

**DUNMORE BOROUGH FIREMEN'S PENSION PLAN**

**LACKAWANNA 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 Dunmore Borough Firemen's 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.

The Dunmore Borough Firemen's Pension Plan is a single-employer defined benefit pension plan locally controlled by the provisions of Ordinance No. 4 of 1955, as amended. The plan is also affected by the provisions of collective bargaining agreements between the borough and its firefighters.





The Honorable Mayor and Borough Council  
Dunmore Borough  
Lackawanna County  
Dunmore, PA 18512

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Dunmore Borough Firemen's 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 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. Dunmore Borough contracted with an independent certified public accounting firm for annual audits of its basic financial statements 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 Dunmore Borough Firemen's 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 Dunmore Borough Firemen's 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 – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation – Failure To Appoint A Chief Administrative Officer

Finding No. 2 – Improper Cost-Of-Living Adjustments

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

February 19, 2010

JACK WAGNER  
Auditor General

DUNMORE BOROUGH FIREMEN'S PENSION PLAN  
STATUS OF PRIOR FINDING

Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation

Dunmore Borough has not complied with the prior audit recommendation concerning the following as further discussed in the Findings and Recommendations section of this report:

- Failure To Appoint A Chief Administrative Officer

DUNMORE BOROUGH FIREMEN'S PENSION PLAN  
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 1 – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation – Failure To Appoint A Chief Administrative Officer

Condition: As disclosed in the prior audit report, municipal officials did not appoint a chief administrative officer (CAO) for the pension plan by ordinance, resolution or by a motion recorded in the minutes of a council meeting.

Criteria: Section 102 of Act 205 defines the CAO as “The person who has primary responsibility for the execution of the administrative affairs of the municipality in the case of the municipality, or of the pension plan in the case of the pension plan, or the designee of that person.”

Municipal officials may appoint two CAOs - one for the pension plan and one for the municipality or appoint one person to fill both positions. Act 205 identifies specific duties for each position, as follows:

CAO of the Municipality

- Supervise and direct the preparation of actuarial reports (Section 201(d));
- Certify and file actuarial valuation reports with the Public Employee Retirement Commission (Section 201(b)); and
- Make actuarial report information available to plan members (Section 201(e)).

CAO of the Pension Plan

- Annually, determine and submit to the governing body of the municipality the financial requirements of the pension plan and minimum municipal obligation (Section 302(b), Section 302(c), Section 303(b), Section 303(c) and Section 304); and
- Provide the governing body of the municipality with a cost estimate of the effect of any proposed benefit plan modification (Section 305(a)).

Cause: Plan officials failed to establish adequate internal control procedures to ensure compliance with the prior audit recommendation.

Effect: The failure to formally appoint a CAO could result in important filing deadlines being overlooked, state aid being adversely affected and/or delayed and investment opportunities being lost.

DUNMORE BOROUGH FIREMEN'S PENSION PLAN  
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 1 – (Continued)

Recommendation: Because of the significance of the CAO's responsibilities to the municipality and/or pension plan, we again recommend that the CAO be formally appointed by ordinance, resolution or motion recorded in the minutes of a council meeting. Such ordinance, resolution or motion should detail the CAO's responsibilities and be filed with other plan documents.

Management's Response: Municipal officials will respond to the finding upon receipt of the audit report.

Finding No. 2 – Improper Cost-Of-Living Adjustments

Condition: The borough granted retroactive cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) for the years 2004 through 2009 to 4 retirees and a surviving spouse of a retiree who were not eligible to receive them since all of the retirees had retired prior to January 1, 1998.

Criteria: Ordinance No. 1 of 2001 states, in part:

Cost of living allowances shall be computed only for retirees who retired on or after January 1, 1998. COLA shall be calculated on a calendar year basis commencing January 1st of each year. A pensioner is not entitled to his/her first COLA until he/she has been retired a minimum of 12 months.

Cause: Municipal officials failed to establish adequate internal control procedures to ensure that COLAs were only paid to eligible beneficiaries.

Effect: The pension plan is paying excess benefits to the aforementioned retirees and surviving spouse.

Recommendation: We recommend that all pension benefits be paid in accordance with the provisions contained in the plan's governing document. To the extent that the borough has already obligated itself to pay benefits in excess of those authorized by the plan's governing document, the excess benefits must be reflected in the Act 205 actuarial valuation reports for the plan and funded in accordance with Act 205 funding standards. Furthermore, the unauthorized portion of such benefits will be deemed ineligible for funding with state pension aid. In such case, the plan's actuary may be required to determine the impact, if any, of the unauthorized benefits on the plan's future state aid allocations and submit this information to the department.

Management's Response: Municipal officials will respond to the finding upon receipt of the audit report.

DUNMORE BOROUGH FIREMEN'S 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	\$ 948,946	\$ 3,898,515	\$ 2,949,569	24.3%	\$ 738,617	399.3%
01-01-05	3,140,600	4,233,397	1,092,797	74.2%	792,612	137.9%
01-01-07	3,282,991	4,376,638	1,093,647	75.0%	806,634	135.6%

Note 1 - The market values of the plan's assets at 01-01-03 and 01-01-05 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.

Note 2 - The actuarial value of assets at 01-01-05 includes bond proceeds deposited in 2004.

DUNMORE BOROUGH FIREMEN'S 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.

DUNMORE BOROUGH FIREMEN'S PENSION PLAN  
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION  
(UNAUDITED)

SCHEDULE OF CONTRIBUTIONS FROM EMPLOYER  
AND OTHER CONTRIBUTING ENTITIES

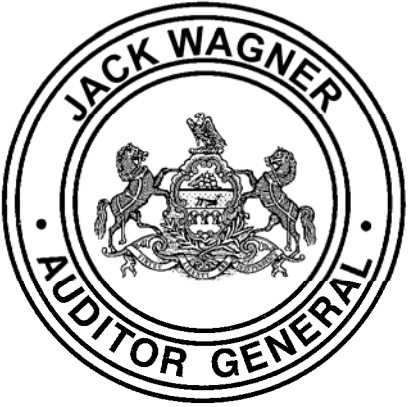
Year Ended December 31	Annual Required Contribution	Percentage Contributed
2003	\$ 437,939	100.0%
2004	188,989	100.0%
2005	218,188	100.0%
2006	190,661	100.0%
2007	269,500	100.0%
2008	270,477	100.0%



DUNMORE BOROUGH FIREMEN'S 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	9 years
Asset valuation method	Fair value
Actuarial assumptions:	
Investment rate of return	8.0%
Projected salary increases	6.0%



DUNMORE BOROUGH FIREMEN'S PENSION PLAN  
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Edward G. Rendell  
Governor  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Dunmore Borough Firemen's Pension Plan  
Lackawanna County  
400 South Blakely Street  
Dunmore, PA 18512

The Honorable Patrick W. Loughney	Mayor
Mr. Timothy Burke	Council President
Ms. Denise Muraca	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).