

**VOLUNTEER FIREMAN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION OF SPRINGTOWN,  
PENNSYLVANIA**

**HEREIN REFERRED TO AS:**

**SPRINGTOWN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION**

**BUCKS COUNTY**

**AUDIT REPORT**

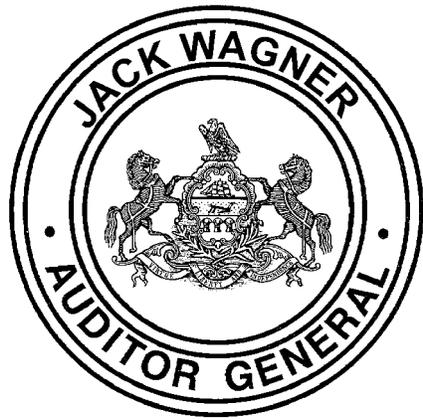
**FOR THE PERIOD**

**JANUARY 1, 2003 TO DECEMBER 31, 2005**



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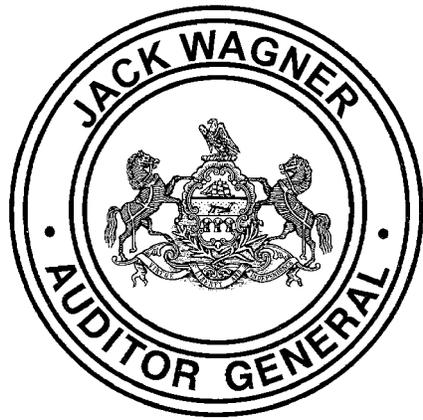
## BACKGROUND

This audit report is a public record, which must be available for examination by all interested citizens and volunteer firefighters' relief association (VFRA) members.

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.

This department conducts its audits of volunteer firefighters' relief associations in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Representations contained in the accompanying financial statements are the responsibility of the relief association's management. This department's responsibility for those statements is confined solely to an expression of our opinion as to the fairness of management's representation of the financial statements taken as a whole.

Act 84 requires that the relief association be governed in accordance with bylaws, which establish the association's operating procedures. Act 84 provides that the primary purpose of a relief association is to afford financial protection to volunteer firefighters against misfortunes suffered during fire service participation. To fulfill this purpose, Act 84 authorizes specific types of expenditures and outlines appropriate 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.



## **Independent Auditor's Report**

Mr. Michael Gawronski, President  
SPRINGTOWN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS'  
RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
Bucks County

We have audited the accompanying Statement of Monetary Assets Arising From Cash Transactions as of December 31, 2005, and the related Statement of Cash Receipts, Disbursements, and Changes in Cash of the Springtown Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association for the period January 1, 2003 to December 31, 2005. These financial statements are the responsibility of the relief association's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

The Department of the Auditor General is mandated by state statute to calculate state aid provided to volunteer firefighters' relief associations and to audit volunteer firefighters' relief associations having received such aid. State aid is calculated by an administrative unit that is not involved in the audit process. The Department's Comptroller Office then pre-audits the calculation and submits requests to the Commonwealth's Treasury Department for the disbursement of state aid to the municipality. The Department has implemented procedures to ensure that Department audit personnel are not directly involved in the calculation and disbursement processes. The Department's mandatory responsibilities are being disclosed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*.

**Independent Auditor's Report** (Continued)

As described in Note 2, these financial statements were prepared on the basis of cash receipts and disbursements, which is a comprehensive basis of accounting other than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the monetary assets arising from cash transactions of the Springtown Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association as of December 31, 2005, and the cash receipts, disbursements, and changes in cash for the period January 1, 2003 to December 31, 2005, on the basis of accounting described in Note 2.

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated February 14, 2006, on our consideration of the Springtown Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grants. The purpose of that report is to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* and should be considered in assessing the results of our audit.

