

Hon. Mr. Carroll.

FIRE BRIGADES.

ANALYSIS.

<p>Title.</p> <p>1. Short Title.</p> <p>2. Interpretation.</p> <p>3. Constitution of Fire Boards.</p> <p>4. Election of members of Board by insurance companies.</p> <p>4A. Election of members by local authorities.</p> <p>5. Date of election, &c.</p> <p>6. Term of office.</p> <p>7. Extraordinary vacancy.</p> <p>8. Proceedings of Board not invalidated.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Proceedings of the Board.</i></p> <p>9. Meetings of Board. Election of Chairman. Chairman to preside. Vote of Chairman. Board may regulate its proceedings.</p> <p>9A. Travelling-expenses.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Annual Estimate of Expenditure.</i></p> <p>10. Estimate to be prepared.</p> <p>11. Proportion of contribution.</p> <p>12. Contributions payable quarterly.</p> <p>13. Contributions by insurance companies.</p> <p>14. Board to assess contributions.</p> <p>15. Interest payable on default by insurance companies. By local authority.</p>	<p>16. Contribution of local authority may be raised by rate. Government buildings to be rated.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Powers and Duties of the Board.</i></p> <p>17. Duties of the Board.</p> <p>18. Board may make regulations.</p> <p>19. Board may borrow money.</p> <p>20. Board to keep accounts.</p> <p>21. Balance-sheet to be submitted to Parliament.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Powers and Duties of the Superintendent.</i></p> <p>22. Powers of Superintendent.</p> <p>23. Damage by Superintendent.</p> <p>24. Police to assist Superintendent.</p> <p>25. Powers of Deputy Superintendent.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Inspector of Fire Brigades.</i></p> <p>25A. Appointment of Inspector of Fire Brigades.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>United New Districts.</i></p> <p>26. United fire districts.</p> <p>27. New fire districts.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>General Provisions.</i></p> <p>28. Existing brigades.</p> <p>29. Recovery of fines.</p> <p>30. Repeal.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Schedule.</p>
---	---

A BILL INTITULED

AN ACT to make Better Provision for the Protection of Life and Property from Fire. Title.

BE IT ENACTED by the General Assembly of New Zealand in Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1. The Short Title of this Act is "The Fire Brigades Act, 1904." Short Title.

2. In this Act, if not inconsistent with the context,— Interpretation.
"Board" means a "Fire Board" constituted under this Act:
Struck out.

"Fire district" means every borough having a population of one thousand or upwards, and any other part of New Zealand from time to time declared by the Governor in Council to be a fire district:

"Insurance company" means any person or persons, corporate or otherwise, carrying on, either alone or with any other business, the business of fire insurance, and the agent or agents in New Zealand of any such person or persons, and includes the State Fire Insurance Department;

Constitution of
Fire Boards.

Election of
members of Board
by insurance
companies.

Election of members
by local authorities.

Date of election, &c.

Term of office.

Extraordinary
vacancy.

“Insurance” means insurance against loss or damage by fire :

“Local authority” means a County Council, Borough Council, Road Board, or Town Board :

“Minister” means the Minister charged with the administration of this Act : 5

3. (1.) For every ~~fire~~ provincial district there shall be a Board, called “The Fire Board,” consisting of seven members, to wit,—

One member to be appointed by the Governor ; 10

Three members to be elected by the insurance companies as hereinafter mentioned ; and

Three members to be elected, as hereinafter mentioned, by the local authorities ~~of~~ within the district.

(2.) Every such Board shall be a body corporate under the name aforesaid, having perpetual succession and a common seal. 15

4. With respect to the election of members by the insurance companies, the following provisions shall apply :—

(a.) The election shall be held under ~~regulations~~ rules to be made by the insurance companies carrying on business in New Zealand, and for this purpose the Minister shall notify in the *Gazette* the time and place of a first meeting of the representatives of such companies ; 20

(b.) At such meeting the representatives present shall elect their own chairman, and all matters shall be decided by a majority of votes, each representative having one vote only, whether he represents one or more than one company ; 25

(c.) The chairman shall have a casting as well as a deliberative vote ; 30

(d.) Such ~~regulations~~ rules, when approved by the Governor and gazetted, shall have the force of law.

New clause.

