

## OAMARU.

SIR,—

Office of Inspector of Fire Brigades, Wellington, 3rd March, 1909.

I have the honour to forward, for the information of your Board, a report in connection with my recent visit of inspection, and dealing with various matters relating to the efficiency of your brigade, plant, appliances, &c.

At 8.15 p.m. on Wednesday, the 24th ultimo, I rang the fire-bell, and directed the Superintendent to get to work with one delivery at a certain point in Tyne Street about 290 yards distant from the station. Water was shown full on at 8.22.31 p.m. At 8.27 p.m. the brigade was mustered, and it was found that the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, and seven firemen were in attendance.

At the inspection at 6.10 p.m. on the following evening eleven members of the brigade, including officers, were present out of a total strength of fourteen on the roll; the remaining three were accounted for.

The time from the first toll of the bell until water was shown—7 minutes 31 seconds—was slow and far from satisfactory, and was due to certain mistakes made in getting the delivery to work. These mistakes I pointed out and commented upon when addressing the members of the brigade during the inspection muster, and no doubt an improvement will take place.

The muster at 8.27 p.m., or 12 minutes from time of first call—viz., nine members, including officers—was fairly satisfactory.

The muster for inspection was satisfactory.

*Personnel of the Brigade.*

The members of your brigade appear to be a smart, active body of men, if anything a little overanxious to do their best, but they are in considerable need of drill and instruction in the various matters pertaining to fire-brigade work. The numerical strength of the brigade is on the weak side, and I would recommend that there never be less than sixteen active members on the roll.

*Stations.*

The new station is in a good position, and, with one minor exception, is very well designed for its purpose, and should meet the needs of your town for a number of years to come. At least three men should sleep on the premises, so that they can get away with the necessary plant at once upon an alarm of fire.

A small reel-shed sufficiently large to house a hose-reel should be erected towards the north end of Thames Street, and a bell and ladders should also be placed there.

*Plant and Appliances.*

I am afraid the four-wheeled vehicle at present in the station will be found too heavy for one horse to drag up the hills at any speed, and I would suggest a light two-wheeled hose-reel, to carry, say, four men, should be obtained, and the present vehicle sold.

A Pelton water-wheel should be installed for the purpose of ringing the fire-bell when it is moved to its new position. A couple of "London Fire Brigade" hand-pumps, with stirrup attachments, should be purchased immediately, and some larger nozzles are required.

*Water Pressure and Reticulation.*

The average pressure on the lower levels—105 lb., with little variation—is fairly satisfactory, seeing that, with one or two exceptions, there are no large buildings or block risks in your town at present; but as the higher levels become more thickly populated it will be necessary to formulate some scheme to give a better supply and pressure there. I understand that the 3 in. mains at present down are to be lifted and replaced, as circumstances permit, by larger ones. This should give a much better supply than there is at present on some of the higher levels.

A plan of the reticulation of the town, with diameters of the mains and the static pressure at various points plainly shown thereon, should be provided for the information of the officers and men of the brigade. This knowledge is very essential, enabling those in charge of the brigade to decide how many deliveries may be safely or efficiently taken from any one main in the vicinity of a fire.

All fire-hydrants should be plainly and conspicuously marked by indicators that may be readily distinguishable at night time.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

E. Piper, Esq., Secretary, Oamaru Fire Board, Oamaru.

## PALMERSTON NORTH.

SIR,—

Office of the Inspector of Fire Brigades, Wellington, 20th August, 1908.

In reply to your letter dated the 23rd July, addressed to the Hon. the Minister of Internal Affairs, asking for a copy of the report submitted by the Inspector of Fire Brigades, I have the honour to forward you a report in that connection, as follows:—

At 8.5 p.m. on Monday, the 29th June, I gave a call at the Palmerston North Central Station for an imaginary fire in the Square, directing the Superintendent to get two deliveries to work