February 14, 2006

JACK WAGNER  
Auditor General

SPRINGTOWN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
STATEMENT OF MONETARY ASSETS ARISING FROM CASH TRANSACTIONS  
DECEMBER 31, 2005

ASSETS:

Cash (note 3)	<u>\$ 59,449</u>
Total Monetary Assets	<u>\$ 59,449</u>

Notes to financial statements are an integral part of this report.

SPRINGTOWN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
 STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS, AND CHANGES IN CASH  
 FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2003 TO DECEMBER 31, 2005

RECEIPTS:

Support:		
State aid (note 4)	\$	87,191
Other Receipts:		
Interest income		530
Reimbursement		346
		<hr/>
Total Receipts		<hr/> 88,067

DISBURSEMENTS:

Fire Services:		
Equipment purchased		45,305
Equipment maintenance		10,172
Training expenses		691
Benefit Services:		
Insurance premiums		4,897
Relief benefits		192
Administrative Services:		
Bank service fees		82
Officer compensation		450
		<hr/>
Total Disbursements		<hr/> 61,789
Net Increase or (Decrease) In Cash		26,278
Cash Balance, January 1		<hr/> 33,171
Cash Balance, December 31	\$	<hr/> <hr/> 59,449

Notes to financial statements are an integral part of this report.

SPRINGTOWN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1. NATURE OF ORGANIZATION

Pursuant to the Act of June 11, 1968, (P.L. 149, No. 84), as amended, the Springtown Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association is a charitable organization that was formed to afford financial protection to volunteer firefighters and to encourage individuals within the community to participate in volunteer fire service.

Act 84 governs the overall operation of the volunteer firefighters' relief association. The relief association's bylaws regulate the specific procedures by which the association assets are managed.

The Springtown Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association is affiliated with the Springtown Community Volunteer Fire Company.

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

- A. The relief association's records are maintained on a cash basis, and the statement of cash receipts and disbursements reflect only cash received and disbursed. Therefore, receivables and payables, long-lived assets, accrued income and expenses, and depreciation, which would otherwise be recognized under accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP) and which may be material in amount, are not recognized in the accompanying financial statements.
- B. Fixed assets are recognized as expenditures at the time of purchase, rather than being capitalized and depreciated over their estimated useful lives.
- C. The relief association did not adopt Statement of Financial Accounting Standard (SFAS) No. 117 since they do not follow GAAP.
- D. The nature of the relief association's monetary assets is considered to be unrestricted.

3. CASH

Cash consisted of the following at December 31, 2005:

Checking account	\$ 4,908
Savings account	<u>54,541</u>
Total Cash	<u>\$ 59,449</u>

SPRINGTOWN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

4. STATE AID

Chapter 7 of the Act of December 18, 1984, (P.L. 1005, No. 205), as amended, 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 relief association of the fire department or departments, which is or are recognized as providing service to the municipality.

During the years 2003, 2004, and 2005, the Springtown Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association received state aid from Springfield Township in Bucks County.

5. RELATED PARTY SITUATIONS

A related party situation exists because the volunteer firefighters' relief association is affiliated with the fire service organization disclosed in Note 1. The relief association is a distinct separate legal entity that was established primarily for the purpose of affording financial protection to the volunteer firefighters against the consequences of misfortune suffered as a result of their participation in the fire service.

Another related party situation exists because certain officers of the relief association hold offices in the fire service organization. Also, an officer of the relief association is an immediate family member of a fire service organization officer.

The relief association membership is aware of these situations and all transactions are approved by the relief association membership.

**Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other  
Matters Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance With  
*Government Auditing Standards***

Mr. Michael Gawronski, President  
SPRINGTOWN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS'  
RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
Bucks County

We have audited the financial statements (cash basis) of the Springtown Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association as of December 31, 2005, and for the period January 1, 2003 to December 31, 2005, and have issued our report thereon dated February 14, 2006. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

The Department of the Auditor General is mandated by state statute to calculate state aid provided to volunteer firefighters' relief associations and to audit volunteer firefighters' relief associations having received such aid. State aid is calculated by an administrative unit that is not involved in the audit process. The Department's Comptroller Office then pre-audits the calculation and submits requests to the Commonwealth's Treasury Department for the disbursement of state aid to the municipality. The Department has implemented procedures to ensure that Department audit personnel are not directly involved in the calculation and disbursement processes. The Department's mandatory responsibilities are being disclosed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*.

Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit, we considered Springtown Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's internal control over financial reporting in order to determine our auditing procedures for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statements and not to provide an opinion on the internal control over financial reporting. However, we noted certain matters involving the internal control over financial reporting and its operation that we consider to be reportable conditions. Reportable conditions involve matters coming to our attention relating to significant deficiencies in the design or operation of the internal control over

**Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other  
Matters Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance With  
*Government Auditing Standards* (Continued)**

financial reporting that, in our judgement, could adversely affect Springtown Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's ability to record, process, and report financial data consistent with the assertions of management in the financial statements. Reportable conditions are described in the following findings:

Finding No. 2 – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation –  
Failure to Maintain a Complete and Accurate Equipment Roster

Finding No. 3 – Insufficient Officer's Bond Coverage

A material weakness is a reportable condition in which the design or operation of one or more of the internal control components does not reduce to a relatively low level the risk that misstatements caused by error or fraud in amounts that would be material in relation to the financial statements being audited may occur and not be detected within a timely period by association officers in the normal course of performing their assigned functions. Our consideration of the internal control over financial reporting would not necessarily disclose all matters in the internal control that might be reportable conditions and, accordingly, would not necessarily disclose all reportable conditions that are also considered to be material weaknesses. However, we consider the reportable conditions described in Finding Nos. 2 and 3 to be material weaknesses.

Compliance and Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether Springtown Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's financial statements are free of material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grants, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the determination of financial statement amounts. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit and, accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed an instance of noncompliance that is required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards* and which is described in the following finding:

Finding No. 3 – Insufficient Officer's Bond Coverage

We also noted a certain immaterial instance of noncompliance that we have reported to the management of Springtown Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association through Finding No. 1 contained in this report.

**Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other  
Matters Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance With  
*Government Auditing Standards* (Continued)**

We are concerned in light of the relief association's failure to correct previously reported audit findings. The relief association management should strive to implement the recommendations and corrective actions noted in this audit report.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the relief association's members and management, and the officials of the municipalities that grant the foreign fire insurance tax monies to the volunteer firefighters' relief association. It is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties.

February 14, 2006

JACK WAGNER  
Auditor General

SPRINGTOWN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 1 – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation –  
Failure to Obtain a Pennsylvania Sales Tax Exemption Number

Condition: As cited in the prior two audit reports, the relief association failed to obtain a Pennsylvania sales tax exemption number. The relief association is currently using the fire service organization's sales tax exemption number, although the fire service organization and the relief association are separate legal entities.

Criteria: Act 84 at 53 P.S. 8505(e) states:

Any volunteer firefighters' relief association organized or conducted in accordance with the requirements of this section shall be regarded as a charitable corporation for all purposes including the right to establish exemption from the operation of certain taxes.

Cause: While notified of this condition in the prior two audit reports, the relief association neglected to obtain its own sales tax exemption number from the Department of Revenue.

Effect: As a result of the relief association's failure to obtain a sales tax exemption number, the relief association may be required to pay Pennsylvania sales tax on their purchases, which ultimately reduces the funds otherwise available for general operating expenditures or for investment purposes.

Recommendation: We again recommend the relief association immediately apply for a state sales tax exemption number from the Department of Revenue and furnish this exemption number to all vendors from whom the relief association purchases equipment. 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.

SPRINGTOWN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 2 – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation –  
Failure to Maintain a Complete and Accurate Equipment Roster

Condition: As cited in the prior two audit reports, the relief association officials did not maintain a complete and accurate roster of equipment owned by the relief association. While a listing was maintained in prior years dating back to 1983, it was incomplete, since no equipment purchases have been recorded since 2000. In addition, there was no indication that an annual inventory of the equipment was performed to account for the relief association's fixed assets and to remove inoperable or unserviceable equipment.

