

# COMPLIANCE AUDIT

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## Rush Volunteer Fire Department Firefighter's Relief Association Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania For the Period January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2020

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June 2021



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Department of the Auditor General

Timothy L. DeFoor • Auditor General



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TIMOTHY L. DEFOOR  
AUDITOR GENERAL

Mr. Paul Jones, President  
Rush Volunteer Fire Department  
Firefighter's Relief Association  
Susquehanna County

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Rush Volunteer Fire Department Firefighter'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, 2018 to December 31, 2020.

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, nor was it required to be, conducted in accordance with Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

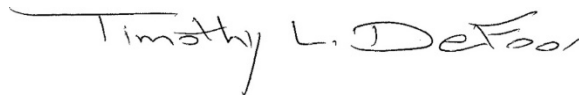
Relief association officers are responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that the relief association's administration of state aid and accumulated relief funds complies with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures, 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.

We were not able to obtain an independent confirmation of a portion of the cash balance and a portion investment balance directly from the financial institutions. Therefore, while the relief association provided copies of bank and investment statements that indicated that, as of December 31, 2020, the relief association had a cash balance of \$50,836 and an investment balance with a fair value of \$108,151, we were not able to verify a portion of those cash and investment balances.

Based on our audit procedures, we conclude that, except for the effects, if any, of the matter described in the preceding paragraph, for the period January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2020:

- 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.

The contents of this report were discussed with the management of the relief association. We would like to thank the relief association officials for the cooperation extended to us during the conduct of the audit.



Timothy L. DeFoor  
Auditor General

May 18, 2021

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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>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Auburn Township	Susquehanna	\$1,986	\$2,177	\$2,204
Friendsville Township	Susquehanna	\$ 529	\$ 582	\$ 593
Jessup Township	Susquehanna	\$1,562	\$1,627	\$1,646
Middletown Township	Susquehanna	\$2,186	\$2,306	\$2,315
Rush Township	Susquehanna	\$7,714	\$8,275	\$8,315

Based on the relief association's records, its total cash and investments as of December 31, 2020 were \$158,987, as illustrated below:

Cash	\$ 50,836
Fair Value of Investments	<u>108,151</u>
Total Cash and Investments	<u><u>\$ 158,987</u></u>

## BACKGROUND – (Continued)

Based on the relief association's records, its total expenditures for the period January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2020 were \$56,234, as noted below. The accuracy of these expenditures was evaluated as part of the Department's audit to conclude on the relief association's compliance 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.<sup>1</sup> **The scope of the Department's audit does not include the issuance of an opinion on the accuracy of these amounts.**

### Expenditures:

#### Benefit Services:

Insurance premiums	\$	27,012
Death benefits		1,000
Total Benefit Services	\$	<u>28,012</u>

#### Fire Services:

Equipment purchased	\$	18,750
Equipment maintenance		4,173
Training expenses		4,866
Total Fire Services	\$	<u>27,789</u>

#### Administrative Services:

Other administrative expenses	\$	133
Bond premiums		300
Total Administrative Services	\$	<u>433</u>

Total Expenditures	\$	<u>56,234</u>
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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:

Rush Volunteer Fire Department

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<sup>1</sup> Accuracy was evaluated for a selection of transactions based on dollar amount, category, and/or random selection.

RUSH VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT FIREFIGHTER'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:

- Insufficient Surety (Fidelity) Bond Coverage

By increasing the Surety (Fidelity) bond coverage to an amount greater than the balance of the relief association's cash assets.

We commend the relief association management for its efforts in complying with the finding and recommendation contained in the prior audit report. The relief association management should strive to remain in compliance with all applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws and administrative procedures.



RUSH VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT FIREFIGHTER'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

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

Rush Volunteer Fire Department Firefighter's Relief Association Governing Body:

**Mr. Paul Jones**  
President

**Mr. Bob Shingler**  
Vice President

**Ms. Deborah Purtell**  
Treasurer

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

**Ms. Emily Cleveland**  
Secretary  
Auburn Township

**Ms. Tina Curley**  
Secretary  
Friendsville Township

**Ms. Janis Bunnell**  
Secretary  
Jessup Township

**Ms. Mary K. Long**  
Secretary  
Middletown Township

**Ms. Lynda Rose Juser**  
Secretary  
Rush Township

RUSH VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT FIREFIGHTER'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

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