

COMPLIANCE AUDIT

Firemen's Relief Association of
Tunkhannock, PA
Wyoming County, Pennsylvania
For the Period
January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2018

October 2019



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of the Auditor General

Eugene A. DePasquale • Auditor General



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EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE
AUDITOR GENERAL

Mr. William Gaylord, President
Firemen's Relief Association of
Tunkhannock, PA
Wyoming County

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Firemen's Relief Association of Tunkhannock, PA (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 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, 2017 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 – Unauthorized Expenditures

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.



EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE
Auditor General

September 30, 2019

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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:

Municipality	County	2017	2018
Eaton Township	Wyoming	\$11,615	\$10,966
Lemon Township	Wyoming	\$ 8,575	\$ 8,088
Tunkhannock Borough	Wyoming	\$10,637	\$ 9,677
Tunkhannock Township	Wyoming	\$28,895	\$26,657

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:

Triton Hose Company No. 1

FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION OF TUNKHANNOCK, PA
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:

- Untimely Receipt And Deposit Of State Aid

By ensuring the timely receipt and deposit all income received.

FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION OF TUNKHANNOCK, PA
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

Finding – Unauthorized Expenditures

Condition: 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
07/07/2018	180	Uniform badges	\$ 459
07/28/2018	183	White parade gloves	100
08/20/2018	184	Parade bell cap	55
Total			\$ <u>614</u>

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

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

- (11) To purchase safeguards for preserving life, health and safety of volunteer firefighters to ensure their availability to participate in the volunteer fire service.
- (15) To purchase fire hoses and nozzles.

Costs associated with the purchase of fire company members' parade uniform badges, white gloves and bell caps do not qualify as authorized volunteer firefighters' relief association expenditures; consequently, these disbursements are 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 \$614 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.

FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION OF TUNKHANNOCK, PA
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

Finding – (Continued)

Management's Response: Relief association management agreed with the finding as presented at the audit exit conference and indicated that they had discovered that the expenditures were unauthorized and relief association management received reimbursement from the affiliated fire company for the unauthorized expenditures on July 22, 2019.

Auditor's Conclusion: We reviewed documentation verifying that the reimbursement of \$614 was received. Compliance for expenditures made during the next audit period will be subject to verification through our next audit.

FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION OF TUNKHANNOCK, PA
SUPPLEMENTARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION
CASH AND INVESTMENT BALANCES
AS OF JANUARY 1, 2017 TO DECEMBER 31, 2018

Cash	\$ 65,170
Fair Value of Investments	<u>746,187</u>
Total Cash and Investments	<u><u>\$ 811,357</u></u>

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

Expenditures:

Benefit Services:

Insurance premiums	\$ 23,389
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Fire Services:

Equipment purchased	\$ 118,885
Equipment maintenance	13,545
Training expenses	2,039
Total Fire Services	\$ 134,469

Administrative Services:

Other administrative expenses	\$ 1,000
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Total Investments Purchased	\$ 5,000
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Other Expenditures:

Unauthorized expenditures	\$ 614
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Total Expenditures	\$ 164,472
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FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION OF TUNKHANNOCK, PA
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom W. Wolf
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Firemen's Relief Association of Tunkhannock, PA Governing Body:

Mr. William Gaylord
President

Mr. Ronald Kukuchka
Vice President

Mr. John Lee
Secretary

Ms. Wilma Gay
Treasurer

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

Ms. Brenda Novak
Secretary
Eaton Township

Ms. Samantha Hoover
Secretary
Lemon Township

Ms. Dawn Welch
Secretary
Tunkhannock Borough

Ms. Judy Gingher
Secretary
Tunkhannock Township

FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION OF TUNKHANNOCK, PA
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

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