Criteria: The relief association should establish adequate internal control procedures to ensure the maintenance of a cumulative equipment roster of all items purchased by the relief association in order to provide an effective accounting control over the relief association's fixed assets. A cumulative roster of all relief association equipment should include the following:

- Type of equipment purchased.
- Date of purchase.
- Unit cost.
- Serial number, if applicable.
- Current location of item.
- Final disposition of sold or damaged equipment.
- Notation of the annual inventory.

Cause: While notified of this condition in the prior two audit reports, relief association officials neglected to establish adequate internal control procedures over fixed assets to include the maintenance of a cumulative equipment roster and the performance of an annual equipment inventory.

Effect: The failure to properly record equipment purchases in a detailed equipment roster prevents officials from effectively monitoring the relief association's equipment purchases. In addition, the failure to maintain a detailed equipment roster prevents adequate accountability and safeguarding of relief association assets.

Recommendation: We again recommend the relief association officials maintain a cumulative roster of all relief association owned equipment. Furthermore, the relief association should ensure it performs an annual inventory of all operable equipment and that the inventory be sufficiently documented. 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.

SPRINGTOWN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 3 – Insufficient Officer's Bond Coverage

Condition: The relief association did not maintain a bond in a sufficient amount to cover the authorized disbursing officer. The relief association's bond coverage was \$50,000; however, as of December 31, 2005, the cash assets totaled \$59,449.

Criteria: Act 84 at 53 P.S. § 8505(c) states, in part, that:

. . . the disbursing officer, whether designated treasurer, comptroller, financial secretary, or otherwise, shall be bonded by corporate surety for the faithful performance of his duties. The amount of such bond shall be at least as great as the maximum cash balance in current funds of the association at any time during the fiscal year, and the premium on such bond shall be a proper charge against the funds of the association.

Cause: Relief association officials failed to monitor their officer's bond coverage to ensure it was in compliance with Act 84 provisions.

Effect: As a result of the disbursing officer of the relief association being insufficiently bonded, the relief association's cash assets are not adequately safeguarded.

However, subsequent to the audit period, on February 10, 2006, the relief association increased the bond coverage for the treasurer to \$75,000.

Recommendation: We recommend that the relief association officials continually monitor the cash balance to ensure that unexpected events affecting current funds do not again result in an insufficient officer's bond coverage. 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.

SPRINGTOWN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
COMMENTS

PRIOR AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

The relief association has complied with the following prior audit recommendations:

- Undocumented Expenditure

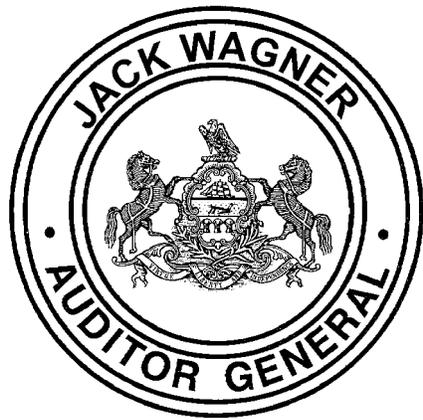
By receiving reimbursement of \$346 for the undocumented expenditure that was made in the prior financial period.

- Inadequate Financial Record-Keeping System

By establishing adequate accounting procedures that meet the minimum financial record-keeping requirements of this department.

- Inadequate Relief Association Bylaws

By revising the relief association bylaws to meet the minimum requirements of Act 84.



SPRINGTOWN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Edward G. Rendell  
Governor  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Springtown Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Officers:

Mr. Michael Gawronski, President

Ms. Suzanne Cressman, Secretary

Mr. Sean Queen, Treasurer

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

Ms. Barbara A. Smith, Secretary  
Springfield 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).