all levels of government. The legislation stated that participation would be measured in terms of goals. The first MWBE goals were 9.1% for Minority Business Enterprises and 3% for Women's Business Enterprises.

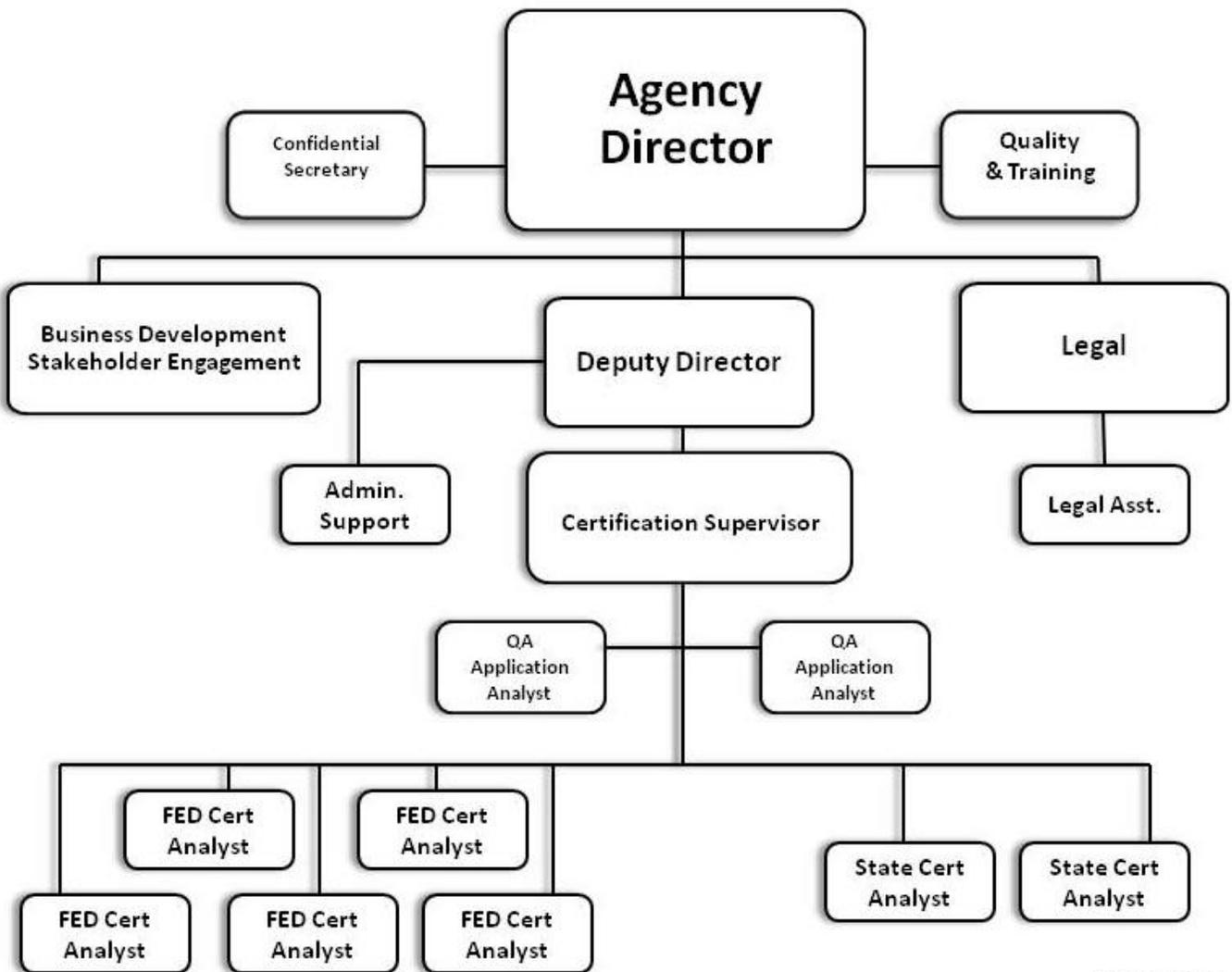


Past and continued excellence from OMWBE would not be possible without its supporters.

Thank You.

Organizational Structure

2013 Organizational Chart



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Operations

Operations this year were predominantly focused on the certification process. OMWBE certification responsibilities included not only certifying new applications in the State and Federal programs, but also on-going renewals, also known as Recertifications and Annual Updates. Additionally, OMWBE was engaged in the processing and approval of loan enrollment applications for the Washington State Linked Deposit Program. Further, OMWBE worked toward improved inter and intra-agency communications, internal training, and Performance Development Plans. Moreover, OMWBE was dedicated to long-term strategic planning and the role our agency played in Results Washington and GovStat reporting.

Certification

The Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises (OMWBE) is charged with qualifying minority and women-owned businesses for certifications for the Federal program under 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 26 and the State program under Revised Code of Washington (RCW) Chapter 39.19.

