

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**STATE TREASURY**

**PROGRESS REPORT ON AUDIT FINDINGS**

**PURSUANT TO EXECUTIVE ORDER 2014-03**

**MARCH 21, 2016**



**State of New Hampshire Treasury  
Progress Report on Audit Findings  
Summary**

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<b>13</b>	7	Create And Operate Accounts As Established And Described By Statute	Substantially Resolved

***Observation No. 1***

***Improve Compliance With Federal Treasury-State Agreement***

The audit report indicated Treasury had not monitored the State's operation of the Federal Treasury-State Agreement ("TSA") for drawing federal funds to ensure State agencies are in compliance with its provisions. The audit report also stated the State's recent (2013) Single Audits of federal programs identified a number of concerns with State agencies' drawing of federal program funds. Concerns included certain Agency practices for drawing federal program funds did not align with provisions in the TSA, the TSA does not necessarily treat the State's interests fairly, and the State accounting system's cash management routine was not in agreement with controlling provisions of the TSA.

**Current Status:**

In 2014, the Department of Administrative Services created the Federal Grants and Cost Allocation Administrator ("Grant Administrator") position to coordinate all aspects of federal program activity. Since then, the Grant Administrator and Chief Deputy Treasurer have worked together to remediate some of the audit findings identified in the most recent federal Single Audits and have developed procedures to achieve compliance with the federal Cash Management requirement.

Treasury, as the Agency authorized to represent the State in the Federal Treasury-State Agreement, obtained approval from the U.S. Treasury to submit a revised TSA for fiscal year 2014, which corrected inconsistencies between the approved TSA and State agencies' practices. This revision resulted in the resolution of several audit findings in the fiscal year 2014 federal Single Audit. In addition, compliance procedures recently developed include the review by State agencies of a Draft TSA for the upcoming fiscal year to allow for a timely submission and approval by the U.S. Treasury of the TSA. Prior to formalizing the compliance procedures developed by the Grant Administrator and Chief Deputy Treasurer, Treasury began posting the TSA documents on Sunspot, the State's Intranet site, so that State agencies could have access to the relevant provisions in the TSA, such as the funding techniques, clearance patterns, and other important components of the federal Cash Management requirement, pertaining to the major federal programs.

The efforts in this area are ongoing and Treasury, in collaboration with the Grant Administrator, will continue with the work to ensure that adequate compliance with this requirement continues. This observation is considered substantially resolved.

***Observation No. 2***

***Review And Improve Controls Over Information Technology Systems***

The audit report noted Information Technology ("IT") controls could be improved to lessen risk and improve the security and reliability of Treasury's information systems.

Issues noted were as follows:

1. Access permissions to certain Treasury key information systems as well as templates and permissions granted in banking applications were not routinely reviewed,

2. Security concern identified by Treasury had not been timely addressed by other responsible agencies (Financial Data Management (“FDM”) and Department of Information Technology (“DoIT”)) since the implementation of NHFirst in 2009,
3. Backups and recovery controls were in need of improvement.

**Current Status:**

Treasury has performed a very thorough review of its procedures for granting banking access to Treasury and non-Treasury employees and has identified, and whenever possible has enhanced, certain procedures. Treasury has also reviewed and updated templates within banking applications, ensuring that routine banking transactions are performed in a more controlled and efficient manner. Treasury has also reviewed all assigned roles and permissions of all Treasury systems in production and continues to make modifications based on best practices. Treasury will continue its work in this area and will develop policies and procedures that will ensure proper role assignment and monitoring based on established procedures. Treasury should have this issue resolved by June 30, 2016.

FDM and DoIT, in consultation with Treasury, implemented a solution to remediate a security concern identified by Treasury in 2009 and the financial audit in 2013. The solution essentially encrypts the accounts payable files upon creation in NHFirst and automates the retrieval and decryption process by MHC, the application utilized for transferring the payment files to the banking applications used by our banking partners. With this implementation, Treasury believes the risks previously identified have been mitigated, and therefore, this component of the audit observation is considered resolved.