4A. With respect to the members to be elected by the local authorities within each provincial district, the following provisions shall apply :— 35

(a.) The metropolitan authority mentioned in the Schedule hereto shall, in the case of each provincial district, elect one member, and all the other local authorities within that district shall together elect two members. 40

(b.) Such elections shall be held in such manner as may be prescribed by regulations.

5. The appointment and election of members of the Board shall be made and held in the month of March, one thousand nine hundred and *five*, and thereafter in the same month in every alternate year. 45

6. Every member shall hold office until the appointment or election of his successor.

7. In the event of an extraordinary vacancy occurring in the office of a member of the Board, whether by death, resignation, or otherwise, such vacancy shall, within one month after the occurrence 50

thereof, be filled by the appointment or election, as the case may be, of some other person to be a member of the Board, who shall hold office so long only as his predecessor would have held it.

8. The acts or proceedings of the Board shall not be invalid by reason only of the number of members of the Board not being complete at the time of such act or proceeding.

Proceedings of Board not invalidated.

Proceedings of the Board.

9. (1.) The Board shall hold at least four meetings in every year—that is to say, in the months of April, July, October, and January; four members to form a quorum.

Meetings of Board.

(2.) At every annual meeting—that is to say, the meeting to be held in the month of April—the members shall elect one of their number to be Chairman, who shall hold office until the appointment of his successor.

Election of Chairman.

(3.) The Chairman shall preside at each meeting of the Board at which he is present; but in his absence from any meeting the members present shall elect a member to act as chairman at such meeting.

Chairman to preside.

(4.) The chairman at any meeting shall have a casting as well as a deliberative vote.

Vote of chairman.

(5.) Subject to the provisions of this Act, every Board may regulate its own proceedings.

Board may regulate its proceedings.

New clause.

9A. The Board may from time to time, out of its funds, pay the reasonable travelling-expenses incurred by any of its members in attending any meeting of the Board.

Travelling-expenses.

Annual Estimate of Expenditure.

10. On or before the thirtieth day of June in every year the Board shall submit to the Minister for his approval an estimate of the probable expenditure necessary for the administration of this Act within the jurisdiction of the Board up to the ~~thirty-first~~ day of ~~March~~ June in the following year; but no such estimate shall have any force or effect until approved by the Minister.

Estimate to be prepared.

11. The amount of the annual expenditure so estimated shall be contributed and paid to the Board in manner and in the proportions following, that is to say:—

Proportion of contribution.

(a.) One half part thereof shall be paid by the insurance companies insuring property within the ~~fire~~ provincial district; and

(b.) The other one-half part thereof shall be paid by the local authorities having jurisdiction within the ~~fire~~ provincial district.

12. The amounts to be so contributed shall in every case be payable in equal quarterly payments on the thirtieth day of September, the thirty-first day of December, the thirty-first day of March, and the thirtieth day of June in every year.

Contributions payable quarterly.

13. For the purpose of ascertaining the amount to be contributed by each insurance company, the following provisions shall apply:—

Contributions by insurance companies.

- (a.) Every such company shall annually, at such time as may be prescribed by regulations, transmit to the Board a return showing the total gross amount of the premiums received by or due to such company during the year ending the thirty-first day of December then previous in respect of the insurances held by such company within the ~~the~~ provincial district, after deducting the amount of premium actually paid by way of reinsurance to any other company contributing under this Act. 5
- (b.) Every such return shall be accompanied by a statutory declaration by the manager, secretary, or agent of the company, that according to the books thereof, and to the best of his knowledge and belief, the return contains a true statement of the amount of such premiums. 10
- (c.) If any company liable to contribute under this Act makes default in transmitting such return and declaration at the time prescribed by the Board, or furnishes an incorrect or incomplete return, such company shall be liable to a fine of *five* pounds for every day during which it is so in default. 15 20
- (d.) The contribution of each such company shall bear the same proportion to the amount payable by all the insurance companies liable to contribute as the amount of premiums, as shown by each such return, bears to the total amount of premiums as shown by all such returns. 25
14. The amount of the contribution payable by each insurance company and by ~~the~~ *each* local authority shall be determined by the Board, but so that the aggregate amount of such contributions shall not exceed the amount payable as appearing in the estimate hereinbefore mentioned. 30
15. (1.) If any insurance company liable to contribute under this Act fails to pay any quarterly payment as hereinbefore prescribed within thirty days after such payment becomes due, the amount of such payment, together with interest thereon at the rate of *ten* per centum per annum, computed from the expiration of such thirty days, may be recovered as a debt due from such company to the Board. 35
- (2.) If any local authority liable to contribute under this Act fails to pay any such quarterly payment within thirty days as aforesaid, the amount of such payment, together with interest thereon at the rate and computed in manner aforesaid, may be paid to the Board by the Colonial Treasurer, and deducted by him from any moneys payable to such local authority by way of subsidy under any Act. 40
16. In order to raise the amount required by section *eleven* hereof to be contributed by ~~the~~ *a* local authority, it may *either pay the same out of its general rate or make and levy* for that purpose a separate rate not exceeding three farthings in the pound on the annual rateable value of the rateable property in ~~the~~ *its* district: 45
- Provided that in making such rate the local authority may include as rateable property all Government buildings in ~~the~~ *its* district, and may for the purposes of such rate compute the annual value of such Government buildings at a sum equal to six pounds per centum on the capital value thereof as appearing on the valua- 50
- Board to assess contributions.
- Interest payable on default by insurance companies.
- By local authority.
- Contribution of local authority may be raised by rate.
- Government buildings to be rated.

