

HAWERA.

An inspection of the Hawera Fire Brigade and of the Fire Police Corps was held on the 2nd September, 1909, when there were present: Brigade—Superintendent, Deputy, and 9 firemen; 3 were on leave and 1 sick; or, 15 accounted for out of 17 then on the roll. Fire Police—Captain, lieutenant, and 6 constables; 3 were on leave and 1 sick; or, 12 accounted for out of 15 on the roll. The second inspection was held on the 3rd February, 1910. Brigade: Present—Superintendent, Deputy, 15 firemen, and 1 messenger; 1 was on leave and 1 sick; or, 20 accounted for out of 21 on the roll. Fire Police: Present—Captain, lieutenant, and 5 constables, or 7 out of a total strength of 14.

The attendance of members of the brigade was good, but that of the Fire Police Corps was very unsatisfactory. Most of the drills were carried out in a smart and efficient manner, and a good discipline is manifest in the brigade. The Central Station and brigade appliances are maintained in good order, and the Fire Police plant is in much better condition than at the time of my previous visit. New hose and coupling-ladders have been provided. No improvement in the hanging of the fire-bell has yet been made.

In an interim report dated the 10th February, 1910, addressed to the Secretary of the Board, I have suggested the neighbourhood of the junction of High and Disraeli Streets as a very suitable site for the new hose-reel shed and bell proposed to be erected at the west end of the town; also that a large-sized trembler bell should be placed in the engine-house at the Central Station.

The Hawera Fire Board should take into consideration the provision of a street fire-alarm system.

During the year ending 30th June, 1909, no fires have occurred in the Hawera Fire District; during the previous year three fires took place, with a loss of £233.

The estimated cost of the brigade for the year 1910–11 is £443, as against £450 for 1909–10, a decrease of £7.

HOKITIKA.

An inspection of the Hokitika Fire Brigade was held on the 5th November, 1909. Present—Superintendent, Deputy, and 16 firemen; 2 were on leave and 2 sick: leaving 8 unaccounted-for.

A second inspection was held on the 27th April, 1910. Present—Superintendent, Deputy, and 8 firemen; 3 were on duty and 1 sick: or, 14 accounted for out of a total strength of 30 on the roll.

The attendance of members of the brigade at the inspection and subsequent drills compares very unfavourably with those of others under the control of Fire Boards, and points to an absence of discipline in that respect or to a want of interest generally in the matter of becoming efficient. Those members who were in attendance carried out the required drills in a smart and competent manner. The stations and plant are maintained in good order and condition.

The high-pressure water system has been installed throughout the town, and a good working-pressure, averaging 105 lb., is available.

Since its inception the Hokitika Fire Board has made considerable additions to the equipment of the brigade. A substantial iron-framed bell and watch tower has been erected, also two new hose-reel sheds, one at the east end of Gibson's Quay, and the other in the north-eastern part of the town. Two new hose-reels, new hose, standpipes, and minor requisites have been purchased, and in the matter of stations, plant, and appliances sufficient provision has been made for the present; but it would add very considerably to the efficient working of the brigade if, as recommended in my report dated the 17th May, 1909, sleeping accommodation for, say, three firemen was provided at the Central Station.

During the year ending 30th June, 1910, 3 fires have occurred in the Hokitika Fire District, as against 5 for the previous year, a decrease of 2.

The loss by fire amounted to £760, as against £1,270, a decrease of £510.

The estimated cost of the brigade for the year 1910–11 is £475, as compared with £645 for the year 1909–10, a decrease of £170.

LAWRENCE.

At 7.35 p.m. on the 24th September, 1909, a surprise alarm of fire was given in Lawrence by means of ringing the fire-bell. The first jet of water was shown at a point some little distance from the station at 7.38.25 p.m., and the second at 7.38.53 p.m., or 3 minutes 25 seconds and 53 seconds respectively from the time of first ringing the bell. This was a very good performance.

At the muster there were present—Superintendent, Deputy, and 9 firemen, or 11 out of a total of 12 on the roll. At the second inspection, held at 7.46 p.m. on the 15th March, 1910, there were present—Superintendent, Deputy, and 8 firemen; with 2 on leave: full strength accounted for. The attendance at both musters was very good.

The various drills were performed in a creditable manner, but attention should be paid to rescue and ambulance work.

A new iron-framed bell-tower has been erected in a more suitable position than that occupied by the old tower.

Five hundred feet of new hose has been purchased, but another hand-pump is required.

During the year ending 30th June, 1910, 5 fires have occurred in the Lawrence Fire District, as against 3 for the previous year, an increase of 2.

The loss by fire amounted to £407, as compared with £550, a decrease of £143.

The estimated cost of the brigade for the year 1910–11 is £100, the same amount as for 1909–10.