

GREYMOUTH.

Two inspections of the Greymouth Brigade, its stations and equipment, have been made—viz., 1st December, 1914, and 3rd April, 1915.

At the first inspection in December there was present the Superintendent, Deputy, and seventeen firemen; these, with one on leave, representing the full strength of the brigade. Various drills were carried out in a satisfactory manner.

The following report, forwarded to the Secretary of the Board, covers the second inspection:—

SIR,—

6th May, 1915.

An inspection of the Greymouth Fire Brigade and its equipment was made on the 13th ultimo, and the following is a report in that connection:—

At the inspection muster there was present the Superintendent, Deputy, and seventeen firemen; these, with one absent, accounting for the full strength of the brigade. Hose-reel and ladder drills were carried out in a satisfactory manner, but the 40 ft. extension ladder is not of a suitable description for ordinary fire-brigade work, and care must be exercised whenever it is found necessary to use it at a fire.

The jumping-sheet is old and too small; a new one should be provided not less than 10 ft. by 10 ft., or, if circular, 10 ft. in diameter.

In the matter of better protection for the southern portion of the town, for a number of reasons, as already explained in detail to several members of your Board, in place of authorizing the formation of an independent or semi-independent body of men, it would be much better and certainly a greater efficiency will be obtained by increasing the strength of the present brigade by enrolling, say, five more men. This recommendation also for the reason that I consider the present authorized strength—viz., twenty all told—is not now an adequate number.

A circular *re* hand fire-engine for sale was recently sent out by this Department, and in the reply received from Greymouth I was much surprised to see stated therein that your Board was prepared to dispose of their steam fire-engine. In view of your present local conditions, I consider the suggestion most injudicious, and strongly deprecate any such action, recommending further that one new 10 ft. length of suction hose be purchased.

The question put to me when in Greymouth as to the liability of the Board under certain conditions is receiving consideration, and an answer will be forwarded to you in due course.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

The stations and equipment is maintained in good order and condition, and I would particularly mention the consistently good average of attendance of the members of this brigade, both at the fire-calls and at my inspections.

During the year eighteen calls were received, of which number thirteen proved to be actual fires within the district seven more than occurred during the previous year. The attendance of members of the brigade at the seventeen calls for which a general alarm was given averaged 17·88 per call, or 89·4 per cent. of the total strength.

The fire loss for the year amounted to £713, as against £1,200 for 1913–14, a decrease of £487.

The estimated cost of the brigade for 1915–16 is £844, as compared with £864 for 1914–15, a decrease of £20.

HAMILTON.

Two inspections of the Hamilton Brigade and its equipment have been made—viz., 3rd November, 1914, and 11th May, 1915; also a special visit was paid to Hamilton on the 21st January for the purpose of consulting with the Board in reference to the tenders for the supply of a motor fire-engine.

Both inspections are covered by the following two reports forwarded to the Secretary of the Board.

SIR,—

24th November, 1914.

An inspection of the Hamilton Fire Brigade and its equipment was made on the 3rd instant, and following is a report in that connection:—

There was present at the inspection muster the Superintendent, Deputy, and nine firemen or eleven out of a total strength of eighteen then on the roll. Of the seven absent, four were at Territorial drill, and three were on leave—an unsatisfactory attendance. Also, I found the appliances and gear in a very dirty state.

Certain experiments were carried out with the object of ascertaining the amount of water to be obtained from the mains for pumping purposes. The results were very unsatisfactory, as from two open standpipes shipped on the 6 in. main the flow amounted to only 110 gallons per minute from each, and from two standpipes shipped on the 4 in. main 85 gallons each.

Practically all the nozzles in use are defective, and new ones should be obtained at once—say, one $\frac{7}{8}$ in., two $\frac{3}{4}$ in., two $\frac{5}{8}$ in., and one $\frac{1}{2}$ in., or six in all.

The fire-protection service in Hamilton is at present in a most unsatisfactory state.

The water-supply, both pressure and volume, is totally inadequate.

The brigade is below its authorized strength.

The brigade equipment is badly deficient.

Altogether, from a fire-protection point of view, a dangerous condition of things exists in your town, and, as a direct consequence, at any moment a fire may occur having most disastrous results that could have been avoided had even some reasonably efficient degree of protection been provided.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.