

Personnel of the Brigade.

There was a full attendance of members at the inspection muster—viz., Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, and eighteen men. They are a smart body of men, of good physique, who evidently take an active interest in their work. The numerical strength is not too high, and should not be allowed to fall below the number at present on the roll.

Stations.

The Boundary Street Station is well situated in respect to the risks of the town, but extensive improvements are required to the building, and sleeping-accommodation for three or four men should be provided, so as to insure a prompt response in the event of an alarm of fire. The hose-reel stations are advantageously situated as conditions are at present.

Plant and Appliances.

The plant and appliances are sufficient for present requirements, with the exception that some new coupling-ladders or light fire-escape and a couple of hand-pumps should be obtained. Seeing your town covers a fairly large area—some 2,000 acres—some other method than that at present in vogue of having to wait until a horse is brought from outside should be adopted; for the present, at any rate, a horse should be stabled at the station every night.

Water Pressure and Reticulation.

The average pressure—115 lb.—is a good one for a town of the description of Greymouth. I would strongly advise that in future no mains under 4 in. in diameter should be laid down. It has been found that pipes under that dimension ultimately become of very little service for fire-extinction purposes. An extension of the mains along Blake Street and Preston Road is urgently required.

General, for Consideration.

Considerable alterations and additions to the station building in Boundary Street would be necessary to put it in such a condition that it could be regarded as a satisfactory fire-station to meet your requirements in the future. Seeing that the building is old and dilapidated, the best and most economical policy would be to build an entirely new station. A fire-alarm system should be installed, and telephonic communication established between the High Street and Central Stations. These improvements cannot be done out of revenue; but by borrowing money for the purpose, the interest could be paid and a sinking fund established without unduly increasing the expenditure in any one year.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

William Ryan, Esq., Superintendent, Greymouth Fire Board, Greymouth.

HAWERA.

SIR,—

Office of Inspector of Fire Brigades, Wellington, 7th October, 1908.

In reply to your letter dated the 3rd ultimo, addressed to the Hon. the Minister of Internal Affairs, also to the letter dated the 23rd ultimo, addressed to Hugh Pollen, Esq., asking for a copy of Inspector Hugo's report, I have the honour to forward you a report bearing upon matters in connection with your brigade.

At 8 p.m. on Tuesday, the 14th July, I gave a call at your fire-station to an imaginary fire at a point about 170 yards distant, directing that two deliveries should be got to work. The first water was shown from the second lead at 8.2.7 p.m., or 2 minutes 7 seconds from the time of call. The water from the first lead was shown at 8.2.37 p.m. There was some delay in getting the first lead to work. The first result was good, but can be improved.

Personnel of the Brigade.

The strength of the brigade is twenty-five all told, with twenty-two on the roll. Of that number, only sixteen were present at the muster—an unsatisfactory attendance. Those present were a smart, well set-up body of men, who appeared to take an interest in their work.

Station.

The present fire-station is in a fairly good position, and is adequate for present requirements.

Plant and Equipment.

The hose—800 ft. in stock and 500 ft. on order—is hardly sufficient; not less than 1,500 ft. of good serviceable hose should be kept in stock. The coupling-ladders are out of repair, and should be replaced by lighter and stronger ones. A couple of hand-pumps fitted with stirrups are required.

Water Reticulation and Pressure.

The reticulation is a very fair one, but no more 3 in. mains should be laid down; nothing under 4 in. should ever be laid for fire-extinction purposes. The average pressure—75 lb., with a possible rise to 100 lb. when required—can also be classed as fair in a town of the description of Hawera, containing no buildings over two stories in height; but care should be taken that