

COMPLIANCE AUDIT

Allison #2 V.F.D. Firemen's Relief Association Fayette County, Pennsylvania For the Period January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2018

April 2019



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of the Auditor General
Eugene A. DePasquale • Auditor General



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**EUGENE A. DePASQUALE
AUDITOR GENERAL**

Mr. Albert Kishel, Jr., President
Allison #2 V.F.D. Firemen's
Relief Association
Fayette County

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Allison #2 V.F.D. Firemen's Relief Association (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, 2016 to December 31, 2018.

The objectives of the audit were:

1. To determine if the relief association took appropriate corrective action to address the finding contained in our prior audit report.
2. To determine if the relief association complied with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures as they relate to the receipt of state aid and the expenditure of relief association funds.

Our audit was limited to the areas related to the objectives identified above and was not required to be and was not conducted in accordance with Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

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 objectives. 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, 2016 to December 31, 2018:

- The relief association took appropriate corrective action to address the finding contained in our prior audit report.
- The relief association, in all significant respects, complied with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures as they relate to the receipt of state aid and the expenditure of relief association funds, except as noted in the finding listed below and discussed later in this report.

Finding – Inappropriate Ownership Of Rescue Vehicles

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.

April 15, 2019



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. Relief association bylaws define the specific operational procedures by which relief associations conduct 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 relief associations 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 municipality:

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>
Luzerne Township	Fayette	\$5,120	\$4,761	\$4,338

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:

Allison # 2 Volunteer Fire Department

ALLISON #2 V.F.D. FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION
STATUS OF PRIOR FINDING

COMPLIANCE WITH PRIOR AUDIT FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

The relief association has complied with the prior audit finding and recommendation, as follows:

- Unauthorized Expenditure

By receiving reimbursement of \$3,239 from the affiliated fire company for the unauthorized expenditure made in the prior audit period.

ALLISON #2 V.F.D. FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

Finding – Inappropriate Ownership Of Rescue Vehicles

Condition: On July 27, 2018, the relief association purchased a rescue vehicle, in the amount of \$8,500, to carry personnel and safeguard equipment; however, the title to the vehicle was inappropriately issued in the name of the fire company and relief association. In addition, a rescue vehicle was donated to the relief association from another relief association in April of 2018; however, the title was also inappropriately issued in the name of the fire company and relief association.

Criteria: Prudent business practice dictates that the relief association should maintain sole ownership of all equipment purchased and donated to the relief association. As such, rescue vehicles purchased and donated to the relief association are to be titled in the name of the relief association.

Cause: Relief association officials failed to establish adequate internal control procedures to ensure that the rescue vehicles purchased and donated were titled in the name of the relief association.

Effect: As a result of the rescue vehicles being inappropriately titled in the name of the fire company and the relief association, the relief association assets were not properly safeguarded.

Recommendation: We recommend that the rescue vehicles be titled in the name of the relief association. If such action is not taken, we recommend that the relief association be reimbursed \$8,500. 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, as a result of our audit, on April 5, 2019 and April 9, 2019, the relief association officials provided copies of the titles in the name of the relief association.

Auditor's Conclusion: We reviewed documentation verifying the titles were in the name of the relief association. Compliance of ownership of future rescue vehicles purchased/donated during the next audit period will be subject to verification through our next audit.

ALLISON #2 V.F.D. FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION
SUPPLEMENTARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION
CASH BALANCE
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2018

Cash	<u>\$ 34,130</u>
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ALLISON #2 V.F.D. FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION
SUPPLEMENTARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION
SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES
FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2016 TO DECEMBER 31, 2018

Expenditures:

Fire Services:		
Equipment purchased	\$	28,025
Equipment maintenance		4,827
Training expenses		<u>1,657</u>
Total Fire Services	\$	<u>34,509</u>
Administrative Services:		
Officer compensation	\$	166
Bond premiums		<u>371</u>
Total Administrative Services	\$	<u>537</u>
Total Expenditures	\$	<u><u>35,046</u></u>

ALLISON #2 V.F.D. FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom W. Wolf
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Allison #2 V.F.D. Firemen's Relief Association Governing Body:

Mr. Albert Kishel, Jr.
President

Ms. Heather Perkins
Vice President

Ms. Karen Holland
Secretary

Mr. Richard L. Marker
Treasurer

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

Mr. Gregg Downer
Secretary
Luzerne 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.