

COMPLIANCE AUDIT

Firemen's Relief Association of Alpha Fire Company No. 1, Inc.

Adams County, Pennsylvania

For the Period

January 1, 2019, to December 31, 2021

November 2022



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of the Auditor General

Timothy L. DeFoor • Auditor General



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**TIMOTHY L. DEFOOR
AUDITOR GENERAL**

Mr. Kevin Dehoff, President
Firemen's Relief Association of Alpha
Fire Company No. 1, Inc.
Adams County

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Firemen's Relief Association of Alpha Fire Company No. 1, Inc. (relief association) for the period January 1, 2019, to December 31, 2021. The audit was conducted pursuant to authority derived from Article VIII, Section 10 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; Section 403 of The Fiscal Code, 72 P.S. § 403; and the Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Act ("VFRA Act"), see 35 Pa.C.S. § 7418.

The objectives of the audit were:

1. To determine if the relief association took appropriate corrective action to address the findings contained in our prior audit report.
2. To determine if the relief association complied with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures as they relate to the receipt of state aid and the expenditure of relief association funds.

Our audit was limited to the areas related to the objectives identified above and was not, nor was it required to be, conducted in accordance with Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

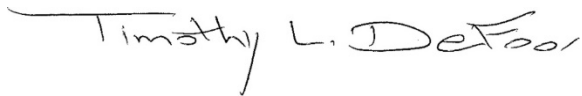
Relief association officers are responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that the relief association's administration of state aid and accumulated relief funds complies with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures, including the safeguarding of assets. Relief association officers are responsible for complying with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures. It is our responsibility to perform procedures to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to the extent necessary to satisfy the audit objectives. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our conclusions.

We were not able to obtain an independent confirmation of the investment balance directly from the financial institution. Therefore, while the relief association provided investment statements that indicated that, as of December 31, 2021, the relief association had an investment balance with a fair value of \$119,307, we were not able to verify this investment balance.

Based on our audit procedures, we conclude that, except for the effects, if any, of the matter described in the preceding paragraph, for the period January 1, 2019, to December 31, 2021:

- The relief association took appropriate corrective action to address the findings contained in our prior audit report.
- The relief association, in all significant respects, complied with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures as they relate to the receipt of state aid and the expenditure of relief association funds.

The contents of this report were discussed with the management of the relief association. We would like to thank the relief association officials for the cooperation extended to us during the conduct of the audit.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timothy L. DeFoor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line above the first name.

Timothy L. DeFoor
Auditor General
October 12, 2022

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BACKGROUND

Pursuant to Article VIII, Section 10 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Section 403 of The Fiscal Code¹, and the Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Act² ("VFRA Act"), 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 Law³ (commonly referred to as Act 205) are properly expended.

The 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.

The VFRA Act governs the overall operation of volunteer firefighters' relief associations. Relief association bylaws define the specific operational procedures by which relief associations conduct business. To fulfill its primary purpose, the VFRA Act authorizes specific types of expenditures and prescribes appropriate volunteer firefighters' relief association investment options. Within the parameters established by the VFRA Act, it is the responsibility of relief associations 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 that is or are recognized as providing the service to the municipality.

¹ 72 P.S. § 403 (as last amended by Act 44 of 2017).

² 35 Pa.C.S. § 7411 *et seq.* See specifically, 35 Pa.C.S. § 7418 (amended by Act 91 of 2020).

³ 53 P.S. § 895.701 *et seq.* (Act 205 of 1984, as amended by Act 119 of 1990).

