

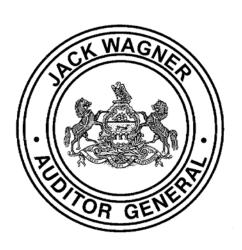
# THE RELIEF ASSOCIATION OF THE WAYNE TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY OF MCELHATTAN, PENNSYLVANIA

**CLINTON COUNTY** 

**COMPLIANCE AUDIT REPORT** 

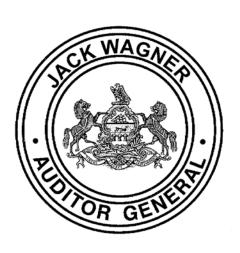
FOR THE PERIOD

**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, 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 Relief Association of the Wayne Township Volunteer Fire Company of McElhattan, Pennsylvania, herein referred to as Wayne 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. The Wayne Township Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association was allocated state aid from the following municipality:

Municipality	County	2007	2008	2009
Wayne Township	Clinton	\$9,985	\$10,352	\$10,552

#### BACKGROUND (Continued)

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

Wayne Township Volunteer Fire Company

Ms. Robin Condo, President
WAYNE TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS'
RELIEF ASSOCIATION
Clinton County

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Wayne 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, 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 Wayne 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 Wayne 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 Wayne Township 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 the Wayne Township Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association took appropriate corrective action to address one of the four findings contained in our prior audit report. However, the Wayne Township Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association failed to take appropriate corrective action to address the remaining three findings contained in our prior audit report, as listed below and discussed in the Status of Prior Findings section of this report. In addition, the results of our audit found the Wayne Township Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association did not, in all significant respects, receive and expend state aid and accumulated relief funds in compliance with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws and administrative procedures, as noted in the findings listed below and discussed in detail in the Findings and Recommendations section of this report. The results of our tests also indicated the Wayne Township Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association expended funds as presented in the Accompanying Expenditure Information and, as of December 31, 2009, had a cash balance of \$12,152 and no investments.

- Finding No. 1 Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation Inadequate Signatory Authority for the Disbursement of Funds
- Finding No. 2 Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation Inadequate Minutes of Meetings
- Finding No. 3 Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation Failure to Maintain a Complete and Accurate Equipment Roster
- Finding No. 4 Undocumented Loan
- Finding No. 5 Unauthorized Expenditures
- Finding No. 6 Undocumented Expenditures

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

December 20, 2010, except for Finding Nos. 2 and 3, for which the dates are December 31, 2010

JACK WAGNER Auditor General

### WAYNE TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION STATUS OF PRIOR FINDINGS

#### COMPLIANCE WITH PRIOR AUDIT FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

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

#### • Insufficient Officer's Bond Coverage

By increasing the officer's bond coverage to an amount greater than the balance of cash assets.

#### NONCOMPLIANCE WITH PRIOR AUDIT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Wayne Township Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association has not complied with three of the four prior audit findings. These findings are noted below and discussed in detail in the Findings and Recommendations section of this report:

- Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation –
   Inadequate Signatory Authority for the Disbursement of Funds
- Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation Inadequate Minutes of Meetings
- Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation –
   Failure to Maintain a Complete and Accurate Equipment Roster

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

### <u>Finding No. 1 – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation – Inadequate Signatory Authority for the Disbursement of Funds</u>

<u>Condition</u>: As cited in our prior audit report, the signature of only one relief association officer was used to disburse relief association funds from the checking account, although the signatures of at least two relief association officers are required. During the audit period, out of thirty checks written, six contained only one signature. Also, we detected three of the eleven checks drawn on the relief association's checking account subsequent to the current financial period that only contained one signature. Issuing checks with the signature of only one officer negates the relief association's internal control over the disbursement process.

Criteria: Act 118 at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7415(c)(3) states, in part:

The bylaws shall require that the signatures of at least two officers, one of whom shall be the disbursing officer, shall be required to bind the association by formal contract or to issue a negotiable instrument.

Furthermore, prudent business practice dictates that the relief association have sufficient internal control procedures in place to ensure the signatures of at least two relief association officials are included on all negotiable instruments. Good internal control procedures require that checks be signed only after the propriety of the expenditures have been determined and the payee, date, and amount to be paid has been confirmed. Additionally, responsible relief association officers should compare this information with supporting documentation, such as invoices, contract, etc., prior to approving the checks.

