

# COMPLIANCE AUDIT

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## Emlenton Borough Police Pension Plan Venango County, Pennsylvania For the Period January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2013

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February 2015



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Department of the Auditor General

Eugene A. DePasquale • Auditor General



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**EUGENE A. DePASQUALE  
AUDITOR GENERAL**

The Honorable Mayor and Borough Council  
Emlenton Borough  
Venango County  
Emlenton, PA 16373

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Emlenton Borough Police Pension Plan for the period January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2013. The audit was conducted pursuant to authority derived from Section 402(j) of Act 205 and in accordance with the standards applicable to performance audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* 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 findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings 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. Our methodology addressed determinations about the following:

- Whether state aid was properly determined and deposited in accordance with Act 205 requirements. State aid allocations that were deposited into the pension plan for the years ended December 31, 2008 to December 31, 2013, are presented on the Summary of Deposited State Aid and Employer Contributions.
- Whether employer contributions are determined and deposited in accordance with the plan's governing document and applicable laws and regulations. Employer contributions that were deposited into the pension plan for the years ended December 31, 2008 to December 31, 2013, are presented on the Summary of Deposited State Aid and Employer Contributions.

- Whether employee contributions are required and, if so, are determined, deducted, and deposited into the pension plan and are in accordance with the plan provisions and applicable laws and regulations.
- Whether benefit payments, if any, represent payments to all (and only) those entitled to receive them and are properly determined in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.
- Whether obligations for plan benefits are accurately determined in accordance with plan provisions and based on complete and accurate participant data; and whether actuarial valuation reports are prepared and submitted to the Public Employee Retirement Commission (PERC) in accordance with state law and selected information provided on these reports is accurate, complete, and in accordance with plan provisions to ensure compliance for participation in the state aid program.
- Whether the terms of the contractual agreement with the Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System are in accordance with the plan's governing document, if separately stated, and applicable laws and regulations.
- Whether refunds are made to eligible members in accordance with the plan provisions and applicable laws and regulations.

The Emlenton Borough Police Pension Plan participates in the Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System (PMRS), which is an agent multiple-employer public employee retirement system that acts as a common investment and administrative agent for participating municipal pension plans. PMRS issues a separate Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, copies of which are available from the PMRS accounting office. PMRS's financial statements were not audited by us and, accordingly, we express no opinion or other form of assurance on them.

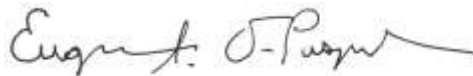
Borough officials are responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that the Emlenton Borough Police Pension Plan is administered in compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies. In conducting our audit, we obtained an understanding of the borough's internal controls as they relate to the borough'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 provide reasonable assurance of detecting instances of noncompliance with legal and regulatory requirements or noncompliance with provisions of contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies that are significant within the context of the audit objectives.

The results of our tests indicated that, in all significant respects, the Emlenton Borough 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 findings further discussed later in this report:

Finding No. 1 – Partial Compliance With Prior Audit Recommendation –  
Receipt Of State Aid In Excess Of Entitlement

Finding No. 2 – Incorrect Data On Certification Form AG 385 Resulting In  
An Overpayment Of State Aid

The contents of this report were discussed with officials of Emlenton Borough and, where appropriate, their responses have been included in the report. We would like to thank borough officials for the cooperation extended to us during the conduct of the audit.



EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE  
Auditor General

January 29, 2015

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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.

Annual state aid allocations are provided from a 2 percent foreign (out-of-state) casualty insurance premium tax, a portion of the foreign (out-of-state) 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 Emlenton Borough 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 15 - Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement Law, Act of February 1, 1974  
(P.L. 34, No. 15), as amended, 53 P.S. § 881.101 et seq.

The Emlenton Borough Police Pension Plan is a single-employer cash balance pension plan locally controlled by the provisions of Ordinance No. 291A, adopted pursuant to Act 15. The plan was established September 1, 1985. Active members are required to contribute 3 percent of compensation to the plan. The municipality is required to contribute 7 percent of each member's compensation. As of December 31, 2013, the plan had 1 active member, 1 terminated member eligible for vested benefits in the future, and no retirees receiving pension benefits.

EMLENTON BOROUGH POLICE PENSION PLAN  
STATUS OF PRIOR FINDING

Partial Compliance With Prior Audit Recommendation

Emlenton Borough has partially complied with the prior audit recommendation concerning the following:

· Receipt Of State Aid In Excess Of Entitlement

During the current audit period, the borough returned \$1,698 to the Commonwealth for the excess state aid received in the years 2009 and 2010; however, plan officials failed to reconcile the amount of state aid allocated to the police pension plan with the plan's pension costs and available employee forfeitures in 2011, as further discussed in the Findings and Recommendations section of this report.

EMLENTON BOROUGH POLICE PENSION PLAN  
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Finding No. 1 – Partial Compliance With Prior Audit Recommendation – Receipt Of State Aid In Excess Of Entitlement**

Condition: As disclosed in the prior audit report, the borough received state aid in excess of the police pension plan’s pension costs in the years 2009 and 2010. During the current audit period, the borough reimbursed \$1,698 to the Commonwealth for the excess state aid received in the years 2009 and 2010; however, plan officials failed to reconcile the amount of state aid allocated to the police pension plan with the plan’s pension costs and available employee forfeitures in the year 2011.

