

# COMPLIANCE AUDIT

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## The Union Township Civilian Defense Fireman's Relief Association Clearfield County, Pennsylvania For the Period January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2017

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September 2018



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Department of the Auditor General

Eugene A. DePasquale • Auditor General



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EUGENE A. DePASQUALE  
AUDITOR GENERAL

Mr. Jason Valentine, President  
The Union Township Civilian Defense  
Fireman's Relief Association  
Clearfield County

We have conducted a compliance audit of The Union Township Civilian Defense Fireman's Relief Association (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, 2015 to December 31, 2017.

The objectives of the audit were:

1. To determine if the relief association took appropriate corrective action to address the finding 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 required to be and was not 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.

Based on our audit procedures, we conclude that, for the period January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2017:

- The relief association took appropriate corrective action to address the finding 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, except as noted in the finding listed below and discussed later in this report.

Finding – Failure To Maintain A Complete And Accurate Membership Roster

The supplementary financial information contained in this report is presented for purposes of additional disclosure and analysis. We performed only limited procedures on the supplementary financial information and, accordingly, express no form of assurance on it.

The contents of this report were discussed with the management of the relief association and, where appropriate, their response has been included in the report. We would like to thank the relief association officials for the cooperation extended to us during the conduct of the audit.

September 11, 2018



EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE  
Auditor General

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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 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 volunteer firefighters' relief associations. Relief association bylaws define the specific operational procedures by which relief associations conduct 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 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.

**BACKGROUND – (Continued)**

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

| <u>Municipality</u> | <u>County</u> | <u>2015</u> | <u>2016</u> | <u>2017</u> |
|---------------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Pine Township       | Clearfield    | \$ 175      | \$ 175      | \$ 142      |
| Union Township      | Clearfield    | \$5,056     | \$5,074     | \$4,821     |

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:

Union Township Civilian Defense Fire Company

THE UNION TOWNSHIP CIVILIAN DEFENSE FIREMAN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
STATUS OF PRIOR FINDING

COMPLIANCE WITH PRIOR AUDIT FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

The relief association has complied with the prior audit finding and recommendation, as follows:

- Failure To Maintain Surety (Fidelity) Bond Coverage

By maintaining Surety (Fidelity) bond coverage in an amount greater than the balance of the relief association's cash assets.

THE UNION TOWNSHIP CIVILIAN DEFENSE FIREMAN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

**Finding – Failure To Maintain A Complete And Accurate Membership Roster**

Condition: The relief association officials did not maintain a complete and accurate roster of relief association members.

Criteria: Relief association officials should maintain a complete and accurate roster of the relief association's membership, as identified by criteria set forth in the relief association's bylaws. A comprehensive roster of all relief association members should include the following:

- Names of each member
- Members' mailing addresses
- Dates of births
- Dates of memberships
- Membership classifications

In addition, when warranted, a notation should be made on the roster identifying the date of a member's resignation or death.

Cause: Relief association officials indicated that they were aware that they should maintain a comprehensive roster of relief association members, but failed to comply.

Effect: The failure to maintain a comprehensive membership roster could result in the payment of benefits to nonmembers, or deprive eligible relief association members from receiving authorized benefit payments.

Recommendation: We recommend that the relief association officials compile and maintain a complete and accurate roster of the relief association's membership. For additional 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.

Auditor's Conclusion: Compliance will be subject to verification through our next audit.



THE UNION TOWNSHIP CIVILIAN DEFENSE FIREMAN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
SUPPLEMENTARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION  
CASH BALANCE  
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2017

|      |                 |
|------|-----------------|
| Cash | <u>\$ 5,439</u> |
|------|-----------------|

THE UNION TOWNSHIP CIVILIAN DEFENSE FIREMAN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
 SUPPLEMENTARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION  
 SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES  
 FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2015 TO DECEMBER 31, 2017

Expenditures:

|                               |           |
|-------------------------------|-----------|
| Benefit Services:             |           |
| Insurance premiums            | \$ 10,847 |
| Fire Services:                |           |
| Equipment purchased           | \$ 14,443 |
| Equipment maintenance         | 420       |
| Training expenses             | 152       |
| Total Fire Services           | \$ 15,015 |
| Administrative Services:      |           |
| Other administrative expenses | \$ 10     |
| Bond premiums                 | 355       |
| Total Administrative Services | \$ 365    |
| Other Expenditures:           |           |
| Miscellaneous *               | \$ 1,680  |
| Total Expenditures            | \$ 27,907 |

\* On October 18, 2017, the relief association reimbursed Union Township for an overpayment of the 2017 state aid allocation in the amount of \$1,430. On December 20, 2017, the relief association reimbursed the affiliated fire company for an erroneous deposit of \$250.

THE UNION TOWNSHIP CIVILIAN DEFENSE FIREMAN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

**The Honorable Tom W. Wolf**  
Governor  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

The Union Township Civilian Defense Fireman's Relief Association Governing Body:

**Mr. Jason Valentine**  
President

**Ms. Jessica Perry-Bailey**  
Vice President

**Mr. Leo Brooks**  
Secretary

**Mr. Brian S. Sekula**  
Treasurer

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

**Ms. Carol Romanski**  
Secretary  
Pine Township

**Ms. Gail J. Michael**  
Secretary  
Union Township

This report is a matter of public record and is available online at [www.PaAuditor.gov](http://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](mailto:news@PaAuditor.gov).