

44. Are you positive that boreholes have not been driven ahead in compliance with the Act?—I do not know of them.
45. You do not really know anything as to whether they have been driven or not?—No.
46. Have you exercised your right as a check inspector since the section was opened for coal-mining?—No.
47. Why not?—There was no reason. It is nine months ago since we did any check inspecting.
48. Were you intimidated or frightened?—No.
49. So that if there had been any cause for an inspection you would have made it?—We would have been told by the union to make an inspection.
50. How long does it take you to reach the surface for the purpose of relieving yourself?—Seven minutes.
51. What are the sanitary arrangements at the mine?—There is a w.c. outside.
52. And you can get to it in seven minutes?—Yes.
53. Do you consider that a long time?—No, but it is long enough.
54. What distance do you live from the mine?—Two miles.
55. Do you think the men in that section of the mine want a bath-house and a change-house?—I think most of them would use it if it were provided.
56. Have there been any accidents in the mine?—One man had his wrist broken about five months ago; it was a pure accident.
57. You think it is a safe mine?—Yes.
58. Are you aware that there is another shaft in course of construction within 10 ft. of the present one?—I have heard some talk about another shaft.
59. Does the Inspector of Mines frequently visit the mine?—He has been down once since I have been there.
60. Has there been any occasion to make a complaint?—No.

WILLIAM ROBERT DUNN sworn and examined. (No. 8.)

1. *The Chairman.*] You are the mine-manager at the Hikurangi Coal-mine, Mr. Dunn?—Yes.
2. What certificate do you hold?—First-class coal-mine manager's certificate.
3. How long have you had your certificate?—Ten years.
4. Over what period does your mining experience extend?—Fifteen or sixteen years.
5. Where?—Mostly in the Auckland Province—in the Thames goldfields. For five years I was manager of the Northern Mine, and I have been in my present position for three years.
6. Can you give us any idea of the probable life of your mine?—Well, the seams in the north are very patchy. The mine has been in existence for eighteen years, but it is difficult to say how long it will be before it is worked out.
7. You have no reason to think it will peter out?—Not for a year or two.
8. *Mr. Fletcher.*] How do you ventilate your mine?—We are using a steam-jet.
9. Is that satisfactory?—Yes, so far as our mine is opened out. As time goes on we will have to put in a fan.
10. Has the Inspector urged the necessity for a fan?—He has discussed the matter with me as manager. The company is looking forward to putting in a fan.
11. How many men have you employed underground per shift?—About fifty-three men. There are also a few in another section of the mine.
12. Does the quantity of air going into the mine reach the requirements of the Act—150 cubic feet per man?—Yes.
13. Are you going to put in a fan shortly?—Yes, the company is looking out for a fan.
14. *Mr. Cochrane.*] In the event of the incline being blocked, what means of escape would the men have?—There is about 3 chains of the incline which is not yet duplicated, but in the event of that being blocked there is another shaft in course of construction which will be completed in two or three days. Then we will have three exits from the mine. I was in hopes of lowering the water sufficiently to enable the men to go through that section.
15. By what means are you lowering the water?—By tapping it from the present mine. We have lowered it 20 ft.
16. How do you tap it?—It is tapped underground by keeping sufficient boreholes in.
17. You say the air is quite up to the statutory amount: is that so at the working-faces?—Yes, the air is fresh going through the mine; it never becomes very warm.
18. Then why do you not guide it up in the ordinary way?—We are carrying it in the ordinary way. As a crosscut is holed a brattice is put up. If there is a complaint made it is always seen to.
19. Yes, but the current does not seem to be carried right up to the working-faces. The bulk of it appears to be short-circuited?—There is certainly some leakage.
20. *Mr. Reed.*] Are you putting boreholes horizontally in to test for water?—This water question is practically finished. We have tapped the water by extending the boreholes.
21. Have the men any reason to be frightened of its coming in?—Not now.
22. Have the men ever applied to you for bath-houses to be erected?—No; I have never had it mentioned to me.
23. Yours is a practically new mine?—Yes, we have only had it opened nine months. It is practically in a state of development yet.
24. As regards the sanitation, what sanitary arrangements have you provided?—I have put up a w.c.
25. What is the average time that would be occupied by the men in getting to it?—It would take about ten minutes from the working-face and back again.
26. Do the men use this place?—I have never known an instance where it has not been used.