All data backups are now maintained both locally and offsite. Treasury has implemented virtual servers maintained by DoIT that include new data backup and restore capabilities. Treasury performs two types of external backups, a Disk-to-Disk backup and a directory synchronization to a different virtual server located at DoIT. This component of the audit observation is considered resolved.

After a thorough review of its essential functions and critical records and systems, State Treasury signed off on its Continuity of Operations Plan (“COOP”) document in early March of 2016. Treasury also performed tests of certain continuity procedures as part of the Test, Training and Exercise Program (“Program”) accompanying the COOP document. Treasury will update all of its continuity documents at least annually and conduct tests and training as described in the Program. This part of the observation is considered fully resolved.

***Observation No. 3***

*Ensure Policies And Procedures For Posting Inter-Agency Transactions Are Appropriate For Treasury’s Purpose*

This observation stated “Treasury’s error in posting two inter-agency transactions during fiscal year 2013 resulted in Treasury understating both revenues and expenditures by \$2.1 million.

The audit identified that Treasury posted the receipt of reimbursements for two debt service payments as negative expenditures instead of revenues. These two posting errors resulted in expenditures and revenues both being understated. Treasury corrected the errors prior to the preparation of the June 30, 2013 financial statements.”

**Current Status:**

Treasury corrected the errors and the weakness causing the errors prior to the audit report issuance on March 21, 2014. This observation remains resolved.

***Observation No. 4***

***Maintain Accurate Information On All State-Guaranteed Debt***

This observation indicated Treasury did not have policies and procedures for maintaining accurate information regarding the State’s contingent liabilities related to certain mortgage loans issued with State guarantees.

**Current Status:**

The Treasury completed the necessary procedures to implement Statement No. 70 of the Governmental Accounting Standard Board (GASB) relative to *Accounting and Financial Reporting for Nonexchange Financial Guarantees* for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2014. As a result of this implementation, the State was able to determine and properly disclose in its comprehensive annual financial report (“CAFR”) dated June 30, 2014, the likelihood of making payments in relation to guarantees extended to other governments, as well as other pertinent information relative to its extended guarantees. Treasury has also updated its year-end procedures to ensure accurate information is reported each year relative to the State’s contingent liabilities, and in particular, information on bonds and loans issued with State guarantees. This observation remains resolved.

***Observation No. 5***

***Finalize Capital Projects Lists Timely***

The audit report indicated Treasury had not finalized the capital projects list supporting its November 2012 bond issue as of March 5, 2014. The capital projects list identifies the capital projects supported by the bond issue and is used in Treasury’s allocation of bond proceeds, liabilities, and debt service charges. The incomplete nature of the capital projects list at June 30, 2013 may have contributed to the need for Treasury to make several corrections to draft debt disclosures prepared for the State’s comprehensive annual financial report, subsequent to auditor inquiry about amounts presented. Documentation made available to the auditors did not fully support the debt service allocated to certain State agencies responsible for paying a portion of debt service at June 30, 2013.

**Current Status:**

Capital Project lists, which support the yearly issuance of new General Obligation Bonds, undergo many iterations before they are finalized, as they reflect actual (bondable) and projected capital expenditures on authorized capital appropriations. Once finalized, the project list is included in the Bond Closing Documents of each bond issuance.

During the timetable for deployment of bond proceeds, general funded projects that do not spend as much or as quickly as anticipated must be replaced in whole or in part with projects that spend more quickly than expected. This reallocation is a manual process and may transpire over a period of 18 months due to bond proceed arbitrage rebate rules established in the Internal Revenue Code. For this reason, Treasury strives to include as much bondable expenditure activity as possible from each bond issue before “finalizing” the list for budgeting purposes, as well as determining individual debt service schedules based on funding sources that are then consolidated into the entire issue. The allocation of bond proceeds and the establishment of debt service schedules for projects funded with non-general funds (“other funds”) are also based on agency budgets, which are typically enacted one or two years prior to a bond issuance. When agencies are developing their budgets, they typically consult with Treasury and request one or more estimated amortization schedules based on different assumptions in order to determine how much to budget for debt service payments. This exercise assists in the allocation of bond proceeds and total debt assigned to State agencies and programs.

