



1666 K Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20006
Telephone: (202) 207-9100
Facsimile: (202) 862-8433
www.pcaobus.org

**Inspection of
Gifford, Hillegass & Ingwersen, LLP
(Headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia)**

**Issued by the
Public Company Accounting Oversight Board**

April 2, 2009

PCAOB RELEASE NO. 104-2009-043



Notes Concerning this Report

1. Portions of this report may describe deficiencies or potential deficiencies in the systems, policies, procedures, practices, or conduct of the firm that is the subject of this report. The express inclusion of certain deficiencies and potential deficiencies, however, should not be construed to support any negative inference that any other aspect of the firm's systems, policies, procedures, practices, or conduct is approved or condoned by the Board or judged by the Board to comply with laws, rules, and professional standards.
2. Any references in this report to violations or potential violations of law, rules, or professional standards should be understood in the supervisory context in which this report was prepared. Any such references are not a result of an adversarial adjudicative process and do not constitute conclusive findings of fact or of violations for purposes of imposing legal liability. Similarly, any description herein of a firm's cooperation in addressing issues constructively should not be construed, and is not construed by the Board, as an admission, for purposes of potential legal liability, of any violation.
3. Board inspections encompass, among other things, whether the firm has failed to identify departures from U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles ("GAAP") or Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC" or "Commission") disclosure requirements in its audits of financial statements. This report's descriptions of any such auditing failures necessarily involve descriptions of the related GAAP or disclosure departures. The Board, however, has no authority to prescribe the form or content of an issuer's financial statements. That authority, and the authority to make binding determinations concerning an issuer's compliance with GAAP or Commission disclosure requirements, rests with the Commission. Any description, in this report, of perceived departures from GAAP or Commission disclosure requirements should not be understood as an indication that the Commission has considered or made any determination regarding these issues unless otherwise expressly stated.



INSPECTION OF GIFFORD, HILLEGASS & INGWERSEN, LLP

The Public Company Accounting Oversight Board ("PCAOB" or "the Board") has conducted an inspection of the registered public accounting firm Gifford, Hillegass & Ingwersen, LLP ("the Firm"). The Board is issuing this report of that inspection in accordance with the requirements of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 ("the Act").

The Act restricts the Board from publicly disclosing portions of an inspection report that discuss certain types of deficiencies or certain other nonpublic information.^{1/} Because the inspection did not identify instances of such deficiencies, and because the report does not otherwise disclose protected information, the Board is making the entire report available to the public.

^{1/} The Board has elsewhere described in detail its approach to making inspection-related information publicly available consistent with legal restrictions. See Statement Concerning the Issuance of Inspection Reports, PCAOB Release No. 104-2004-001 (August 26, 2004).

PART I

INSPECTION PROCEDURES AND CERTAIN OBSERVATIONS

Members of the Board's inspection staff ("the inspection team") conducted primary procedures for the inspection from January 12, 2009 to January 14, 2009. These procedures were tailored to the nature of the Firm, certain aspects of which the inspection team understood at the outset of the inspection to be as follows:

Number of offices	1 (Atlanta, Georgia)
Ownership structure	Limited liability partnership
Number of partners	10
Number of professional staff ^{2/}	62
Number of issuer audit clients ^{3/}	3

Board inspections are designed to identify and address weaknesses and deficiencies related to how a firm conducts audits.^{4/} To achieve that goal, Board

^{2/} "Professional staff" includes all personnel of the Firm, except partners or shareholders and administrative support personnel. The number of partners and professional staff is provided here as an indication of the size of the Firm, and does not necessarily represent the number of the Firm's professionals who participate in audits of issuers or are "associated persons" (as defined in the Act) of the Firm.

^{3/} The number of issuer audit clients shown here is based on the Firm's self-reporting and the inspection team's review of certain information for inspection planning purposes. It does not reflect any Board determination concerning which, or how many, of the Firm's audit clients are "issuers" as defined in the Act. In some circumstances, a Board inspection may include a review of a firm's audit of financial statements of an issuer that ceased to be an audit client before the inspection, and any such former clients are not included in the number shown here.

