



TWIN VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT RELIEF ASSOCIATION

CHESTER COUNTY

COMPLIANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR THE PERIOD

DECEMBER 19, 2006 TO DECEMBER 31, 2010



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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 Twin Valley Fire Department Relief Association, herein referred to as Twin Valley 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 Twin Valley Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association was allocated state aid from the following municipalities:

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
Caernarvon Township	Berks	\$30,941	\$32,932	\$30,900	\$34,779
New Morgan Borough	Berks	\$ 2,890	\$ 2,916	\$ 2,527	\$ 2,844
East Nantmeal Township	Chester	\$12,125	\$ 6,247	\$ 5,637	\$ 6,345
Elverson Borough	Chester	\$10,223	\$10,604	\$ 9,739	\$10,962
Warwick Township	Chester	\$18,781	\$19,336	\$17,439	\$19,628
West Nantmeal Township	Chester	\$10,560	\$10,931	\$10,199	\$11,479

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

Twin Valley Fire Department



**Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of the Auditor General
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**EUGENE A. DePASQUALE
AUDITOR GENERAL**

Mr. Ross Miller, President
TWIN VALLEY VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS'
RELIEF ASSOCIATION
Chester County

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Twin Valley 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 December 19, 2006 to December 31, 2010.

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 Twin Valley 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 Twin Valley Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's recorded financial transactions, tests of the physical existence of inventories, interviews of selected officials and direct confirmation of the Twin Valley Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's cash, investments, and certain other assets and liabilities as of December 31, 2010, 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 December 19, 2006 to December 31, 2010, found the Twin Valley Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association, in all significant respects, received 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 later in this report. The results of our tests also indicated the Twin Valley Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association expended funds as presented in the Accompanying Expenditure Information and, as of December 31, 2010, had a cash balance of \$118,074 and no investments.

Finding – Inappropriate Ownership of All-Terrain Vehicle and Trailer

The contents of this report were discussed with the management of the Twin Valley Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association and, where appropriate, their response has been included in the report.

September 12, 2011

EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE
Auditor General

TWIN VALLEY VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

Finding – Inappropriate Ownership of All-Terrain Vehicle and Trailer

Condition: On December 30, 2010, the relief association purchased an all-terrain vehicle and trailer, in the amount of \$10,000 to carry personnel and safeguard equipment; however, the title to the vehicle and trailer was inappropriately issued in the name of Twin Valley Fire Department.

Criteria: Sound business practice dictates that the relief association should maintain sole ownership of all equipment purchased by the relief association. As such, all-terrain vehicles and trailers purchased by the relief association are to be titled in the name of the relief association.

Cause: The relief association failed to establish adequate internal control procedures to ensure that the all-terrain vehicle and trailer purchased was titled in the name of the relief association.

Effect: As a result of the all-terrain vehicle and trailer being inappropriately titled in the name of the fire department, this relief association's assets were not properly safeguarded.

Recommendation: We recommend that the relief association ensure that the title to the all-terrain vehicle and trailer referred to in this finding and all other relief owned vehicles be titled in the name of the relief association. 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 that, on September 12, 2011, the relief association applied to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation to have the all-terrain vehicle and trailer retitled in the name of the relief association.

TWIN VALLEY VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
 ACCOMPANYING EXPENDITURE INFORMATION
 FOR THE PERIOD DECEMBER 19, 2006 TO DECEMBER 31, 2010

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	\$ 148,200
Tokens of sympathy and goodwill	39
Total Benefit Services	<u>\$ 148,239</u>
Fire Services:	
Equipment purchased	\$ 159,145
Equipment maintenance	29,232
Training expenses	15,742
Fire prevention materials	4,987
Total Fire Services	<u>\$ 209,106</u>
Administrative Services:	
Miscellaneous administrative expenses	\$ 5,667
Total Administrative Services	<u>\$ 5,667</u>

TWIN VALLEY VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom Corbett
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Twin Valley Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Governing Body:

Mr. Ross Miller, President

Mr. Robert C. Gebhardt, III, Vice President

Mr. Andy Koppenhaver, Secretary

Mr. Robert Gebhardt, Treasurer

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

Mr. Randall P. Miller, Secretary
Caernarvon Township

Ms. Carolyn Williams, Secretary
New Morgan Borough

Ms. Kathleen Brumfield, Secretary
East Nantmeal Township

Ms. Lorrie A. Stolz, Secretary
Elverson Borough

Ms. Joan Grimley, Secretary
Warwick Township

Ms. Susan L. Ward, Secretary
West Nantmeal 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.