

The appliances are maintained in good order and condition. The station has now been in occupation for nearly four years, and nothing in the way of renovation done during that period; and the inspection of the premises showed they are badly in need of attention, particularly the residential parts. The additional living-accommodation and alterations as suggested by the Superintendent are reasonable requirements, as is also the additional glass panelling in the engine-house and front doors; there is less glazing in these doors than is usually provided.

I would again bring before your Board the necessity of installing a system of street fire-alarms. The favourable fire loss average results attained during the last (nearly) three years are liable to be upset at any moment by a "late call" entirely as the result of there being no direct means of communication with the station, and I would commend this matter to early attention.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

The brigade received thirty-eight calls, of which twenty-nine proved to be actual fires within the district, eight more than during the preceding year.

The attendance of members of the brigade at thirty-three calls, Nos. 15, 32, 34, and 37 omitted, averaged 20.51 per call, or 81 per cent. of the total strength.

The total fire loss amounted to £5,631, as against £2,608 for the previous year, an increase of £3,023.

The estimated cost of the brigade for 1914-15 is £1,939 3s. 4d., as compared with £1,842 9s. 1d. for 1913-14, an increase of £96 14s. 3d.

PETONE.

A special visit was made to Petone on the 12th August, for the purpose of conferring with the Board in reference to various brigade matters.

An inspection of the Petone Fire Brigade, its station and equipment, was made on the 18th June, when there were present at the inspection muster the Superintendent, Deputy, fifteen firemen, and one messenger, or nineteen out of a total strength of twenty-two.

The turnout was performed smartly, and various wet and dry drills were carried out in a very satisfactory manner.

At 8 p.m. on the same date the water-pressure registered on the gauge at the central station was 67 lb., and the average available pressure is about equal to that of last year.

The fire-alarm installation is in good order, and the station and plant are maintained in good order.

During the year twenty-two calls were received, of which eighteen proved to be actual fires occurring within the district, or eight more than during the previous year. The attendance of members of the brigade at twenty-one calls, No. 4 omitted, averaged sixteen per call, or 72.7 per cent. of the full brigade strength.

The fire loss amounted to £3,866, as against £593 for 1913, an increase of £3,273.

The estimated cost of the brigade for 1914-15 is £1,076 11s. 9d., as compared with £847 16s. 10d. for 1913-14, an increase of £228 14s. 11d. The increase is due to the setting-down of sums towards the purchase of a motor appliance, and for the extension of the fire-alarm system.

ROTORUA.

Two inspections of the Rotorua Fire Brigade, its station and equipment, have been made—viz., 18th December, 1913, and 6th May, 1914.

The following reports, forwarded to the secretary of the Board, respectively cover the two inspections:—

SIR,—

13th January, 1914.

An inspection of the Rotorua Fire Brigade and its equipment was held on the 18th ultimo, when there were present the Superintendent, Deputy, and thirteen firemen: these, with two on leave, accounted for the full strength (seventeen) of the brigade then on the roll.

When, as under the new agreement, the reel is being towed to fires by a motor-car, care must be taken not to travel at too great a speed, and, particularly, corners should be rounded very steadily, otherwise an accident, as has already happened elsewhere, will be the result.

The water-pressure gauge in Fenton Street—a comparison with my own gauge proves it to be correct—at 8.30 on Monday, the 17th, registered 46 lb., at 10 a.m. on the 18th 45 lb., and again at 9 p.m. on the same date 45 lb. When compared with my readings taken in July, 1912, there is an average drop of from 10 lb. to 12 lb., and this available pressure is not now an adequate one for fire-protection purposes. The great discrepancy between the static head and the pressure actually available, particularly in view of the large diameter of the carrying-main and of the reticulating pipes, points to an excessive waste or leakage, and if there is no improvement in sight within the near future the brigade should be provided with an auxiliary pumping unit.

I understand there is no regular night patrol by the police in Rotorua, nor is there any night watch of any other description, and in view of local conditions that matter should receive the attention of your Board.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.