



FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION OF EAST NORWEGIAN TOWNSHIP

HEREIN REFERRED TO AS:

EAST NORWEGIAN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION

SCHUYLKILL COUNTY

AUDIT REPORT

FOR THE PERIOD

JANUARY 1, 2003 TO DECEMBER 31, 2005



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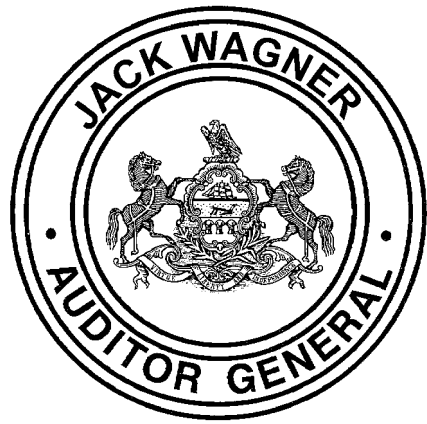
BACKGROUND

This audit report is a public record, which must be available for examination by all interested citizens and volunteer firefighters' relief association (VFRA) members.

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.

This department conducts its audits of volunteer firefighters' relief associations in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Representations contained in the accompanying financial statements are the responsibility of the relief association's management. This department's responsibility for those statements is confined solely to an expression of our opinion as to the fairness of management's representation of the financial statements taken as a whole.

Act 84 requires that the relief association be governed in accordance with bylaws, which establish the association's operating procedures. Act 84 provides that the primary purpose of a relief association is to afford financial protection to volunteer firefighters against misfortunes suffered during fire service participation. To fulfill this purpose, Act 84 authorizes specific types of expenditures and outlines appropriate 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.



Independent Auditor's Report

Mr. Gary Gorman, President
EAST NORWEGIAN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS'
RELIEF ASSOCIATION
Schuylkill County

We have audited the accompanying Statement of Monetary Assets Arising From Cash Transactions as of December 31, 2005, and the related Statement of Cash Receipts, Disbursements, and Changes in Cash of the East Norwegian Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association for the period January 1, 2003 to December 31, 2005. These financial statements are the responsibility of the relief association's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

The Department of the Auditor General is mandated by state statute to calculate state aid provided to volunteer firefighters' relief associations and to audit volunteer firefighters' relief associations having received such aid. State aid is calculated by an administrative unit that is not involved in the audit process. The Department's Comptroller Office then pre-audits the calculation and submits requests to the Commonwealth's Treasury Department for the disbursement of state aid to the municipality. The Department has implemented procedures to ensure that Department audit personnel are not directly involved in the calculation and disbursement processes. The Department's mandatory responsibilities are being disclosed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*.

Independent Auditor's Report (Continued)

As described in Note 2, these financial statements were prepared on the basis of cash receipts and disbursements, which is a comprehensive basis of accounting other than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the monetary assets arising from cash transactions of the East Norwegian Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association as of December 31, 2005, and the cash receipts, disbursements, and changes in cash for the period January 1, 2003 to December 31, 2005, on the basis of accounting described in Note 2.

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated May 4, 2006, on our consideration of the East Norwegian Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grants. The purpose of that report is to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* and should be considered in assessing the results of our audit.

May 4, 2006

JACK WAGNER
Auditor General

EAST NORWEGIAN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
STATEMENT OF MONETARY ASSETS ARISING FROM CASH TRANSACTIONS
DECEMBER 31, 2005

ASSETS:

Cash (note 3)	\$ 877
Investments (note 4)	<u>19,261</u>
Total Monetary Assets	<u>\$ 20,138</u>

Notes to financial statements are an integral part of this report.

EAST NORWEGIAN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS, AND CHANGES IN CASH
FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2003 TO DECEMBER 31, 2005

RECEIPTS:

Support:	
State aid (note 5)	\$ 21,579
Other Receipts:	
Investments sold	18,834
Interest income	676
Reimbursement	70
	<hr/>
Total Receipts	41,159

DISBURSEMENTS:

Fire Services:	
Equipment purchased	24,055
Equipment maintenance	1,138
Benefit Services:	
Insurance premiums	7,019
Tokens of sympathy and goodwill	174
Administrative Services:	
Office equipment and supplies	768
Bank service fees	50
Miscellaneous expenses	114
Other Disbursements:	
Investments purchased	19,000
Erroneous deposit of relief association funds (note 6)	28
Income reinvested	260
	<hr/>
Total Disbursements	52,606

Net Increase or (Decrease) In Cash	(11,447)
Cash Balance, January 1	<hr/> 12,324
Cash Balance, December 31	<hr/> <hr/> \$ 877

Notes to financial statements are an integral part of this report.