OMWBE serves as Washington's sole Unified Certification Program (UCP). Federally certified firms are eligible to participate in transportation specific federal projects including construction work on rails, roads, bridges, airports, and seaports. This certification is specifically for those firms who do transportation related scopes of work funded by the US Department of Transportation (USDOT), including the Federal Highway Administration, (FHWA), Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

During 2013, OWMBE continued to offer two previously existing federal certifications:

- Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)
- Airport Concessionaire Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (ACDBE)

On May 1, 2013, OMWBE started accepting applications for a new federal certification program titled Small Business Enterprise (SBE) certification. The SBE certification criteria are similar to the DBE program, except that it is a race and gender-neutral program. OMWBE received its first SBE application on June 3, 2013 and had its first SBE certified firm on September 30, 2013.

During 2013, OMWBE processed 200 new federal certification applications. The results of these were as follows:

- **Certifications: 80**
- **Denials: 48**
- **Voluntary Withdrawals: 72**

Once a firm is federally certified, the file is reviewed annually as part of a mandatory renewal process, known as the Annual Update. The renewal process ensures continued eligibility by the firm. In the event a firm no longer qualifies as a federally certified firm, the firm is decertified and removed from the federal program.

OMWBE processed 224 Annual Updates during 2013. The results of these are as follows:

- **Renewed: 113**
- **Decertified: 110**
- **Graduation: 1**

The staggering decertification number, at first glance, may be concerning; however, this number is largely due to a clean-up of the certification database. Most of these firms either went out of business or failed to respond to the requested documentation needed to process their Annual Update. Less than 50 firms were decertified for failing to meet the federal certification criteria.

One firm graduated from the DBE certification program. This means that they exceeded the allowable size standard of \$22.41 million in gross receipts over a three-year average.

State certified firms are eligible to participate in contracting opportunities with state and local governments. Some private sector companies recognize and use OMWBE's state certified firms for their supplier diversity goals. The state program consists of the following five different certification designations:

- Minority Business Enterprise (MBE)
- Woman Business Enterprise (WBE)
- Minority Woman Business Enterprise (MWBE)
- Combination Business Enterprise (CBE)
- Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (SEDBE)

OMWBE processed 401 new state applications during 2013. The results of these were as follows:

- **Certifications: 209**
- **Denials: 85**
- **Voluntary Withdrawals: 107**

A state certified firm completes a similar renewal process as the federally certified firm, only the state renewal process is conducted every three years. The state renewal process is termed Recertification. The recertification process similarly ensures that the firm maintains eligibility for the state program.

For the state certification program, 705 recertifications were processed during 2013. The results were as follows:

- **Renewed: 209**
- **Decertified: 496**

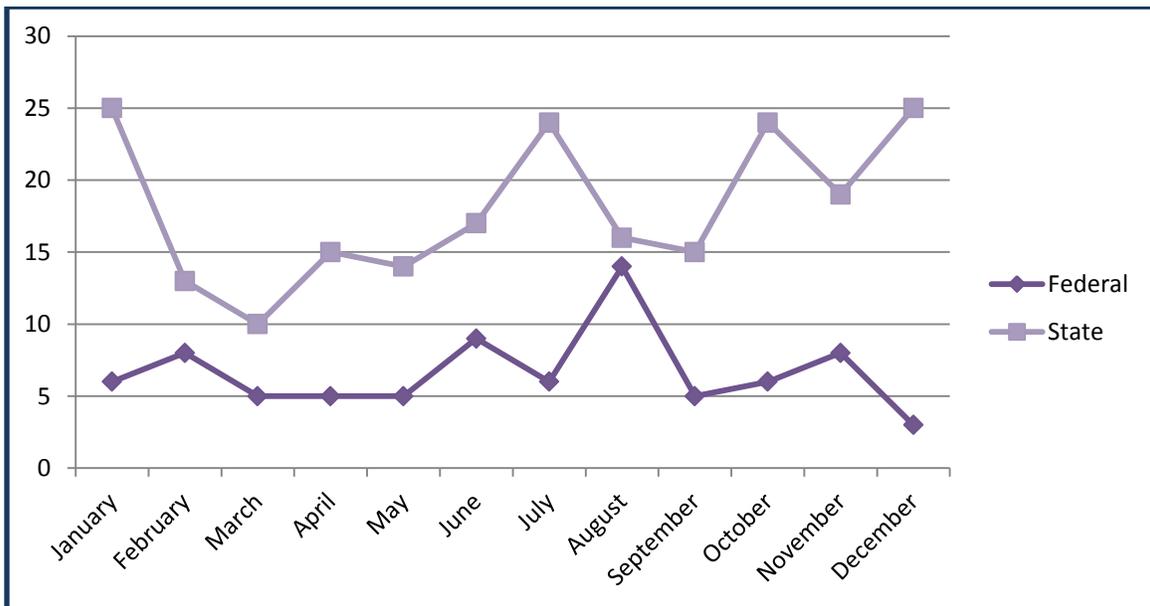
Similar to the Federal decertification numbers, the overwhelming decertification numbers may be concerning; however, it is also largely due to a clean-up of the certification database.

Again, most of these firms either went out of business or failed to respond to the requested documentation needed to process their recertification. In addition, many federally certified firms are also state certified; thus, there is an overlap in the number of decertified firms. Less than 120 firms were decertified for failure to meet the state certification criteria.

