

SPRINGVILLE VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY RELIEF ASSOCIATION

SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY

COMPLIANCE AUDIT REPORT

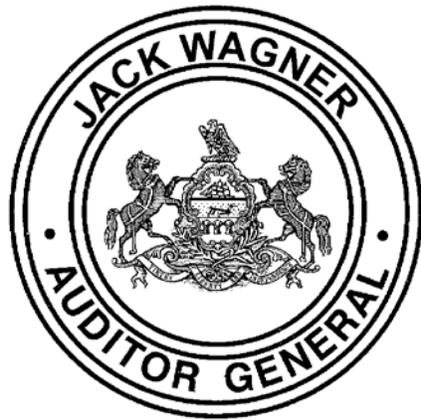
FOR THE PERIOD

JANUARY 1, 2008 TO DECEMBER 31, 2010



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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 Springville Volunteer Fire Company Relief Association, herein referred to as Springville 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.

BACKGROUND (Continued)

The Springville Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association was allocated state aid from the following municipalities:

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
Auburn Township	Susquehanna	\$2,296	\$2,099	\$2,362
Dimock Township	Susquehanna	\$2,760	\$2,556	\$2,877
Lathrop Township	Susquehanna	\$1,680	\$1,516	\$1,706
Springville Township	Susquehanna	\$9,507	\$8,827	\$9,935

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

Springville Volunteer Fire Company

Mr. Ronald Howell, President
SPRINGVILLE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS'
RELIEF ASSOCIATION
Susquehanna County

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Springville 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, 2008 to December 31, 2010.

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 objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our audit results and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

The objectives of the audit were:

1. To determine if the volunteer firefighters' relief association took appropriate corrective action to address the findings contained in our prior audit report; and
2. To determine if the volunteer firefighters' relief association received 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.

Volunteer firefighters' relief association officers are responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that the Springville 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 objectives, and assessed whether those significant controls were properly designed and implemented. Our audit procedures also included tests of documentary evidence supporting the Springville Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's recorded financial transactions, tests of the physical existence of inventories, interviews of selected officials and direct confirmation of the Springville Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's cash, investments, and certain other assets and liabilities as of December 31, 2010, with the custodians of the funds, debtors, creditors, and financial institutions to the extent necessary to satisfy the audit objectives. 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 objectives.

The results of our audit, for the period January 1, 2008 to December 31, 2010, found the Springville Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association took appropriate corrective action to address one of the two findings contained in our prior audit report. However, the Springville Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association failed to take appropriate corrective action to address the remaining finding contained in our prior audit report, as listed below and discussed in the Status of Prior Findings section of this report. In addition, the results of our audit found the Springville Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association, in all significant respects, received 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 in detail in the Finding and Recommendation section of this report. The results of our tests also indicated the Springville Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association expended funds as presented in the Accompanying Expenditure Information and, as of December 31, 2010, had a cash balance of \$33,776 and no investments.

Finding – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation –
Undocumented Expenditures

The contents of this report were discussed with the management of the Springville Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association and, where appropriate, their response has been included in the report.

March 31, 2011

JACK WAGNER
Auditor General

SPRINGVILLE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
STATUS OF PRIOR FINDINGS

COMPLIANCE WITH PRIOR AUDIT FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

The Springville Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association has complied with the following prior audit finding and recommendation:

- Insufficient Officer's Bond Coverage

By increasing the officer's bond coverage to an amount greater than the balance of cash assets.

NONCOMPLIANCE WITH PRIOR AUDIT FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

The Springville Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association has not complied with one of the two prior audit findings. This finding is noted below and discussed in detail in the Finding and Recommendation section of this report:

- Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation –
Undocumented Expenditures

While the relief association received reimbursement totaling \$616 from the Springville Volunteer Fire Company, for the prior audit period undocumented expenditures totaling \$958, the relief association did not provide adequate supporting documentation for the remaining undocumented expenditure balance of \$342. Refer to the finding in the Finding and Recommendation section of this report.

We are concerned with the volunteer firefighters' relief association's continued failure to correct a previously reported audit finding. The association management should strive to fully implement the recommendation and corrective action noted in this audit report.

SPRINGVILLE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

Finding – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation –
Undocumented Expenditures

Condition: As cited in our prior audit report, the relief association incurred two undocumented expenditures totaling \$958. During our current audit we found that while the relief association received reimbursement totaling \$616 from the affiliated fire company for one of the undocumented expenditures, the relief association again, was unable to provide adequate supporting documentation for the remaining undocumented expenditure totaling \$342.

Criteria: Act 118 at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7418(a) states:

The Office of Auditor General shall have the power and its duty shall be to audit the accounts and records of every volunteer firefighters' relief association receiving money under Chapter 7 of the Act of December 18, 1984 (P.L. 1005, No. 205), [FN1] known as the Municipal Pension Plan Funding Standard and Recovery Act, as far as may be necessary to satisfy the Auditor General that the money received was or is being expended for no purpose other than that authorized by this subchapter. Copies of all audits shall be furnished to the Governor.

Without adequate supporting documentation, such as invoices, this department is unable to determine whether relief association funds were expended for purposes authorized by Act 118. Furthermore, good business practices dictate that supporting documentation be maintained to verify the propriety of all financial transactions.

Cause: While notified of this condition during our prior audit, relief association officials, again, failed to establish adequate internal control procedures to ensure supporting documentation is maintained for all expenditures or obtain full reimbursement for the prior audit period's undocumented expenditures.

Effect: Lack of supporting documentation, such as an invoice, made it impossible to determine if the expenditure was made in accordance with Act 118 at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7416(f). In addition, the failure to maintain adequate supporting documentation for relief association expenditures can lead to an increased risk of errors occurring and funds being misappropriated.

However, as a result of our audit, and subsequent to the audit period, on March 31, 2011, the relief association was reimbursed \$342 for the remaining prior audit period undocumented expenditure.

SPRINGVILLE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

Finding – (Continued)

Recommendation: We, again, recommend that the relief association officials maintain supporting documentation for all future expenditures. 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.

SPRINGVILLE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
 ACCOMPANYING EXPENDITURE INFORMATION
 FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2008 TO DECEMBER 31, 2010

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	\$ 7,182
Relief benefits	109
Tokens of sympathy and goodwill	500
Total Benefit Services	\$ 7,791
Fire Services:	
Equipment purchased	\$ 33,005
Training expenses	2,130
Total Fire Services	\$ 35,135
Administrative Services:	
Miscellaneous administrative expenses	\$ 12
Total Administrative Services	\$ 12
Other Expenditures:	
Erroneous deposit reimbursement	\$ 2,692
Total Other Expenditures	\$ 2,692

SPRINGVILLE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom Corbett
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Springville Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Governing Body:

Mr. Ronald Howell, President

Mr. Kevin Palmer, Vice President

Ms. Jane Howell, Secretary

Ms. Ann Van Lenten, Treasurer

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

Mr. Ted C. Place, Secretary
Auburn Township

Mr. Paul Jennings, Secretary
Dimock Township

Ms. Ann Marie Shevchuk, Secretary
Lathrop Township

Ms. Constance Swackhamer,
Secretary
Springville Township

This report is a matter of public record. Copies of this report may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General, Office of Communications, 318 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120. If you have any questions regarding this report or any other matter, you may contact the Department of the Auditor General by accessing our website at www.auditorgen.state.pa.us.