



**PLEASANT HALL VOLUNTEER FIREMAN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION**

**HEREIN REFERRED TO AS:**

**PLEASANT HALL VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION**

**FRANKLIN COUNTY**

**COMPLIANCE AUDIT REPORT**

**FOR THE PERIOD**

**JANUARY 1, 2005 TO DECEMBER 31, 2008**



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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, Act of June 11, 1968, (P.L. 149, No. 84), as amended, 53 P.S. § 8501 et seq. (commonly referred to as Act 84), 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 Pleasant Hall 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 84 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 84 authorizes specific types of expenditures and prescribes appropriate volunteer firefighters' relief association investment options. Within the parameters established by Act 84, 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. The Pleasant Hall Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association was allocated state aid from the following municipalities:

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
Orrstown Borough	Franklin	\$ 1,099	\$ 1,108	\$ 1,114	\$ 1,142
Letterkenny Township	Franklin	\$14,289	\$14,549	\$15,192	\$15,682
Lurgan Township	Franklin	\$ 6,530	\$ 6,620	\$ 6,694	\$ 6,904

BACKGROUND (Continued)

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

Pleasant Hall Volunteer Fire Company

Mr. Darrell Creamer, President  
PLEASANT HALL VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS'  
RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
Franklin County

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Pleasant Hall 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, Act of June 11, 1968, (P.L. 149, No. 84), as amended, 53 P.S. § 8501 et seq. (commonly referred to as Act 84), for the period January 1, 2005 to December 31, 2008.

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 findings 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 Pleasant Hall Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's administration of state aid and accumulated 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 Pleasant Hall Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's recorded financial transactions, tests of the physical existence of inventories, interviews of selected officials and direct confirmation of the Pleasant Hall Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's cash, investments, and certain other assets and liabilities as of December 31, 2008, 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, 2005 to December 31, 2008, found, in all significant respects, the Pleasant Hall Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association took appropriate corrective action to address the findings contained in our prior audit report and received and expended state aid and accumulated funds in compliance with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws and administrative procedures, except as noted in the findings listed below and discussed in the Findings and Recommendations section in this report. The results of our tests also indicated the Pleasant Hall Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association expended funds as presented in the accompanying information and as of December 31, 2008, had a cash balance of \$59,118 and no investments.

Finding No. 1 – Inadequate Financial Record-Keeping System

Finding No. 2 – Failure to Maintain a Complete and Accurate Equipment Roster

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

December 2, 2009

JACK WAGNER  
Auditor General



PLEASANT HALL VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
STATUS OF PRIOR FINDINGS

COMPLIANCE WITH PRIOR AUDIT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Pleasant Hall Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association has complied with the following prior audit findings and recommendations:

- Failure to Maintain a Pennsylvania Sales Tax Exemption Number

By obtaining a state sales tax exemption number and furnishing this number to all vendors from which the relief association purchases equipment.

- Inadequate Minutes of Meetings

By maintaining detailed minutes of all relief association meetings.

PLEASANT HALL VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 1 – Inadequate Financial Record-Keeping System

Condition: The relief association's financial record-keeping system did not provide effective control over cash receipts, disbursements, and monetary assets, and does not meet the minimum requirements of maintaining financial records established by this department. The following are the noted deficiencies:

- A journal was not maintained to record the receipts and disbursements of the relief association;
- Ledgers were not utilized to record the transactions of the relief association accounts;
- An investment roster was not maintained; and
- Annual financial statements were not prepared.

Criteria: Act 84 at 53 P.S. § 8505 (a) states, in part, that the relief association:

. . . must provide for the taking and preserving of minutes of all meetings, and the maintenance of such books of account as may be necessary and appropriate to afford a permanent record of its financial affairs.

In addition, an adequate system of accounting and record keeping is a prerequisite for sound administration of relief association assets.

Cause: Relief association officials were unaware of their various record-keeping responsibilities.