New State and Federal Applications Received by Month

New state applications accounted for 72% of all new applications received by OMWBE during 2013. The remaining 28% of new applications came from businesses applying for the federal certification program. OMWBE received an average of six new federal certification applications per month, with applications received by month ranging from three to 14. The state program received an average of 17 new applications each month, with applications received by month ranging from 10 to 25. A graphical representation of the number of new state and federal applications OMWBE received by month during 2013 is depicted in Figure 1.

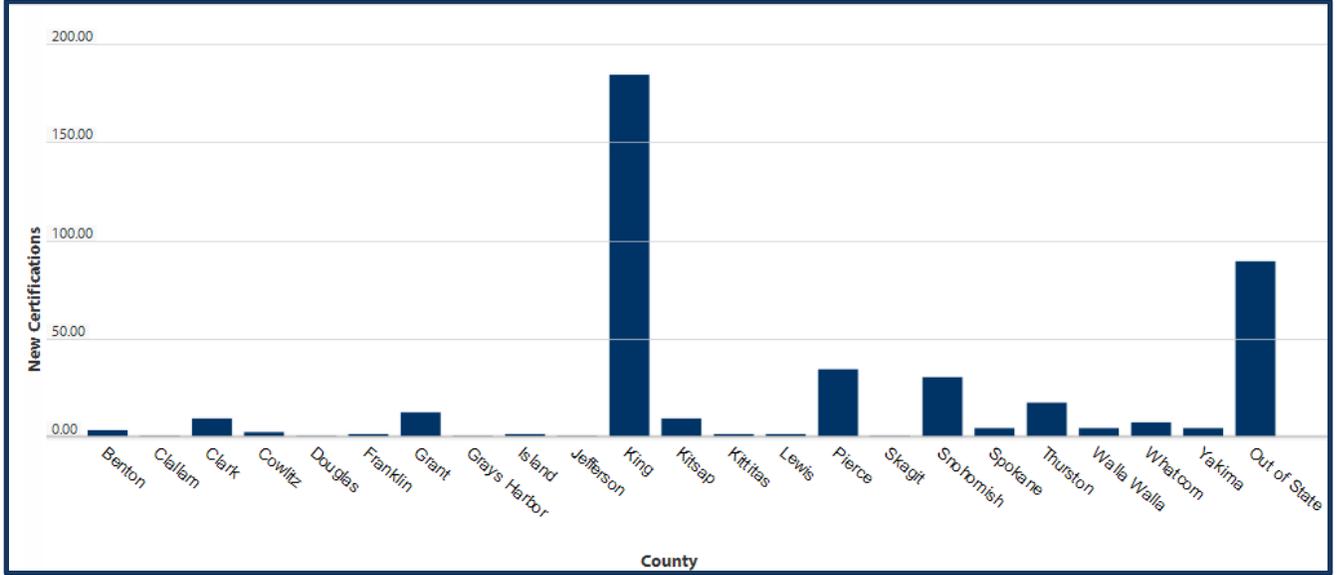
Figure 1



Number of New Applications by County

The number of combined new state and federal applications received by county is depicted in Figure 2. OMWBE received new applications from 22 of the 39 Washington State Counties. The majority of new applications derived from King County. Positively, OMWBE received more new out-of-state applications than was provided by any independent county, except King County.

