

COMPLIANCE AUDIT

Bedford Firemen's Relief Association of the State of Pennsylvania

Bedford County, Pennsylvania
For the Period
January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2015

January 2017



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of the Auditor General

Eugene A. DePasquale • Auditor General



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EUGENE A. DePASQUALE
AUDITOR GENERAL

Mr. David Shedlock, President
Bedford Firemen's Relief Association
of the State of Pennsylvania
Bedford County

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Bedford Firemen's Relief Association of the State of Pennsylvania (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, 2014 to December 31, 2015.

The objective of the audit was 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 objective 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 objective. 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, 2014 to December 31, 2015, 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, except as noted in the finding listed below and discussed later in this report.

Finding – Untimely Deposit Of State Aid

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 and, where appropriate, their response has been included in the report. We would like to thank the relief association officials for the cooperation extended to us during the conduct of the audit.

January 17, 2017



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 municipalities:

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>
Bedford Borough	Bedford	\$15,878	\$15,796
Bedford Township	Bedford	\$42,698	\$39,978
Colerain Township	Bedford	\$ 8,282	\$ 7,910
East St. Clair Township	Bedford	\$ 2,640	\$ 2,549
Napler Township	Bedford	\$ 2,181	\$ 2,092
Rainsburg Borough	Bedford	\$ 628	\$ 628*
Snake Spring Township	Bedford	\$ 6,031	\$ 6,084

* The 2015 state aid allocation received from Rainsburg Borough was not deposited by the relief association into an appropriate relief association account until January 27, 2016 as disclosed in the finding in this report.

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:

Bedford Fire Department No. 1

BEDFORD FIREMAN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION OF THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

Finding – Untimely Deposit Of State Aid

Condition: The relief association did not deposit the 2015 state aid allocation it received from Rainsburg Borough, in the amount of \$628, until January 27, 2016. The foreign fire insurance tax allocation was distributed to the municipal treasurer on September 23, 2015 who did not forward this state aid to the relief association until January 27, 2016 which is not within 60 days of receipt, as required by Section 706 (b)(2) of the Act of December 18, 1984, (P.L. 1005, No. 205). Upon receipt of the state aid allocation, the relief association appropriately deposited the funds into a relief association account.

Criteria: Section 706 (b)(2) of the Act of December 18, 1984, (P.L. 1005, No. 205), states:

The foreign fire insurance premium tax amount applicable to a municipality served solely by volunteer firefighters shall be paid to the municipality, which shall within 60 days of the date of the receipt of the moneys from the State Treasurer pay the amount received to the relief association fund of the fire department or departments, or fire company or companies, now existing or hereafter organized, inside or outside of the municipality, which is or are actively engaged in the service of the municipality and duly recognized by the governing body of the municipality.

Furthermore, prudent business practices dictate that upon receipt of its state aid allocation, the relief association should establish adequate internal control procedures to ensure the funds are deposited in a timely manner.

Cause: Relief association officials failed to establish internal control procedures which require that all income be received, recorded and deposited in a timely manner

Effect: As a result of the untimely deposit, funds were not available to pay general operating expenses or for investment purposes. In addition, an untimely deposit of receipts increases the risk that funds could be lost or misappropriated.

Recommendation: We recommend that relief association officials adopt internal control procedures to ensure the timely deposit of all future income received. 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 indicated they will take action to comply with the recommendation.

Auditor's Conclusion: Compliance will be subject to verification through our next audit.

BEDFORD FIREMAN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION OF THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA
SUPPLEMENTARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION
CASH AND INVESTMENT BALANCES
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2015

Cash	\$ 87,331
Fair Value of Investments	<u>1,240,318</u>
Total Cash and Investments	<u>\$ 1,327,649</u>

BEDFORD FIREMAN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION OF THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA
SUPPLEMENTARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION
SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES
FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2014 TO DECEMBER 31, 2015

Expenditures:

Benefit Services:

Insurance premiums	\$ 41,464
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Fire Services:

Equipment purchased	\$ 118,221
Equipment maintenance	982
Training expenses	1,934
Total Fire Services	<u>\$ 121,137</u>

Administrative Services:

Other administrative expenses	\$ 869
Bond premiums	1,488
Total Administrative Services	<u>\$ 2,357</u>

Total Expenditures	<u><u>\$ 164,958</u></u>
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BEDFORD FIREMAN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION OF THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom W. Wolf
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Bedford Firemen's Relief Association of the State of Pennsylvania Governing Body:

Mr. David Shedlock
President

Mr. Rocky L. Fetter
Vice President

Mr. Jay F. Speicher
Secretary

Mr. Marvin L. Bennett
Treasurer

BEDFORD FIREMAN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION OF THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

The following municipalities allocated foreign fire insurance tax monies to this relief association and received a copy of this report:

Ms. Beverly Geller
Secretary
Bedford Borough

Ms. Janie L. McMillen
Secretary
Bedford Township

Ms. Madelyn N. Fix
Secretary
Colerain Township

Ms. Dorothy R. Oldham
Secretary
East St. Clair Township

Ms. Leslie Kennedy
Secretary
Napier Township

Mr. Wayne C. Koontz
Secretary
Rainsburg Borough

Ms. Rose Diehl
Secretary
Snake Spring Township

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.