COMPLIANCE AUDIT

Manheim Township Fire Rescue Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association

Lancaster County, Pennsylvania For the Period January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2018

February 2020



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General

Eugene A. DePasquale • Auditor General





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EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE AUDITOR GENERAL

Mr. Steve Leayman, President Manheim Township Fire Rescue Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Lancaster County

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Manheim Township Fire Rescue Volunteer Firefighters' 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, 2017 to December 31, 2018.

The objectives of the audit were:

- 1. To determine if the relief association took appropriate corrective action to address the findings 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, 2017 to December 31, 2018:

- The relief association took appropriate corrective action to address two of the six findings contained in our prior audit report. However, the relief association failed to take appropriate corrective action to address the four remaining findings contained in our prior audit report, as listed below and discussed in the Status of Prior Findings section of this report.
- Because of the significance of the matters described in the findings below and discussed later in this report, the relief association did not, in all significant respects, comply 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, collectively as a whole. Therefore, the relief association may be subject to the potential withholding of its upcoming state aid distribution, as discussed in the Potential Withhold of State Aid section of this report.

Finding No. 1	No. 1 – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation – Failure To Maintain A Complete And Accurate Equipment Roster						
Finding No. 2	_	Noncompliance Undocumented E			Audit	Recommendation	_
Finding No. 3	_	Noncompliance Inadequate Intern			Audit	Recommendation	_
Finding No. 4	_	Noncompliance Inadequate Minut				Recommendation	_
Finding No. 5	_	Unauthorized Exp	oenditur	es			

Four of the five audit findings contained in this report cite conditions that existed in the operation of the relief association during the prior audit period and were not corrected during the current audit period. We are concerned by the number of findings noted and strongly encourage timely implementation of the recommendations noted in this audit report.

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.

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February 3, 2020

EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE Auditor General

CONTENTS

Page
Background1
Status of Prior Findings
Findings and Recommendations:
Finding No. 1 – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation – Failure To Maintain A Complete And Accurate Equipment Roster4
Finding No. 2 – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation – Undocumented Expenditures
Finding No. 3 – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation – Inadequate Internal Controls7
Finding No. 4 – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation – Inadequate Minutes Of Meetings9
Finding No. 5 – Unauthorized Expenditures10
Potential Withhold of State Aid12
Supplementary Financial Information13
Report Distribution List

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:

Municipality	County	2017	2018
Manheim Township	Lancaster	\$266,493	\$240,822

The volunteer firefighters' relief association and the affiliated fire service organizations are separate, legal entities. The relief association is affiliated with the following fire service organizations:

Eden Fire Company No. 1

Neffsville Community Fire Company No. 1

Southern Manheim Township Fire Company

MANHEIM TOWNSHIP FIRE RESCUE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION STATUS OF PRIOR FINDINGS

COMPLIANCE WITH PRIOR AUDIT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The relief association has complied with two of the six prior audit findings and recommendations, as follows:

• Failure To Secure Ownership In Jointly Purchased Equipment

By executing written formal agreements with the affiliated fire company that adequately secures its proportional ownership interest in the jointly purchased equipment.

• Failure To Maintain A Complete And Accurate Membership Roster

By maintaining a comprehensive listing of the relief association's membership.

NONCOMPLIANCE WITH PRIOR AUDIT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The relief association has not complied with four of the six prior audit findings. These findings are noted below and discussed in detail in the Findings and Recommendations section of this report:

- Failure To Maintain A Complete And Accurate Equipment Roster
- <u>Undocumented Expenditures</u>

Although the relief association received reimbursement of \$5,458 from the affiliated fire company for the undocumented expenditures that were made in the prior audit period, the relief association again failed to provide adequate documentation to support all expenditures in the current audit period as further disclosed in Finding No. 2 of this report.

