

Meeting Notes

Small Business Liaison Team (SBLT)

Thursday, January 26, 2017 1:00-2:30 pm

Please send corrections, edits or additional information to [help@oria.wa.gov](mailto:help@oria.wa.gov).

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<b>Location</b>	Department of Commerce Building Floor 4, Large Room 407 Sunrise Room
<b>Purpose</b>	2017 Outreach Plan & Workgroups; Agency Presentations: Office of the Attorney General and US Small Business Administration
<b>Attendees</b>	• Linda Alongi • Mike Brennan • Kayla Burr • Mark Costello • Lynn Fetch • • Kari Gilje • Rose Gundersen • Scott Hitchcock • Kim Johnson • Edmon Lee • • Ryan Leisinger • Rachael Lindstedt • Eric Moss • Servando Patlan • • Grant Pfeifer • Patrick Reed • Janet Shimabukuro • Jovi Swanson • • Korey Twombly • Peter Vernie • Margeret Warner •

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## Agenda Highlights

- **Welcome and Agenda Overview**
- **Calendar of Events & Web Traffic Report**
- **2017 Outreach Plan & Workgroups**
- **Agency Presentations:**
  - Office of the Attorney General – Business Scams and Fraud on Business, Tax and Consumer Related Topics
  - US Small Business Administration – Overview of Small Business Association

## Welcome and Agenda Overview

### Scott Hitchcock, Office for Regulatory Innovation and Assistance

- Quick overview of the agenda – Introductions
- Update: Thurston County Chamber outreach – spoke to Korey in December regarding Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) content for their website
  - **Action:** Brittany Wilson, ORIA: Will be creating an initial draft by pulling information from each agency website of commonly asked questions
  - **Action:** Scott is planning to attend the next meeting (February)

## Calendar of Events – Updates to the Calendar

### Rachael Lindstedt, Office for Regulatory Innovation and Assistance

- Presented on the [Small Business Events Calendar](#)<sup>a</sup>

- **Action:** Since each agency has their own calendar of events and reduce duplicative work, ORIA will set up a page with a table directing customers to each agency's events.
- Each meeting ORIA will highlight events of interest to the SBLT.

## Web Traffic Report

### Rachael Lindstedt, Office for Regulatory Innovation and Assistance

- Presented the [Web Traffic Report](#)<sup>b</sup> for October 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016:
  - Calendar of Events
  - Small Business Guide agency referrals
  - Small Business Guide HTML
  - Small Business Guide PDF
  - United States and Country page views
- A quarterly web traffic report is presented to the Small Business Liaison Team each month; next month's report will include data from November 1, 2016 to January 31, 2017.

## 2017 Outreach Plan & Workgroups

### Scott Hitchcock, Office for Regulatory Innovation and Assistance

- Working towards creating workgroups based on the results of the [2017 Outreach Survey](#)<sup>c</sup>
  - Still need to develop the purpose and goal of each workgroup, and determine ORIA's role in supporting each of the workgroup teams
  - Currently limiting workgroup members to one to two members per workgroup – this will help minimize burden and workload across the board. Members can choose to add their names to additional work groups.
  - More information to follow during **February 23** meeting.
- The 2016 SBLT Annual Report is almost complete. Goal is to circulate final report next week.

## Agency Presentations

### Office of the Attorney General: Business Scams and Fraud on Business, Tax and Consumer Related Topics

#### Eric Moss, Attorney General Office (ATG)

- Works in the Consumer protection division and outreach for ATG
  - Outreach documents are in a few other languages (Russian, Spanish, etc.), but mostly we work with community leaders to translate press releases into the language of their community
    - **Action:** Edmon Lee will connect Eric Moss with Korean businesses

- The ATG is the State's law firm: If you work for the state then the ATG will represent your agency
- Purpose: maintain a marketplace free of deception and unfair practices; this is handled 3 ways:
  - **Informal (voluntary) dispute resolution:** Complaints are provided to businesses; businesses are given 30-days to resolve and if they do not respond then a letter is sent to the consumer informing them of their options. A majority of businesses respond to the consumer directly.
  - **Litigation:** Specific criteria needs to be met to go this route, i.e. it has to affect a majority of consumers ([Comcast<sup>d</sup>](#))
  - **Public Policy:** Recommending legislation to improve consumer protection (e.g. student lending, vulnerable adults, etc.)
- **Who are consumers:** anyone who spends money in Washington (residents, non-residents, small businesses, etc.)
  - **How is internet commerce handled?** If the transaction is completed in Washington, then ATG can assist; however, if the transaction is completed in another state, they recommend contacting that state for complaints.
- **Better Business Bureau (BBB) vs Attorney General Office (ATG):** the BBB is a private organization with no legal enforcement; however, they can use media to help keep businesses in line. The BBB also provides information to ATG.
- Information received from the customer is shared with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) using their complaint systems – Catalyst / Consumer Sentinel
  - Conversation around developing a better referral process for other agencies (such as Department of Revenue)
    - ✓ Civil Rights are sent to Human Rights Commission
    - ✓ Some complaints are sent to Department of Labor and Industries and Secretary Of State
    - ✓ Landlord/Tenant complaints are not considered a consumer complaint and they recommend contacting tenant union(s)
  - Is there a way to share the data in their database with other state agencies through an API or is there a way to get a data sharing agreement?
    - ✓ **Action:** Eric Moss will research this and get back to Scott Hitchcock, ORIA.
- Presented PowerPoint presentation on **Small Business Scams**
  - Key takeaways
    - No legitimate collection agencies are aggressive (there are legal protections against that type of tactic)

