

**Report of the
PUBLIC EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT
ADMINISTRATION COMMISSION
on the Examination of Certain Expenses
of the Bristol County Retirement Board
For the Six Year Period
January 1, 1995 – December 31, 2000**

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April 3, 2003

The Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission has completed an examination of certain expenses of the Bristol County Retirement System pursuant to G.L. c. 32, §21. The examination covered the period from January 1, 1995 to December 31, 2000. This audit was conducted in accordance with the accounting and management standards established by the Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission in regulation 840 CMR 25.00.

In our opinion the financial records and management functions with respect to expenses are being performed in conformity with the standards established by the Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission.

In closing, I acknowledge the work of examiners David Pickering, Edward Johnson, and James Ryan who conducted this examination and express appreciation to the Bristol County Retirement Board, the current Executive Director and the Board staff for their courtesy and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Joseph E. Connarton
Executive Director

Bristol County Retirement Board

FOR THE SIX YEAR PERIOD ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2000

The Bristol County Retirement Board

The plan is a contributory defined benefit plan covering all Bristol County Retirement System member unit employees deemed eligible by the Retirement Board, with the exception of school department employees who serve in a teaching capacity. The Teacher's Retirement Board administers the pension of such school department employees.

Instituted in 1937, the System is a Massachusetts Contributory Retirement System and is governed by Chapter 32 of the Massachusetts General Laws. Membership in the plan is mandatory upon commencement of employment for all permanent, full-time employees.

Selection Criteria:

During a regular audit of the Pittsfield Retirement Board, PERAC Auditors discovered a letter from the Board Chairman to one of the Board's fund managers. The letter contained references to a trip taken by the Chairman, which may have been financed by a third party investment broker. The trip, as it was described to us, was in violation of 840 CMR 17.03 (d).

During a subsequent interview with the Chairman regarding the trip, he explained that it included several other Massachusetts Retirement Board members, whom he went on to name. Boards on which the named members serve were then contacted and a review of certain Board expenditures was conducted for the six-year period January 1, 1995 through December 31, 2000. The Pittsfield Audit was referred to the Attorney General's Office on April 20, 2001.

Audit Scope

The scope of our audit was to review and analyze the internal controls over certain expenses and to review the Board's internal policies and management functions related to this matter. We reviewed expenses for the period of January 1, 1995 to December 31, 2000 inclusive.

Bristol County Retirement Board

FOR THE SIX YEAR PERIOD ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2000 (Continued)

Travel Regulations:

On March 7, 2002 PERAC issued Memorandum #15/2002, "Guidelines for Retirement Board Travel Supplemental Regulations" and directed Boards to adopt supplemental regulations consistent with the guidelines. On April 25, 2002 the Bristol County Retirement Board submitted Supplemental Travel Regulations for review and approval. On June 11, 2002 the Board was advised that its proposed regulations were inconsistent with the guidelines in several respects. The Board submitted amended regulations on June 27, 2002. On October 2, 2002 the Board was advised that its amended regulations were inconsistent with the guidelines in several respects.

NOTE: On October 31, 2002, the Board again submitted revised Travel Regulations, which were approved on November 22, 2002.

Bristol County Retirement Board

EXPLANATION OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR THE SIX YEAR PERIOD ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2000

Travel:

During the review period, all expenses were properly authorized and documented by the Bristol County Retirement Board in accordance with 840 CMR 25.15(3) and (4).

Board Response: The Bristol County Retirement Board issues no comments, as the findings indicate that all expenses were properly authorized and documented.

Additionally, please be advised that we have returned to Mr. Joseph Connarton the October 31, 2002 adoption of Board Travel Regulations which we feel meet all the criteria set by PERAC. These Travel Regulations were approved on November 22, 2002.