- Inadequate Internal Controls
- Inadequate Minutes Of Meetings

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

<u>Finding No. 1 – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation – Failure To Maintain</u> <u>A Complete And Accurate Equipment Roster</u>

<u>Condition</u>: The relief association failed to maintain a complete and accurate roster of equipment owned by the relief association. Although a listing of relief association owned equipment was provided during the current audit period, it was incomplete because it did not contain the names of suppliers (vendors), dates of purchase and cost of equipment to accurately identify equipment owned by the relief association. As such, it was impossible to determine if all equipment purchased during the audit period in the amount of \$382,249 was recorded. 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.

A similar condition was noted in our prior audit report.

<u>Criteria</u>: 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

<u>Cause</u>: Even though notified of this condition during our prior audit, relief association officials again 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.

<u>Effect</u>: The continued 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.

Finding No. 1 – (Continued)

<u>Recommendation</u>: We again 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.

<u>Management's Response</u>: 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.

<u>Auditor's Conclusion</u>: We are concerned by the relief association's failure to correct this previously reported audit finding and strongly encourage timely implementation of the recommendation noted in this audit report.

<u>Finding No. 2 – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation – Undocumented</u> <u>Expenditures</u>

<u>Condition</u>: The relief association was unable to provide adequate supporting documentation for the following expenditures made during the current audit period:

Date	Check No.	Payee Description		Amount
08/03/17	1112	Cardmember services	\$	170
09/07/17	1123	Cardmember services		153
09/07/17	1136	Equipment vendor		1,402
10/05/17	1139	Cardmember services		100
10/05/17	1145	Equipment vendor		97
10/19/17	1150	Commonwealth of PA		15
01/16/18	1182	Insurance vendor		3,572
04/05/18	1201	Cardmember services		360
12/06/18	1267	Cardmember services		91
		Total	\$	5,960

A similar condition was noted in our prior audit report.

Finding No. 2 – (Continued)

Criteria: Section 7418(a) of Act 118 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), 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 and/or itemized receipts, this department is unable to determine whether relief association funds were expended for purposes authorized by Act 118. Furthermore, prudent business practice dictates that supporting documentation be maintained to evidence the propriety of all financial transactions.

<u>Cause</u>: Even though notified of this condition during our prior audit, relief association officials again neglected to establish adequate internal control procedures to ensure supporting documentation is maintained for all expenditures.

<u>Effect</u>: Lack of supporting documentation, such as invoices, itemized receipts and detailed minutes of meetings, made it impossible to determine if the expenditures were made in accordance with Section 7416(f) of Act 118. 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. Furthermore, the relief association's future state aid allocations may be withheld until the finding recommendation is complied with.

<u>Recommendation</u>: We recommend that the relief association officials provide this department with adequate supporting documentation, such as invoices and/or itemized receipts, to ensure the propriety of the expenditures or that the relief association be reimbursed \$5,960 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.

<u>Management's Response</u>: 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.

Finding No. 2 – (Continued)

<u>Auditor's Conclusion</u>: Due to the potential withhold of state aid, the relief association's compliance with the finding recommendation will be monitored subsequent to the release of the audit report and through our next audit of the relief association.

<u>Finding No. 3 – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation – Inadequate Internal</u> <u>Controls</u>

<u>Condition</u>: As disclosed in the prior audit report, the relief association failed to establish adequate internal controls. A similar condition occurred during the current audit period as noted by the following conditions that are indicative of internal control weaknesses:

- A formal written policy regarding the use of credit cards was not established and adequate supporting documentation was not maintained evidencing the propriety of all expenditures reported on monthly credit card statements resulting in undocumented expenditures as disclosed in Finding No. 2.
- Detailed minutes of meetings were not maintained as reported in Finding No. 4.
- A formal contract between the relief association and the township was not established designating the financial record-keeping responsibilities performed on behalf of the relief association.

Criteria: Section 7415(a) of Act 118 states, in part, that the relief association:

.... must provide for taking and preserving minutes of all meetings and maintenance of such books of account as may be necessary and appropriate to afford a permanent record of its fiscal affairs.

