

the higher pressure is made available immediately upon an alarm of fire taking place; also, the manual engine should be kept in good working-order, and in immediate readiness in case of any failure in the high-pressure water system.

*Fire Police.*

There was no attendance of Fire Police at the muster. Their plant is in a very dirty and neglected condition, and it appears to me that a reorganization of that body is urgently required.

The members of the brigade who were present at the muster appeared very willing to learn, and eager for information; and I would suggest that systematic drill and instruction classes should be held, and carried out on the lines as explained by me during the course of my address.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

H. S. Elliott, Esq., Secretary, Hawera Fire Board, Hawera.

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

A second inspection of this brigade was made on the 7th and 8th January last. A false alarm of fire was given by ringing the fire-bell opposite the station at 9.21 p.m. on the 7th. Instructions were given to get to work at a point in Collins Street about 230 yards distant. The hose-reel was "got away" from the station very quickly, but some delay took place in getting to work, and it was 9.26.23 p.m., or 5 minutes 23 seconds later, before water was shown. This time was long, but was due to a misunderstanding, and not to any want of smartness of the members of the brigade, who appear to be both active and willing. At the muster at 9.31 p.m.—10 minutes from time of first call—the Superintendent and ten men were present. At the inspection muster at 8 p.m. on the following evening the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, and sixteen men were present.

The station and appliances are maintained in good order. No new ladders have yet been provided, and the shanks of some of the standpipes require lengthening. The fire-bell in the tower opposite the station, when rung, does not ring out clearly as it should do, and cannot be heard any distance. This defect I think is due to the manner in which it is hung, and this matter should be attended to.

There was no attendance of the Fire Police at either muster, and their plant is in the same neglected state as at the time of my previous visit.

HOKITIKA.

SIR,—

Office of Inspector of Fire Brigades, Wellington, 17th May, 1909.

In reply to your letter dated the 13th instant, and addressed to the Hon. the Minister of Internal Affairs, asking for a copy of Inspector Hugo's report in connection with his inspection of your brigade on the 15th April last, I have the honour to forward you a report in connection therewith.

At 7.29 p.m. on the 15th April I caused the fire-bell to be rung, and directed the brigade to get to work with three deliveries at Kellar's Hotel. The first water was shown from the manual engine at 7.39.20 p.m.; the second from a hydrant on the high-pressure main at 7.41 p.m.; the third from the steamer at 7.42.50 p.m. With the exception of the delivery from the steamer, the time taken in getting to work was slow; this was due to misunderstanding, which no doubt would not have occurred had there been any fire really showing. Further, there appeared to be some doubt as to whether the high-pressure service was available.

The members of the brigade responded promptly to the alarm, and the plant was taken to the scene of the supposed fire in quick time. At the muster in the station, at 8.6 p.m., there were present the Superintendent and twenty-seven officers and firemen. They appear to be a smart active body of men, and of good physique. I was disappointed that there was not a better attendance at the muster on the following evening, only the Superintendent and seven men being present.

The plant and appliances appear to be kept in good order and condition, and, with the exceptions mentioned below, should be sufficient for present requirements.

Sleeping-accommodation for, say, three men should be provided at the Central Station. This would prove most beneficial to the working of the brigade, particularly when the high-pressure system is in full working-order. They would then be able to get away with a light hose-reel immediately upon any alarm of fire during the night. Hose-reels should be stationed, one at the east end of Gibson's Quay, and one in the north-east neighbourhood of the town. I understand your Board proposes to do this.

The hydrant-beds should be lifted so that the plates should not be below the level of the streets, and indicators be placed so that the position of the plugs are clearly marked. This is very essential for night-work.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

A. A. Andrews, Esq., Secretary, Hokitika Fire Board, Hokitika.