



OFFICE OF THE
UTAH STATE AUDITOR

News Release
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Office of the Utah State Auditor Releases
A Limited Performance Audit of The Utah State Fair Corporation

Salt Lake City, UTAH –

The Office of the Utah State Auditor (Office) conducted *A Limited Performance Audit of the Utah State Fair Corporation (USFC)* due to concerns regarding the ability of the USFC to operate self-sufficiently. The Office compared USFC financial performance and attendance with state fairs in six surrounding states and six county fairs in Utah. The audit also reviewed unique state and county fair models in various state and counties.

The audit identified that the Utah State Fair is the most under-attended and highly subsidized state fair in comparable intermountain states. The three most comparable intermountain state fairs that, like the Utah State Fair, are hosted in the largest city in the state—Arizona, Idaho, and New Mexico—draw significantly more visitors per capita and require less state financial contributions than the Utah State Fair. Additionally, the Utah State Fair’s market penetration is almost 30 percent less than the average of 35 other state fairs.

The three intermountain state fairs reviewed in-depth average almost twice as many patrons per capita as the Utah State Fair, and do not require direct ongoing state appropriations. Although state law requires the Utah State Fair to have a plan to be self-sustaining since 1995, the Legislature has appropriated a total of more than \$6.8 million to the USFC between 2004 and 2012.

The audit cites additional options to help improve the self-sufficiency of the USFC while maximizing the use and success of the Utah State Fairpark.

Among these opportunities, the USFC board could consider:

- Increasing use of the Fairpark during non-fair days
- Fully privatizing the USFC
- Contracting with a private management group to operate the Fairpark
- Co-locating the state and county fairs
- Relinquishing the State Fairpark and renting space to host the annual 11-day state fair

The full audit can be found at auditor.utah.gov.

About the Office of the Utah State Auditor

The Office of the Utah State Auditor provides Utah taxpayers and government officials with an independent assessment of financial operation, statutory compliance, and performance management for state and local government.

Specific activities of the Office include performing financial audits, conducting Federal funds compliance audits, providing local government oversight, conducting agency and program performance audits, performing fraud & compliance audits, and operating the State Auditor Hotline for citizens to report suspected financial issues or improprieties. These capabilities strengthen Utah State Government and help taxpayers have confidence in the integrity of Utah's government agencies.

The Utah State Auditor is a Constitutional Officer of the State of Utah, elected directly by the state's citizens every 4 years. The role of the Utah State Auditor is authorized in Article VII, Section 15 of the Utah Constitution. Additional Information at Auditor.Utah.gov

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