

**HOUSTON BOROUGH NONUNIFORMED PENSION PLAN**

**WASHINGTON COUNTY**

**COMPLIANCE AUDIT REPORT**

**FOR THE PERIOD**

**JANUARY 1, 2006, TO DECEMBER 31, 2008**





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ABBREVIATION

PSABMRT - Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs Municipal Retirement Trust



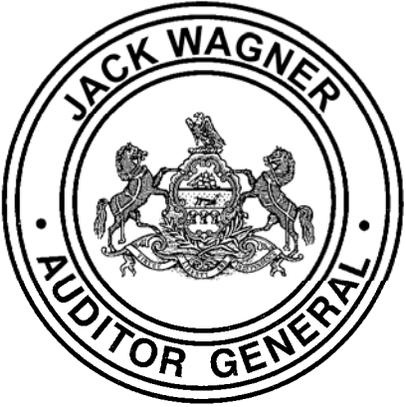
## **BACKGROUND**

On December 18, 1984, the Pennsylvania Legislature adopted the Municipal Pension Plan Funding Standard and Recovery Act (P.L. 1005, No. 205, as amended, 53 P.S. § 895.101 et seq.). The act established mandatory actuarial reporting and funding requirements and a uniform basis for the distribution of state aid to Pennsylvania's public pension plans. Section 402(j) of Act 205 specifically requires the Auditor General, as deemed necessary, to make an audit of every municipality which receives general municipal pension system State aid and of every municipal pension plan and fund in which general municipal pension system State aid is deposited.

Pension plan aid is provided from a 2 percent foreign casualty insurance premium tax, a portion of the foreign fire insurance tax designated for paid firefighters and any investment income earned on the collection of these taxes. Generally, municipal pension plans established prior to December 18, 1984, are eligible for state aid. For municipal pension plans established after that date, the sponsoring municipality must fund the plan for three plan years before it becomes eligible for state aid. In accordance with Act 205, a municipality's annual state aid allocation cannot exceed its actual pension costs.

In addition to Act 205, the Houston Borough Nonuniformed Pension Plan is also governed by implementing regulations adopted by the Public Employee Retirement Commission published at Title 16, Part IV of the Pennsylvania Code and applicable provisions of various other state statutes.

The Houston Borough Nonuniformed Pension Plan is a single-employer defined contribution pension plan locally controlled by the provisions of Ordinance No. 473 and a joinder agreement with PSABMRT. Active members are not required to contribute to the plan. The municipality is required to contribute \$100 per month per member.



The Honorable Mayor and Borough Council  
Houston Borough  
Washington County  
Houston, PA 15342

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Houston Borough Nonuniformed Pension Plan for the period January 1, 2006, to December 31, 2008. The audit was conducted pursuant to authority derived from Section 402(j) of Act 205 and in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* applicable to performance audits issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our finding and conclusions based on our audit objective. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our finding and conclusions based on our audit objective.

The objective of the audit was to determine if the pension plan was administered in compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies. Our audit was limited to the areas related to this objective.

Borough officials are responsible for establishing and maintaining an internal control structure to provide reasonable assurance that the Houston Borough Nonuniformed Pension Plan is administered in compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies. To assist us in planning and performing our audit, we obtained an understanding of the borough's internal control structure as it relates to the borough's compliance with those requirements. Additionally, we tested transactions, assessed official actions, performed analytical procedures and interviewed selected officials to the extent necessary to satisfy the audit objective.

The results of our tests indicated that, in all significant respects, the Houston Borough Nonuniformed Pension Plan was administered in compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies, except as noted in the following finding further discussed later in this report:

Finding – Receipt Of State Aid In Excess Of Entitlement

The accompanying supplementary information is presented for purposes of additional analysis. We did not audit the information and, accordingly, express no form of assurance on it.

The contents of this report were discussed with officials of Houston Borough and, where appropriate, their responses have been included in the report.