Given these requirements and constraints, the Capital Projects application, a functionality within the NHFirst - Activities Module, was recently implemented and is expected to significantly enhance the process of determining what projects can be bonded. This reporting application will replace the use of manual spreadsheets for compiling bondable and projected capital expenditures prior to a bond issuance. Treasury did not issue bonds in fiscal year 2016 but will have the opportunity to validate the benefits of this application in fiscal year 2017. This observation is deemed substantially resolved.

***Observation No. 6***

*Notify Financial Institutions Timely Of Changes In Individuals Authorized To Initiate Transactions*

The audit report indicated that Treasury did not timely update its list of authorized signers at one financial institution with which it maintained 52 State investment accounts during, and subsequent to, fiscal year 2013.

**Current Status:**

Treasury updated the list of authorized signers as soon as it was notified by the auditors of the omission. Since being notified of the weakness, Treasury updated procedures, completed an exhaustive inventory of all accounts, and communicated with banking and investment partners to ensure such changes were implemented. Review of information and inventory of accounts is now performed annually. This observation remains resolved.

***Observation No. 7***

***Improve Segregation Of Duties For Trust And Agency Funds***

The audit reported the financial accounting duties for Treasury's trust and agency funds were not fully segregated during most of the fiscal year ended June 30, 2013.

**Current Status:**

Treasury has segregated trust and agency account responsibilities as much as possible and has enhanced procedures in order to mitigate some of the risks identified in the audit observations. For example, as noted in the response to observation No. 9, Treasury implemented procedures to ensure that only authorized individuals have the ability to direct Treasury's actions while in custody of trusts and custodial accounts. Another example is that all the records prepared by the Senior Treasury Analyst are now reviewed and reconciled by other staff within Treasury, as well as the oversight provided by the respective trustees and fund administrators. However, Treasury believes the administration of these accounts will improve once the accounting of trust and custodial account transactions, currently maintained off-books via spreadsheets, is migrated to the State's accounting system ("NHFirst"). Treasury met with the State Comptroller in 2015 to discuss the possibility of migrating these accounts to NHFirst. This initiative remains in its early stages and Treasury expects discussions with Administrative Services will continue in order to accomplish this effort. This observation remains partially resolved.

***Observation No. 8***

***Improve Record-Keeping For Trust And Agency Accounts***

The audit reported during fiscal year 2013 Treasury primarily used spreadsheets to account for the financial activity in the 49 trust and agency funds for which it serves as custodian. The financial activity of certain trust and agency funds is also budgeted and accounted for in NHFirst.

**Current Status:**

As of March 2016, Treasury administers 44 trust and custodial accounts through the use of spreadsheets. Using NHFirst for this function would create many efficiencies, improve the internal control system over financial reporting of trust and custodial accounts, eliminate duplication of records, and mitigate risks associated with recording accounting transactions in spreadsheets. Treasury would need to collaborate with the Comptroller's Office and Financial Data Management in order to determine what is needed to create new funds or accounts in the State's Chart of Accounts. Treasury will pursue this initiative with the expectation of having a plan by June 30, 2016. This observation remains unresolved.

***Observation No. 9***

***Maintain Listing Of Authorized Initiators Of Trust And Agency Account Transactions***

The audit report noted that Treasury’s controls over the initiation of trust and agency account transactions did not include ensuring that the individuals requesting the transactions have the proper authority to direct the receipt or expenditure of funds within the accounts.

