



RELIEF ASSOCIATION OF THE STOCKDALE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

WASHINGTON COUNTY

COMPLIANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR THE PERIOD

JANUARY 1, 2007 TO DECEMBER 31, 2009



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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 Relief Association of the Stockdale Volunteer Fire Department, herein referred to as Stockdale 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 Stockdale Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association was allocated state aid from the following municipality:

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>
Stockdale Borough	Washington	\$2,605	\$2,683	\$2,417

BACKGROUND (Continued)

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

Stockdale Volunteer Fire Department

Ms. Renee Corley, President
STOCKDALE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS'
RELIEF ASSOCIATION
Washington County

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Stockdale 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, 2007 to December 31, 2009.

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 Stockdale 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 Stockdale Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's recorded financial transactions, tests of the physical existence of inventories, interviews of selected officials and direct confirmation of the Stockdale Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's cash, investments, and certain other assets and liabilities as of December 31, 2009, 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, 2007 to December 31, 2009, found, in all significant respects, the Stockdale Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association received and expended funds in compliance with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws and administrative procedures, except as noted in the following finding discussed later in this report. The results of our tests indicated the Stockdale Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association expended funds as presented in the accompanying information and as of December 31, 2009, had a cash balance of \$12,729 and no investments.

Finding – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation –
Inadequate Officer's Bond Coverage

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

February 2, 2010

JACK WAGNER
Auditor General

STOCKDALE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
STATUS OF PRIOR FINDINGS

COMPLIANCE WITH PRIOR AUDIT FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

The Stockdale Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association has complied with the following prior audit finding and recommendation:

- Failure to Obtain a Federal Tax Identification Number

By obtaining a federal tax identification number and furnishing it to the financial institution in which the relief association maintains funds.

NONCOMPLIANCE WITH PRIOR AUDIT FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

The Stockdale Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association has not complied with a prior audit finding. This issue is further discussed in the following finding noted in the Finding and Recommendation section of this report:

- Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation –
Inadequate Officer's Bond Coverage

We are concerned with the volunteer firefighters' relief association's failure to correct a previously reported audit finding. The association management should strive to implement the recommendation and corrective action noted in this audit report.

STOCKDALE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

Finding – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation –
Inadequate Officer's Bond Coverage

Condition: As cited in the prior audit report, the relief association failed to maintain sufficient bond coverage on the relief association's disbursing officer, as required by Act 84. The relief association's bond coverage was \$10,000; however, as of December 31, 2009, the cash assets totaled \$12,729. In addition, the relief association's bond policy is inadequate, as the name of the current relief association treasurer is not recorded on the policy. Since, the relief association's policy is a name schedule bond, the individual presently serving as the disbursing officer of the relief association should be recorded on the insurance policy.

Criteria: Act 84 at 53 P.S. § 8505(c) states, in part, that:

. . . the disbursing officer, whether designated treasurer, comptroller, financial secretary, or otherwise, shall be bonded by corporate surety for the faithful performance of his duties. The amount of such 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 such bond shall be a proper charge against the funds of the association.

Cause: While notified of the insufficient coverage in the prior audit report, relief association officials neglected to monitor the cash balance to ensure the officer's bond coverage was in compliance with Act 84 provisions. In addition, the relief association failed to have the insurance carrier amend the bond policy to reflect the name of the current disbursing officer..

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

Recommendation: We again recommend the relief association ensure that a faithful performance bond adequately covers the current disbursing officer as required by Act 84. This requirement may be accomplished by increasing the officer's bond coverage to an amount greater than the expected maximum balance of cash assets, or by decreasing the cash assets to an amount anticipated to remain below the coverage amount. Relief association officials should monitor the cash balance to ensure that unexpected events affecting current funds do not again result in an insufficient officer's bond coverage. In addition, the relief association should either take action to have the bond policy amended to reflect the name of the current disbursing officer or obtain a new bond policy which covers the disbursing officer position rather than the name of the individual. For further guidance, please refer to the Auditor General's publication, MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATIONS.

STOCKDALE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

Finding – (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.

STOCKDALE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
ACCOMPANYING EXPENDITURE INFORMATION
FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2007 TO DECEMBER 31, 2009

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	\$ 6,990
Total Benefit Services	<u>\$ 6,990</u>
Fire Services:	
Equipment purchased	\$ 7,080
Total Fire Services	<u>\$ 7,080</u>

STOCKDALE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Edward G. Rendell
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Stockdale Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Governing Body:

Ms. Renee Corley, President

Mr. Thomas J. Wilkinson, Vice President

Mr. Robert Petty, Secretary

Mr. John J. Georgagis, Treasurer

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

Ms. Jean E. Brown, Secretary
Stockdale Borough

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.