- You never have to make a decision quickly
- Trust, but verify – trust that there are good people, but verify that they are who they claim to be and are from the agency they represent
- Complain often and complain everywhere
- **Action:** A copy of the presentation will be e-mailed to the SBLT members for their information.
- Information on safeguarding consumers for businesses can be found at:  
<http://www.atg.wa.gov/business-resources>.
- If you have any questions/complaints, feel free to e-mail Eric Moss directly at [eric.moss@atg.wa.gov](mailto:eric.moss@atg.wa.gov); he will make sure the information is passed on to the appropriate agencies or individuals.

## US Small Business Administration

### Mark Costello, Small Business Administration (SBA)

- Presented PowerPoint presentation on the: [Overview of SBA](#)<sup>e</sup>
  - The SBA is a relatively small federal government agency (around 3,000 employees) with 68 offices throughout the United States.
    - Seattle district covers most of Washington and parts of Idaho.
    - Pending administrator Linda McMann, spoke regarding the goals and vision of the new administration for the Small Business Administration:
      - ✓ Assured them that the SBA will not be consolidated with other agencies
      - ✓ Enhancing SBA's role for assistance small businesses
      - ✓ Government agencies will be focused on developing better rules, regulations, and laws to help small businesses in the United States
  - Three essential components of assisting small businesses:
    - Capital (Funding)
    - Counseling (Technical Assistance)
      - ✓ Counseling done through partnership model (they do not counsel owners directly)
        - SCORE – volunteer business advisors work one-on-one with new small businesses and provide business resources on their website, such as: business plan templates, cash flow templates, etc.)
        - Small Business Development Centers – 50% funded by the SBA and the rest by Washington State University and various Economic Development Councils (EDC); they focus on working with established businesses looking to raise money or expand their businesses

- Women's Business Center; Washington Center for Women in Business; Washington Women's Business Center – Focuses on providing counseling and training to Women (SNAP in Spokane and Business Impact NW also provide these services)
- VBOC – Focuses on providing counseling and training to Veterans
- ✓ The SBA provides workshops every Thursday
  - Reserved room can fit up to 35 attendees
  - The SBA often partners with other governmental organizations (i.e. Secretary of State – Patrick Reed) to provide information to small business owners.
  - Workshops sometimes focus on specific business types, such as: online businesses, exporting businesses, etc.
- ✓ Work with Library Systems – such as King and Snohomish to provide outreach opportunities
- ✓ Website provides a lot of information for small businesses, including a business plan builder and templates
- Contracting (Facilitating Access to Government Contracting)
  - ✓ Goal of 23% of government contracts going to Small Businesses reached last year
  - ✓ 8a program: provides access to small businesses that are economically disadvantaged
  - ✓ Partners with Washington Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC to provide these services
  - ✓ Complaints regarding government contracts can be referred to either SBA or PTAC (Tiffany Scroggs)
- **Action:** Scott, ORIA will connect with Mark to make sure that the SBA and SBLT are continually working together and what it looks like.

## Referenced Hyperlinks

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- a **Small Business Events Calendar:** <http://www.oia.wa.gov/BizEvents>
- b **Web Traffic Report:**  
[https://www.ezview.wa.gov/Portals/\\_1729/Documents/Presentations/WebSite%20Analytics%20-%20SBLT%20Report%20\(Sep-Nov%202016\).pdf](https://www.ezview.wa.gov/Portals/_1729/Documents/Presentations/WebSite%20Analytics%20-%20SBLT%20Report%20(Sep-Nov%202016).pdf)
- c **2017 Outreach Survey:**  
[https://www.ezview.wa.gov/Portals/\\_1729/Documents/Presentations/2017%20Outreach%20Survey%20Summary%20Report%20Final%2012-5-2016.pdf](https://www.ezview.wa.gov/Portals/_1729/Documents/Presentations/2017%20Outreach%20Survey%20Summary%20Report%20Final%2012-5-2016.pdf)
- d **Comcast:** <http://www.atg.wa.gov/NEWS/NEWS-RELEASES/AG-ANNOUNCES-LAWSUIT-AGAINST-COMCAST-MORE-100-MILLION>
- e **SBA Overview for SBLT Meeting:**  
[https://www.ezview.wa.gov/Portals/\\_1729/Documents/Presentations/SBA%20Overview%20for%20SBLT%20Meeting%201-26.pdf](https://www.ezview.wa.gov/Portals/_1729/Documents/Presentations/SBA%20Overview%20for%20SBLT%20Meeting%201-26.pdf)