

**AMBRIDGE BOROUGH POLICE PENSION PLAN**

**BEAVER COUNTY**

**COMPLIANCE AUDIT REPORT**

**FOR THE PERIOD**

**JANUARY 1, 2007, TO DECEMBER 31, 2009**





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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 Ambridge 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 147 - Special Ad Hoc Municipal Police and Firefighter Postretirement Adjustment Act, Act of December 14, 1988 (P.L. 1192, No. 147), as amended, 53 P.S. § 896.101 et seq.

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 Ambridge Borough Police Pension Plan is a single-employer defined benefit pension plan locally controlled by the provisions of Ordinance No. 1198, as amended, adopted pursuant to Act 600. The plan is also affected by the provisions of collective bargaining agreements between the borough and its police officers.





The Honorable Mayor and Borough Council  
Ambridge Borough  
Beaver County  
Ambridge, PA 15003

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Ambridge Borough Police Pension Plan for the period January 1, 2007, to December 31, 2009. 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 findings 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. Ambridge Borough contracted with an independent certified public accounting firm for audits of its basic financial statements for the years ending December 31, 2007 and 2008, which are available at the borough's offices. Those 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 Ambridge 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 the extent necessary to satisfy the audit objectives.

The results of our tests indicated that, in all significant respects, the Ambridge 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 finding further discussed later in this report:

Finding – Failure To Fully Pay The Minimum Municipal Obligation Of The Plan

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 Ambridge Borough and, where appropriate, their responses have been included in the report.

April 16, 2010

JACK WAGNER  
Auditor General

AMBRIDGE BOROUGH POLICE PENSION PLAN  
STATUS OF PRIOR FINDINGS

Compliance With Prior Audit Recommendations

Ambridge Borough has complied with the prior audit recommendations concerning the following:

- Pension Benefits Not Authorized By Act 600 And The Plan's Governing Document

During the current audit period, no unauthorized pension benefits were granted to any new retirees. However, excess benefits are still being paid to existing retirees. Since the municipality received state aid based on unit value during the audit period, it did not receive state aid attributable to the excess benefit provided. The Department will continue to monitor the impact of the excess benefits being paid to the existing retirees on the plan's future state aid allocations;

- Incorrect Data On Certification Form AG 385 Resulting In An Overpayment Of State Aid

The borough reimbursed \$3,554 to the Commonwealth for the overpayments of state aid received in 2004 and 2006;

- Incorrect Data On Certification Form AG 64 Resulting In An Overpayment Of Reimbursement For The 2002 Ad Hoc Postretirement Adjustment

The borough reimbursed \$132 to the Commonwealth for the overpayment of the 2002 ad hoc postretirement adjustment reimbursement received in 2007; and

- Failure To Maintain An Adequate Record-Keeping System

During the current audit period, the borough hired a pension consultant to monitor and maintain the records of the pension plan.

AMBRIDGE BOROUGH POLICE PENSION PLAN  
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

Finding – Failure To Fully Pay The Minimum Municipal Obligation Of The Plan

Condition: Plan officials did not fully pay the minimum municipal obligation (MMO) of the police pension plan for the year 2007 as required by Act 205. The municipality had an unpaid MMO balance of \$4,603 for the year 2007.

Criteria: With regard to the MMO, Section 302(c) of Act 205 states, in part:

Annually, the chief administrative officer of the pension plan shall determine the minimum obligation of the municipality with respect to the pension plan for the following plan year.

Section 302(d) of Act 205 states, in part:

The minimum obligation of the municipality shall be payable to the pension plan from the revenue of the municipality.

Furthermore, Section 302(e) of Act 205 states, in part:

Any amount of the minimum obligation of the municipality which remains unpaid as of December 31 of the year in which the minimum obligation is due shall be added to the minimum obligation of the municipality for the following year, with interest from January 1 of the year in which the minimum obligation was first due until the date the payment is paid.

Cause: Plan officials did not comply with the Act 205 requirements because of a mathematical error in the determination of the 2007 MMO.

Effect: The proper determination of the plan’s MMO ensures plan officials can properly allocate the necessary resources to the pension plan for the upcoming year. The failure to fully pay the MMO could result in the plan not having adequate resources to meet current and future benefit obligations to its members.

Due to the municipality’s failure to fully pay the 2007 MMO by the December 31, 2007, deadline, the municipality must add the 2007 MMO balance to the current year’s MMO and include interest, as required by Act 205.

Recommendation: We recommend that the municipality pay the MMO due to the police pension plan for the year 2007, with interest, in accordance with Section 302(e) of Act 205. A copy of the interest calculation must be maintained by the borough for examination during our next audit of the plan.

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

AMBRIDGE BOROUGH 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, 2005, 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)]
01-01-05	\$ 3,334,261	\$ 4,053,492	\$ 719,231	82.3%	\$ 768,754	93.6%
01-01-07	4,598,907	4,378,562	(220,345)	105.0%	647,933	(34.0%)
01-01-09	4,260,475	4,388,908	128,433	97.1%	593,448	21.6%

Note: The market values of the plan's assets at 01-01-05, 01-01-07 and 01-01-09 have been adjusted to reflect the smoothing of gains and/or losses over a 4-year averaging period. This method 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.

AMBRIDGE BOROUGH 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.

AMBRIDGE BOROUGH POLICE PENSION PLAN  
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION  
(UNAUDITED)

SCHEDULE OF CONTRIBUTIONS FROM EMPLOYER  
AND OTHER CONTRIBUTING ENTITIES

Year Ended December 31	Annual Required Contribution	Percentage Contributed
2004	\$ 159,927	100.0%
2005	171,745	100.0%
2006	113,689	100.0%
2007	47,096	90.2%
2008	57,578	100.0%
2009	47,705	119.2%

AMBRIDGE BOROUGH 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, 2009
Actuarial cost method	Entry age normal
Amortization method	Level dollar
Remaining amortization period	12 years
Asset valuation method	Fair value, 4-year smoothing
Actuarial assumptions:	
Investment rate of return	7.0%
Projected salary increases *	5.0%
* Includes inflation at	3.0%



AMBRIDGE BOROUGH POLICE PENSION PLAN  
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Edward G. Rendell  
Governor  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Ambridge Borough Police Pension Plan  
Beaver County  
600 Eleventh Street  
Ambridge, PA 15003

The Honorable Richard D'Ambrusio	Mayor
Mr. Gerald C. McCoy	Council President
Ms. Marilyn Sheleheda	Acting Borough Manager

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).