



**NORTH HAMPTON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT
RELIEF ASSOCIATION**

ALLEGHENY COUNTY

COMPLIANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR THE PERIOD

JANUARY 1, 2010 TO DECEMBER 31, 2012

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE - AUDITOR GENERAL

DEPARTMENT OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL





**Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of the Auditor General
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0018**
Facebook: Pennsylvania Auditor General
Twitter: @PAAuditorGen

**EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE
AUDITOR GENERAL**

Mr. Jerry Wittmer, President
NORTH HAMPTON VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS'
RELIEF ASSOCIATION
Allegheny County

We have conducted a compliance audit of the North Hampton Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association pursuant to authority derived from Article VIII, Section 10 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Section 403 of The Fiscal Code, Act of April 9, 1929, (P.L. 343, No. 176), and mandated by the Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Act, as consolidated by the Act of November 23, 2010 (P.L. 1181, No. 118), at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7411 *et seq.*, for the period January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2012.

We conducted this compliance audit 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 the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our audit results and conclusions based on our audit objective. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our audit results and conclusions based on our audit objective.

The objective of the audit was to determine if the volunteer firefighters' relief association received state aid and expended state aid and accumulated relief funds in compliance with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws and administrative procedures.

Our audit was limited to the areas related to the objective identified above.

Volunteer firefighters' relief association officers are responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that the North Hampton Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's administration of state aid and accumulated relief funds complies with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws and administrative procedures including the safeguarding of assets. In conducting our audit, we obtained an understanding of the volunteer firefighters' relief association's internal controls as they relate to the association's compliance with those requirements and that we considered to be significant within the context of the audit objective, and assessed whether those significant controls were properly designed and implemented. Our audit procedures also included tests of documentary evidence supporting the North Hampton Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's recorded financial transactions, tests of the physical existence of inventories, interviews of selected officials and direct confirmation of the North Hampton Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's cash, investments, and certain other assets and liabilities as of December 31, 2012, with the custodians of the funds, debtors, creditors, and financial institutions to the extent necessary to satisfy the audit objective. Additionally, we performed procedures to provide a reasonable assurance of detecting instances of violations of legal and regulatory requirements or violations of provisions of contracts that are significant within the context of the audit objective.

The results of our audit, for the period January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2012, found the North Hampton Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association, in all significant respects, received state aid and expended state aid and accumulated relief funds in compliance with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws and administrative procedures, except as noted in the finding listed below and discussed later in this report. The results of our tests also indicated the North Hampton Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association expended funds as presented in the Accompanying Expenditure Information and, as of December 31, 2012, had a cash balance of \$187,000.

Finding – Failure To Maintain Surety (Fidelity) Bond Coverage

The contents of this report were discussed with the management of the North Hampton Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association and, where appropriate, their responses have been included in the report.

January 31, 2014



EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE
Auditor General

CONTENTS

Background 1

Finding and Recommendation:

 Finding – Failure to Maintain Surety (Fidelity) Bond Coverage 3

Accompanying Expenditure Information 4

Report Distribution List 5

BACKGROUND

Pursuant to Article VIII, Section 10 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Section 403 of The Fiscal Code, Act of April 9, 1929, (P.L. 343, No. 176), and the Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Act, as consolidated by the Act of November 23, 2010, (P.L. 1181, No. 118), at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7411 *et seq.*, the Department of the Auditor General's duty is to audit the accounts and records of every volunteer firefighters' relief association to determine that funds received under the Foreign Fire Insurance Tax Distribution Law, Act of December 18, 1984, (P.L. 1005, No. 205), as amended, 53 P.S. § 895.701 *et seq.* (commonly referred to as Act 205), are properly expended.

The North Hampton Volunteer Fire Department Relief Association, herein referred to as North Hampton Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association, is a charitable organization that was formed primarily to afford financial protection to volunteer firefighters and to encourage individuals to participate in volunteer fire service.

Act 118 governs the overall operation of the volunteer firefighters' relief association. The relief association's bylaws define the specific operational procedures by which the volunteer firefighters' relief association conducts business. To fulfill its primary purpose, Act 118 authorizes specific types of expenditures and prescribes appropriate volunteer firefighters' relief association investment options. Within the parameters established by Act 118, it is the responsibility of the volunteer firefighters' relief association to choose investments in a proper and prudent manner.

Volunteer firefighters' relief associations receive public tax monies, and the association officers therefore have a responsibility to the public to conduct the association's financial affairs in a businesslike manner and to maintain sufficient financial records to support the propriety of all association transactions. Volunteer firefighters' relief association officers are also responsible for ensuring that the association operates in accordance with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws and administrative procedures.