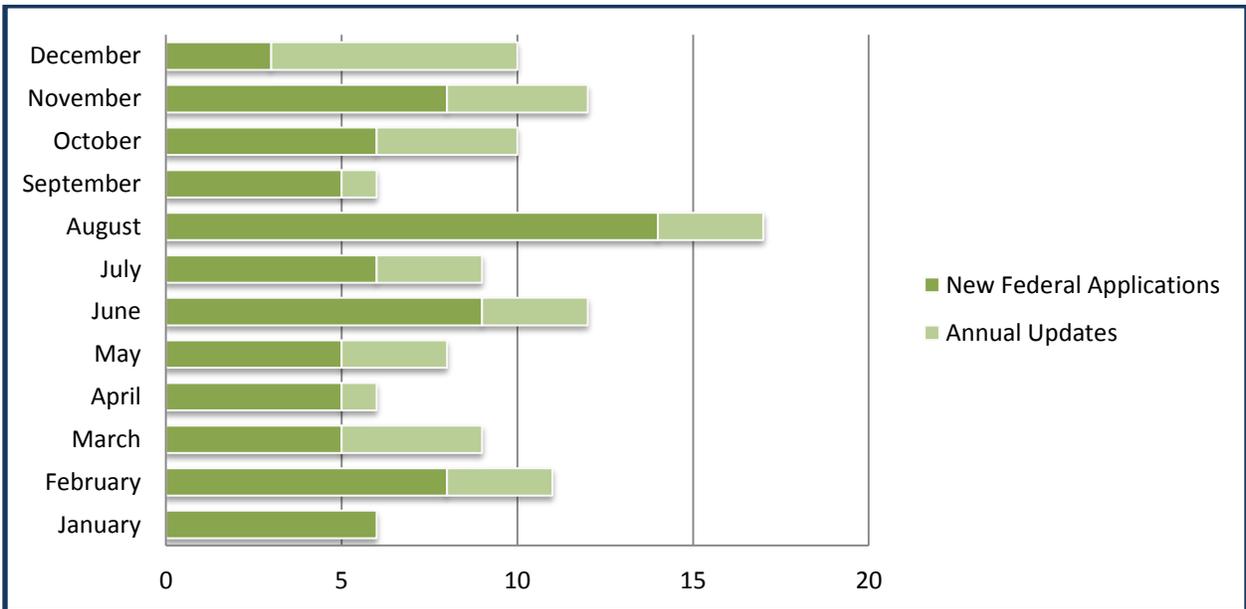
Figure 2



Number of Onsite Interviews

All new federal certification applications require that a site visit (onsite) be conducted at the firm’s place of business. If the firm has an active job site that can be attended by a visitor, OMWBE will also typically include this site during the scheduled visit. This process allows the agency to further review the scope of work performed by an applicant firm and confirms that the eligible owner has the technical knowledge to control the scope of work for which they are seeking certification. In addition, OMWBE performs updated onsites every four years. This ensures that OMWBE has a detailed and accurate business description of the work being executed by the certified firm, and that the eligible owners are still in control of the firm. Figure 3 shows a monthly breakdown of the number of onsites OMWBE conducted during 2013. OMWBE conducted 116 onsites; 80 of those for new applications and the remaining 36 for currently certified firms.

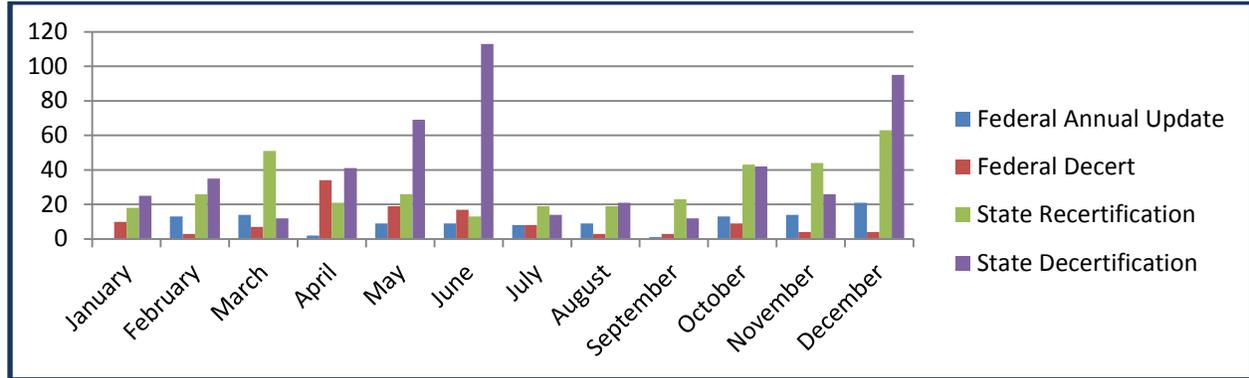
Figure 3



Other Applications Received (State Recertifications and Federal Annual Updates)

Figure 4 is a graphical representation of the federal annual updates, federal decertifications, state recertifications and state decertifications that OMWBE processed in 2013. As previously discussed, the peak in both state and federal decertifications was the result of a clean-up of the certification database and failure of firms to respond to information requests.