In addition, Article VII of the relief association's bylaws states, in part:

Funds of the Association shall not be expended for any purpose other than those authorized by the provisions of the Relief Act and the Association Bylaws. All expenditures outside of the ordinary course and scope of business must be approved by a majority vote at an Association meeting and duly recorded in the meeting minutes. All expenditures must be made through the Association account(s) and be recorded in the Association records. Supporting documentation such as invoices and cancelled checks shall be given to the Treasurer.

Finding No. 3 – (Continued)

Furthermore, prudent business practice dictates that:

- The use of credit cards should be treated as any other expenditure; original receipts and invoices should be required prior to payment or purchases, and a formal policy should be created and strictly adhered to for card access, usage and safeguarding.
- Detailed meeting minutes should be maintained to accurately document presentation, discussion and membership approval of relief association business transacted.
- Relief association officials should be aware of its fiduciary responsibilities and the financial duties and record-keeping functions being performed by the township on the relief association's behalf.
- All transactions should be deemed authorized before expending the relief association's funds.

<u>Cause</u>: Even though notified of this condition during our prior audit, relief association officials again neglected to establish adequate internal controls to ensure the propriety of expenditures and proper documentation of relief association transactions.

<u>Effect</u>: The continued failure to establish adequate internal controls prevented the relief association from adequately safeguarding its assets and prevented the verification as to whether relief association business was presented before the membership for discussion and approval. Furthermore, the lack of effective internal controls places the relief association funds at greater risk for misappropriation.

<u>Recommendation</u>: We again recommend that the relief association officials adopt internal control procedures which will require the following:

- A formal written policy regarding the credit card account, including access, usage and safeguarding, and the maintenance of all original receipts and invoices to support transactions reflected on the credit card statements.
- Maintenance of detailed meeting minutes which show the presentation, discussion, and the approval of all financial activities.
- A formal contract between the relief association and the township regarding financial record-keeping responsibilities performed on behalf of the relief association. Additionally, relief association officials should become more involved and aware of the financial activities involving the relief association.

For further guidance, please refer to the Auditor General's publication, MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION.

Finding No. 3 – (Continued)

<u>Management's Response</u>: 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.

<u>Auditor's Conclusion</u>: We are concerned by the relief association's failure to correct this previously reported audit finding and strongly encourage timely implementation of the recommendation noted in this audit report.

<u>Finding No. 4 – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation – Inadequate Minutes</u> <u>Of Meetings</u>

<u>Condition</u>: The relief association failed to maintain detailed minutes of meetings as required by Act 118. Specifically, the following discrepancies existed during the current audit period:

- The relief association's minutes did not address all of the financial-related transactions that occurred during the audit period.
- The relief association's minutes did not address whether an officer conducting business with the relief association abstained from voting when expenditures related to his business were involved.

A similar condition was noted in our prior audit report.

Criteria: Section 7415(a) of Act 118 states, in part, that the relief association:

... must provide for taking and preserving minutes of all meetings and maintenance of such books of account as may be necessary and appropriate to afford a permanent record of its fiscal affairs.

<u>Cause</u>: Even though notified of this condition during our prior audit, relief association officials again neglected to maintain detailed minutes of meetings as required by Act 118.

<u>Effect</u>: Without detailed minutes of meetings, evidence that relief association business was presented before the membership for approval does not exist.

Finding No. 4 – (Continued)

<u>Recommendation</u>: We again recommend that the relief association officials maintain detailed minutes of meetings, evidencing the discussion and approval of all financial-related business conducted by the relief association. For further guidance, please refer to the Auditor General's publication, MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATIONS.

<u>Management's Response</u>: 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.

<u>Auditor's Conclusion</u>: We are concerned by the relief association's failure to correct this previously reported audit finding and strongly encourage timely implementation of the recommendation noted in this audit report.

