



WINFIELD TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER FIREMAN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION

BUTLER 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 Winfield Township Volunteer Fireman's Relief Association, herein referred to as Winfield Township 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 Winfield Township Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association was allocated state aid from the following municipality:

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
Winfield Township	Butler	\$24,949	\$21,684	*\$24,406

* The 2010 state aid allocation was not deposited into a relief association account in a timely manner. (See Finding No. 2 in the Findings and Recommendations section of this report).

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

Winfield Township Volunteer Fire Company



**Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of the Auditor General
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0018
Facebook: Pennsylvania Auditor General
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**EUGENE A. DePASQUALE
AUDITOR GENERAL**

Mr. Doug Whipkey, President
WINFIELD TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER
FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
Butler County

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Winfield Township 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 Winfield Township 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 Winfield Township Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's recorded financial transactions, tests of the physical existence of inventories, interviews of selected officials and direct confirmation of the Winfield Township 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 Winfield Township Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association took appropriate corrective action to address six of the seven findings contained in our prior audit report. However, the Winfield Township 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 Winfield Township 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 findings listed below and discussed in detail in the Findings and Recommendations section of this report. The results of our tests also indicated the Winfield Township Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association expended funds as presented in the Accompanying Expenditure Information and, as of December 31, 2010, had a cash balance of \$23,362 and no investments.

Finding No. 1 – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation –
Undocumented Expenditures

Finding No. 2 – Untimely Deposit of State Aid

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

September 19, 2011

EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE
Auditor General

WINFIELD TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
STATUS OF PRIOR FINDINGS

COMPLIANCE WITH PRIOR AUDIT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Winfield Township Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association has complied with the following prior audit findings and recommendations:

- Unauthorized Expenditures

By receiving reimbursement from the affiliated fire company, in the amount of \$330, for the unauthorized expenditures that were made during the prior audit period. In addition, we did not detect any additional unauthorized expenditures during the current audit period.

- Inappropriate Commingling of Funds

By receiving reimbursement from the affiliated fire company, in the amount of \$2,069, for the funds due to the relief association.

- Inadequate Documentation for Jointly Purchased Vehicle

By executing a written agreement with the affiliated fire company that documented the relief association's proportionate share in the tanker truck.

- Failure to Document Ownership Interest in Jointly Purchased Vehicle

By executing a written agreement with the affiliated fire company that documented the relief association's proportionate share in the brush truck.

- Inappropriate Presigning of Blank Checks

By prohibiting the presigning of blank checks.

- Inadequate Internal Controls

By adopting control procedures to adequately safeguard relief association assets and ensure the propriety of all relief association transactions.

WINFIELD TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
STATUS OF PRIOR FINDINGS (Continued)

NONCOMPLIANCE WITH PRIOR AUDIT FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

The Winfield Township Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association has not complied with one of the seven prior audit findings. This finding is noted below and discussed in detail in the Findings and Recommendations section of this report:

- Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation –
Undocumented Expenditures

While the Winfield Township Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association received reimbursement from the affiliated fire company, in the amount of \$1,127, for prior audit period undocumented expenditures, during the current audit period the relief association, again, made undocumented expenditures (See Finding No. 1).

WINFIELD TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 1 – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation –
Undocumented Expenditures

Condition: The relief association was unable to provide adequate supporting documentation for the following expenditures:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Check No.</u>	<u>Payee</u>	<u>Amount</u>
01/04/08	739	Fireman's association	\$ 20
01/10/08	740	Supply vendor	53
05/20/08	764	Food vendor	68
06/02/08	765	Equipment vendor	439
07/05/08	773	Food vendor	20
12/24/08	791	Equipment vendor	106
03/03/09	797	Equipment vendor	227
08/05/09	816	Training vendor	210
08/15/10	859	Training vendor	231
Total			<u>\$ 1,374</u>

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: Relief association officials failed to establish adequate internal control procedures to ensure supporting documentation is maintained for all expenditures.

WINFIELD TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (Continued)

Finding No. 1 – (Continued)

Effect: Lack of supporting documentation, such as invoices and detailed minutes of meetings, made it impossible to determine if the expenditures were 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.

Recommendation: We recommend the relief association provide this department with adequate supporting documentation, such as invoices, to determine the validity of the expenditures or that the relief association be reimbursed \$1,374 for the undocumented expenditures. We also 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.

WINFIELD TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (Continued)

Finding No. 2 – Untimely Deposit of State Aid

Condition: The volunteer firefighters' relief association did not deposit the 2010 state aid allocation it received from Winfield Township, in the amount of \$24,406, until April 20, 2011.

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.

Upon receipt of the state aid allocation, the relief association should ensure the funds are deposited in a timely manner.

Cause: The foreign fire insurance tax allocation was distributed to the municipal treasurer on September 20, 2010, who forwarded this state aid to the volunteer firefighters' relief association on September 24, 2010, which was within 60 days of receipt, as required by Section 706 (b)(2) of the Act of December 18, 1984, (P.L. 1005, No. 205).

The relief association failed to establish internal control procedures requiring that all income received be 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 the relief association officials adopt internal control procedures to ensure the timely deposit of all 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.

WINFIELD TOWNSHIP 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	\$ 225
Relief benefits	500
Tokens of sympathy and goodwill	631
Total Benefit Services	\$ 1,356
Fire Services:	
Equipment purchased	\$ 52,525
Equipment maintenance	4,493
Training expenses	3,331
Fire prevention materials	500
Total Fire Services	\$ 60,849
Administrative Services:	
Miscellaneous administrative expenses	\$ 12,292
Total Administrative Services	\$ 12,292
Other Expenditures:	
Undocumented expenditures	\$ 1,374
Total Other Expenditures	\$ 1,374

WINFIELD TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom Corbett
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Winfield Township Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Governing Body:

Mr. Doug Whipkey, President

Mr. Mark Undercuffler, Vice President

Ms. Jodie Undercuffler, Secretary

Ms. Lisa Douglas, Treasurer

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

Ms. Victoria Schneider, Secretary
Winfield 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.