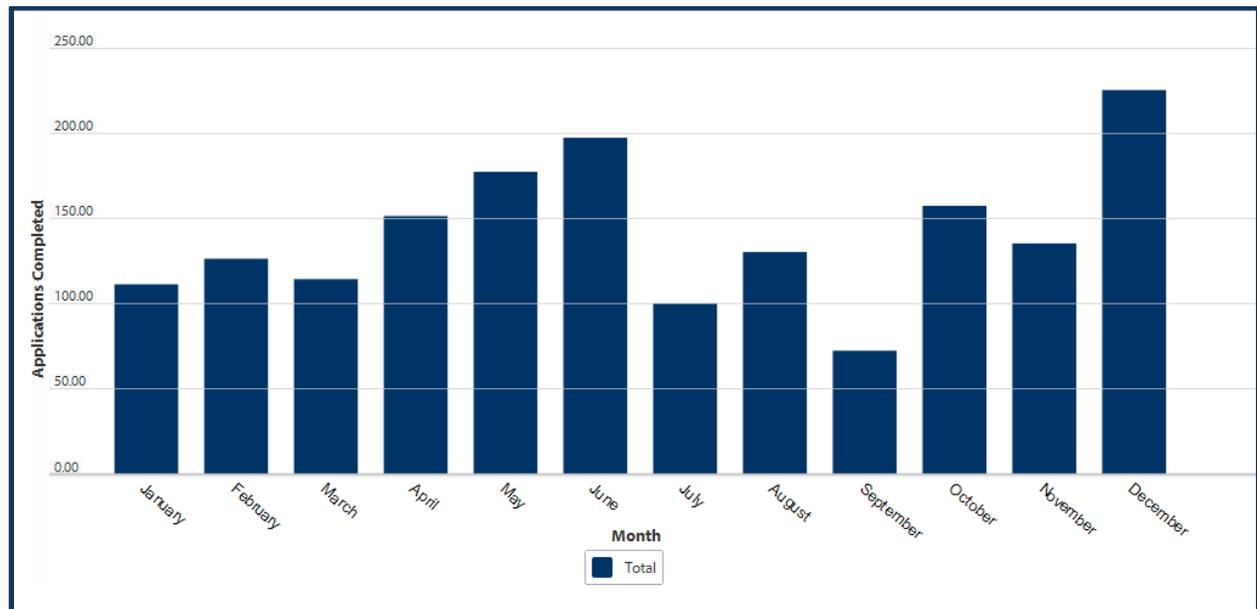
Figure 4



Application Determination by Month

In 2013, OMWBE processed 1,707 files. The total number of files reviewed included the processing of new state, new federal, state recertification and federal annual updates, which resulted in new certifications, denials, voluntary withdrawals, state and federal renewals, decertifications, and graduations. Figure 5 is a monthly breakdown of the total number of application determinations made.

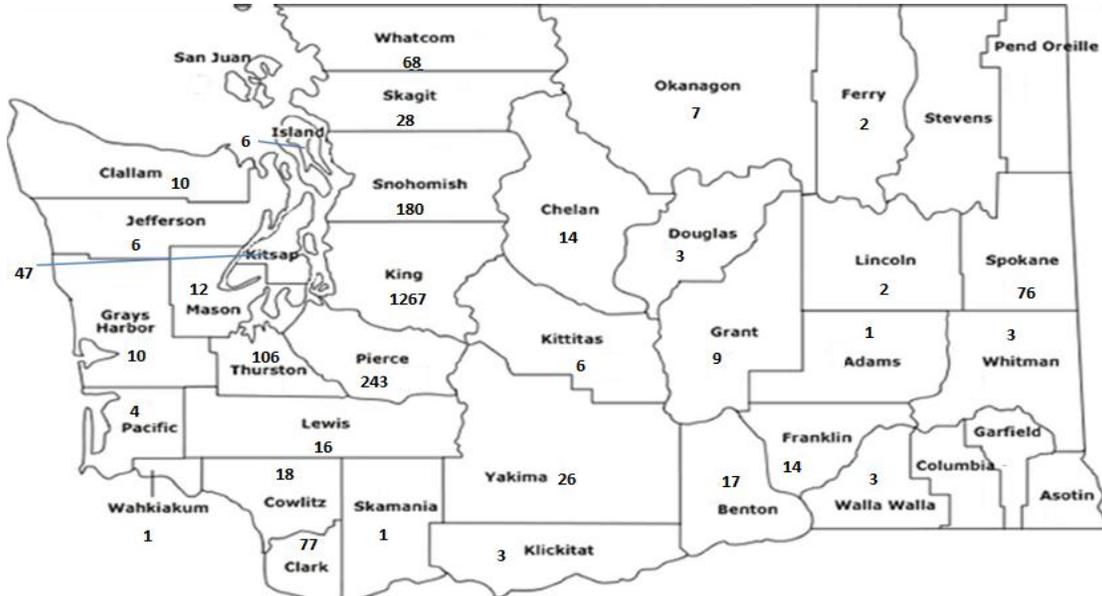
Figure 5



Distribution of Certified Firms

There are 2,285 certified firms in Washington State; located in 32 of the 39 counties. Figure 6 shows the distribution of certified firms across the State.

Figure 6



Out of State Certified Firms

In addition to the certified firms located in Washington State, OMWBE has certified 204 out-of-state based firms. These 204 firms are certified in either the state or federal program. The table in Figure 7 provides a list of the out-of-state firms certified by state. OMWBE has certified firms from 31 different states and Canada. The majority of OMWBE's out-of-state firms are located in Oregon.

Figure 7

Alaska – 1	Arizona – 4	California – 30	Colorado – 6
Florida – 9	Georgia – 1	Idaho – 7	Indiana – 1
Illinois – 5	Indiana – 1	Maryland – 2	Massachusetts – 4
Minnesota – 1	Missouri – 1	Montana – 5	Nevada – 5
New Jersey – 5	New Mexico – 1	New York – 4	North Carolina – 1
Ohio – 2	Oklahoma – 1	Oregon – 86	Pennsylvania – 2
South Carolina – 1	Tennessee – 1	Texas – 8	Utah – 1
Virginia – 4	West Virginia – 1	Wisconsin – 2	Canada – 1

Timeliness of certification processing

OMWBE strives to complete new applications with quality and timeliness. OMWBE made a commitment to the Governor’s Office to process new state applications in 45 days. New federal applications, including DBE, SBE and ACDBE, must be completed within 90 days and out-of-state new applications must be completed within 60 days, per 49 CFR Part 26. The timeframe to process new applications does not begin until OMWBE is in receipt of a complete application with all necessary supporting documentation. For the first time in recent OMWBE history, OMWBE processed all new applications within the allotted timeframes, unless a firm requested special accommodations.

