

COMPLIANCE AUDIT

East Bangor Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Northampton County, Pennsylvania For the Period January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2014

March 2016



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of the Auditor General
Eugene A. DePasquale • Auditor General



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EUGENE A. DePASQUALE
AUDITOR GENERAL

Mr. Peter Zazulak, President
East Bangor Volunteer Firefighters'
Relief Association
Northampton County

We have conducted a compliance audit of the East Bangor Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association (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, 2012 to December 31, 2014.

The objectives of the audit were:

1. To determine if the relief association took appropriate corrective action to address the findings contained in our prior audit report.
2. To determine if the 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 objectives identified above.

Relief association officers are responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that the 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. Relief association officers are responsible for complying with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures. It is our responsibility to perform procedures to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to the extent necessary to satisfy the audit objectives. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our conclusions.

Based on our audit procedures, we conclude that, for the period January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2014:

- The relief association took appropriate corrective action to address the findings contained in our prior audit report.
- The 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.

The supplementary financial information contained in this report is presented for purposes of additional disclosure and analysis. We performed only limited procedures on the supplementary financial information and, accordingly, express no form of assurance on it.

The contents of this report were discussed with the management of the relief association. We would like to thank the relief association officials for the cooperation extended to us during the conduct of the audit.

March 8, 2016



EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE
Auditor General

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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 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 volunteer firefighters' relief associations. The relief association's bylaws define the specific operational procedures by which the 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 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 that is or are recognized as providing the service to the municipality.

BACKGROUND – (Continued)

The relief association was allocated state aid from the following municipality:

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>
East Bangor Borough	Northampton	\$ 5,856	\$ 6,579	\$ 6,238

Previously, the relief association had a withhold of state aid placed on funds they were due to receive during 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011. The withhold of state aid was the result of the relief association failing to comply with recommendations concerning findings stemming from undocumented expenditures, the failure to obtain a federal tax identification number, and insufficient documentation of a loan to the affiliated fire company. The relief association eventually complied with all three of the recommendations concerning these discrepancies and the withheld state aid for the aforementioned four years was released to East Bangor Borough. The municipality forwarded the funds, totaling \$27,318, to the relief association and the funds were subsequently deposited into a relief association account.

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
East Bangor Borough	Northampton	\$ 5,697	\$ 5,313	\$ 5,980	\$ 10,328

The volunteer firefighters' relief association and the affiliated fire service organization are separate, legal entities. The relief association is affiliated with the following fire service organization:

East Bangor Volunteer Fire Company

EAST BANGOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
STATUS OF PRIOR FINDINGS

COMPLIANCE WITH PRIOR AUDIT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The relief association has complied with the prior audit findings and recommendations, as follows:

- Undocumented Expenditures

By receiving reimbursement of \$421 from the affiliated fire company for the undocumented expenditures that were made in the prior audit period.

- Failure To Maintain Surety (Fidelity) Bond Coverage

By maintaining Surety (Fidelity) bond coverage in an amount greater than the balance of the relief association's cash assets.

- Failure To Maintain Minutes Of Meetings

By maintaining minutes of all relief association meetings held during the period.

We commend the relief association management for its efforts in complying with the findings and recommendations contained in the prior audit report. The association management should strive to remain in compliance with all applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws and administrative procedures.

EAST BANGOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
 SUPPLEMENTARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION
 FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2012 TO DECEMBER 31, 2014

Cash Balance:	\$	6,542
Expenditures:		
Benefit Services:		
Tokens of sympathy and goodwill	\$	<u>55</u>
Fire Services:		
Equipment purchased	\$	43,842
Equipment maintenance		2,417
Training expenses		<u>50</u>
Total Fire Services	\$	<u>46,309</u>
Administrative Services:		
Other administrative expenses	\$	127
Bond premiums		<u>314</u>
Total Administrative Services	\$	<u>441</u>

EAST BANGOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom W. Wolf
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

East Bangor Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Governing Body:

Mr. Peter Zazulak
President

Mr. Edward Austin
Vice President

Ms. Brianna Zazulak
Secretary

Mr. Jeremy Grube
Treasurer

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

Ms. Bonnie Due
Secretary
East Bangor Borough

This report is a matter of public record and is available online at www.PaAuditor.gov. Media questions about the report can be directed to the Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General, Office of Communications, 229 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120; via email to: news@PaAuditor.gov.