



PORT MATILDA FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION

HEREIN REFERRED TO AS:

PORT MATILDA VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION

CENTRE COUNTY

COMPLIANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR THE PERIOD

JANUARY 1, 2005 TO DECEMBER 31, 2007



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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 Port Matilda 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.

BACKGROUND (Continued)

The Port Matilda Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association was allocated state aid from the following municipalities:

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>
Halfmoon Township	Centre	\$12,242	\$12,544	\$12,762
Huston Township	Centre	\$ 8,291	\$ 8,377	\$ 8,752
Port Matilda Borough	Centre	\$ 3,238	\$ 3,275	\$ 3,303
Taylor Township	Centre	\$ 2,330	\$ 2,374	\$ 2,523
Worth Township	Centre	\$ 5,223	\$ 5,304	\$ 5,452

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

Port Matilda Fire Company, Inc.
Port Matilda Ambulance Association

Mr. Dean Rudy Sr., President
PORT MATILDA VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS'
RELIEF ASSOCIATION
Centre County

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Port Matilda 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, 2005 to December 31, 2007. The audit was conducted in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* applicable to performance audits, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

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 Port Matilda 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 applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws and administrative procedures significant within the context of the audit objectives. We also tested transactions, confirmed the Port Matilda Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's investment balance and the cash balance as of December 31, 2007, with the custodian of the funds, and interviewed selected officials to the extent necessary to satisfy the audit objectives.

The results of our audit for the period January 1, 2005 to December 31, 2007, found, in all significant respects, the Port Matilda 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 findings discussed later in this report. The results of our tests indicated the Port Matilda Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association expended funds as presented in the accompanying information and as of December 31, 2007, had a cash balance of \$57,739 and an investment balance with a fair value of \$40,079.

Finding No. 1 – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation –
Failure to Adhere to Relief Association Bylaws

Finding No. 2 – Insufficient Officer's Bond Coverage

Finding No. 3 – Failure to Maintain a Complete and Accurate Equipment Roster

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

October 3, 2008

JACK WAGNER
Auditor General

PORT MATILDA VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
STATUS OF PRIOR FINDINGS

COMPLIANCE WITH PRIOR AUDIT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- Failure to Maintain Detailed Minutes of Meetings

By maintaining minutes of all association meetings.

- Failure to Maintain a Complete and Accurate Membership Roster

By maintaining a comprehensive listing of the relief association membership.

NONCOMPLIANCE WITH PRIOR AUDIT FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

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

- Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation –
Failure to Adhere to Relief Association Bylaws

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 recommendations and corrective actions noted in this audit report.

PORT MATILDA VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 1 – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation –
Failure to Adhere to Relief Association Bylaws

Condition: As cited in the prior audit report, the relief association did not adhere to a provision in the association's bylaws. During the current audit, we again detected that the relief association did not abide by the same provision. Specifically the relief association did not abide by Article 10, Section 1, which states:

The President shall appoint three auditors at the regular meeting in January who shall audit the accounts of the Association and make a written report of the audit to the members of the Association within 60 days.

Criteria: Prudent business practice dictates that the relief association should adhere to all provisions stipulated in the relief association's bylaws to ensure that the relief association conducted its affairs with proper authorization and maintains adequate oversight of its monetary assets.

Cause: While notified of this condition in the prior audit report, relief association officials neglected to adhere to the bylaw guidelines established by the relief association.

Effect: As a result of the relief association not following the mandatory provisions stipulated in the bylaws, the relief association did not provide adequate oversight of its monetary assets.

Recommendation: We again recommend that relief association officials review the bylaws governing their organization, and establish guidelines and procedures to meet the provisions contained in the bylaws in order to assure that the association provide proper oversight of its monetary assets. 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.

PORT MATILDA VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 2 – Insufficient Officer's Bond Coverage

Condition: The relief association did not maintain a bond in a sufficient amount to cover the authorized disbursing officer. The relief association's bond coverage was \$50,000; however, as of December 31, 2007, the cash assets totaled \$57,739.

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: Relief association officials failed to monitor the cash balance to ensure the officer's bond coverage was in compliance with Act 84 provisions.

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

Recommendation: We recommend the relief association ensure that a faithful performance bond adequately covers the 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. 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.

PORT MATILDA VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 3 – Failure to Maintain a Complete and Accurate Equipment Roster

Condition: The relief association officials did not maintain a complete and accurate roster of equipment owned by the relief association. No equipment roster was provided during the current audit to reflect equipment purchases made during the current audit period. The relief association did provide an equipment roster in prior audits, but it was incomplete as no equipment had been recorded since September 2004. Also, there was no indication that an annual inventory of the equipment was performed to account for the relief association's fixed assets.

Criteria: 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 roster of all relief association equipment should include the following:

- Type of equipment purchased.
- Date of purchase.
- Unit cost.
- Name of supplier.
- Serial number, if applicable.
- Current location of item.
- Final disposition of sold or damaged equipment.
- Notation of the annual inventory.

Cause: Relief association officials failed to establish adequate internal control procedures over fixed assets to include the maintenance of a cumulative equipment roster and the performance of an annual equipment inventory to account for the relief association's fixed assets.

Effect: 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 equipment inventory prevents adequate accountability and safeguarding of relief association assets.

Recommendation: We recommend the relief association officials maintain a cumulative roster of all relief association owned equipment. Furthermore, the relief association should ensure it performs an annual inventory of all operable equipment and that the inventory be sufficiently documented. 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.

PORT MATILDA VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
 ACCOMPANYING EXPENDITURE INFORMATION
 FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2005 TO DECEMBER 31, 2007

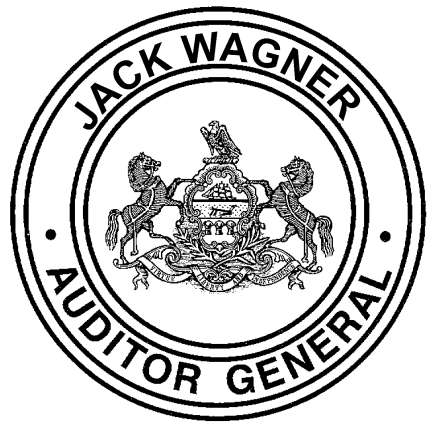
Act 84 at 53 P.S. § 8502(1) states, in part, that:

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	\$ 11,389
Total Benefit Services	\$ 11,389
Fire Services:	
Equipment purchased	\$ 26,713
Equipment maintenance	14,894
Training expenses	10,524
Fire prevention materials	3,021
Total Fire Services	\$ 55,152
Administrative Services:	
Miscellaneous administrative expenses	\$ 555
Total Administrative Services	\$ 555
Total Investments Purchased	\$ 10,000



PORT MATILDA VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Edward G. Rendell
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Port Matilda Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Officers:

Mr. Dean Rudy Sr., President

Ms. Sandy Jones, Secretary

Ms. Sandra Meek, Treasurer

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

Ms. Karen J. Brown, Secretary
Halfmoon Township

Ms. Karen Dillon-Ballock, Secretary
Huston Township

Ms. Rhonda Walters, Secretary
Port Matilda Borough

Ms. Michele L. Reese, Secretary
Taylor Township

Ms. Jadine E. Reese, Secretary
Worth 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.