May 15, 2009

JACK WAGNER  
Auditor General

HOUSTON BOROUGH NONUNIFORMED PENSION PLAN  
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

Finding – Receipt Of State Aid In Excess Of Entitlement

Condition: The borough received state aid in excess of the nonuniformed pension plan’s defined contribution pension costs in the year 2007, as illustrated below:

State aid allocation	\$ 2,529
Actual municipal pension costs	<u>(2,262)</u>
Excess state aid	<u>\$ 267</u>

Criteria: Section 402(f)(2) of Act 205 states:

No municipality shall be entitled to receive an allocation of general municipal pension system State aid in an amount which exceeds the aggregate actual financial requirements of any municipal pension plans for police officers, paid firefighters or employees other than police officers or paid firefighters maintained by the municipality, less the amount of any aggregate annual member or employee contributions during the next succeeding plan year, as reported in the most recent complete actuarial report filed with the commission.

Cause: Plan officials were unaware of the need to annually reconcile the amount of state aid allocated to the borough with the plan’s actual defined contribution pension costs.

Effect: It is this department’s opinion that since the entire proceeds of the insurance premium tax on foreign casualty insurance companies are distributed annually to each eligible recipient municipality, it is inappropriate to use state aid in one year to offset pension costs in other years. Consequently, the overpayment of state aid in the year 2007, in the total amount of \$267, must be returned to the Commonwealth for redistribution.

Recommendation: We recommend that the municipality return the \$267 of excess state aid received in the year 2007 to the Commonwealth from the general fund. A check in this amount should be made payable to: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and mailed to: Department of the Auditor General, Municipal Pension & Fire Relief Programs Unit, 1205 Pittsburgh State Office Building, 300 Liberty Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15222. A copy of the interest calculation must be submitted along with evidence of payment.

Furthermore, we recommend that, in the future, plan officials reconcile the amount of state aid allocated to the borough with the plan’s defined contribution pension costs.

HOUSTON BOROUGH NONUNIFORMED PENSION PLAN  
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

Finding – (Continued)

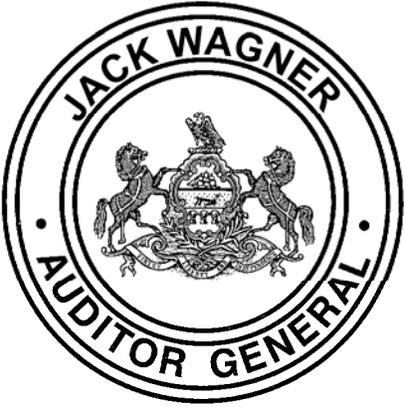
Management's Response: Municipal officials agreed with the finding without exception. Subsequent to the audit period, the borough reimbursed \$267 to the Commonwealth for the excess state aid received in the year 2007.

Auditor's Conclusion: Municipal officials have partially complied with the finding recommendation. Full compliance will be evaluated during our next audit of the plan.

HOUSTON BOROUGH NONUNIFORMED PENSION PLAN  
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION  
(UNAUDITED)

SCHEDULE OF STATE AID  
AND EMPLOYER CONTRIBUTIONS

Year Ended December 31	State Aid Deposited	Employer Contributions
2003	\$ 2,162	\$ 269
2004	2,042	144
2005	2,045	652
2006	2,565	798
2007	2,262	None
2008	1,358	638



HOUSTON BOROUGH NONUNIFORMED PENSION PLAN  
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Edward G. Rendell  
Governor  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Houston Borough Nonuniformed Pension Plan  
Washington County  
42 Western Avenue  
Houston, PA 15342

The Honorable Rick A. Adams	Mayor
Mr. Charles W. Fife	Council President
Ms. Maxine H. Burt	Secretary/Treasurer

This report is a matter of public record. Copies of this report may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General, Office of Communications, Room 318 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120. If you have any questions regarding this report or any other matter, you may contact the Department of the Auditor General by accessing our website at [www.auditorgen.state.pa.us](http://www.auditorgen.state.pa.us).