EAST NORWEGIAN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1. NATURE OF ORGANIZATION

Pursuant to the Act of June 11, 1968, (P.L. 149, No. 84), as amended, the East Norwegian Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association is a charitable organization that was formed to afford financial protection to volunteer firefighters and to encourage individuals within the community to participate in volunteer fire service.

Act 84 governs the overall operation of the volunteer firefighters' relief association. The relief association's bylaws regulate the specific procedures by which the association assets are managed.

The East Norwegian Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association is affiliated with the following fire service organizations:

American Hose Company Schoentown
East Norwegian Township Emergency Services of Mill Creek
Independent Hose Company Dieners Hill

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

- A. The relief association's records are maintained on a cash basis, and the statement of cash receipts and disbursements reflect only cash received and disbursed. Therefore, receivables and payables, long-lived assets, accrued income and expenses, and depreciation, which would otherwise be recognized under accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP) and which may be material in amount, are not recognized in the accompanying financial statements.
- B. Fixed assets are recognized as expenditures at the time of purchase, rather than being capitalized and depreciated over their estimated useful lives.
- C. The relief association did not adopt Statement of Financial Accounting Standard (SFAS) No. 117 since they do not follow GAAP.
- D. The nature of the relief association's monetary assets is considered to be unrestricted.
- E. All investments of the relief association are carried at their original cost to the association, rather than the fair value.

EAST NORWEGIAN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

3. CASH

Cash consisted of the following at December 31, 2005:

Checking account	\$ 766
Money market account	<u>111</u>
Total Cash	<u><u>\$ 877</u></u>

4. INVESTMENTS

The investments held by the relief association as of December 31, 2005, consisted of the following:

	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Fair Value</u>
Certificates of deposit	<u>\$ 19,261</u>	<u>\$ 19,578</u>
Total Investments	<u><u>\$ 19,261</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 19,578</u></u>

5. STATE AID

Chapter 7 of the Act of December 18, 1984, (P.L. 1005, No. 205), as amended, 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 relief association of the fire department or departments, which is or are recognized as providing service to the municipality.

During the years 2003, 2004, and 2005, the East Norwegian Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association received state aid from East Norwegian Township in Schuylkill County.

EAST NORWEGIAN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

6. ERRONEOUS DEPOSIT

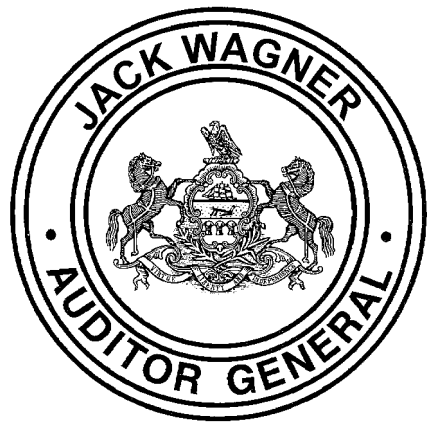
On March 15, 2004, the relief association erroneously deposited \$28 into an East Norwegian Township Emergency Services account from the closure of a relief association bank account. The relief association will seek full reimbursement of the erroneous deposit.

7. RELATED PARTY SITUATIONS

A related party situation exists because the volunteer firefighters' relief association is affiliated with the fire service organizations disclosed in Note 1. The relief association is a distinct separate legal entity that was established primarily for the purpose of affording financial protection to the volunteer firefighters against the consequences of misfortune suffered as a result of their participation in the fire service.

Another related party situation exists because certain officers of the relief association hold offices in a fire service organization.

The relief association membership is aware of these situations and all transactions are approved by the relief association membership.



**Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other
Matters Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance With
*Government Auditing Standards***

Mr. Gary Gorman, President
EAST NORWEGIAN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS'
RELIEF ASSOCIATION
Schuylkill County

We have audited the financial statements (cash basis) of the East Norwegian Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association as of December 31, 2005, and for the period January 1, 2003 to December 31, 2005, and have issued our report thereon dated May 4, 2006. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

The Department of the Auditor General is mandated by state statute to calculate state aid provided to volunteer firefighters' relief associations and to audit volunteer firefighters' relief associations having received such aid. State aid is calculated by an administrative unit that is not involved in the audit process. The Department's Comptroller Office then pre-audits the calculation and submits requests to the Commonwealth's Treasury Department for the disbursement of state aid to the municipality. The Department has implemented procedures to ensure that Department audit personnel are not directly involved in the calculation and disbursement processes. The Department's mandatory responsibilities are being disclosed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*.

Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit, we considered East Norwegian Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's internal control over financial reporting in order to determine our auditing procedures for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statements and not to provide an opinion on the internal control over financial reporting. Our consideration of the internal control over financial reporting would not necessarily disclose all matters in the internal control that might be material weaknesses. A material weakness is a reportable condition in which the design or operation of one or more of the internal control components does not reduce to a relatively low level the risk that misstatements caused by error or fraud in amounts that

**Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other
Matters Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance With
Government Auditing Standards (Continued)**

would be material in relation to the financial statements being audited may occur and not be detected within a timely period by association officers in the normal course of performing their assigned functions. We noted no matters involving the internal control over financial reporting and its operation that we consider to be material weaknesses.

Compliance and Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the East Norwegian Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's financial statements are free of material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grants, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the determination of financial statement amounts. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit and, accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*. However, we noted certain immaterial instances of noncompliance that we have reported to the management of East Norwegian Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association through Finding Nos. 1 and 2 contained in this report.

We are concerned in light of the relief association's failure to correct a previously reported audit finding. The relief association management should strive to implement the recommendations and corrective actions noted in this audit report.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the relief association's members and management, and the officials of the municipalities that grant the foreign fire insurance tax monies to the volunteer firefighters' relief association. It is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties.

May 4, 2006

JACK WAGNER
Auditor General

EAST NORWEGIAN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 1 – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation –
Failure to Maintain a Pennsylvania Sales Tax Exemption Number

Condition: As cited in the prior audit report, the relief association failed to maintain a Pennsylvania sales tax exemption number. While the relief association did have its own sales tax exemption number, it expired on February 28, 1996, and is no longer valid.

Criteria: Act 84 at 53 P.S. 8505(e) states:

Any volunteer firefighters' relief association organized or conducted in accordance with the requirements of this section shall be regarded as a charitable corporation for all purposes including the right to establish exemption from the operation of certain taxes.

Cause: While notified of this condition in the prior audit report, the relief association neglected to renew its sales tax exemption number from the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue.

Effect: As a result of the relief association's failure to maintain a sales tax exemption number, the relief association paid \$55 of Pennsylvania sales tax, which reduced the funds otherwise available for general operating expenditures or for investment purposes.

Recommendation: We again recommend the relief association immediately reapply for renewal of the state sales tax exemption number from the Department of Revenue and furnish this exemption number to all vendors from whom the relief association purchases equipment. 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.

EAST NORWEGIAN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 2 – Unauthorized Expenditures

Condition: The relief association expended funds for the following items, which are not authorized by Act 84:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Check No.</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>
04/08/04	1002	Checks for fire company bank account	\$ 259
02/23/05	1010	Address database for fire company fundraising	146
Total			<u>\$ 405</u>

Criteria: Act 84 at 53 P.S. § 8506(e)(1) states:

The funds of any volunteer firefighters' relief association may be spent:

To pay for such normal and reasonable running expenses as may be appropriate to the businesslike conduct of its affairs including legal fees and including but not by way of limitation the rental or purchase of offices, the payment of reasonable compensation of any needed employees, and the purchase of office equipment and supplies.

The primary purpose of the items stated above was for the benefit of the affiliated fire company not for the volunteer firefighters business affairs; consequently, they are not considered authorized expenditures as defined by Act 84.

Cause: Relief association officials were unaware that the aforementioned expenditures were not authorized by Act 84.

Effect: As a result of these improper expenditures, relief association funds were not available for investment purposes, or to pay for expenditures authorized by Act 84.

Recommendation: We recommend the relief association be reimbursed \$405 for the unauthorized expenditures and that relief association officials become familiar with Act 84 at 53 P.S. § 8506(e) 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.

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.

EAST NORWEGIAN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Edward G. Rendell
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

East Norwegian Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Officers:

Mr. Gary Gorman, President

Ms. Michele Placek, Secretary

Mr. William Shaffer Jr., Treasurer

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

Mr. Mark Donahue, Secretary
East Norwegian 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.