



333 Bush Street  
 San Francisco, CA 94104  
 (415) 263-5400  
 www.statefundca.com

Date: May 4, 2021

**TO: MEMBERS, AUDIT COMMITTEE**

<b>I. AGENDA ITEM # AND TITLE:</b>	Open Agenda Item 3b – Consent Calendar: Annual Review and Approval of Audit Committee Charter
<b>II. NAME AND PROGRAM:</b>	Hilda Padua, Board Liaison
<b>III. ACTIVITY:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Informational <input type="checkbox"/> Request for Direction <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action Proposed <input type="checkbox"/> Exploratory
<b>IV. JUSTIFICATION:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Standard/Required Item <input type="checkbox"/> Board Request – New Item <input type="checkbox"/> New Topic from Staff

**V. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Part of the Board process and agenda setting is to review the Committee Charters regularly for potential changes, and review the recommendations of the Governance Committee to be presented and approved at the May Governance Committee meeting and, thereafter, at the Board Open meeting.

**VI. ANALYSIS:**

The staff reviews the Committee Charters, at least annually, pursuant to the Governance Charter and best practices.

At the March 2017 meeting the Board approved the revised Audit and Governance Committee Charters, and redistributed oversight of Enterprise Risk Management. The Board approved all of the Charters without further change in May of 2017. In November of 2017 the Board determined that oversight of Enterprise Risk Management would be handled by an expanded and renamed Investment and Risk Committee. That decision did not affect the Audit Committee Charter.

The staff has reviewed the Audit Committee Charter for this year and has no changes to recommend.

**VII. RECOMMENDATION:**

To approve the Audit Committee Charter as presented.

**VIII. APPENDIX:**

- Copy of Audit Committee Charter



## STATE COMPENSATION INSURANCE FUND AUDIT COMMITTEE CHARTER

Adopted May 17, 2011

1<sup>st</sup> Amended: Adopted August 16, 2012

2<sup>nd</sup> Amended: Adopted May 21, 2015

3<sup>rd</sup> Amended: Adopted May 26, 2016

4<sup>th</sup> Amended: Adopted March 2, 2017

4<sup>th</sup> Amended: Approved Without Change May 18, 2017; May 24, 2018; May 23, 2019; June 16, 2020

[Proposed for review and to be approved - no recommended changes]

Governance Committee: May 17, 2021

Audit Committee: May 18, 2021

Board of Directors: May 20, 2021

### Purpose

The purpose of the Audit Committee of the Board of Directors of the State Compensation Insurance Fund (the "State Fund") is to assist the Board of Directors (the "Board") in its oversight responsibilities for State Fund's legal, ethical, and regulatory compliance obligations by:

1. Overseeing the preparation, presentation, and integrity of the State Fund's financial statements and financial reporting processes, policies, and practices;
2. Maintaining adequate internal controls and procedures designed to ensure compliance with accounting standards and applicable laws and regulations;
3. Overseeing State Fund's internal accounting systems, and financial and operational controls;
4. Assessing the qualifications and independence of the independent auditor;
5. Evaluating, and assuring the performance of, the Internal Audit function responsible for reviewing and auditing State Fund management's assessment of its controls and procedures;
6. Hiring, evaluating, and assuring the performance of, the independent auditor responsible for planning and carrying out a proper audit of State Fund's annual financial statements;
7. Monitoring State Fund's compliance with legal, ethical, and regulatory requirements, including the National Association of Insurance Commissioners' Model Audit Rule ("MAR").

In carrying out its oversight responsibilities, the Audit Committee does not provide expert or special assurance as to State Fund's financial statements or legal and regulatory compliance or any professional certification as

to the work of the independent auditor. As such, it is not the duty or responsibility of the Audit Committee or its members to conduct field work, or other types of auditing or accounting reviews or procedures, or to set auditor independence standards, and each member of the Audit Committee shall be entitled to rely on:

1. The integrity of those persons and organizations, within and outside of State Fund, from which it receives information, including State Fund's independent and internal auditors;
2. The accuracy of the financial and other information provided to the Audit Committee by such persons or organizations, absent actual knowledge to the contrary (which shall be promptly reported to the Board of Directors);
3. Representations made by management as to any non-audit services provided by the independent auditor. The Internal Audit department and independent auditors report to the Board through the Committee, and shall provide the Committee with periodic reporting on the status of their activities and findings.

