

**SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN**

**BUCKS COUNTY**

**COMPLIANCE AUDIT REPORT**

**FOR THE PERIOD**

**JANUARY 1, 2007, TO DECEMBER 31, 2008**





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## 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 Solebury Township Police 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 including, but not limited to, the following:

Act 600 - Police Pension Fund Act, Act of May 29, 1956 (P.L. 1804, No. 600), as amended, 53 P.S. § 761 et seq.

The Solebury Township Police Pension Plan is a single-employer defined benefit pension plan locally controlled by the provisions of Ordinance No. 2004-219, as amended, adopted pursuant to Act 600. The plan is also affected by the provisions of collective bargaining agreements between the township and its police officers.



Board of Township Supervisors  
Solebury Township  
Bucks County  
Solebury, PA 18963

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Solebury Township Police Pension Plan for the period January 1, 2007, 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 our audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our finding and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our finding and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

The objectives of the audit were:

1. To determine if municipal officials took appropriate corrective action to address the finding contained in our prior audit report; and
2. 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 the objectives identified above. Solebury Township contracted with an independent certified public accounting firm for annual audits of its basic financial statements which are available at the township's offices. Those financial statements were not audited by us and, accordingly, we express no opinion or other form of assurance on them.

Township officials are responsible for establishing and maintaining an internal control structure to provide reasonable assurance that the Solebury Township Police Pension Plan is administered in compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies. In conducting our audit, we obtained an understanding of the township's internal controls as they relate to the township's compliance with those requirements and that we considered to be significant within the context of our audit objectives, and assessed whether those significant controls were properly designed and implemented. Additionally, we tested transactions, assessed official actions, performed analytical procedures and interviewed selected officials to the extent necessary to satisfy the audit objectives.

The results of our tests indicated that, in all significant respects, the Solebury Township Police 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 – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation – Pension  
Plan Not In Compliance With Act 600 Provisions

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 Solebury Township and, where appropriate, their responses have been included in the report.

January 4, 2010

JACK WAGNER  
Auditor General

SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN  
STATUS OF PRIOR FINDING

Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation

Solebury Township has not complied with the prior audit recommendation concerning the following as further discussed in the Finding and Recommendation section of this report:

- Pension Plan Not In Compliance With Act 600 Provisions

SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN  
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

Finding – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation – Pension Plan Not In Compliance With Act 600 Provisions

Condition: As disclosed in the prior audit report, Ordinance No. 2004-219 contains a service-related disability benefit provision that is not in compliance with Act 600, as amended by Act 30. The specific inconsistency is as follows:

<u>Benefit Provision</u>	<u>Governing Document</u>	<u>Act 600</u>
Service-related disability benefit	...50% of base salary at the time of the disability. There shall be no offset for Worker’s Compensation or Social Security benefits.	The benefit must be in conformity with a uniform scale and fixed by the plan’s governing document at no less than 50% of the member’s salary at the time the disability was incurred, reduced by the amount of Social Security disability benefits received for the same injury.

In addition, the following benefit provisions previously cited as unauthorized are contained in Ordinance No. 2004-219, and are not in accordance with Act 600, as noted below:

<u>Benefit Provision</u>	<u>Governing Document</u>	<u>Act 600</u>
Intervening military service credit member contribution	No participant shall be required to make contributions to the pension fund while on an unpaid military leave of absence in active service with the uniformed services of the United States of America. If such a participant returns to employment with the township, he/she shall contribute to the fund an amount equal to the contribution rate in effect during the period of uniformed service multiplied by the compensation the participant would have earned for such period.	No member contribution required for intervening military service credit.

SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN  
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

Finding – (Continued)

<u>Benefit Provision</u>	<u>Governing Document</u>	<u>Act 600 (as amended)</u>
Normal retirement benefit	...employee shall have the option of selecting a ten-year certain form of pension...	Monthly pension or retirement benefits other than length of service increments shall be computed at one half the monthly average salary of such member during not more than the last sixty nor less than the last thirty-six months of employment.

Consequently, no actuarial equivalent provisions are authorized by Act 600.

Criteria: A governing document which contains clearly defined and updated benefit provisions is a prerequisite for the consistent, sound administration of retirement benefits. In addition, the police pension plan’s benefit structure should be in compliance with Act 600, as amended.

Cause: Compliance with the prior audit recommendation is subject to collective bargaining.

Effect: Maintaining a benefit structure which is not in compliance with Act 600 could result in plan members or their beneficiaries receiving incorrect benefit amounts or being denied benefits to which they are statutorily entitled.

Recommendation: We again recommend that municipal officials, after consulting with their solicitor, take whatever action is necessary to bring the police pension plan’s benefit structure into compliance with Act 600, as amended, at their earliest opportunity to do so.