tion-roll made under "The Government Valuation of Land Act, 1896."

Powers and Duties of the Board.

17. It shall be the duty of the Board to establish and maintain ~~an~~ efficient brigades in such parts of the provincial district as it thinks fit for the suppression and extinction of fires, and for protecting life and property from loss or damage thereby, and to ~~furnish such brigade with~~ provide such buildings and equipment as it deems necessary; and for such purposes the Board may lease, purchase, or otherwise acquire land as it may determine.

Duties of the Board.

18. (1.) For the purposes aforesaid the Board may, subject to the approval of the Minister, from time to time make by-laws providing for,—

Board may make regulations.

- (a.) The appointment of a Superintendent and a Deputy Superintendents, and such other officers and members of the any brigade as it deems necessary;
- (b.) The payment of wages to such officers and members, and of gratuities in respect of voluntary or special services rendered to the any brigade;
- (c.) The establishment of stations or divisions of the any brigade, and the area to be served by any brigade;
- (d.) ~~Securing~~ The discipline and good conduct among of members of the brigades;
- (e.) ~~Regulating~~ The storage of kerosene and of any dangerous explosive, and of empty crates, cases, and other packages, sawdust, shavings, hay, straw, and other inflammable substances;

Struck out.

(f.) Regulating the conduct of meetings of the Board, and the payment of fees to members of the Board;

New subclauses.

- (f.) The enrolment of persons as a volunteer fire police, and the control and duties of such persons;
- (g.) The establishment, maintenance, and protection of fire-alarm circuits for public use;
- (h.) The employment of any brigade at any fire occurring outside the area served by the brigade;
- (g i.) Imposing fines not exceeding ~~five~~ twenty pounds for any breach of any such by-laws; and
- (h j.) Generally for the purpose of carrying into effect the objects of this Act.

(2.) All such by-laws, when approved by the Minister and gazetted, shall have the force of law.

New clause.

18A. The Board, its officers and servants, shall have the use of all watermains, water-plugs, and valve-pipes belonging to any local authority, and of all water therein or in any well or tank, free of charge, for the purpose of extinguishing any fire, or for the purpose of drills conducted under the authority of the Board.

Struck out.

Board may borrow
money.

19. (1.) Subject to the approval of the Minister, the Board may from time to time raise by way of special loan under "The Local Bodies' Loans Act, 1901," such moneys as it deems necessary for the efficient performance of the duties imposed on it by this Act, not exceeding at any time *four thousand* pounds: Provided that it shall not be necessary to take a poll of the ratepayers in respect of any such loan. 5

(2.) The Colonial Treasurer may lend, under Part II. of the last-mentioned Act, to any Board, as if it were a local authority, such sum as he thinks fit, not exceeding in any one year the sum of *two thousand* pounds. 10

Board to keep
accounts.

20. The Board shall keep full and correct accounts of all moneys received and expended, and of all credits and liabilities, and shall, within twenty-eight days after the thirty-first day of March in every year, cause to be prepared a balance-sheet, together with a statement of receipts and expenditure for the year. 15

Balance-sheet to
be submitted to
Parliament.

