

The second inspection is covered by the following report forwarded to the Secretary of the Board :—

SIR,—

6th May, 1915.

An inspection of the Feilding Fire Brigade and its equipment was made on the 26th ultimo, and in that connection I beg to submit the following report for the consideration of your Board :—

At the inspection muster there was present the Superintendent, Deputy, and fourteen firemen ; these, with two on theatre duty and one on leave, accounting for the full strength then on the roll.

Various wet and dry drills were carried out, with not very satisfactory results ; but considerable allowance must be made, owing to the fact that a number of the more experienced firemen have recently left the brigade and gone to the front. The vacancies, of course, have had to be filled by inexperienced men, and sufficient time had not elapsed to bring them up to any degree of efficiency, but they should be given extra drilling with that object in view.

Now that the Feilding Telephone Exchange is open all night, I would again suggest to your Board the advisability of utilizing the telephone service as an auxiliary fire-alarm system on the lines as previously recommended.

The price of hose has gone up considerably during the last two or three months, and my information is that further rises may be expected ; therefore I consider it would be good policy to purchase, say, another 500 ft at present quotations.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

During the year fourteen calls were received, of which nine proved to be actual fires within the district, the same number as during the previous year. The attendance of members of the brigade at the fourteen calls averaged 13.2 per call or 60 per cent. on an average strength of twenty-two members.

The fire loss for the year amounted to £3,548, as against £756 for 1913-14, an increase of £2,792.

The estimated cost of the brigade for 1915-16 is £544 11s. 2d., as compared with £683 11s. for 1914-15, a decrease of £138 19s. 10d.

GISBORNE.

One inspection of the Gisborne Fire Brigade has been made, and is covered by the following report forwarded to the Secretary of the Board :—

SIR,—

18th January, 1915.

An inspection of the Gisborne Fire Brigade and its equipment was made on the 6th and 7th instant, and following is a report in that connection :—

At the inspection muster on the 7th there was present the Superintendent, Deputy, sixteen firemen, and four messengers ; these, with two on leave, representing the full strength of the brigade then on the roll.

The motor hose-tender and chemical engine fully loaded with eight men on board was taken for a test run over various rises in the borough, and twice over the Ormond Road Hill on the top gear, when on each occasion the engine was accelerated and the speed of the machine increased whilst on the steepest portion of the rise.

Various drills were carried out in a satisfactory manner, also a test was made of the flow of water from the 4 in. main in Bright Street, when with 120 lb. pressure a flow of 385 gallons per minute was registered.

In view of the necessity of providing for the maintenance of the present auxiliary salt-water system the new site for the central fire-station on the corner of Bright Street and Palmerston Road is a suitable one. No alteration to the existing plans for the new building is necessary more than was pointed out and explained at the time of my visit—viz., the removal and readjustment of the porch and external staircase, so that the building may be brought up to the street-line in Bright Street.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

As in past years, the fire loss in Gisborne is very heavy, more than usually so, and is, in fact, the second highest in all the fire districts ; and for the last two years the average loss per head of the population of the borough is very much higher than that of any other fire district in New Zealand. As stated in my report for 1913-14, in my opinion the higher ratio of loss is not due to any laxity or inefficiency on the part of the personnel of the brigade, but, amongst other things, more particularly due to the want of a suitable central station providing accommodation for men to sleep on the premises. However, the Board has at last made a definite move in that direction, and the new station is now in course of erection ; but had it been built, as it should have been, some years ago, many thousands of pounds would have been saved in the borough. The public telephones are now being utilized as a subsidiary fire-alarm service until such time as a proper street fire-alarm system is installed.

During the year fifty-four calls were received, of which number thirty-five proved to be actual fires within the district, fourteen more fires than occurred during the previous year. The attendance of members of the brigade at the fifty-four calls averaged 16.31 per call, or 83.64 per cent. of an average total strength of 19.50—a good record.

The fire loss amounted to £18,385, as against £9,917 for 1913-14, an increase of £8,468.

The estimated cost of the brigade for 1915-16 is £1,125, as compared with £763 for 1914-15, an increase of £362.