Act 205 sets forth the computation of the Foreign Fire Insurance Tax Distribution paid to each applicable municipality throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The amount of the distribution is based upon the population of each municipality and the market value of real estate within the municipality. Upon receipt of this distribution, the municipality must allocate the funds to the volunteer firefighters' relief association of the fire service organization or fire service organizations, which is or are recognized as providing the service to the municipality. The North Hampton Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association was allocated state aid from the following municipality:

Municipality	County	2010	2011	2012
Hampton Township	Allegheny	\$68,280	\$106,988	\$61,030

BACKGROUND – (Continued)

The volunteer firefighters' relief association and the affiliated fire service organization are separate, legal entities. The North Hampton Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association is affiliated with the following fire service organization:

North Hampton Volunteer Fire Department

NORTH HAMPTON VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

Finding – Failure to Maintain Surety (Fidelity) Bond Coverage

Condition: Subsequent to the audit period under review, the relief association failed to maintain Surety (Fidelity) bond coverage on its authorized disbursing officer, as required by Act 118. The current treasurer was not listed in the coverage detail for the bond policy in effect, since taking office on January 1, 2013. In addition, as of December 31, 2012, the relief association's cash assets totaled \$187,000 which exceeded the Surety (Fidelity) bond coverage which amounted to \$185,000 on such date.

Criteria: Act 118 at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7415(c)(4) states, in part, that:

. . . the disbursing officer, whether designated treasurer, comptroller, financial secretary or otherwise, shall be bonded by corporate surety for faithful performance of duty. The amount of the bond shall be at least as great as the maximum cash balance in current funds of the association at any time during the fiscal year, and the premium on the bond shall be a proper charge against the funds of the association.

Cause: Relief association officials were unaware that the new treasurer had not been included on the bond policy in effect, or that the coverage amount had been exceeded due to a lack of internal control procedures to ensure that the Surety (Fidelity) bond coverage on the relief association's authorized disbursing officer was in compliance with Act 118 provisions.

Effect: As a result of the authorized disbursing officer of the relief association not being bonded, the relief association's cash assets were not adequately safeguarded.

Recommendation: We recommend that the relief association officials ensure the disbursing officer is bonded for an amount greater than the relief association's maximum cash balance so as to maintain the Surety (Fidelity) bond coverage as required by Act 118. For further guidance, please refer to the Auditor General's publication, MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATIONS.

Management's Response: Relief association management agreed with the finding as presented at the audit exit conference and subsequent to the period under review, on September 15, 2013, the Surety (Fidelity) bond was updated to include the newly appointed treasurer in the bond coverage; however, the balance of the relief association's cash assets remains in excess of the Surety (Fidelity) bond coverage (\$185,000) as of the date of this report.

Auditor's Conclusion: It appears that the relief association intends to comply with our finding recommendation. Compliance will be subject to verification through our next audit.

**NORTH HAMPTON VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
ACCOMPANYING EXPENDITURE INFORMATION
FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2010 TO DECEMBER 31, 2012**

Act 118 at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7412 states: a volunteer firefighters' relief association is an organization formed primarily for the purpose of affording financial protection to volunteer firefighters against the consequences of misfortune suffered as a result of their participation in the fire service. The organization may contain within its membership the members of one or more fire companies and may serve secondary purposes, as set forth in this subchapter, but only if adequate provisions have been first made to serve the primary purpose.

Act 118 at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7416 authorizes the investment of relief association funds and outlines the types of benefits and services that can be provided with volunteer firefighters' relief association funds.

Furthermore, all expenditures must be properly authorized as prescribed in the volunteer firefighters' relief association bylaws and approved at an association meeting.

USES OF FUNDS:

Benefit Services:

Insurance premiums	\$ 57,601
Death benefits	5,000
Relief benefits	20
Total Benefit Services	<u>\$ 62,621</u>

Fire Services:

Equipment purchased	\$ 72,258
Equipment maintenance	16,146
Training expenses	500
Total Fire Services	<u>\$ 88,904</u>

Administrative Services:

Other administrative expenses	<u>\$ 232</u>
-------------------------------	---------------

**NORTH HAMPTON VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST**

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom Corbett
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

North Hampton Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Governing Body:

Mr. Jerry Wittmer	President
Mr. Brandon Hoehn	Vice President
Mr. Jordan Brennan	Secretary
Mr. Christopher Andrews	Treasurer

A report was also distributed to the following municipality, which allocated foreign fire insurance tax monies to this relief association.

Mr. W. Christopoher Lochner, Secretary
Hampton Township

This report is a matter of public record and is available online at www.auditorgen.state.pa.us. Media questions about the report can be directed to the Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General, Office of Communications, 231 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120; via email to: news@auditorgen.state.pa.us.