Employees by Month

From April through September 2013, OMWBE hired seven non-permanent employees to assist with the conversion to a paperless system. Additionally, from March to August 2013, OMWBE hired three non-permanent certification analysts to work specifically on the new Small Business Enterprise (SBE) federal certification. Figure 8 shows a monthly breakdown of the number of OMWBE employees during 2013, including both permanent and non-permanent.

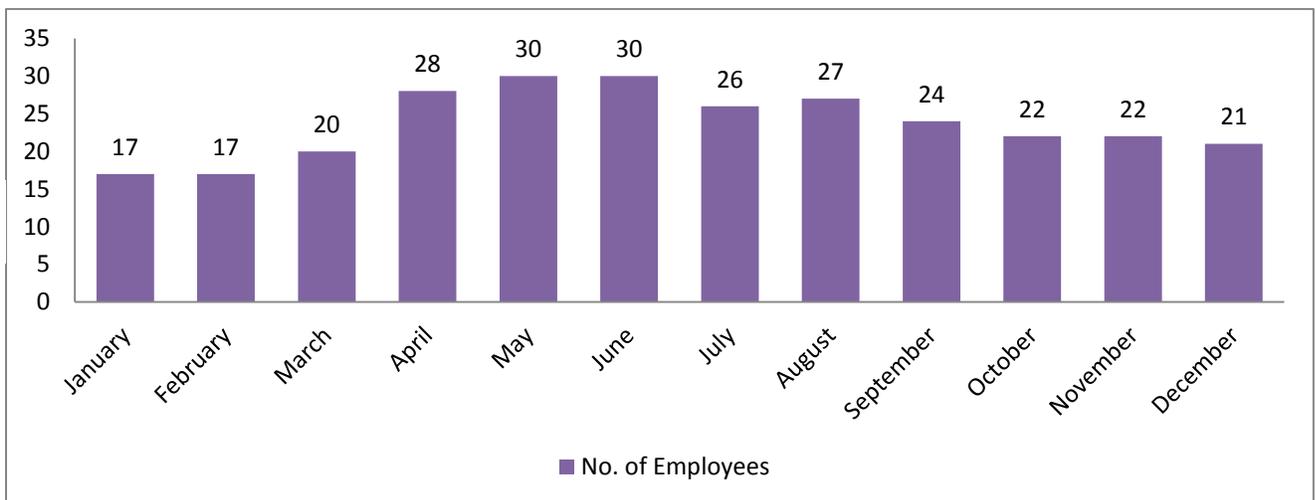


Figure 8

Training

On April 1, 2013, OMWBE hired a full-time employee to execute Quality Assurance and Training. The objective of this position was to identify certification standards, streamline workflows and implement workforce training and education. There was progress toward writing training manuals and developing training programs for employees. OMWBE established standards for file organization and is working on refining those standards with input from staff. A revised process flow and reporting process was also developed. During 2013, OMWBE started using the Learning Management System (LMS) to register and track employees regarding internal training opportunities.

Employee Performance Development Plans (PDPs)

The Deputy Director developed performance expectations and position descriptions for all employees. In previous years, the agency did not conduct employee development evaluations. However, in 2013, the Deputy Director communicated the implementation of PDPs to all employees in writing, which included quarterly reviews and culminated into an annual performance review pertaining to the expectations of each employee. Performance reviews were an opportunity for employees to embrace accountability and provide input regarding training needs or areas of concern.

Intra-Agency Communication

Throughout 2013, OWMBE continued to use the Morning Meeting process (give information, get information) as the primary source of intra-agency communication.

Every morning from 8:30 am to 9:00 am, employees share information with each other to ensure every employee is knowledgeable about the happenings within OWMBE. Guest speakers from several agencies have attended the Morning Meetings, granting employees a wealth of information directly from the subject matter experts. Morning Meetings are open to the public. This is an opportunity for individuals from other state agencies, the private sector and community members to participate in OWMBE transparency. In addition to the Morning Meetings, weekly Management Team Meetings ensure open and regular communication between members of OWMBE's management team, DES and WSDOT.

Inter-Agency Communications

OMWBE strategically used inter-agency communication to bring together representatives from various state and federal agencies to address regulatory interpretations. During the year, OWMBE hosted meetings with the Department of Transportation (WSDOT), Department of Enterprise Services (DES), Office of Financial Management (OFM), Department of Financial Institutions (DFI), four ethnic commissions, and other state agencies, commissions, offices, and quasi-agencies. The agency also hosted regular monthly meeting with representatives from Federal Highways Administration (FHWA), United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), and WSDOT to interpret regulations concerning OWMBE's policies and procedures. OWMBE will continue to lead these meetings moving forward.

Strategic Planning

The entire OWMBE team worked together during 2013 to modernize its mission and vision statements that reflect its forward movement and present purpose. OWMBE also created a new slogan (*Embracing Small Business, Empowering Entrepreneurs*) and value pillars, which exude its commitment to the small business community it serves.

Linked Deposit Program (LDP)

The Washington State Legislature found that minority and women-owned businesses were historically denied access to capital and that a lack of capital was a key barrier to said businesses. In response, the legislature passed the 1993 Minority and Women Owned Business Assistance Act, which created the Linked Deposit Program (LDP).

