

tensions of the reticulation as recommended above, I have to suggest that the intermediate section of 12 in. piping at present in the carrying main be replaced with 15 in. piping, and that a direct telephone-line be established between the fire-station and the filter-beds, so that the filter-beds may be cut out at once in case of a fire, or, as an alternative, the capacity of the filters be increased so that the full carrying-capacity of the 15 in. main is available at all times.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

During the year thirty calls were received, of which sixteen proved to be actual fires within the district thirteen less than during the previous year. The attendance of members of the brigade at the twenty calls for which a general alarm was given averaged seventeen per call, or 68 per cent. of an average strength of twenty-five.

The fire loss for the year amounted to £2,650, as against £5,631 for 1913-14, a decrease of £2,981.

The estimated cost of the brigade for 1915-16 is £1,685 19s., as compared with £1,939 3s. 4d. for 1914-15, a decrease of £253 4s. 4d.

PETONE.

Two inspections of the Petone Brigade and its equipment have been made—viz., 18th December, 1914, and 21st June, 1915. The two following reports forwarded to the Secretary of the Board cover the respective inspections:—

SIR,—

22nd December, 1914.

An inspection of the Petone Fire Brigade and its equipment was made on the 18th instant, when there was present at the muster the Superintendent, Deputy, and fifteen firemen; these, with five on leave, accounting for the full strength (twenty-two) of the brigade. The station, plant, and appliances are in good order.

Various wet drills were carried out in a fairly satisfactory manner, also a test was made of the flow of water from the 4 in. main in Cuba Street, when, with a pressure at the hydrant of 66 lb., a flow of 250 gallons per minute was recorded.

When turning out with the hose-wagon the horse did not start well, and when in the street opposite the station balked badly, causing a delay of some three minutes or more in getting away. This balking is, I understand, not an uncommon occurrence, and the present horse should be replaced with a more reliable animal, or in its place your Board should provide the brigade with a motor fire-appliance. Taking everything into consideration, the last proposition will prove equal from an economical point of view, and will certainly give more efficient results.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

SIR,—

24th June, 1915.

An inspection of the Petone Fire Brigade and its equipment was made on the 21st instant, and in that connection I beg to submit the following report for the consideration of your Board:—

At the inspection muster there were present the Superintendent, Deputy, fifteen firemen, and one messenger; these accounting for eighteen out of a total strength of twenty men now on the roll. Various drills were carried out satisfactorily so far as the men are concerned, but they require more instruction in various matters, as pointed out at the time. The station and plant is in good order and condition.

The "turn out" of the horse-drawn hose-and-ladder cart was executed very badly, owing to the difficulty of getting the horse to start. Four minutes ten seconds elapsed from the time the order was given until the cart was clear of the station, and again after pulling up it took twelve minutes to restart the horse. I understand from the Superintendent that the balking of the horse has now become of frequent occurrence. This condition of things practically nullifies in effect the expenditure incurred by your Board in bringing the brigade and its equipment up to a proper degree of efficiency, and may at any moment be the direct cause of serious loss. An immediate remedy is required, and two methods are available: First, by replacing the horse-drawn vehicle by a suitable motor fire-machine, which is the more efficient and economical method, but will take some time to carry into effect; secondly, the purchase of another horse to replace the present animal.

Some long time ago I spoke about the wrong handling and the unnecessary backing and filling to which the horse was subjected, but without any result, and if another animal is procured it must be handled differently, otherwise there will be a recurrence of the present trouble.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

A special visit was made to Petone on the 4th September for the purpose of testing a new set of flow-gauges. Since the submission of my report dated the 24th June, the Board has purchased another horse for the use of the brigade, and that is, I understand, giving satisfactory results.

During the year seventeen calls were received, of which number ten proved to be actual fires—eight less than occurred during the previous year. The attendance of members of the brigade at the seventeen calls averaged 12.41 per call, or 62 per cent. of the total strength.

The fire loss for the year amounted to £293, as against £3,866 for 1913-14, a decrease of £3,573.

The estimated cost of the brigade for 1915-16 is £880 13s. 7d., as compared with £1,076 11s. 9d. for 1914-15, a decrease of £195 18s. 2d.