



**BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER  
FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION**

**CRAWFORD COUNTY**

**COMPLIANCE AUDIT REPORT**

**FOR THE PERIOD**

**JANUARY 1, 2010 TO DECEMBER 31, 2012**

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA**

**EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE - AUDITOR GENERAL**

**DEPARTMENT OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL**



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**EUGENE A. DePASQUALE**  
**AUDITOR GENERAL**

Mr. Mike Lohse, President  
BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER  
FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
Crawford County

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Bloomfield Township Volunteer Firefighters' 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, 2010 to December 31, 2012.

We conducted this compliance audit in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* applicable to performance audits, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our audit results and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our audit results and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

The objectives of the audit were:

1. To determine if the volunteer firefighters' relief association took appropriate corrective action to address the finding contained in our prior audit report; and
2. To determine if the volunteer firefighters' relief association received and expended state aid and accumulated relief funds in compliance with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws and administrative procedures.

Our audit was limited to the areas related to the objectives identified above.

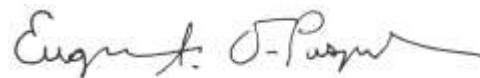
Volunteer firefighters' relief association officers are responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that the Bloomfield Township Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's administration of state aid and accumulated relief funds complies with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws and administrative procedures including the safeguarding of assets. In conducting our audit, we obtained an understanding of the volunteer firefighters' relief association's internal controls as they relate to the association's compliance with those requirements and that we considered to be significant within the context of the audit objectives, and assessed whether those significant controls were properly designed and implemented. Our audit procedures also included tests of documentary evidence supporting the Bloomfield Township Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's recorded financial transactions, tests of the physical existence of inventories, interviews of selected officials and direct confirmation of the Bloomfield Township Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's cash, investments, and certain other assets and liabilities as of December 31, 2012, with the custodians of the funds, debtors, creditors, and financial institutions to the extent necessary to satisfy the audit objectives. Additionally, we performed procedures to provide a reasonable assurance of detecting instances of violations of legal and regulatory requirements or violations of provisions of contracts that are significant within the context of the audit objectives.

The results of our audit, for the period January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2012, found the Bloomfield Township Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association in all significant respects, received state aid and expended state aid and accumulated relief funds in compliance with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws and administrative procedures, except as noted in the finding listed below and discussed in detail in the Finding and Recommendation section of this report. The results of our tests also indicated the Bloomfield Township Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association expended funds as presented in the Accompanying Expenditure Information and, as of December 31, 2012, had a cash balance of \$12,326 and an investment balance with a fair value of \$10,528.

Finding – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation –  
Unauthorized Expenditures

The contents of this report were discussed with the management of the Bloomfield Township Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association and, where appropriate, their responses have been included in the report.

October 24, 2013



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 Bloomfield Township Volunteer Firefighters' 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 the volunteer firefighters' relief association. The relief association's bylaws define the specific operational procedures by which the volunteer firefighters' relief association conducts 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 the volunteer firefighters' relief association 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, which is or are recognized as providing the service to the municipality.

BACKGROUND - (Continued)

The Bloomfield Township Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association was allocated state aid from the following municipalities:

| <u>Municipality</u> | <u>County</u> | <u>2010</u> | <u>2011</u> | <u>2012</u> |
|---------------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Athens Township     | Crawford      | \$ 1,403    | \$ 2,105    | \$ 1,200    |
| Bloomfield Township | Crawford      | \$ 12,314   | \$ 18,003   | \$ 10,230   |

The volunteer firefighters' relief association and the affiliated fire service organization are separate, legal entities. The Bloomfield Township Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association is affiliated with the following fire service organization:

Bloomfield Township Volunteer Fire Department

BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
STATUS OF PRIOR FINDING

NONCOMPLIANCE WITH PRIOR AUDIT FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

The Bloomfield Township Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association has not complied with the following prior audit finding. This finding is noted below and discussed in detail in the Finding and Recommendation section of this report:

- Unauthorized Expenditures

BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

Finding – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation – Unauthorized Expenditures

Condition: As cited in our prior audit report, the relief association expended \$9,558 for the premium on the fire department's building and property liability insurance. During the current audit period, the relief association received reimbursement of \$8,380 from the Bloomfield Volunteer Fire Department for the unauthorized expenditure, which left a balance due to the relief association of \$1,208. Subsequently, the relief association again expended \$375 for a fire department insurance premium; therefore, the relief association is due \$1,583 for unauthorized expenditures made on behalf of the fire department.