The State Treasurer is authorized to use up to \$175 million (as of 6/12/08) of the State's short-term surplus funds to purchase certificates of deposit in an amount equivalent to the amount loaned by financial institutions to certified minority and women's business enterprises.

For a certified firm to be eligible for a LDP loan, the firm in conjunction with a participating bank must complete a loan enrollment form. OMWBE is responsible for approving firms for LDP funds and tracking firms on the waitlist. During 2013, there was a steady list of firms on a waitlist pending the availability of LDP funds.

At the end of 2013, there were 470 outstanding loans with 326 firms involved in the LDP. The reason for fewer firms than loans is that firms may enroll more than one loan in the LDP at a time. During 2013, OMWBE received 63 LDP loan enrollment forms, with 67 loans funded with a reduced interest rate. There were five firms on the waitlist at the end of 2013. The average funded loan amount for 2013 was \$361,803. Figure 9 shows a graphical representation of the monthly LDP loan enrollment forms received and the number of firms offered LDP funds.

Linked Deposit Application Received and Funded by Month

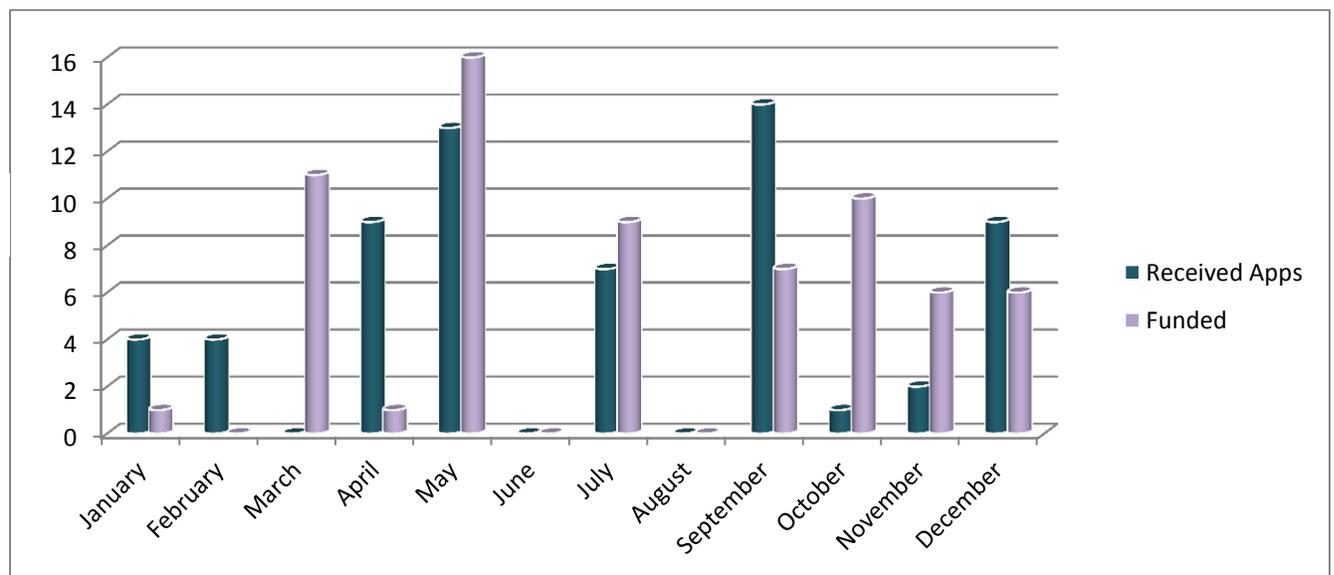


Figure 9

Business Development and Outreach

OMWBE has worked towards developing processes that encourage the use of certified firms to help build a more prosperous Washington State economy. This last year, OMWBE focused on effective communication, relationship building and coordination with other agencies to strengthen the minority and women business community and, ultimately, the citizens of Washington State.

Increased Awareness

The creation of an outreach program to increase community awareness proactively targeted minority and women owned businesses in order to increase the number of firms applying for certification. OMWBE collaborated with local groups and organizations that focus on minority and women owned businesses to help spread the word about the different types of certification and Linked Deposit Program. OMWBE participated in outreach to firms by attending widely attended events including, but certainly not limited to, the following:

- Procurement Council Assistance Center (PTAC);
- Native American Procurement Council Assistance Center (Native American PTAC);
- Architects Engineers and Agencies Subcommittee (AEA);
- Capital Projects Advisory Review Board (CPARB);
- National Association of Minority Contractors (NAMC);
- TABOR 100;
- Regional Contracting Forum;
- Small Business Administration (SBA);
- Northwest Minority Supplier Development Council.

OMWBE also participated in radio programs conducted in the Spanish and Korean languages. Additionally, OMWBE attended numerous "Meet the Prime" events, an opportunity for certified firms to familiarize themselves and socialize with prime contractors.

