

SIR,—

30th May, 1914.

An inspection of the Rotorua Fire Brigade and its equipment was made on the 6th instant.

At the inspection muster there were present the Deputy Superintendent and thirteen firemen: these, with four on leave, accounted for the full strength (eighteen) then on the roll.

A series of wet and dry hose-reel drills were carried out, and, as pointed out at the time, various matters in that connection require attention. The tarpaulin covering the hose and gear at Whakarewarewa is badly torn and requires putting in order.

A number of readings of the water-gauge taken on the 5th and 6th instant gave an average pressure throughout of 49 lb.; and whilst the average shows a slight improvement when compared with that prevailing at the time of my previous visit in January last, it is still unsatisfactory, and is not an adequate pressure for fire-protection purposes in your town.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

The Board now have under consideration the question of the purchase of a motor fire appliance, and in that connection I have recommended that, if it is not yet definitely decided that the work of improving the water-pressure is to be taken in hand in the immediate future, a pumping unit should be included in the motor outfit.

During the past year the brigade has received eight calls, four of which proved to be actual fires, the same number as during the previous year. The attendance of members of the brigade at eight calls average 12·5 per call, or 65·8 per cent. of the full strength.

The fire loss for this year amounted to £116, as against £952 for 1913, a decrease of £836.

The estimated cost of the brigade for 1914–15 is £614, as compared with £419 10s. for 1913–14, an increase of £194 10s., due to a sum of £200 being set down for part reduction of overdraft.

TIMARU.

Two inspections of the Timaru Fire Brigade and its equipment have been made—viz., 28th and 29th October, 1913, and 24th and 25th April, 1914. Both inspections are covered by reports forwarded to the secretary of the Board, as follows:—

SIR,—

6th November, 1913.

An inspection of the Timaru Fire Brigade was held on the 28th ultimo, when there were present the Superintendent, Deputy, and fifteen firemen: these, with two on leave, accounted for the full strength of the brigade. There was also one probationer in attendance.

Various drills, both wet and dry, were carried out in a satisfactory manner.

The brigade should be provided with two hand-pumps.

In all probability it will be necessary in the not-distant future to establish a small hose-reel station on a site further removed from the central station than the shed on the Wilson Street site, therefore it would not be wise to go to any great expenditure on the Wilson Street shed. There is at present a perpendicular drop of some 30 in. or more from the level of the shed-floor to the footpath, and this, particularly in the hands of strangers, might result in the smashing of the reel at any time, as the wheels of the reel stand back some 4 ft. from the door. I would recommend, as explained to the Superintendent, that a ramp the width of the reel should be cut back in the floor so to ease the reel on to the footpath. This could be done at a very small cost.

Enclosed herewith are, first, recommendations *re* specifications and tender for motor fire appliance; and, second, recommendations *re* competitive plans for the new central fire-station.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

SIR,—

1st May, 1914.

Herewith I have the honour to submit for the consideration of your Board the following report in connection with my recent visit to Timaru.

An inspection of the brigade was held on the evening of the 24th ultimo, when there were present at the muster the Superintendent, Deputy, and thirteen firemen: these, with three on leave, accounted for eighteen out of the total strength of twenty.

Various drills, wet and dry, were carried out in a satisfactory manner.

In company with the Superintendent and the secretary of the Board I made an inspection of the new central fire-station now in course of erection, and found things in connection therewith progressing satisfactorily.

The couplings recently supplied to the brigade are not made in accordance with the Government standard pattern, as was ordered. The manufacturers of the couplings in question were supplied with a blue-print copy of the patterns in June last, and I have to recommend that the couplings be returned with the request that they be replaced with new couplings made in accordance with the order as originally given.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

Two special visits were made to Timaru—on the 26th September, 1913, consultation with Board respecting site and plans for the proposed new central fire-station; and on the 12th June last, concerning tenders for the supply of a motor fire appliance.