<u>Cause</u>: While notified of this condition during our prior audit, relief association officials, again, failed to establish adequate internal control procedures which require the signatures of at least two officers on all negotiable instruments.

<u>Effect</u>: As a result of the relief association officer issuing checks with only one signature, assets were placed at greater risk as expenditures were being made without a second relief association officer having the opportunity to verify the propriety of the expenditures. The application of the second signature, after evaluating the propriety of the expenditure, reduces the risk for errors occurring and going undetected, and reduces the risk of misappropriation.

<u>Recommendation</u>: We, again, recommend the relief association officials establish adequate internal control procedures to ensure that the signatures of at least two officers, one of whom shall be the treasurer, are included on all relief association negotiable instruments as defined by Act 118. For further guidance, please refer to the Auditor General's publication, MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATIONS.

## <u>Finding No. 2 – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation – Inadequate Minutes of Meetings</u>

<u>Condition</u>: As cited in our prior audit report, the relief association, again, failed to maintain detailed minutes of meetings, as required by Act 118. Specifically, the relief association's minutes did not address all of the financial-related transactions that occurred during the audit period. Although the relief association meets at least monthly, minutes for only three, zero, five and ten meetings were provided to auditors for years 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010, respectively.

Criteria: Act 118 at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7415(a) states, in part, that the relief association:

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

In addition, Article 1, of the relief association's bylaws states, in part:

The secretary shall keep a complete record of the proceedings of all meetings of the Association and its Executive Board . . .

<u>Cause</u>: While notified of this condition during our prior audit, relief association officials, again, failed to maintain detailed minutes of meetings as required by Act 118.

<u>Effect</u>: Without detailed minutes of meetings, evidence that relief association business was presented before the membership for approval does not exist.

<u>Recommendation</u>: We, again, recommend the relief association maintain detailed minutes of meetings, evidencing the discussion and approval of all financial-related business conducted by the relief association. For further guidance, please refer to the Auditor General's publication, MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATIONS.

### <u>Finding No. 3 – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation –</u> Failure to Maintain a Complete and Accurate Equipment Roster

<u>Condition</u>: As cited in our prior audit report, the relief association officials, again, failed to maintain a complete and accurate roster of equipment owned by the relief association. While a roster was previously maintained, it was incomplete, since none of the equipment purchased since January 2, 2001, was recorded. In addition, 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. Equipment purchases since January 1, 2004 through December 31, 2010, totaled \$29,968.

<u>Criteria</u>: Sound business practice dictates 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 purchase;
- Unit costs;
- Names of suppliers;
- Serial numbers, if applicable;
- Current locations of items;
- Final dispositions of sold or damaged equipment; and
- Evidence of the performance and results of an annual physical inventory.

<u>Cause</u>: While notified of this condition during our prior audit, relief association officials, again, 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.

<u>Effect</u>: 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.

<u>Recommendation</u>: We, again, 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.

#### Finding No. 3 – (Continued)

#### Finding No. 4 – Undocumented Loan

<u>Condition</u>: Subsequent to the audit period, on November 28, 2010, the relief association made a loan to the Wayne Township Volunteer Fire Company, in the amount of \$4,145, without a formal written loan agreement.

Criteria: Act 118 at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7416(c)(3) states:

All, or any part of the funds of a volunteer firefighters' relief association may be invested:

In any obligation of an incorporated fire company, provided that the obligation is: (i) secured by assets of the company having capital value equal to at least 150% of the amount of the obligation at the time it is made; (ii) subject to provisions which amortize the loan at a rate ensuring that the depreciated value of the assets pledged shall continue to be at least 150% of the balance due.

In addition, Article 1, of the relief association's bylaws states, in part:

... They may not make an unsecured loan ...

<u>Cause</u>: Relief association officials were unaware that the loan to the fire company must be documented to ensure compliance with Act 118 provisions.

<u>Effect</u>: Failure to adequately document the loan through a formal written agreement places the investment at greater risk.

Recommendation: We recommend the relief association and fire company prepare a formal written loan agreement, signed by both parties, specifying the payment schedule and the interest rate. The loan agreement must also specifically identify the collateral to protect the investment as required by Act 118 at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7416(c)(3). If such action is not taken, we recommend that the loan be immediately liquidated. For further guidance, please refer to the Auditor General's publication, MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATIONS.

