

A false alarm was given for a fire at the Defence Building in Knox Street; the motor fire-engine arrived on the scene in seventy-four seconds, and water was playing on the building within two minutes six seconds from the time the call was first given. Various drills, wet and dry, were carried out with the motor pump, ladders, &c., and in view of all the circumstances, such as the large proportion of new members and new plant, in a fairly satisfactory manner.

There are several phases of the fire-protection service in Hamilton at the present time which, to say the least, are very disquieting. In the first place, there is the numerical weakness of the Hamilton Section of the brigade, ten in all, the majority of them new members, and only two men sleeping on the station. To remedy this last as much as possible, as suggested at the time, direct alarm-wires should be run to the two firemen's houses situated within a few yards of the station. Secondly, there is the matter of the new fire-bell in Garden Place, at present practically useless for fire-alarm purposes. As far as I can judge, it appears to me that the metal of which the bell is constructed is altogether too soft; in any case the matter should be rectified at once.

Another matter to which I would call attention is the agreement with the Freezing Works Company at Horotiu, some eight miles away, whereby your Board, in case of a fire occurring at the works, "undertakes to send eleven firemen and an officer as soon as possible." Even with the brigade at its authorized strength, that is altogether too many men to send such a distance away, and under present conditions absolutely unthinkable. I would advise an immediate modification of the agreement.

At the time of my visit the whole faces of the hydrant indicators were painted white, but I believe this matter is being attended to.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

W. Luxford, Esq., Secretary, Fire Board, Hamilton.

There was a decrease of six in the number of fires, with a decrease of £26,684 in the fire loss as compared with the working of the previous year. The attendance of the brigade at the eleven calls averaged 13·6 members per call.

HASTINGS.

An inspection of the Hastings Brigade and its equipment was made on the 17th June last. The following report, forwarded to the Secretary of the Board, covers the inspection:—

SIR,—

20th June, 1918.

An inspection of the Hastings Fire Brigade and its equipment was made on the 17th instant, when there was present at the inspection muster the Superintendent, Deputy, seventeen firemen, and two messengers; these, with three on leave, accounting for the then full strength of the brigade. Various hose and ladder drills, both wet and dry, were carried out in a fairly satisfactory manner.

Both hand-pumps are out of order, and the hose on one of them is leaking from end to end; the hose on the other is leaking badly in one place in the middle of the length; it should be cut in two and half attached to each pump. There is a rung missing in one of the lengths of the coupling-ladder. All the new hose should be properly marked in the manner already fully explained.

The motor-machine is at present depending upon a battery-and-coil ignition only, and to give greater reliability I would recommend that a magneto be fitted on the machine so to provide dual ignition.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

The Secretary, Fire Board, Hastings.

As compared with the previous year's working, there was an increase of three in the number of fires, but a decrease of £20,787 in the fire loss. The attendance of the brigade at fifteen calls, Nos. 12 and 14 omitted, averaged 17·3 members per call.

HAWERA.

An inspection of the Hawera Brigade and its equipment was made on the 30th April last, when there was present at the inspection muster the Superintendent, Deputy, and thirteen firemen; these, with two on leave, accounting for the full strength of the brigade then on the roll.

The turnout of the motor hose-tender was performed smartly, and the various wet and dry drills carried out in an efficient manner. The station and equipment was found to be in good order and condition. The Board have provided the brigade with a new 35 ft. trussed extension ladder, also with a Shand-Mason pattern smoke helmet.

Only one fire occurred in the district during the year, a decrease of six, with an increase of £20 in the fire loss as compared with the previous year's working. The attendance of the brigade at the three calls averaged seventeen members per call.