



**SOUTH WILLIAMSPORT VOLUNTEER JOINT  
FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH  
WILLIAMSPORT, PENNSYLVANIA**

**LYCOMING COUNTY**

**COMPLIANCE AUDIT REPORT**

**FOR THE PERIOD**

**JANUARY 1, 2011 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. Philip Hurne, President  
SOUTH WILLIAMSPORT VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS'  
RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
Lycoming County

We have conducted a compliance audit of the South Williamsport 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, 2011 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 objective. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our audit results and conclusions based on our audit objective.

The objective of the audit was 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 objective identified above.

Volunteer firefighters' relief association officers are responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that the South Williamsport 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 objective, and assessed whether those significant controls were properly designed and implemented. Our audit procedures also included tests of documentary evidence supporting the South Williamsport Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's recorded financial transactions, tests of the physical existence of inventories, interviews of selected officials and direct confirmation of the South Williamsport 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 objective. 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 objective.

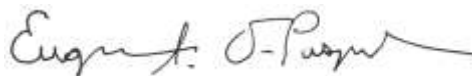
The results of our audit, for the period January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2012, found the South Williamsport Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association, in all significant respects, received state aid and expended state aid and accumulated relief funds in compliance with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws and administrative procedures, except as noted in the findings listed below and discussed later in this report. The results of our tests also indicated the South Williamsport Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association expended funds as presented in the Accompanying Expenditure Information and, as of December 31, 2012, had a cash balance of \$157,241 and an investment balance with a fair value of \$149,625.

Finding No. 1 – Untimely Receipt And Deposit Of State Aid

Finding No. 2 – Insufficient Surety (Fidelity) Bond Coverage

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

April 10, 2014



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 South Williamsport Volunteer Joint Firemen's Relief Association of South Williamsport, Pennsylvania, herein referred to as the South Williamsport 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

The South Williamsport Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association was allocated state aid from the following municipalities:

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
Armstrong Township	Lycoming	\$ 5,126	\$ *
South Williamsport Borough	Lycoming	\$ 56,245	\$ 31,865

\* The 2012 state aid allocation received from Armstrong Township, in the amount of \$2,929, was not deposited into the relief association's checking account until February 13, 2013 as disclosed in Finding No. 1 contained in this report.

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

Citizens Fire Company, Number 2  
First Ward Fire Company of the Borough of South Williamsport, Pennsylvania  
Independent Fire Company, Number 1

SOUTH WILLIAMSPORT VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 1 – Untimely Receipt And Deposit of State Aid

Condition: The South Williamsport Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association did not deposit their 2011 and 2012 state aid allocations in a timely manner. The volunteer firefighters' relief association did not deposit its state aid allocations received from Armstrong Township, in the amounts of \$5,126 and \$2,929, until 49 days and 44 days, respectively, after the funds were distributed by the municipality.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Municipality</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Date Municipality Distributed State Aid to South Williamsport Borough</u>	<u>Date State Aid Distributed To VFRA</u>	<u>Deposit Date</u>
2011	Armstrong Township	\$ 5,126	10/15/11	12/16/11	01/03/12
2012	Armstrong Township	\$ 2,929	12/31/12	02/12/13	02/13/13

Criteria: Section 706 (b)(2) of the Act of December 18, 1984, (P.L. 1005, No. 205), states:

The foreign fire insurance premium tax amount applicable to a municipality served solely by volunteer firefighters shall be paid to the municipality, which shall within 60 days of the date of the receipt of the moneys from the State Treasurer pay the amount received to the relief association fund of the fire department or departments, or fire company or companies, now existing or hereafter organized, inside or outside of the municipality, which is or are actively engaged in the service of the municipality and duly recognized by the governing body of the municipality.

Furthermore, prudent business practice dictates that, upon receipt of its state aid allocation, the relief association should ensure the funds are deposited in a timely manner.

Cause: Armstrong Township inadvertently sent the 2011 and 2012 state aid allocations to the South Williamsport Borough instead of directly to the South Williamsport Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association. The South Williamsport Borough issued checks to South Williamsport Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association for the 2011 and 2012 state aid allocations on December 16, 2011 and February 12, 2013, respectively; however, the relief association failed to monitor the municipality's receipt and distribution of state aid allocations. In addition, the relief association failed to establish adequate internal control procedures to ensure that all income received was recorded and deposited in a timely manner.

SOUTH WILLIAMSPORT VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 1 – (Continued)

Effect: As a result of the untimely deposits, funds were not available to pay general operating expenses or for investment purposes. In addition, untimely deposit of receipts increases the risk that funds could be lost or misappropriated.

Recommendation: We recommend that the relief association officials adopt adequate internal control procedures to ensure the timely receipt and deposit of all income received. 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 subsequent audit.

Finding No. 2 – Insufficient Surety (Fidelity) Bond Coverage

Condition: The relief association did not maintain a Surety (Fidelity) bond in a sufficient amount to cover the relief association's authorized disbursing officer. The relief association's Surety (Fidelity) bond coverage amount was \$100,000; however, as of December 31, 2012, the relief association's cash assets totaled \$157,241.

Criteria: Act 118 at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7415(c)(4) states, in part, that:

. . . the disbursing officer, whether designated treasurer, comptroller, financial secretary or otherwise, shall be bonded by corporate surety for faithful performance of duty. The amount of the bond shall be at least as great as the maximum cash balance in current funds of the association at any time during the fiscal year, and the premium on the bond shall be a proper charge against the funds of the association.

Cause: Relief association officials failed to monitor the relief association's cash balance to ensure that the Surety (Fidelity) bond coverage on the relief association's authorized disbursing officer was in compliance with Act 118 provisions.

Effect: As a result of the authorized disbursing officer of the relief association being insufficiently bonded, the relief association's cash assets were not adequately safeguarded.



SOUTH WILLIAMSPORT VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 2 – (Continued)

Recommendation: We recommend that the relief association officials ensure that its Surety (Fidelity) bond sufficiently covers the relief association's authorized disbursing officer, as required by Act 118. This requirement may be accomplished by increasing the Surety (Fidelity) bond coverage on the relief association's authorized disbursing officer to an amount greater than the expected maximum balance of the relief association's cash assets, or by decreasing the relief association's cash assets to an amount anticipated to remain below the policy coverage amount. Relief association officials should monitor the relief association's cash balance to ensure that unexpected events affecting the relief association's current funds do not again result in insufficient Surety (Fidelity) bond coverage on the relief association's authorized disbursing officer. 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 subsequent audit.

SOUTH WILLIAMSPORT VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
 ACCOMPANYING EXPENDITURE INFORMATION  
 FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2011 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	\$ 10,790
Tokens of sympathy and goodwill	100
Total Benefit Services	\$ 10,890
Fire Services:	
Equipment purchased	\$ 73,723
Equipment maintenance	2,181
Training expenses	7,248
Total Fire Services	\$ 83,152
Administrative Services:	
Other administrative expenses	\$ 4,046

SOUTH WILLIAMSPORT VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom Corbett  
Governor  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

South Williamsport Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Governing Body:

Mr. Philip Hurne	President
Ms. Laverna Hurne	Vice President
Ms. Holly Huyck	Secretary
Ms. Ciara L. Sausser	Treasurer

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

Ms. Rebecca Jo Fought, Secretary  
Armstrong Township

Mr. Michael D. Miller, Secretary  
South Williamsport Borough

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).