Criteria: Act 118 at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7416(f)(1, 2, 8, and 12) 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.
- (2) To purchase contracts of insurance which, at a minimum, shall afford financial assistance to active members of the fire service represented by the association against losses due to injury suffered in the fire service and may also provide, in the order named: (i) for payments to the surviving spouse or other dependents of a member in the event of member's death; (ii) for protection of active firefighters against disease; (iii) for replacement or purchase of prosthetic devices such as visual aids, hearing aids, dentures, braces, crutches and the like, where those devices have been lost or damaged while the owner was engaged in the fire service or where the need for those devices arose because of functional impairment attributable to participation in the fire service; (iv) for repair or replacement, if necessary, of articles of clothing or pocket pagers damaged or lost in the course of participation in the fire service; and (v) for disability incurred after service for a minimum of 20 years as a volunteer firefighter.
- (8) To contribute to or to purchase contracts of insurance which will contribute to the cost of rehabilitating and retraining volunteer firefighters who, by reason of their participation in the fire service, have suffered a major impairment of the ability to continue their vocation.



BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

Finding – (Continued)

- (12) To secure insurance against the legal liability of volunteer firefighters for loss and expense from claims arising out of performance of official and authorized duties while going to, returning from or attending fires or performing their duties as special fire police.

Cause: Relief association officials failed to establish adequate internal control procedures to ensure compliance with the prior audit recommendation.

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 the relief association be reimbursed \$1,583 from the fire department for the unauthorized expenditures.

Furthermore, we again recommend 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.

Management's Response: Relief association management agreed with the finding as presented at the audit exit conference. Subsequent to the current audit period, the relief association received reimbursement in the amount of \$1,583 from the Bloomfield Township Volunteer Fire Department for the unauthorized expenditures.

Auditor's Conclusion: Based on the management response, the relief association has complied with the finding and recommendation.

BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
 ACCOMPANYING EXPENDITURE INFORMATION  
 FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2010 TO DECEMBER 31, 2012

Act 118 at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7412 states: a volunteer firefighters' relief association is an organization formed primarily for the purpose of affording financial protection to volunteer firefighters against the consequences of misfortune suffered as a result of their participation in the fire service. The organization may contain within its membership the members of one or more fire companies and may serve secondary purposes, as set forth in this subchapter, but only if adequate provisions have been first made to serve the primary purpose.

Act 118 at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7416 authorizes the investment of relief association funds and outlines the types of benefits and services that can be provided with volunteer firefighters' relief association funds.

Furthermore, all expenditures must be properly authorized as prescribed in the volunteer firefighters' relief association bylaws and approved at an association meeting.

USES OF FUNDS:

|                                 |           |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| Benefit Services:               |           |
| Insurance premiums              | \$ 14,137 |
| Tokens of sympathy and goodwill | 175       |
| Total Benefit Services          | \$ 14,312 |
|                                 |           |
| Fire Services:                  |           |
| Equipment purchased             | \$ 34,644 |
| Equipment maintenance           | 888       |
| Training expenses               | 7,841     |
| Total Fire Services             | \$ 43,373 |
|                                 |           |
| Administrative Services:        |           |
| Other administrative expenses   | \$ 1,004  |
| Total Investments Purchased     | \$ 5,000  |

BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom Corbett  
Governor  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Bloomfield Township Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Governing Body:

Mr. Mike Lohse, President

Mr. Nicholas Kueczynski, Vice President

Ms. Bonnie Willison, Secretary

Mr. Jerry L. Kalkbrenner, Treasurer

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

Ms. Leslie A. Burton, Secretary  
Athens Township

Ms. Marge Robatzen, Secretary  
Bloomfield Township

This report is a matter of public record and is available online at [www.auditorgen.state.pa.us](http://www.auditorgen.state.pa.us). Media questions about the report can be directed to the Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General, Office of Communications, 231 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120; via email to: [news@auditorgen.state.pa.us](mailto:news@auditorgen.state.pa.us).