#### <u>Finding No. 5 – Unauthorized Expenditures</u>

<u>Condition</u>: During our review of activity subsequent to the audit period, we noted the relief association expended funds for the following items, which are not authorized by Act 118:

Date	Check No.	Description		mount
01/07/10 02/19/10	170 Transfer	Payment on the fire company loan Payment on the fire company loan	\$	969 1,903
		Total	\$	2,872

Criteria: Act 118 at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7416(f)(1) 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.

Because the Department of the Auditor General is legislatively prohibited from giving pre-audit advice, an interagency agreement with the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) has been established whereby the DCED provides interpretation of Act 118. Costs associated with payments on the fire company's loan have been deemed by DCED to not qualify as normal and reasonable running expenses; consequently, these disbursements are not authorized under Act 118.

<u>Cause</u>: Relief association officials were unaware that the aforementioned expenditures were not authorized by Act 118.

<u>Effect</u>: 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 \$2,872 for the unauthorized expenditures and 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.

### Finding No. 5 – (Continued)

#### <u>Finding No. 6 – Undocumented Expenditures</u>

<u>Condition</u>: The relief association was unable to provide adequate supporting documentation for the following expenditures:

Date	Check No.	Payee Description		An	nount
12/24/08 12/09/09	157 166	Store Vendor		\$	217 300
			Total	\$	517

<u>Criteria</u>: Act 118 at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7418(a) states:

The Office of Auditor General shall have the power and its duty shall be to audit the accounts and records of every volunteer firefighters' relief association receiving money under Chapter 7 of the Act of December 18, 1984 (P.L. 1005, No. 205), [FN1] known as the Municipal Pension Plan Funding Standard and Recovery Act, as far as may be necessary to satisfy the Auditor General that the money received was or is being expended for no purpose other than that authorized by this subchapter. Copies of all audits shall be furnished to the Governor.

Without adequate supporting documentation, such as invoices, this department is unable to determine whether relief association funds were expended for purposes authorized by Act 118. Furthermore, good business practices dictate that supporting documentation be maintained to verify the propriety of all financial transactions.

<u>Cause</u>: Relief association officials failed to establish adequate internal control procedures to ensure supporting documentation is maintained for all expenditures.

<u>Effect</u>: Lack of supporting documentation, such as invoices and without detailed minutes of meetings, made it impossible to determine if the expenditures were made in accordance with Act 118 at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7416(f). In addition, the failure to maintain adequate supporting documentation for relief association expenditures can lead to an increased risk of errors occurring and funds being misappropriated.

<u>Recommendation</u>: We recommend the relief association provide this department with adequate supporting documentation, such as invoices, to determine the validity of the expenditures or that the relief association be reimbursed \$517 for the undocumented expenditures. We also recommend that the relief association officials maintain supporting documentation for all future expenditures. For further guidance, please refer to the Auditor General's publication, MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATIONS.

### Finding No. 6 – (Continued)

### WAYNE TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION POTENTIAL WITHHOLD OF STATE AID

Conditions such as those reported in Finding Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 may lead to a total withholding of state aid in the future unless the findings are corrected. However, such action will not be considered if sufficient documentation is provided within 60 days to verify compliance with this department's recommendations. Such documentation should be submitted by the volunteer firefighters' relief association to: Department of the Auditor General, Bureau of Firefighters' Relief Association Audits, Room 316-D Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120.

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

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	\$ 16,277
Total Benefit Services	\$ 16,277
F: G :	
Fire Services:	
Equipment purchased	\$ 19,544
Total Fire Services	\$ 19,544
Other Expenditures:	
Undocumented Expenditures	\$ 517
Total Other Expenditures	\$ 517

### WAYNE TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom Corbett Governor Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Wayne Township Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Governing Body:

Ms. Robin Condo, President

Mr. Rickey Gardner, Vice President

Ms. Jennifer Rafter, Secretary

Mr. Thomas D. Sarosi, Jr., Treasurer

A report was also distributed to the following municipality, which allocated foreign fire insurance tax monies to this relief association.

Ms. Darlene S. Macklem, Secretary Wayne 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.