Internal Revenue Service, Treasury

§ 1.103–16 Owings of certain volunteer fire departments.

(a) General rule. An obligation of a volunteer fire department is a qualified volunteer fire department within the meaning of paragraph (b) of this section, if—

(1) The volunteer fire department is a qualified volunteer fire department within the meaning of paragraph (a) of § 1.103–9; and

(2) Substantially all of the proceeds of the issue of which the obligation is a part are to be used for the acquisition, construction, reconstruction, or improvement of a fire house or fire truck used or to be used by the qualified volunteer fire department.

An obligation of a volunteer fire department shall not be treated as an obligation of a political subdivision of a State for purposes of section 103(a)(1) unless both conditions set forth in this paragraph (a) are satisfied.
Thus, for example, if an obligation is issued by an ambulance and rescue squad that is a qualified volunteer fire department as required by paragraph (a)(1) of this section, but substantially all of the proceeds of the issue of which the obligation is a part are to be used for the furnishing of emergency medical services, rather than for the purposes specified in paragraph (a)(2) of this section, the obligation shall not be treated as an obligation of a political subdivision of a State for purposes of section 103(a)(1).

(b) Definition of qualified volunteer fire department. For purposes of this section, the term “qualified volunteer fire department” means an organization—

(1) That is organized and operated to provide firefighting services or emergency medical services in an area within the jurisdiction of a political subdivision, and

(2) That is required to furnish firefighting services by written agreement with the political subdivision, and

(3) That serves persons in an area within the jurisdiction of the political subdivision that is not provided with any other firefighting services.

The requirement of paragraph (b)(2) of this section that a qualified volunteer fire department be required to furnish firefighting services by written agreement with the political subdivision may be satisfied by an ordinance or statute of the political subdivision that establishes, regulates, or funds the volunteer fire department. A volunteer fire department does not fail to satisfy the requirement of paragraph (b)(3) of this section by furnishing or receiving firefighting services on an emergency basis, or by cooperative agreement with other fire departments, to or from areas outside of the area that the volunteer fire department is organized and operated to serve. The fact that tax revenues of a political subdivision served by a volunteer fire department contribute toward the support of the volunteer fire department in the form of salary, purchase of equipment, or other defrayment of expenses will not prevent the volunteer fire department from being a “qualified volunteer fire department” within the meaning of this paragraph (b). Moreover, an obligation of a volunteer fire department receiving such support may qualify as an obligation of a political subdivision within the meaning of section 103(a)(1) independently of section 103(i) and this section if the requirements of section 103(a)(1) are satisfied. See §1.103–1(b) for rules relating to qualification under section 103(a)(1).

(c) “Substantially all” test. Substantially all of the proceeds of an issue are used for the purposes specified in paragraph (a)(2) of this section if 90 percent or more of the proceeds are so used. Thus, for example, if more than 10 percent of the proceeds of an obligation issued by a qualified volunteer fire department are used for the purchase of an ambulance or for rescue equipment not to be used in providing fire fighting services, interest on the obligation is not exempt from tax under section 103(i) and this section. In computing this percentage—

(1) Costs are allocated between providing a firehouse or firetruck and other uses of the proceeds on a pro rata basis; and

(2) The rules set forth in §1.103–8(a)(1)(i), relating to amounts allocable to exempt and nonexempt uses and amounts chargeable to capital account, apply.

(d) Refunding issues. An obligation which is part of an issue issued by a qualified volunteer fire department after December 31, 1980, part or all of the proceeds of which issue are used directly or indirectly to pay principal, interest, call premium, or reasonable incidental costs of refunding a prior issue qualifies as an obligation of a political subdivision under section 103(i) and this section only if—

(1) The prior issue was issued by a qualified volunteer fire department;

(2) Substantially all of the proceeds of the prior issue were used for the purposes described in paragraph (a)(2) of this section;

(3) The prior issue was issued after December 31, 1980; and

(4) The refunding issue is issued not more than 180 days before the date on which the last obligation of the prior issue is discharged (within the meaning of §1.103–13(b)(11)).