Certification Training Events

In 2013, OMWBE held three external certification workshops. Skanska, a prime contractor, hosted these workshops in an effort to increase certified firms in areas where few firms are certified (e.g. concrete work). The workshops were an opportunity for OMWBE to work directly with firms regarding the certification process, including documentation requirements, and to answer questions. OMWBE made additional staff available to sit down one-on-one with the firms to review application materials, respond to questions and accept completed applications. Two workshops were offered in Tacoma and one in Seattle. In 2014, OMWBE strives to increase the offerings of certification and external training workshops.

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Legislative Session

During the 2013 legislative session, Representative Tomiko-Santos introduced House Bill 1674. This bill would allow OMWBE to conduct its own investigations, amending RCWs 39.19.100 and 39.19.110. The bill would authorize OMWBE to subpoena information from firms believed to have committed fraud or other misrepresentations in obtaining certification. Before issuing any subpoenas, OMWBE would obtain court review and approval. Furthermore, it would allow OMWBE to decertify firms that have committed fraud or other prohibited activities. It would also require OMWBE to report on agency and educational institution certified business usage. While HB 1674 did not pass, OMWBE continues to find ways to improve its current investigation process. The bill is still alive and may be revisited in the 2014 legislative session.

In addition, OMWBE proposed agency request legislation for the first time in a number of years. OMWBE has the ability to penalize businesses that have made a false statement to influence certification, fraudulently obtained, retained, or attempted to obtain certification or knowingly obstructing or impeding a state employee who is investigating the qualifications of the business for the program. Currently, any money OMWBE collects from a penalty assessment will be deposited in the state general fund. OMWBE proposed legislation would amend RCW 39.19.200 to require penalty monies collected be deposited in the minority and women's business enterprise account.

Information Technology Development

This year was a successful year in information technology (IT) improvements with OMWBE implementing an entirely new database and replacing its preexisting website. OMWBE focused on opportunities in IT as it increased staff capacity and accessibility of real-time information to stakeholders.

DBE Certification (DBEC) Database

OMWBE contracted with WSDOT to digitize current and archived records into an electronic database. DBE Certification (DBEC) is OMWBE's new internal database which securely houses documentation electronically and tracks all action steps taken during the certification process. This project reduced physical storage space requirements in the office, as well as created electronic search capabilities for easy file access. Additional functionalities of the new database included the ability for analysts to "virtually" write, highlight, and make notes on digital pages, the ability to redact files digitally, and the ability to extract handwritten information from pages and auto-populate the data into form fields. The database also allows staff to track progress on application files in real time, without having to audit the physical number of files in process.

OMWBE hired seven non-permanent employees from April through September 2013 to assist with the transition of paper files to electronic files. In just six months, these employees transformed most paper files into electronic files. They set daily and weekly goals to make the transition possible.

Now that OMWBE Certification Analysts are reviewing electronic files, as opposed to the previous hardcopies, they are completing applications at a significantly faster rate and with greater accuracy. The transition to a paperless system is also environmentally responsible and cost effective. OMWBE continues to update the database daily to ensure optimal productivity by the document management system itself, as well as by its users. OMWBE's future goal for DBEC is to enable the processing of online applications for new state and federal certification, recertification applications, and annual updates.

Website

November 20, 2013 marked the grand launch of OMWBE's revamped website (www.omwbe.wa.gov). Notably clearer and more aesthetically pleasing, the site's transformation has proven itself more user-friendly and effective. We are now able to track the number of visits and user statistics. User statistics equate to the length of time each visitor spends on the site and the geographical region in which they are located, popular landing pages, number of application downloads, and bounce rate.



FOLLOW OMWBE



ANNOUNCEMENTS

- [Save the Date! WSDOT Regional Contracting Forum](#)
 - [Coalition launches statewide Get Certified campaign](#)
 - [Changes proposed for transportation DBE goals](#)
 - [Washington Health Plan Finder for Small Businesses](#)
- [Next >](#)

AVAILABLE BIDS

- [Interstate Re-locations of Office Goods \(Part A-moving, Part B-installation\)](#)
- [DSHS – Gurney \(Cots\), Eastern State Hospital](#)
- [002-14: Maintenance of Stanby Generators](#)
- [North Transfer Station Rebuild Project](#)



RESOURCES

Resources for Small Businesses including Federal and State.



CALENDAR

Upcoming Events, Training, and Opportunities.



BIDS & OPPORTUNITIES

Upcoming Bids & Opportunities for State Contracts.

On a daily basis, OMWBE posts bid opportunities and announcements for certified firms. The website is a great resource for people not only certified or looking to be certified, but interested in learning more about what OMWBE does. The new and improved website is viewable in over 80 languages. In addition, to express the agency’s appreciation to the community it serves, the pictures on the home page are of actual OMWBE certified firms.

The website also posts a real-time directory of all firms certified by OMWBE. This directory includes the state and federal certified firms by name, certification type(s), NAICS codes, business description and location. It is excellent exposure for certified firms, and a remarkable resource for prime contractors and others looking to hire minority and women-owned firms.

To help ease and expedite the application process for business owners, OMWBE introduced form-fillable applications, which are readily available on the Certification page. OMWBE combined the five state certification applications into one single user-friendly state application.

OMWBE is now able to better disseminate invaluable information regarding OMWBE, certification, ongoing opportunities, upcoming events, small business resources, and much more.



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