21. Such balance-sheet and statement of accounts, after being audited by the Audit Office, together with a report of the proceedings of the Board during the same period, shall be sent to the Minister, who shall, within ten days after the receipt thereof, lay the same before Parliament, if sitting, and, if not, then within ten days after the commencement of the next ensuing session, and a copy thereof shall be sent to each contributing insurance company and local authority in the fire district. 20 25

Powers and Duties of the Superintendent.

Powers of
Superintendent.

22. (1.) The Superintendent shall at all times, subject to the control of the Board, have charge of the brigade and of all plant belonging to the Board.

(2.) He shall at all times have free access to any building within his district for the purpose of ascertaining and reporting on any breach of the by-laws in respect to the storage of kerosene or of any dangerous explosive, or of empty crates, cases, or other packages, sawdust, shavings, hay or straw, or other inflammable substance. 30

Struck out.

(3.) He shall at all times have free access to all theatres and other buildings within his district used for public entertainment or public concourse, in order to report to the Board whether proper precautions for the prevention of or escape from fire are being observed. 35 40

(4.) On any alarm of fire,—

(a.) He shall with all possible speed proceed to the place where such fire is, and there direct the working of the brigade and of any persons who may place their services at his disposal; 45

(b.) He may take any measures that appear to him necessary for the protection of life or property, or for the control and extinction of fire, and may, with any assistance he requires, break into, take possession of, or pull down any premises for preventing the spread of fire, doing, however, as little damage thereby as possible; 50

(c.) He may order any person under his control, or any constable, to remove any persons who, by their presence or otherwise howsoever, interfere with or impede the labours of the brigade in extinguishing the fire;

5 (d.) He may cause water to be shut off from any main or pipe in order to obtain a greater pressure and supply of water for the purpose of extinguishing the fire;

10 (e.) He may cause any street or thoroughfare in the neighbourhood of any fire to be closed for traffic during the continuance of any fire;

(f.) He may at the time of such fire, or immediately thereafter, pull down or shore up any wall or building damaged by fire that may be dangerous to life or property.

15 (5.) He shall report to the Board on every fire occurring in the district, and shall give such particulars thereof as the Board may require.

New subclause.

(6.) He may appear on behalf of the Board at any inquest on a fire held under "The Coroners Act, 1867."

20 23. Any damage to property caused by the Superintendent in the lawful execution of any power conferred by this Act, or by any member of the brigade or person acting under his orders, shall be deemed to be damage by fire within the meaning of any policy of insurance covering the property so damaged.

Damage by Superintendent.

25 24. The authority of the Superintendent shall be recognised by all members of the Police Force and all other persons, and it shall be the duty of every constable present at any fire to assist the Superintendent in the maintenance of his authority, and in enforcing obedience by all persons to his orders in the due execution of his duties.

Police to assist Superintendent.

30 25. During the absence from any fire of the Superintendent the Deputy Superintendent shall have all the powers and duties herein conferred and imposed on the Superintendent.

Powers of Deputy Superintendent.

New clause.

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

35 25A. (1.) The Governor may from time to time appoint some fit person to be Inspector of Fire Brigades, who shall be charged with such duties as the Governor may from time to time assign to him.

Appointment of Inspector of Fire Brigades

40 (2.) The Governor may also from time to time appoint some fit person to be Deputy Inspector of Fire Brigades, who, under the control of the Inspector of Fire Brigades, shall perform such duties as he is called upon to perform in the carrying out of this Act, and who, in case of the absence, illness, or other temporary incapacity of the Inspector of Fire Brigades, shall act in his name and on his behalf, and while so acting shall have and may exercise all the powers, duties, and functions of the Inspector of Fire Brigades.

45 (3.) Such Inspector of Fire Brigades and Deputy Inspector shall be paid such salaries as are from time to time appropriated by Parliament.

*Struck out.**United New Districts.*

United fire districts.

26. (1.) The Governor may from time to time by Order in Council declare that any two or more fire districts forming a continuous area shall form one united fire district, with such name as is assigned thereto by such Order. 5

(2.) Such Order shall fix the number of the members of the Board of such united fire district, of which number one shall be appointed by the Governor and the remainder (in equal numbers) by the insurance companies and by the local authorities of the districts forming such united fire district. 10

(3.) Such order shall also fix the date of the first election of members of the Board, and on that date the Boards of the fire districts so united shall cease to exist.