The borough received state aid in excess of the police pension plan’s pension costs after the application of available forfeitures in the year 2011, as illustrated below:

Actual municipal pension costs	\$ 1,595
Employee forfeitures available	<u>(5,970)</u>
Adjusted municipal pension costs	-
State aid allocated to plan	<u>2,257</u>
Excess state aid	<u><u>\$ 2,257</u></u>

At December 31, 2011, the police pension plan had a forfeiture balance of \$4,375.

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: The municipality was notified by PMRS in 2009 that forfeitures must be used to satisfy the employer contribution due to the plan in the year the forfeiture becomes available; however, when forfeitures became available during the current audit period, municipal officials were unclear on how they should be applied to the annual pension costs.



EMLENTON BOROUGH POLICE PENSION PLAN  
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Finding No. 1 – (Continued)**

Effect: It is this department's opinion that because 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 received in one year to offset pension costs in other years. Consequently, the overpayment of state aid received in the year 2011 must be returned to the Commonwealth for redistribution.

Furthermore, the borough's future state aid allocations may be withheld until the finding recommendation is complied with.

Recommendation: We recommend that the municipality return the \$2,257 of excess state aid received in the year 2011 to the Commonwealth. A check in this amount, with interest compounded annually from date of receipt to date of repayment, at a rate earned by the plan, should be made payable to: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and mailed to: Department of the Auditor General, Municipal Pension & Fire Relief Programs Unit, 320 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120. 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 borough's annual state aid allocation and any available employee forfeitures with the plan's annual pension costs and reimburse any excess state aid received to the Commonwealth.

Management's Response: Municipal officials agreed with the finding without exception.

Auditor's Conclusion: Due to the potential withhold of state aid, the borough's compliance with the finding recommendation will be monitored subsequent to the release of the audit report and through our next audit of the plan.

**Finding No. 2 – Incorrect Data On Certification Form AG 385 Resulting In An Overpayment Of State Aid**

Condition: The borough certified 1 ineligible police officer and overstated payroll by \$13,906 on the Certification Form AG 385 filed in 2012, by certifying a police officer who was not full-time employee until August 8, 2011. The data contained on this certification form is based on prior calendar year information.

Criteria: Pursuant to Act 205, at Section 402(e)(2), in order to be eligible for certification, an employee must have been employed on a full-time basis for at least six consecutive months and must have been participating in a pension plan during the certification year.

EMLENTON BOROUGH POLICE PENSION PLAN  
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Finding No. 2 – (Continued)**

Cause: Plan officials failed to establish adequate internal control procedures to ensure the accuracy of the data certified.

Effect: The data submitted on this certification form is used, in part, to calculate the state aid due to the municipality for distribution to its pension plans. Because the borough’s state aid allocation was based on pension costs, the incorrect certification of pension data affected the borough’s state aid allocation, as identified below:

Year	Normal Cost	Payroll Overstated	State Aid Overpayment
2012	7.0%	\$ 13,906	\$ 973

Furthermore, the borough’s future state aid allocations may be withheld until the finding recommendation is complied with.

Recommendation: We recommend that the 2012 excess state aid, in the amount of \$973, be returned to the Commonwealth. A check in this amount, with interest compounded annually from date of receipt to date of repayment, at a rate earned by the pension plan, should be made payable to: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and mailed to: Department of the Auditor General, Municipal Pension & Fire Relief Programs Unit, 320 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120. A copy of the interest calculation must be submitted along with the check.

We also recommend that in the future, plan officials establish adequate internal control procedures, such as having at least 2 people review the data certified, to ensure compliance with the instructions that accompany Certification Form AG 385 to assist them in accurately reporting the required pension data.

Management’s Response: Municipal officials agreed with the finding without exception.

Auditor’s Conclusion: Due to the potential withhold of state aid, the borough’s compliance with the finding recommendation will be monitored subsequent to the release of the audit report and through our next audit of the plan.

EMLENTON BOROUGH POLICE PENSION PLAN  
POTENTIAL WITHHOLD OF STATE AID

The findings contained in this audit report cite overpayments of state aid to the borough in the total amount of \$3,230. Conditions of this nature may lead to a total withholding of state aid in the future unless those findings are corrected. The overpayments of state aid should be refunded to the Commonwealth with interest, at a rate earned by the pension plan, and should be made payable to: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and mailed to: Department of the Auditor General, Municipal Pension & Fire Relief Programs Unit, 320 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120.

EMLENTON BOROUGH POLICE PENSION PLAN  
SUMMARY OF DEPOSITED STATE AID AND EMPLOYER CONTRIBUTIONS

Year Ended December 31	State Aid	Employer Contributions
2008	\$ 3,673	\$ 40
2009	2,827	370
2010	662	1,134
2011	1,595	None
2012	None	1,647
2013	1,422	568

EMLENTON BOROUGH POLICE PENSION PLAN  
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom W. Wolf  
Governor  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Emlenton Borough Police Pension Plan  
Venango County  
511 Hill Street  
Emlenton, PA 16373

The Honorable Timothy Russell	Mayor
Mr. Barry Louise	Council President
Ms. Nancy Marano	Borough Manager
Ms. Kristine M. Cline	Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System

This report is a matter of public record and is available online at [www.auditorgen.state.pa.us](http://www.auditorgen.state.pa.us). Media questions about the report can be directed to the Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General, Office of Communications, 231 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120; via email to: [news@auditorgen.state.pa.us](mailto:news@auditorgen.state.pa.us).