**Current Status:**

In the fall of 2014, Treasury compiled a list of individuals who are authorized to direct routine transactions. In addition, Treasury updated its procedures relative to its biennial update of Custodial Account Agreements (“Agreement”) maintained with all the Trust and Account Administrators by adding information relative to individuals who are authorized to conduct trust and agency financial transactions. This observation remains resolved.

***Observation No. 10***

***Determine The Ownership And Disposition Of Account Balances***

The audit report indicated that three trust and agency accounts maintained by the Treasurer require review to determine the purpose and ownership of certain balances in those accounts.

**Current Status:**

Conversations continue in regard to the use and disposition of the Laconia State School fund. Since the Laconia State School is no longer in existence, Treasury is awaiting guidance from the Attorney General’s Office as to the proper disposition of these funds. A meeting between representatives from the Department of Health and Human Services and the Attorney General’s Office is scheduled for April of 2016. Treasury is not currently fulfilling any disbursement requests until there is clarity of the purpose and ownership of these funds.

After performing extensive research, Treasury has received final guidance from NH Department of Labor (“NH DOL”) legal counsel directing that the Crown Paper Workers Compensation fund must remain open until all potential claims have been received or until potential claimants no longer exist. As a result, Treasury has instituted a procedure by which annual confirmation is obtained from NH DOL indicating whether or not the account should remain open. This portion of the observation is resolved.

Treasury received final guidance from the Attorney General’s Office directing that the interest earned on Financial Responsibility funds, which are monies held in a custodial capacity, belong to Treasury and thus should be deposited in the general fund. Treasury validated records maintained with those retained by the Division of Motor Vehicles and transferred the funds to the general fund in early March of 2016. In order to true up fiscal year 2016, Treasury intends to transfer any earned interest through May 2016 and perform this exercise once per year. This portion of the observation is considered resolved.

***Observation No. 11***

***Review Trust And Agency Financial Information In State CAFR For Proper Presentation***

The audit reported Treasury had not established policies and procedures to periodically review the trust and agency financial information included in the State's CAFR to ensure that the trust and agency financial information of the accounts in the Treasury's custody is properly presented.

**Current Status:**

Treasury's procedure is to review, in collaboration with Administrative Services, the nature and authority of any new accounts assigned to Treasury custody in order to determine how the funds should be reported in the CAFR. When the accounts are initially established, Treasury performs a thorough review of the account in order to determine how it should be presented in the CAFR. Beginning in the fall of 2014, Treasury incorporated into its year-end procedures a review and reconciliation between the trust and agency account reports included in the unaudited CAFR and Treasury's records to ensure they are accurately reported in accordance with the established criteria, as well as consistent with prior years. This observation remains resolved.

***Observation No. 12***

*File Report Of Information Required By Statute*

The audit reported Treasury did not file certain statutorily-required reports during the fiscal year ended June 30, 2013.

**Current Status:**

Treasury continues to file timely Quarterly Cash and Investments Balance Reports with the Governor and Executive Council, Commissioner of Administrative Services, and the Joint Legislative Fiscal Committee pursuant to RSA 6-B:2, VII.

Treasury continues to file its Annual Report in accordance with the requirements of RSA 11:5-b, II. This observation remains fully resolved.

***Observation No. 13***

*Create And Operate Accounts As Established And Described By Statute*

The audit indicated Treasury did not utilize certain statutorily-established accounts during fiscal year 2013.

**Current Status:**

[HB 1197](#), legislation requested by the State Treasurer, was introduced and referred to the House Ways and Means Committee during the 2016 legislative session to amend the statutes referred to in the audit observation: RSA 261:97-b, relative to the administration of the Conservation Number Plate Trust fund and RSA 227-M:7-a, relative to the administration of the Land and Community

Heritage Investment Program Administrative fund. HB 1197 has passed in the House and has now moved to the Senate. Treasury anticipates these statutory changes will occur before July of 2016.

This observation is considered substantially resolved.