

COMPLIANCE AUDIT

Smith Township Police Pension Plan Washington County, Pennsylvania For the Period January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2013

March 2015



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of the Auditor General
Eugene A. DePasquale • Auditor General



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**EUGENE A. DePASQUALE
AUDITOR GENERAL**

Board of Township Supervisors
Smith Township
Washington County
Slovan, PA 15078

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Smith Township Police Pension Plan for the period January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2013. We also evaluated compliance with some requirements for the year 2014 when possible. 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 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 the objective identified above. Our methodology addressed determinations about the following:

- Whether state aid was properly determined and deposited in accordance with Act 205 requirements.
- Whether employer contributions are determined and deposited in accordance with the plan's governing document and applicable laws and regulations.
- 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 unallocated insurance contract, including ownership and any restrictions, are in compliance with plan provisions, investment policies, and state regulations.
- Whether benefit payments have only been made to living recipients, based on the Social Security numbers found in the pension records for retirees and beneficiaries.

Smith 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.

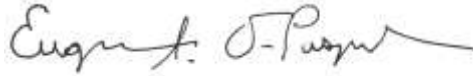
Township officials are responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that the Smith Township Police Pension Plan is administered in compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances 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 objective, 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 objective.

The results of our tests indicated that, in all significant respects, the Smith 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 – Overpayment Of State Aid Due To The Provision Of Excess Pension Benefits

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

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eugene A. DePasquale". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

February 20, 2015

EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE
Auditor General

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Background	1
Finding and Recommendation:	
Finding - Overpayment Of State Aid Due To The Provision Of Excess Pension Benefits ...	3
Supplementary Information	4
Report Distribution List	8

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 Smith 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 Smith Township Police Pension Plan is a single-employer defined benefit pension plan locally controlled by the provisions of Ordinance No. 2007-5, 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. The plan was established November 1, 1954. Active members are required to contribute 5 percent of compensation to the plan; however, member contributions were eliminated during the current audit period. As of December 31, 2013, the plan had 3 active members, 1 terminated member eligible for vested benefits in the future, and 4 retirees receiving pension benefits from the plan.

BACKGROUND – (Continued)

As of December 31, 2013, selected plan benefit provisions are as follows:

Eligibility Requirements:

Normal Retirement	Age 55 and 25 years of service.
Early Retirement	Available with 20 years of service.
Vesting	A member is 100% vested after 12 years of service.

Retirement Benefit:

Benefit equals 50% of final 60 months average compensation.

Survivor Benefit:

Before Retirement Eligibility	Refund of member contributions plus interest.
After Retirement Eligibility	A monthly benefit equal to 50% of the pension the member was receiving or was entitled to receive on the day of the member's death.

Service Related Disability Benefit:

Benefit equals 50% of the member's salary at the time the disability was incurred, offset by Social Security disability benefits received for the same injury.

SMITH TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

Finding – Overpayment Of State Aid Due To The Provision Of Excess Pension Benefits

Condition: Prior to January 1, 2008, the police pension plan operated pursuant to the provisions of Act 69. Pursuant to the plan’s governing document in effect at that time, vested pension benefits were granted to 3 police officers and an early retirement pension benefit to 1 police officer that were not authorized by Act 69. Currently, 3 retired police officers are receiving excess benefits pursuant to these provisions. As a result, the township received excess state aid totaling \$6,621 in 2014 attributable to the provision of pension benefits in excess of Act 69 provisions.

Criteria: To the extent that the township is not in compliance with Act 69 and/or is contractually obligated to pay benefits to existing retirees in excess of those authorized by Act 69, such benefits are deemed ineligible for funding with state pension aid.

Cause: Excess pension benefits must be reflected in the Act 205 actuarial valuation reports for the plan and funded in accordance with Act 205 funding standards. Because the township’s state aid allocation is determined, in part, by the information contained in the plan’s actuarial valuation report, the correct inclusion of excess benefits in the actuarial valuation report resulted in the allocation of excess state aid to the township in 2014 attributable to excess benefits provided.

Effect: The plan’s actuary prepared Supplemental Actuarial Information Form AG-MP-1 as of January 1, 2013, and determined that for the year 2014, the impact of the excess benefits on the township’s state aid allocation totaled \$6,621.

Recommendation: We recommend that the total excess state aid received, in the amount of \$6,621, 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 the impact of the excess benefits on the township’s state aid allocations in years subsequent to 2014 be determined and any overpayments be reimbursed to the Commonwealth.

Management’s Response: On December 9, 2014, municipal officials returned \$6,734 to the Commonwealth for the excess state aid received in 2014, including interest.

Auditor’s Conclusion: Full compliance will be monitored through our next audit of the plan.

SMITH 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. The historical information, beginning as of January 1, 2009, 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)]
01-01-09	\$ 409,159	\$ 246,694	\$ (162,465)	165.9%	\$ 44,483	(365.2%)
01-01-11	427,122	257,046	(170,076)	166.2%	40,631	(418.6%)
01-01-13	425,916	277,494	(148,422)	153.5%	103,983	(142.7%)

Note: The market value of the plan's assets at 01-01-09 are valued using the smoothing method described in Section 210 of Act 205, as amended, which provides for optional, alternative, expanded asset smoothing methods for determination of the actuarial value of assets. For the two-year valuation period beginning in 2009, this methodology allows an expansion of the asset smoothing corridor for recognition of gains and losses from 20 to 30 percent for all municipalities. The market values of the plan's assets at 01-01-11 and 01-01-13 have been adjusted to reflect the smoothing of gains and/or losses subject to a maximum of 120 percent of the market value. These methods will lower contributions in years of less than expected returns and increase contributions in years of greater than expected returns. The net effect over long periods of time is to have less variance in contribution levels from year to year.

SMITH 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. When assets are in excess of the actuarial accrued liability, the higher the bracketed percentage, the stronger the plan.

SMITH 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
2008	None	N/A
2009	None	N/A
2010	None	N/A
2011	None	N/A
2012	None	N/A
2013	None	N/A

SMITH 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, 2013
Actuarial cost method	Entry age normal
Amortization method	N/A
Remaining amortization period	N/A
Asset valuation method	Fair value – smoothing method described in Section 210 of Act 205, as amended.
Actuarial assumptions:	
Investment rate of return	7.0%
Projected salary increases	5.0%

SMITH TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom W. Wolf
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Smith Township Police Pension Plan
Washington County
P.O. Box 94
Slovan, PA 15078

Mr. Thomas A. Schilinski	Chairman, Board of Township Supervisors
Mr. Timothy J. Green	Secretary
Ms. Michele Meneely	Treasurer

This report is a matter of public record and is available online at www.PaAuditor.gov. 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.