



LAWN FIRE COMPANY RELIEF ASSOCIATION

HEREIN REFERRED TO AS:

LAWN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION

LEBANON COUNTY

COMPLIANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR THE PERIOD

JANUARY 1, 2006 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 Lawn 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 Lawn Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association was allocated state aid from the following municipalities:

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
Conewago Township	Dauphin	\$ 4,476	\$ 4,591	\$ 4,787
South Annville Township	Lebanon	\$ 3,900	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,070
South Londonderry Township	Lebanon	\$21,291	\$22,248	\$22,918

BACKGROUND (Continued)

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

Lawn Fire Company

Mr. Carl R. Epler, President
LAWN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS'
RELIEF ASSOCIATION
Lebanon County

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Lawn 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, 2006 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 Lawn 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 Lawn Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's recorded financial transactions, tests of the physical existence of inventories, interviews of selected officials and direct confirmation of the Lawn 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, 2006 to December 31, 2008, found, in all significant respects, the Lawn 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 Lawn Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association expended funds as presented in the accompanying information and as of December 31, 2008, had a cash balance of \$24,470 and an investment balance with a fair value of \$26,278.

Finding – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation –
Unauthorized Expenditure

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

May 28, 2009

JACK WAGNER
Auditor General

LAWN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
STATUS OF PRIOR FINDINGS

COMPLIANCE WITH PRIOR AUDIT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- Failure to Timely Deposit State Aid

By adopting internal control procedures to ensure the timely deposit of income received.

- Inadequate Signatory Authority for the Disbursement of Funds

By requiring the signatures of all least two officers on all negotiable instruments.

- Inappropriate Presigning of Blank Checks

By discontinuing the practice of presigning blank checks.

NONCOMPLIANCE WITH PRIOR AUDIT FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

- Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation –
Unauthorized Expenditures

While the relief association obtained reimbursements from the affiliated fire company in two payments, one on April 26, 2006 in the amount of \$19,824, and one on June 1, 2009 in the amount of \$2,797, for the unauthorized expenditures made in the prior audit period, an additional unauthorized expenditure was made in the current audit period. This is further discussed in the finding contained in this report.

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

LAWN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

Finding – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation –
Unauthorized Expenditure

Condition: As cited in the prior audit report, the relief association expended funds for certain items that were not authorized under Act 84. During the current audit period, the relief association made another expenditure that is not considered authorized under Act 84. Specifically, the relief association expended \$720 for a one year maintenance agreement on Emergency Medical Service (EMS) reporting software, which is not authorized by Act 84.

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

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) had been established whereby the DCED provided interpretation of Act 84 of 1968, the "Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Act." Computer software is authorized as long as the software is not being used to bill for ambulance services. Consequently, the disbursement described above is not authorized under Act 84.

Cause: Relief association officials were unaware that the expenditure for the maintenance agreement for EMS reporting software was not authorized by Act 84.

Effect: As a result of this improper expenditure, 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 \$720 for the unauthorized expenditure. We again recommend 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.

LAWN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
 ACCOMPANYING EXPENDITURE INFORMATION
 FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2006 TO DECEMBER 31, 2008

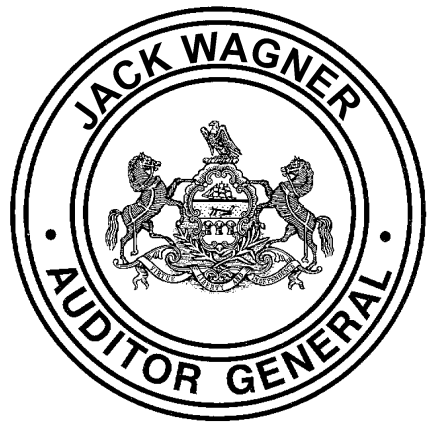
Act 84 at 53 P.S. § 8502(1) states, in part, that:

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	\$ 22,135
Relief benefits	231
Total Benefit Services	\$ 22,366
Fire Services:	
Equipment purchased	\$ 72,145
Equipment maintenance	10,196
Training expenses	4,619
Total Fire Services	\$ 86,960
Administrative Services:	
Miscellaneous administrative expenses	\$ 2,744
Total Administrative Services	\$ 2,744
Total Investments Purchased	\$ 25,000



LAWN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Edward G. Rendell
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Lawn Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Governing Body:

Mr. Carl R. Epler, President	Mr. Doug Farst, Treasurer
Mr. Dave Long, Vice President	Mr. Allan Wenger, Assistant Treasurer
Mr. Jeremy Roeting, Secretary	

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

Ms. Shirley Meyers, Secretary Conewago Township	Mr. Donald H. Umberger, Secretary South Annville Township
Mr. Thomas Ernharth, Secretary South Londonderry 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.