

*Water Pressure and Reticulation.*

The average water-pressure of 130 lb. is an excellent one for fire-extinction purposes; but hitherto the best results have not been obtained from this splendid pressure, owing to the nozzles used being of too small a bore. The reticulation, owing to the large quantity of 3 in. piping laid down, leaves much to be desired; no mains under 4 in. in diameter should ever be laid for fire purposes. The fact of having two different patterns of hydrants—screw and ball—is also bad, as it necessitates the brigade always carrying with them the two corresponding patterns of standpipes; then, again, the hydrants, though ample in number, are laid at very irregular depths. Altogether, the high-pressure system of your town, with the exception of the pressure, is not a model one from a fire-brigade point of view, in whose work seconds of time are an object. The less complicated the system, and the simpler and more uniform the equipment, the better the results obtained.

When you are ready to consider the question of your new station I shall be pleased, should you so desire, to go into the matter of design and cost with you, and will at any time give you all information as to purchase of new equipment.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

Fred Pirani, Esq., Chairman, Feilding Fire Board.

*REPORT No. 2. (30th June, 1909.)*

I made a second inspection of this brigade on the 4th and 5th February last. A false alarm of fire was given by ringing the fire-bell at the station at 9.15 p.m. on the 4th. Instructions were given to get to work at a point on Kimbolton Road some 300 yards distant. Water was shown at 9.18.19 p.m., or 3 minutes 19 seconds from time of call, a satisfactory result, but as certain members of the brigade were aware of my presence in the town, and were prepared, it cannot be regarded as the outcome of a surprise alarm. When mustered at 9.25 p.m., or 10 minutes from time of first call, the Deputy Superintendent and ten men were present.

The full strength of the brigade is Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, and seventeen men. At the muster at 8 p.m. on the following night there were present Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, and twelve men, with five men on leave. This is too large a proportion on leave at any one time, unless provision is made for assistance in cases of emergency.

I consider an improvement has taken place since my previous visit of inspection; the men appear to be smarter in their movements, and to take greater interest in their work and in the instruction given.

Attention has been given to the recommendation contained in my previous report, but no ladders have been provided as yet.

*GISBORNE.*

SIR,—

Office of Inspector of Fire Brigades, Wellington, 8th October, 1908.

In reply to your letter dated the 29th August, addressed to the Minister of Internal Affairs, asking that a report from the Inspector of Fire Brigades on the condition and general efficiency of your brigade might be forwarded, I have the honour to submit a report dealing with the matters in question.

At 7.32 p.m. on Thursday, the 13th August, I gave a call at the fire-station for an imaginary fire at a point in Bright Street some 150 yards distant, directing that two deliveries from hydrants should be got to work, also that steam should be got up on the stationary fire-engine. Water was shown from the first delivery at 7.34.7 p.m., or 2 minutes 7 seconds from the time of call. Water was shown from the second delivery at 7.37.28, or 5 minutes 28 seconds from time of call. The first water was shown in creditable time, but there was some confusion over getting the second lead to work. The engine was started with 75 lb. steam on the gauge at 7.48.52 p.m., or 16 minutes 52 seconds after the order was given to get up steam. Taking circumstances into consideration, this result was fairly good, but in getting the deliveries to work from the steamer mains considerable trouble was experienced, and time lost in finding and clearing the hydrants in Gladstone Road.

*Personnel of the Brigade.*

Of the total strength of the brigade on the roll—twenty-five—there were present at the muster twenty-two. They are a fine active body of men, of good physique, who appear considerably interested in their work, and willing to learn, but they lack instruction, and I strongly recommend that systematic drills should be held, embracing the various subjects as explained by me during the course of my address, but great care must be taken that the drills or classes do not fall into a monotonous routine.

*Stations.*

The present station-site is a very suitable one in relation to the risks of the town, present and future; but the station building is quite inadequate for its purpose. A new station is required, which should contain accommodation for a caretaker and for men to sleep on the premises. Small hose-reel sheds should be placed in the Kaiti and Whataupoko districts; also, one is required in Gladstone Road, somewhere in the vicinity of Herbert Street.