Effect: The failure of relief association officials to maintain adequate records prohibits the membership from effectively monitoring the relief association's financial operations.

Recommendation: We recommend the relief association establish and maintain a financial record-keeping system that meets the minimum record-keeping requirements of this department. 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.

PLEASANT HALL VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 2 – Failure to Maintain a Complete and Accurate Equipment Roster

Condition: The relief association officials did not maintain a complete and accurate roster of equipment owned by the relief association. While a listing of equipment was provided, it was commingled with equipment owned by the fire company, and there was no indication that a physical inventory of equipment was conducted on an annual basis, nor whether such inventory accounted for all of the relief association's fixed assets. In addition, the list of equipment that was provided did not contain all dates of purchase, unit costs, names of suppliers, nor serial numbers, when available, to accurately identify equipment owned. As such, it was impossible to determine if all items purchased during the audit period had been accurately recorded.

Criteria: 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 fixed assets. A cumulative equipment roster of all relief association equipment should include the following:

- Types of equipment purchased;
- Dates of purchases;
- Unit costs;
- Names of suppliers;
- Serial numbers, if applicable;
- Current locations of items;
- Final dispositions of sold or damaged equipment; and
- Evidence of the results of an annual physical inventory.

Furthermore, sound business practice requires the performance of an annual physical inventory of all relief association owned equipment.

Cause: Relief association officials failed to establish adequate internal control procedures over fixed assets 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 fixed assets prevents adequate accountability for, and safeguarding of, relief association fixed assets.

PLEASANT HALL VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 2 – (Continued)

Recommendation: We recommend the relief association officials maintain a cumulative equipment roster of all relief association owned equipment. 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.

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.

PLEASANT HALL VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
 ACCOMPANYING EXPENDITURE INFORMATION  
 FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2005 TO DECEMBER 31, 2008

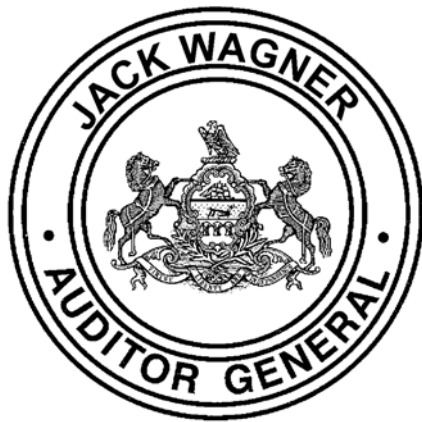
Act 84 at 53 P.S. § 8502(1) states, in part, that:

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. Such an association may also serve other purposes, . . . provided only that adequate provisions be first made to serve its primary purpose. . . .

Act 84 at 53 P.S. § 8506, 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. 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	\$ 12,092
Total Benefit Services	\$ 12,092
Fire Services:	
Equipment purchased	\$ 46,148
Equipment maintenance	7,448
Training expenses	13,473
Fire prevention materials	1,351
Total Fire Services	\$ 68,420
Administrative Services:	
Miscellaneous administrative expenses	\$ 17
Total Administrative Services	\$ 17
Total Investments Purchased	\$ 51,154



PLEASANT HALL VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom Corbett  
Governor  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Pleasant Hall Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Governing Body:

Mr. Darrell Creamer, President

Ms. Teresa Reed, Vice President

Ms. Theresa Warren, Secretary

Mr. Thomas Rine, Treasurer

Reports were also distributed to each municipality, which allocated foreign fire insurance tax monies to this relief association.

Ms. Darby Burkholder, Secretary  
Orrstown Borough

Ms. Joann P. Wright, Secretary  
Letterkenny Township

Ms. Joanne E. Zimmerman, Secretary  
Lurgan Township

This report is a matter of public record. Copies of this report may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General, Office of Communications, 318 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120. If you have any questions regarding this report or any other matter, you may contact the Department of the Auditor General by accessing our website at [www.auditorgen.state.pa.us](http://www.auditorgen.state.pa.us).