Finding No. 5 – Unauthorized Expenditures

<u>Condition</u>: The relief association expended funds for the following items during the current audit period that are not authorized by Act 118:

Date	Check No.	Description		 Amount
04/06/17	1088	Training for career staff		\$ 225
11/02/17	1160	Training for career staff		90
02/08/18	1190	Gear for career staff		5,196
04/05/18	1202	Training for career staff		510
06/07/18	1222	Training for career staff		55
09/06/18	1241	Training for career staff		75
11/01/18	1264	Training for career staff		150
		-	Total	\$ 6,301

Criteria: Section 7416(f) of Act 118 states:

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

- (10) To pay reasonable expenses actually and necessarily incurred for attending bona fide firefighters' training schools.
- (11) To purchase safeguards for preserving life, health and safety of volunteer firefighters to ensure their availability to participate in the volunteer fire service.

Finding No. 5 – (Continued)

Costs associated with training of and gear for career staff do not qualify as authorized volunteer firefighters' relief association expenditures; consequently, these disbursements are not authorized under Act 118.

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

<u>Effect</u>: 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. Furthermore, the relief association's future state aid allocations may be withheld until the finding recommendation is complied with.

<u>Recommendation</u>: We recommend that the relief association be reimbursed \$6,301 for the unauthorized expenditures and that relief association officials become familiar with Section 7416(f) of Act 118 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.

<u>Management's Response</u>: 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.

<u>Auditor's Conclusion</u>: Due to the potential withhold of state aid, the relief association's compliance with the finding recommendation will be monitored subsequent to the release of the audit report and through our next audit of the relief association.

MANHEIM TOWNSHIP FIRE RESCUE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION POTENTIAL WITHHOLD OF STATE AID

Conditions such as those reported by Finding Nos. 2 and 5 contained in this audit report may lead to a total withholding of state aid in the future unless those findings are corrected. However, such action may not be considered if sufficient documentation is provided within 60 days to verify compliance with this department's recommendations. Such documentation should be submitted by the relief association to: Department of the Auditor General, Bureau of Fire Relief Audits, Room 327 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120.

MANHEIM TOWNSHIP FIRE RESCUE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION SUPPLEMENTARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION CASH AND INVESTMENT BALANCES AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2018

Cash	\$ 369,002
Fair Value of Investments	 394,810
Total Cash and Investments	\$ 763,812

MANHEIM TOWNSHIP FIRE RESCUE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION SUPPLEMENTARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2017 TO DECEMBER 31, 2018

Expenditures:

Benefit Services:	
Insurance premiums	\$ 58,903
Death benefits	2,500
Relief benefits	5,455
Total Benefit Services	\$ 66,858
Fire Services:	
Equipment purchased	\$ 382,249
Equipment maintenance	73,484
Training expenses	49,766
Fire prevention materials	12,976
Total Fire Services	\$ 518,475
Administrative Services:	
Other administrative expenses*	\$ 17,043
Bond premiums	565
Total Administrative Services	\$ 17,608
Other Expenditures:	
Payments on lease-financing	\$ 112,426
Undocumented expenditures	5,960
Unauthorized expenditures	6,301
Total Other Expenditures	\$ 124,687
Total Expenditures	\$ 727,628

* A significant portion of the other administrative expenditures represents two payments for cloud based firehouse software totaling \$4,870, township yearly accounting services for the audit period totaling \$2,000 and tax preparation for the audit period totaling \$8,550.

MANHEIM TOWNSHIP FIRE RESCUE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom W. Wolf Governor Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Manheim Township Fire Rescue Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Governing Body:

Mr. Steve Leayman President

Mr. Jeffrey Ober Vice President

Mr. Joe Banzhof Secretary

Mr. Chris Oberle, II Treasurer

Mr. Carl Everhart Board Member

Mr. Kyle Templeton Board Member

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

Mr. Sean P. Molchany Secretary Manheim Township

This report is a matter of public record and is available online at <u>www.PaAuditor.gov.</u> 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.