(4.) The united fire district so constituted shall be deemed to be a fire district within the meaning of this Act. 15

New fire districts.

27. The Governor may, by Order in Council, from time to time, on application of any Borough Council or other local authority, declare any area to be a fire district under this Act with such name as he thinks fit, and by such order may define the boundaries of such new fire district. 20

*General Provisions.**Struck out.*

Existing brigades.

28. Every brigade existing in any fire district on the commencement of this Act shall be subject to the control of the Board, and the equipment provided for or belonging to the brigade (except in the case of a volunteer brigade) shall be deemed to be the property of and vest in the Board. 25

New clauses.

Existing brigades.

28A. (1.) Every brigade existing in any provincial district shall be subject to the control of the Board, and all land and buildings occupied by any brigade shall, subject to any charge or encumbrance thereon, be vested in the Board in trust: Provided that the Board shall pay to any local authority or person, owners of such land or buildings, a rental of *four* per centum on the capital value: Provided further that should there be any loan outstanding on any such land or buildings the amount of the loan shall, when computing the capital value, be deducted, and the interest, at the rate of percentage at which the money was borrowed, added to the annual revenue. 30
35
40

(2.) The Board shall take over all plant and appliances in the possession of any brigade at a price to be agreed upon between the Board and the local authority or persons owning the same, or, if the parties cannot agree, then at a price to be fixed by arbitration in the manner provided by "The Arbitration Act, 1890," as if this section were a submission under that Act. 45

(3.) Payment of the price so agreed on or fixed may be extended over any period not exceeding ten years, as the Board may determine; and interest at the rate of *five* per centum per annum shall be paid by the Board on so much of the said price as is from time to time unpaid. 50

28B. Every turncock employed by any local authority shall, upon any fire occurring in the district allotted to him by such local authority, proceed with all possible speed to the fire, and, when directed so to do by the Superintendent, shall assist by all means in his power the insuring of a plentiful supply of water.

Turncock to assist.

28c. (1.) Every local authority or person supplying artificial light to any premises on fire shall forthwith send some competent person to shut off or disconnect the supply of artificial light to such premises or to any building, land, or street adjoining such premises or adjacent thereto as and if directed so to do by the Superintendent.

Electric light, &c., may be disconnected.

(2.) Any local authority, company, or person owning any electric tramway shall, if required so to do by the Superintendent, forthwith send some competent person to cut off the supply of electricity from any section required.

28D. (1.) It shall not be lawful to use any building for public meetings, or as assembly-rooms, or as a theatre, or music-hall, or dancing-hall, or for any public performances or public amusements whatever, or for purposes of public worship, or for any local authority to license any building for any such purpose, unless the same is provided to the satisfaction of the Superintendent, or such officer as he may appoint, with sufficient safeguards against and means of escape in case of fire.

Public buildings to be provided with fire-escapes, &c.

(2.) The Superintendent shall at all times have free access to any and every part of any such building in order to ascertain whether or not such provision exists, and shall annually report to the Board thereon in the case of every such building.

(3.) The Board on receipt of such report shall forward the same, or a copy thereof, to the Mayor or Chairman of the local authority within whose district any such building is situate.

(4.) Every person who obstructs or hinders the Superintendent in inspecting any such building is liable to a fine not exceeding *fifty* pounds and not less than *ten* pounds.

29. All fines imposed by this Act shall be recoverable in a summary way, in the manner provided by "The Justices of the Peace Act, 1882."

Recovery of fines.

30. Sections three hundred and ten to three hundred and seventeen of "The Municipal Corporations Act, 1900," and section six of "The Counties Act Amendment Act, 1903," are hereby repealed so far as the same relate to boroughs subject to this Act.

Repeal.

Schedule.

New Schedule.

SCHEDULE.

METROPOLITAN AUTHORITY FOR EACH PROVINCIAL DISTRICT.

Provincial District.			Metropolitan Authority.
Auckland...	...	...	City of Auckland.
Hawke's Bay	...	...	Borough of Napier.
Taranaki ...	...	...	Borough of New Plymouth.
Wellington	...	...	City of Wellington.
Nelson ...	...	...	City of Nelson.
Marlborough	...	...	Borough of Blenheim.
Canterbury	...	...	City of Christchurch.
Westland...	...	...	Borough of Hokitika.
Otago ...	...	...	City of Dunedin.

By Authority: JOHN MACKAY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1904.