Management Response: Municipal officials stated that noncompliance with the prior finding was due to extended labor negotiations for the new collective bargaining agreement and a draft ordinance is now being prepared to comply with the finding.

Auditor’s Conclusion: Compliance will be evaluated during our next audit of the plan.

SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN  
 SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION  
 (UNAUDITED)

SCHEDULE OF FUNDING PROGRESS

Historical trend information about the plan is presented herewith as supplementary information. It is intended to help users assess the plan's funding status on a going-concern basis, assess progress made in accumulating assets to pay benefits when due, and make comparisons with other state and local government retirement systems.

The actuarial information is required by Act 205 biennially, except for distressed pension plans, for which annual reporting was required through January 1, 2003. The historical information, beginning as of January 1, 2003, is as follows:

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Actuarial Valuation Date	Actuarial Value of Assets (a)	Actuarial Accrued Liability (AAL) - Entry Age (b)	Unfunded (Assets in Excess of) Actuarial Accrued Liability (b) - (a)	Funded Ratio (a)/(b)	Covered Payroll (c)	Unfunded (Assets in Excess of) Actuarial Accrued Liability as a % of Payroll [(b-a)/(c)]
01-01-03	\$ 1,704,727	\$ 2,315,365	\$ 610,638	73.6%	\$ 672,138	90.9%
01-01-05	1,936,434	2,917,011	980,577	66.4%	702,601	139.6%
01-01-07	2,437,979	3,167,625	729,646	77.0%	987,829	73.9%

SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN  
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION  
(UNAUDITED)

The comparability of trend information is affected by changes in actuarial assumptions, benefit provisions, actuarial funding methods, accounting policies, and other changes. Those changes usually affect trends in contribution requirements and in ratios that use the actuarial accrued liability as a factor.

Analysis of the dollar amount of the actuarial value of assets, actuarial accrued liability, and unfunded (assets in excess of) actuarial accrued liability in isolation can be misleading. Expressing the actuarial value of assets as a percentage of the actuarial accrued liability (Column 4) provides one indication of the plan's funding status on a going-concern basis. Analysis of this percentage, over time, indicates whether the system is becoming financially stronger or weaker. Generally, the greater this percentage, the stronger the plan.

Trends in unfunded (assets in excess of) actuarial accrued liability and annual covered payroll are both affected by inflation. Expressing the unfunded (assets in excess of) actuarial accrued liability as a percentage of annual covered payroll (Column 6) approximately adjusts for the effects of inflation and aids analysis of the plan's progress made in accumulating sufficient assets to pay benefits when due. Generally, where there is an unfunded actuarial accrued liability, the smaller this percentage, the stronger the plan. However, when assets are in excess of the actuarial accrued liability, the higher the bracketed percentage, the stronger the plan.

SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN  
 SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION  
 (UNAUDITED)

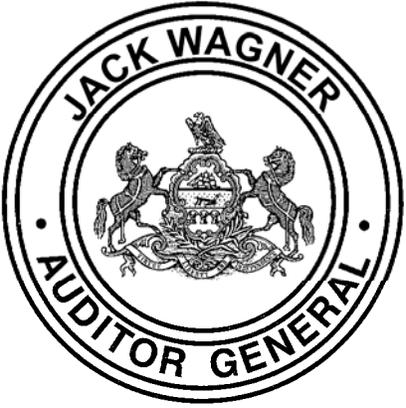
SCHEDULE OF CONTRIBUTIONS FROM EMPLOYER  
 AND OTHER CONTRIBUTING ENTITIES

Year Ended December 31	Annual Required Contribution	Percentage Contributed
2003	\$ 82,046	153.6%
2004	139,520	100.0%
2005	143,056	128.5%
2006	219,259	100.0%
2007	213,390	100.0%
2008	216,368	100.0%

SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN  
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION  
NOTES TO SUPPLEMENTARY SCHEDULES  
(UNAUDITED)

The information presented in the required supplementary schedules was determined as part of the actuarial valuation at the date indicated. Additional information as of the latest actuarial valuation date follows:

Actuarial valuation date	January 1, 2007
Actuarial cost method	Entry age normal
Amortization method	Level dollar
Remaining amortization period	12 years
Asset valuation method	Adjusted market value
Actuarial assumptions:	
Investment rate of return *	7.5%
Projected salary increases *	5.0%
* Includes inflation at	Not disclosed
Cost-of-living adjustments	None assumed



SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN  
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Edward G. Rendell  
Governor  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Solebury Township Police Pension Plan  
Bucks County  
P. O. Box 139  
Solebury, PA 18963

Mr. Michael Kennerley	Chairman, Board of Township Supervisors
Mr. John Granger	Township Manager
Ms. Karyn L. Koerwer, CPA	Finance Manager
Ms. Gretchen Rice	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).