^{4/} This focus necessarily carries through to reports on inspections and, accordingly, Board inspection reports are not intended to serve as balanced report cards or overall rating tools.

inspections include reviews of certain aspects of selected audits performed by the firm and reviews of other matters related to the firm's quality control system.

In the course of reviewing aspects of selected audits, an inspection may identify ways in which a particular audit is deficient, including failures by the firm to identify, or to address appropriately, respects in which an issuer's financial statements do not present fairly the financial position, results of operations, or cash flows of the issuer in conformity with GAAP.^{5/} It is not the purpose of an inspection, however, to review all of a firm's audits or to identify every respect in which a reviewed audit is deficient. Accordingly, a Board inspection report should not be understood to provide any assurance that the firm's audits, or its issuer clients' financial statements, are free of any deficiencies not specifically described in an inspection report.

A. Review of Audit Engagement

The inspection procedures included a review of aspects of the Firm's auditing of financial statements of one issuer. The scope of this review was determined according to the Board's criteria, and the Firm was not allowed an opportunity to limit or influence the scope. This review did not identify any audit performance issues that, in the inspection team's view, resulted in the Firm failing to obtain sufficient competent evidential matter to support its opinion on the issuer's financial statements.

B. Review of Quality Control System

In addition to evaluating the quality of the audit work performed on a specific audit, the inspection included review of certain of the Firm's practices, policies, and procedures related to audit quality. This review addressed practices, policies, and procedures concerning audit performance, training, compliance with independence standards, client acceptance and retention, and the establishment of policies and procedures. The inspection team did not identify anything that it considered to be a quality control defect that warrants discussion in a Board inspection report.

END OF PART I

^{5/} When it comes to the Board's attention that an issuer's financial statements appear not to present fairly, in a material respect, the financial position, results of operations, or cash flows of the issuer in conformity with GAAP, the Board's practice is to report that information to the SEC, which has jurisdiction to determine proper accounting in issuers' financial statements.

PART II

RESPONSE OF THE FIRM TO DRAFT INSPECTION REPORT

Pursuant to section 104(f) of the Act, 15 U.S.C. § 7214(f), and PCAOB Rule 4007(a), the Firm provided a written response to a draft of this report. Pursuant to section 104(f) of the Act and PCAOB Rule 4007(b), the Firm's response, minus any portion granted confidential treatment, is attached hereto and made part of this final inspection report.



Gifford Hillegass & Ingwersen, LLP
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS & ADVISORS.
Where it all comes down to worth.

March 9, 2009

Mr. George H. Diacont
Director
Division of Registration and Inspections
Public Company Accounting Oversight Board
1666 K Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20006

Response to Report on 2009 Inspection of Gifford Hillegass & Ingwersen, LLP

Dear Mr. Diacont:

Gifford Hillegass & Ingwersen, LLP welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board ("PCAOB") report on the inspection of our Firm's public company practice. We support the mission of the PCAOB and believe the inspections conducted by the PCAOB serve to effectively oversee and strengthen audit quality and provide a benefit to the accounting profession, investors and the general public. Gifford Hillegass & Ingwersen, LLP has always been committed to providing the highest quality accounting and auditing services and recognizes the value to our practice of our own internal inspections, our peer review and the Inspection from the PCOAB.

We are pleased that our Inspection report contained no audit performance or quality control issues which require a response.

We appreciate the attitude of the PCAOB staff that conducted our Inspection and found their perspectives to be of value to us in our ongoing efforts to continuously improve our audit practice. We look forward to working with the PCAOB in the future.

Sincerely,

Cynthia C. Ethridge, Partner
GIFFORD, HILLEGASS & INGWERSEN, LLP

■
1200 Ashwood Parkway, Suite 300
Atlanta, GA 30338-4747
Tel (770) 396-1100 • Fax (770) 393-0319
www.ghi-cpa.com

MEMBERS OF THE LEADING EDGE ALLIANCE