In discharging its oversight role, the Audit Committee may investigate any matter brought to its attention, with full access to all books, records, facilities and personnel of the State Fund, and the authority to engage independent counsel and other advisors, as it determines necessary, to carry out its duties (including the approval of the fees and other retention terms of such independent counsel and advisers).

### **Organization**

The Committee is a standing committee of the Board and shall be composed of not less than three and not more than five members of the Board. Member nominations are made by the Board Chair, reviewed and approved by the Governance Committee and ratified by the Board annually. All members should have general knowledge of financial and auditing matters and the Board shall have, at all times, a member with an auditing background for the purposes of fulfilling the responsibility of the Chair of the Audit Committee, pursuant to Insurance Code Section 11770(b)(1) as may be amended. The Chair of the Audit Committee shall serve for two years or until resignation, removal, or until a successor has been appointed pursuant to the provisions of State Fund's By-Laws. The Board Chair may nominate a Vice-Chair who shall serve until appointment as Audit Committee Chair or until resignation, removal, or until a successor has been appointed pursuant to the provisions of State Fund's By-Laws. All members must comply with the minimum requirements of Section 14 of MAR, as may be amended.

### **Meetings**

The Committee will meet at least four times each year with authority to convene additional meetings, as needed. All meetings shall be held in accordance with the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act ("Bagley-Keene"). The Committee may invite members of management, auditors, or others to attend meetings, and the Committee will hold separate closed sessions, when necessary, to further the business of the Committee and to meet with management, the internal auditors, and independent auditors, as in the Committee's judgment is necessary. Board members who are not members of the Committee may attend the Committee's open session meeting as observers, and may attend closed sessions only at the Committee's request. The Committee will regularly report on its actions to the full Board at the next scheduled meeting.

## Committee Duties and Responsibilities

The Committee shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

### 1. *Independent Auditor*

- a. Select and retain, evaluate and terminate when appropriate, the independent auditors, set the independent auditors' compensation, and oversee the work of the independent auditors for the purpose of preparing or issuing the State Fund audited financial report or related work.
- b. Pre-approve all audit services and non-audit services performed by the independent auditor and the related fees, and consider whether the provision of any such non-audit services is compatible with the independence of the independent auditor. Review the independent auditors' annual audit plan, including the planning, scope and staffing, and approach.
- c. Review the qualifications, independence, and performance of the independent auditors at least once annually, in accordance with the established measures approved by the Committee, and include a discussion of the performance of the independent auditors with management.
- d. Review and confirm the independence of the independent auditors by obtaining statements from the auditors on relationships between the independent auditors and the State Fund, including their non-audit services, and discuss any relationships with the independent auditors.
- e. Monitor and ensure the independent audit partner in charge is rotated as required by law or regulation.
- f. At least annually, obtain and review a report, either in writing or orally, by the independent auditors, describing the independent auditor's internal quality control procedures, material issues raised by recent internal quality control reviews of the firm, and any investigations by governmental or professional authorities concerning independent audits conducted by the firm for the last five years.
- g. On a regular basis, and in accordance with Bagley-Keene, meet separately with the independent auditors to discuss any matters that the Committee or auditors believe should be discussed privately.

### 2. *Accounting Principles and Policies, Financial Reporting and Internal Control over Financial Reporting*

- a. Receive periodic reports from the Chief Financial Officer relating to significant accounting developments, including emerging issues, the impact of the accounting changes where material, and the effect of regulatory and accounting initiatives.
- b. Review and discuss reports, by the independent auditors, in connection with State Fund's audited financial statements, that are required by, or referred to, in SAS 61 (and management's responses thereto), or that describe all significant accounting policies and material permitted practices used, all material alternative treatments within statutory accounting principles that have been discussed with management, the ramifications of the use of the alternative disclosures and treatments, and

the treatment preferred by the independent auditors; obtain any material written communications between the independent auditors and management, such as any management letter or schedule of unadjusted differences.

