

COMPLIANCE AUDIT

The Scott Township Firemen's Relief Association

Columbia County, Pennsylvania

For the Period

January 1, 2017 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. Lou Moser, President
The Scott Township Firemen's
Relief Association
Columbia County

We have conducted a compliance audit of The Scott Township 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, 2017 to December 31, 2018.

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, 2017 to December 31, 2018, 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 – Failure To Maintain A Complete And Accurate Equipment Roster

Finding No. 2 – Inadequate Minutes Of Meetings

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.

April 19, 2019



EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE
Auditor General

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Background.....	1
Findings and Recommendations:	
Finding No. 1 – Failure To Maintain A Complete And Accurate Equipment Roster.....	3
Finding No. 2 – Inadequate Minutes Of Meetings.....	4
Supplementary Financial Information	5
Report Distribution List	7

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>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>
Mount Pleasant Township	Columbia	\$ 2,264	\$ 2,072
North Centre Township	Columbia	\$ 6,051	\$ 5,539
Scott Township	Columbia	\$33,066	\$30,116

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:

Epsy Volunteer Fire Company No. 1

Lightstreet Community Fire Company

THE SCOTT TOWNSHIP FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 1 – 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. 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 \$90,939 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.

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.

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.

THE SCOTT TOWNSHIP 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 indicated they will take action to comply with the recommendation.

Auditor's Conclusion: Compliance will be subject to verification through our next audit.

Finding No. 2 – Inadequate Minutes Of Meetings

Condition: The relief association failed to maintain detailed minutes of meetings as required by Act 118. Specifically, the relief association's minutes did not address all of the financial-related transactions that occurred during the audit period.

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.

Cause: Relief association officials indicated that they were unaware that maintaining detailed minutes of meetings was required by Act 118.

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

Recommendation: We 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.

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.

Auditor's Conclusion: Compliance will be subject to verification through our next audit.

THE SCOTT TOWNSHIP FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION
SUPPLEMENTARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION
CASH AND INVESTMENT BALANCES
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2018

Cash	\$ 94,623
Fair Value of Investments	<u>129,316</u>
Total Cash and Investments	<u>\$ 223,939</u>

THE SCOTT TOWNSHIP FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION
SUPPLEMENTARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION
SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES
FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2017 TO DECEMBER 31, 2018

Expenditures:

Benefit Services:

Insurance premiums	\$ 14,705
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Fire Services:

Equipment purchased	\$ 90,939
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Training expenses	210
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Total Fire Services	\$ 91,149
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Administrative Services:

Other administrative expenses	\$ 1,285
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Bond premiums	598
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Total Administrative Services	\$ 1,883
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Total Expenditures	\$ 107,737
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THE SCOTT TOWNSHIP FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom W. Wolf
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

The Scott Township Firemen's Relief Association Governing Body:

Mr. Lou Moser
President

Mr. Doug Kashner
Vice President

Mr. Ken Carey
Secretary

Mr. Charles J. Lukeski
Treasurer

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

Ms. Wendy Westover
Secretary
Mount Pleasant Township

Ms. Connie Kline
Secretary
North Centre Township

Ms. Brittany Stasik
Secretary
Scott Township

THE SCOTT TOWNSHIP FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

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