

**BRUIN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT RELIEF ASSOCIATION**

**HEREIN REFERRED TO AS:**

**BRUIN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION**

**BUTLER COUNTY**

**COMPLIANCE AUDIT REPORT**

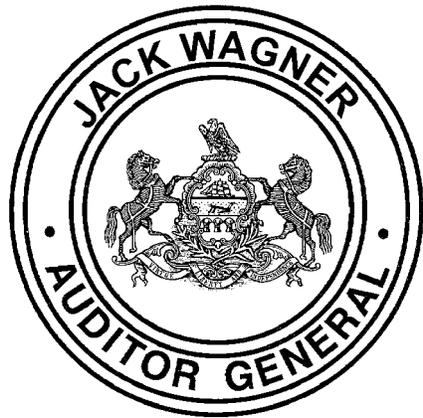
**FOR THE PERIOD**

**JANUARY 1, 2004 TO DECEMBER 31, 2007**



## CONTENTS

Background.....	1
Letter From the Auditor General .....	3
Finding and Recommendation:	
Finding – Untimely Receipt and Deposit of State Aid .....	5
Accompanying Expenditure Information .....	6
Report Distribution List.....	7



## 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, Act of June 11, 1968, (P.L. 149, No. 84), as amended, 53 P.S. § 8501 et seq. (commonly referred to as Act 84), 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 Bruin 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 84 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 84 authorizes specific types of expenditures and prescribes appropriate volunteer firefighters' relief association investment options. Within the parameters established by Act 84, 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 Bruin Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association was allocated state aid from the following municipalities:

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>
Bruin Borough	Butler	\$2,257	\$2,512	\$2,532	\$2,556
Parker Township	Butler	\$ 879	\$ 972	\$ 982	\$ 993

BACKGROUND (Continued)

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

Bruin Volunteer Fire Department

Mr. Darrel Hillwig, President  
BRUIN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS'  
RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
Butler County

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Bruin 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, Act of June 11, 1968, (P.L. 149, No. 84), as amended, 53 P.S. § 8501 et seq. (commonly referred to as Act 84), for the period January 1, 2004 to December 31, 2007. The audit was conducted in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* applicable to performance audits, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

The objective of the audit was 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 objective identified above.

Volunteer firefighters' relief association officers are responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that the Bruin Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's administration of state aid and accumulated 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 applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws and administrative procedures significant within the context of the audit objective. We also tested transactions, confirmed the Bruin Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's cash balance as of December 31, 2007, with the custodian of the funds, and interviewed selected officials to the extent necessary to satisfy the audit objective.

The results of our audit for the period January 1, 2004 to December 31, 2007, found, in all significant respects, the Bruin Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association received and expended funds in compliance with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws and administrative procedures, except as noted in the following finding discussed later in this report. The results of our tests indicated the Bruin Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association expended funds as presented in the accompanying information and as of December 31, 2007, had a cash balance of \$3,883 and no investments.

Finding – Untimely Receipt and Deposit of State Aid

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

January 18, 2008

JACK WAGNER  
Auditor General

BRUIN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

Finding – Untimely Receipt and Deposit of State Aid

Condition: The volunteer firefighters' relief association did not receive and deposit its state aid in a timely manner. Specifically, the 2007 state aid allocation from Parker Township, in the amount of \$993, was not forwarded to the relief association until January 17, 2008, and was not deposited into a relief association account until January 25, 2008.

Criteria: The foreign fire insurance tax allocation was distributed to the municipal treasurer, who is required to forward this state aid to the volunteer firefighters' relief association 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 should ensure the funds are deposited in a timely manner.

Cause: The relief association failed to establish internal control procedures which require that all income be timely received and deposited. According to the municipality, the state aid was not timely distributed due to a change in the municipal secretary position. According to the relief association, the reason for the untimely deposit was due to the state aid not being distributed by the municipality until January 17, 2008.

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

Recommendation: We recommend the relief association officials adopt internal control procedures to ensure the timely receipt and deposit of all income. 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.

BRUIN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
 ACCOMPANYING EXPENDITURE INFORMATION  
 FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2004 TO DECEMBER 31, 2007

Act 84 at 53 P.S. § 8502(1) states, in part, that:

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. Such an association may also serve other purposes, . . . provided only that adequate provisions be first made to serve its primary purpose. . . .

Act 84 at 53 P.S. § 8506, 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. 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	\$ 12,798
Tokens of sympathy and goodwill	<u>77</u>
Total Benefit Services	<u><u>\$ 12,875</u></u>
Fire Services:	
Equipment purchased	\$ 1,740
Training expenses	<u>540</u>
Total Fire Services	<u><u>\$ 2,280</u></u>
Administrative Services:	
Miscellaneous administrative expenses	<u>5</u>
Total Administrative Services	<u><u>\$ 5</u></u>

BRUIN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Edward G. Rendell  
Governor  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Bruin Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Officers:

Mr. Darrel Hillwig, President

Mr. Wallace Emery, Secretary

Mr. Terry L. Sweeney, Treasurer

Reports were also distributed to each municipality, which allocated foreign fire insurance tax monies to this relief association.

Ms. Marjorie L. Pennington, Secretary  
Bruin Borough

Ms. Vicki Steiner, Secretary  
Parker 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](http://www.auditorgen.state.pa.us).