- c. Review with management, and the independent auditors, all matters required to be communicated to the Committee under generally accepted auditing standards, and any significant findings prepared by the independent auditors and internal audit together with management's responses.
- d. Review and discuss, with management and the independent auditors, State Fund's annual audited financial statements and quarterly financial statements, and discuss State Fund's financial reports filed with the Department of Insurance and the California State Controller's Office, and solicit the independent auditor's opinion with respect to the financial statements in the reports.
- e. Review with management, and the independent auditors, significant issues regarding accounting principles and financial statement presentation, including any significant changes in the selection or application of accounting principles; any significant deficiencies or material weaknesses in State Fund's internal controls and State Fund's remediation plans regarding these issues, and any special audit steps adopted in light of material control deficiencies.
- f. Review with management, and the independent auditors, the results of the audit, including any difficulties encountered, and State Fund's accounting practices, policies and compliance with accounting standards.
- g. Review with management, independent and internal auditors, the integrity of State Fund's financial reporting processes and controls, any significant financial risk exposures, and State Fund's policies, guidelines, and steps that management has taken to monitor, control and report such risk exposures.
- h. Review and assess all significant matters related to audits, examinations, investigations or inquiries regarding State Fund, by the California State Auditor and other appropriate State and Federal agencies.
- i. Review and discuss reports, from the General Counsel, on legal matters determined by the General Counsel to warrant the Audit Committee's attention, including legal, compliance or regulatory matters that may have a material impact on State Fund's business, financial statements or compliance policies and any material reports or inquiries received from regulators and government agencies.

### 3. *Internal Audit*

- a. Review with management, and the Chief Audit Executive and Internal Audit manager, the charter, budget, activities, staffing, and organizational structure of the Internal Audit function, Internal Audit's compliance with applicable standards and guidelines, and any recommendations with respect to the quality, timeliness, performance or strengthening of that function.

- b. Review, and recommend approval of, the annual audit plan, all major changes to the plan, and the annual update of the biennial plan.
- c. Review and evaluate the performance of the Internal Audit function, including a review of the performance of the Chief Audit Executive and, if appropriate, recommend the selection of a new Chief Audit Executive.
- d. Review, with the internal auditors, any difficulties including restriction on scope of work, access to required information, and any other issues the Committee deems appropriate.
- e. On a regular basis, and in accordance with the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act, meet separately with the internal auditors to discuss any matters that the Committee or auditors believe should be discussed privately.

#### 4. *Ethics and Legal Compliance*

- a. Review with management, the internal auditors and independent auditors, as applicable, on at least a quarterly basis, the adequacy and effectiveness of State Fund's systems and controls for monitoring and managing legal and regulatory compliance, including State Fund's disclosure procedures and controls.
- b. Establish procedures for the receipt, retention, and treatment of complaints received by State Fund regarding State Fund's employees, accounting, internal controls or auditing matters, including complaints received by the California State Auditor regarding State Fund, and for the confidential, anonymous submission of complaints and tips by State Fund's employees regarding questionable accounting or auditing matters as mandated by the Board or by law.
- c. Establish procedures for the receipt, retention, and treatment of reports of investigations and audits conducted of State Fund by the California State Auditor.
- d. Review, and recommend to the Board, any changes to the Code of Conduct and related policies and/or other compliance policies and guidelines that relate to financial reporting, and receive reports regarding compliance with the Code.
- e. Recommend to the Board, as appropriate, any other compliance policies and guidelines that the Committee deems appropriate, to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- f. Review and approve State Fund's compliance plan on a regular basis, and recommend and approve changes, as needed.
- g. Obtain regular updates, from State Fund's management and State Fund's legal counsel, regarding compliance matters, and assurances that compliance functions are performed with independence and in accordance with professional standards. Discuss, annually with the General Counsel, the effectiveness of State Fund's compliance program in detecting and preventing violations of law, the State Fund Code of Conduct and Business Ethics Policy.

- h. Review with management State Fund's policies and procedures with respect to officers and key employees' expense accounts and perquisites, including excess benefit transactions, and review the results of any audit of these areas by the internal or independent auditors.

5. *Evaluation of Committee and Charter*

- a. Conduct, and report to the Board the results of, an annual self-evaluation of its performance in accordance with the requirements of this Charter.
- b. Review this Charter at least annually and recommend any changes to the Board.

**Powers**

The Audit Committee shall have the following powers:

- a. To obtain advice and assistance from, internal or external, legal, accounting, or other advisors, and to have direct access to advisors without the presence of any officer of State Fund, and to initiate, direct, and conduct investigations, using outside experts of any kind at the direct cost of the State Fund.
- b. To interview and meet with any employee of State Fund, without the presence of any officer of State Fund.
- c. To form, and delegate authority to, subcommittees, with Board approval.
- d. To recommend, to the Board, amendments to any provisions of this Charter, as appropriate, due to new laws, regulations, or the needs of State Fund or the Board.
- e. Such other powers as may be necessary and appropriate to fulfill the Committee's purposes and responsibilities under this Charter.
- f. To perform such other functions, as assigned by State Fund's Charter, By-Laws, or the Board.

BOARD of DIRECTORS of the STATE COMPENSATION INSURANCE FUND