(e) Examples. The provisions of this section may be illustrated by the following examples:

Example 1. The County M Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association provides firefighting, ambulance, and emergency medical services...
in County M. The board of county commissioners of County M contracts with the County M Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association for these services, and County M is not served by any other firefighting association. On August 1, 1981, the Association issues an obligation for funds to purchase a new fire truck, a new ambulance, and rescue equipment not to be used for fighting fires. Funds to be used for the purchase of the ambulance and rescue equipment constitute more than 10 percent of the proceeds of the obligation. Thus, substantially all of the proceeds of the obligations are not used for one of the purposes described in paragraph (a)(2) of this section. Although the County M Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association is a qualified volunteer fire department under paragraph (b) of this section because it provides firefighting and emergency medical services in an area within County M which is not provided with any other firefighting services and is required to provide these services by written agreement with County M, the August 1, 1981, obligation of County M Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association will not be treated as an obligation of a political subdivision of a State under section 103(i) and paragraph (a) of this section because the obligations are not to be used for a purpose described in section 103(i)(1)(B) and paragraph (a) of this section. Accordingly, interest on the August 1, 1981, obligation of County M Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association is not exempt from gross income under section 103(a)(1).

Example 2. County N Volunteer Fire Department provides firefighting services in County N by contract with the county, which is not served by any other firefighting association. On June 15, 1982, County N Volunteer Fire Department issues its obligation for funds to construct an addition to its firehouse to house a rescue squad, the rescue squad’s vehicle, and rescue equipment not to be used in firefighting. Although the County N Volunteer Fire Department is a qualified volunteer fire department under paragraph (b) of this section, interest on its June 15, 1982, obligation will not be exempt from tax under section 103(i) and this section because the proceeds of this obligation will not be used for the purposes described in paragraph (a) of this section.

Example 3. The County O Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association provides firefighting, ambulance, and emergency medical services in County O. The board of county commissioners of County O contracts with the County O Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association for these services, and County O is not served by any other firefighting association. On September 1, 1983, the Association issues its obligations for funds to construct a new building to house its firefighting, ambulance, and rescue functions. Although the ambulance and rescue equipment will occupy space in the projected facility, the cost allocable on a pro rata basis to providing housing for the ambulance and rescue equipment represents less than 10 percent of the proceeds of the obligations. Thus, substantially all of the proceeds of the obligations are used for one of the purposes described in paragraph (a)(2) of this section. The County O Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association is a qualified volunteer fire department under paragraph (b) of this section because it provides firefighting and emergency medical services in an area within County O which is not provided with any other firefighting services and is required to provide these services by written agreement with County O. The obligations of County O Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association will be treated as obligations of a political subdivision of a State under section 103(i) and paragraph (a) of this section because the obligations are those of a qualified volunteer fire department and because substantially all of the proceeds of the obligations are to be used for a purpose described in section 103(i)(1)(B) and paragraph (a)(2) of this section. Accordingly, interest on the September 1, 1983, issue of obligations of County O Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association is exempt from gross income under section 103(a)(1).

[T.D. 7901, 48 FR 32981, July 20, 1983]

§ 1.103(n)–1T Limitation on aggregate amount of private activity bonds (temporary).

Q-1: What does section 103(n) provide?
A-1: Interest on an issue of private activity bonds will not be tax exempt unless the aggregate amount of bonds issued pursuant to that issue, when added to (i) the aggregate amount of private activity bonds previously issued by the issuing authority during the calendar year and (ii) the portion of that year’s private activity bond limit that the issuing authority has elected to carry forward to a future year, does not exceed the issuing authority’s private activity bond limit for that calendar year. See A-4 of § 1.103(n)–4T with respect to private activity bonds issued under a carryforward election.

Q-2: What is the effective date of section 103(n)?
A-2: In general, section 103(n) applies to private activity bonds issued after December 31, 1983. Section 103(n) does not apply to any issue of obligations, however, if there was an inducement.