

# COMPLIANCE AUDIT

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## Mahaffey Volunteer Firemen's Relief Association Clearfield County, Pennsylvania For the Period January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2017

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June 2018



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Department of the Auditor General

Eugene A. DePasquale • Auditor General



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EUGENE A. DePASQUALE  
AUDITOR GENERAL

Mr. Jack L. Bush, President  
Mahaffey Volunteer Firemen's  
Relief Association  
Clearfield County

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Mahaffey Volunteer 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, 2015 to December 31, 2017.

The objective of the audit was 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 objective 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 objective. 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, 2015 to December 31, 2017, 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 findings listed below and discussed later in this report.

Finding No. 1 – Unauthorized Expenditures

Finding No. 2 – Failure To Maintain A Complete And Accurate Equipment Roster

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 responses have 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.

June 19, 2018



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 municipalities:

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>
Bell Township	Clearfield	\$4,265	\$4,314	\$4,227
Burnside Township	Clearfield	\$1,796	\$1,794	\$1,802
Chest Township	Clearfield	\$ 944	\$ 952	\$ 860
Ferguson Township	Clearfield	\$1,225	\$1,243	\$1,320
Greenwood Township	Clearfield	\$2,051	\$2,040	\$1,933
Mahaffey Borough	Clearfield	\$1,443	\$1,439	\$1,321
New Washington Borough	Clearfield	\$ 351	\$ 343	\$ 306
Newburg Borough	Clearfield	\$ 409	\$ 407	\$ 381

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:

Community Volunteer Fire Department of Mahaffey

MAHAFFEY VOLUNTEER FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Finding No. 1 – Unauthorized Expenditures**

Condition: The relief association expended \$100 for a token of sympathy to a non-member during the current audit period that is not authorized by Act 118.

In addition, subsequent to the current audit period, the relief association expended \$1,000 for a grant writer for the affiliated fire company grant that is not authorized by Act 118.

Criteria: Act 118 at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7416(f)(1, 11) states:

The funds of any volunteer firefighters' relief association may be spent:

- (1) To pay for such normal and reasonable running expenses as may be appropriate to the businesslike conduct of the affairs of the association, including legal fees, rental or purchase of offices, payment of reasonable compensation of employees and purchase of office equipment and supplies.
  
- (11) To purchase safeguards for preserving life, health and safety of volunteer firefighters to ensure their availability to participate in the volunteer fire service.

Costs associated with the purchase for a non-member and a grant writer for the affiliated fire company grant do not qualify as an authorized volunteer firefighters' relief association expenditure; consequently, this disbursement is not authorized under Act 118.

Cause: Relief association officials indicated that they were unaware that the aforementioned expenditures were not authorized by Act 118.

Effect: As a result of these improper expenditures, relief association funds were not available for investment purposes, or to pay for expenditures authorized by Act 118.

Recommendation: We recommend that the relief association be reimbursed \$1,100 for the unauthorized expenditures and that relief association officials become familiar with Act 118 at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7416(f) to aid them in determining the propriety of future expenditures. For further guidance, please refer to the Auditor General's publication, MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATIONS.

MAHAFFEY VOLUNTEER FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Finding No. 1 – (Continued)**

Management's Response: Relief association management agreed with the finding as presented at the audit exit conference and, as a result of our audit, the affiliated fire company reimbursed the relief association \$100 on March 27, 2015 and \$1,000 on May 2, 2018 for the unauthorized expenditures.

Auditor's Conclusion: We reviewed documentation verifying that the reimbursements of \$1,100 was received. Compliance for expenditures made during the next audit period will be subject to verification through our next audit.

**Finding No. 2 – Failure To Maintain A Complete And Accurate Equipment Roster**

Condition: The relief association failed to maintain a complete and accurate roster of equipment owned by the relief association. Specifically, the relief association purchased \$53,024 of equipment during the current audit period and there was no equipment roster provided for these purchases. In addition, there was no indication that a physical inventory of equipment was conducted on an annual basis to account for the equipment owned by the relief association.

Criteria: Prudent business practice dictates that 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 equipment. A cumulative equipment roster of all relief association equipment should include all of the following:

- Types of equipment purchased
- Dates of purchase
- Unit costs
- Names of suppliers
- Serial numbers, if applicable
- Current locations of items
- Final dispositions of sold or damaged equipment
- Evidence of the performance and results of an annual physical inventory

Cause: Relief association officials failed to establish adequate internal control procedures over equipment by requiring the maintenance of a cumulative equipment roster and the performance of an annual physical inventory of equipment.



MAHAFFEY VOLUNTEER FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Finding No. 2 – (Continued)**

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 and perform an annual physical inventory of equipment prevents adequate accountability for, and safeguarding of, relief association equipment.

Recommendation: We recommend that the relief association officials maintain a cumulative equipment roster of all equipment owned by the relief association. Furthermore, the relief association should ensure it performs an annual physical inventory of all operable equipment and that the completion of 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 and, as a result of our audit, provided a cumulative equipment roster on June 23, 2018 of all equipment owned by the relief association.

Auditor's Conclusion: We reviewed the equipment roster received on June 23, 2018. Full compliance will be subject to verification through our next audit.

MAHAFFEY VOLUNTEER FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
SUPPLEMENTARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION  
CASH BALANCE  
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2017

Cash	<u>\$ 12,577</u>
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MAHAFFEY VOLUNTEER FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
 SUPPLEMENTARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION  
 SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES  
 FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2015 TO DECEMBER 31, 2017

Expenditures:

Benefit Services:	
Insurance premiums	\$ 4,476
Relief benefits	121
Tokens of sympathy and goodwill	90
Total Benefit Services	\$ 4,687
Fire Services:	
Equipment purchased	\$ 53,024
Equipment maintenance	5,875
Training expenses	2,484
Fire prevention materials	419
Total Fire Services	\$ 61,802
Administrative Services:	
Other administrative expenses	143
Bond premiums	362
Total Administrative Services	\$ 505
Other Expenditures:	
Payments on loan	\$ 24,604
Unauthorized expenditure *	100
Total Other Expenditures	\$ 24,704
Total Expenditures	\$ 91,698

\* This represents the unauthorized expenditure made during the current audit period as disclosed in Finding No. 1.

MAHAFFEY VOLUNTEER FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

**The Honorable Tom W. Wolf**  
Governor  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Mahaffey Volunteer Firemen's Relief Association Governing Body:

**Mr. Jack L. Bush**  
President

**Mr. Gary L. Brink**  
Vice President

**Ms. Theresa Dilts**  
Secretary

**Ms. Patricia Ann Marshall**  
Treasurer

MAHAFFEY VOLUNTEER FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

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

**Ms. Sally M. Long**  
Secretary  
Mahaffey Borough

**Ms. Stephanie J. Marshall**  
Secretary  
New Washington Borough

**Ms. Jennifer Peterson**  
Secretary  
Newburg Borough

**Mr. Kenneth R. Voris**  
Secretary  
Bell Township

**Ms. Diana L. Rorabaugh**  
Secretary  
Burnside Township

**Mr. Larry Garner**  
Secretary  
Chest Township

**Ms. Beth Peoples**  
Secretary  
Ferguson Township

**Ms. Kathy Dickey**  
Secretary  
Greenwood Township

This report is a matter of public record and is available online at [www.PaAuditor.gov](http://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](mailto:news@PaAuditor.gov).