BACKGROUND – (Continued)

The relief association was allocated state aid from the following municipalities:

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>
Germany Township	Adams	\$18,006	\$18,105	\$16,068
Littlestown Borough	Adams	\$23,692	\$23,889	\$21,306
Mount Joy Township	Adams	\$ 6,881	\$ 3,786	\$ 3,353
Mount Pleasant Township	Adams	\$ 1,380	\$ 1,419	\$ 1,283
Union Township	Adams	\$19,097	\$19,206	\$17,133

Based on the relief association's records, its total cash and investments as of December 31, 2021, were \$231,939 as illustrated below:

Cash	\$ 112,632
Fair Value of Investments	<u>119,307</u>
Total Cash and Investments	<u><u>\$ 231,939</u></u>

BACKGROUND – (Continued)

Based on the relief association's records, its total expenditures for the period January 1, 2019, to December 31, 2021, were \$316,632, as noted below. The accuracy of these expenditures was evaluated as part of the Department's audit to conclude on the relief association's compliance with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures as they relate to the receipt of state aid and the expenditure of relief association funds.⁴ **The scope of the Department's audit does not include the issuance of an opinion on the accuracy of these amounts.**

Expenditures:

Benefit Services:

Insurance premiums	\$ 17,808
Death benefits	2,200
Total Benefit Services	<u>\$ 20,008</u>

Fire Services:

Equipment purchased	\$ 224,614
Equipment maintenance	32,434
Training expenses	15,523
Fire prevention materials	6,379
Total Fire Services	<u>\$ 278,950</u>

Administrative Services:

Bond premiums	\$ 1,296
Officer compensation	60
Other administrative expenses	14,241
Total Administrative Services	<u>\$ 15,597</u>

Total Investments Purchased	<u>\$ 2,077</u>
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Total Expenditures	<u><u>\$ 316,632</u></u>
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The volunteer firefighters' relief association and the affiliated fire service organization are separate, legal entities. The relief association is affiliated with the following fire service organization:

Alpha Fire Company No.1, Inc.

⁴ Accuracy was evaluated for a selection of transactions based on dollar amount, category, and/or random selection.

FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION OF ALPHA FIRE COMPANY NO. 1, INC.
STATUS OF PRIOR FINDINGS

COMPLIANCE WITH PRIOR AUDIT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The relief association has complied with the prior audit findings and recommendations, as follows:

- Failure To Execute A Prorated Share Agreement For Fire Station Building Purchases

By executing an agreement with the fire company for a prorated amount of the fire station building purchase.

- Duplicate Payment

By receiving reimbursement of \$4,356 from the affiliated fire company for the duplicate payment.

- Failure To Disclose Related Party Transaction

By no longer doing business with the related third party.

- Inadequate Minutes Of Meetings

By maintaining adequate meeting minutes with a recording secretary's signature and a financial transaction section. The relief association has also kept its meeting minutes separate from those of the fire company and the EMS.

- Inadequate Relief Association Bylaws And Inadequate Signatory Authority For The Disbursement Of Funds

By adding the requirement for two signatories into the bylaws and showing evidence that the relief association has two officers, one being the Treasurer, sign all checks.

We commend the relief association management for its efforts in complying with the findings and recommendations contained in the prior audit report. The relief association management should strive to remain in compliance with all applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures.

FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION OF ALPHA FIRE COMPANY NO. 1, INC.
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom W. Wolf
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Fireman's Relief Association of Alpha Fire Company No. 1, Inc. Governing Body:

Mr. Kevin Dehoff
President

Mr. Dave Pittman
Vice President

Mr. Brandon Null
Secretary

Ms. Stacy Snyder
Treasurer

Mr. George Peart
Assistant Treasurer

Mr. Tom Wellman
Trustee

Mr. Michael Hahn
Trustee

FIREMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION OF ALPHA FIRE COMPANY NO. 1, INC.
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

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

Ms. Melissa Zirkle
Secretary
Germany Township

Ms. Sandra J. Conrad
Secretary
Littlestown Borough

Ms. Shannon M. Hare
Secretary
Mount Joy Township

Ms. Jennifer S. Day
Secretary
Mount Pleasant Township

Ms. Carol J. Bollinger
Secretary
Union Township

This report is a matter of public record and is available online at www.PaAuditor.gov. Media questions about the report can be directed to the Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General, Office of Communications, 229 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120; via email to: news@PaAuditor.gov.