

SECTION II.—NATIONAL COMMERCIAL BROADCASTING SERVICE.

GENERAL.

During the year the National Commercial Broadcasting Service operated the following stations :—

1ZB Auckland	..	..	..	..	1 kW.	1,070 kc.
2ZB Wellington	..	..	..	..	1 kW.	1,130 kc.
3ZB Christchurch	..	..	..	..	1 kW.	1,430 kc.
4ZB Dunedin	..	..	..	..	1 kW.	1,280 kc.
2ZA Palmerston North	..	..	..	..	250 watts	1,400 kc.

COMMERCIAL BROADCASTING UNDER WAR CONDITIONS.

Although the Service is in its fifth year, the particular period under review is of special significance in that it represents the first complete year of operation under the stress of war conditions. The hazards which it was anticipated might be associated with advertising over the air in wartime did not materialize, and it was confirmed that in the handling of advertising over the air the Commercial Broadcasting Service could be relied upon to exercise that measure of control and responsibility which should characterize broadcasting at a time of great national emergency. The Service not only fulfilled all the requirements of the Organization for National Security and the Director of Publicity, but it actively co-operated in its own field with many of the War Departments and with national and patriotic agencies requiring its services in connection with war effort. Foremost among the activities in this respect were the campaigns undertaken in connection with war savings, waste material, patriotic funds, and Air Force recruiting.

NATIONAL AND PATRIOTIC SERVICE.

The authorities used the facilities of the Service for the broadcasting of national service talks and announcements, and in addition, nearly ten thousand free (courtesy) announcements were given to patriotic and charitable objects and announcements regarding the nation's war effort. The Service initiated the novel form of charity appeal, known as "the Radio Telephone Appeal," which, reaching the homes of the people and encouraging direct giving, resulted in £48,760 being raised for worthy causes with comparatively little cost to the organizations concerned. This amount was in addition to other large sums raised in connection with other efforts stimulated by the various stations of the Service.

THE ADVERTISING SCHEDULE.

On the commercial side results of the year disclose that, notwithstanding shortage of stocks and difficulties of marketing consequent upon the war, the radio has been resorted to more than ever by advertisers, and the business of the Service reached proportions not hitherto achieved. The operations of the year resulted in a net trading profit of £52,084, out of which the sum of £37,250 has been set aside to meet taxation on the year's earnings.

The Service was able to maintain a generally satisfied clientele, and there were many notable instances of sales successes accruing from the use of the radio as an advertising medium. An interesting feature arising out of the year's operations was the fact that as a result of increased listening to the commercial stations in the daytime and in consequence of an adjustment in which short commercial announcements were rationalized and rotated in the peak entertainment periods in the evening advertisers bought time in the day periods which hitherto remained unsold. The Service experienced difficulty in finding placement in its schedules for all the business offering, and a considerable volume of very desirable business had to be deferred or rejected in order to avoid overcrowding the programmes with advertisements and to maintain a balance between advertising and the purely entertainment aspects. Generally speaking, the actual advertising material included in any one broadcasting week (i.e., seven days, 6 a.m. to 12 midnight) did not exceed 15 per cent. of the total combined output of the stations in the commercial network. The balance represented what the Service had to offer the listening public by way of entertainment without charge to the listeners. Advertising was confined to week-days, while on Sundays and religious holidays the commercial schedules were substituted by attractive sustaining programmes designed to retain listeners for the week-day commercial programmes.

DIVERSIFIED ENTERTAINMENT.

One of the main functions of the Service during the year was to attract and hold the largest volume of listening by the provision of bright, diversified, and popular entertainment. The mainstay of the programmes has been the increasing number of recorded serial features sponsored by advertisers. Progress was made in the development of production studios in which features were recorded for broadcast. In providing public entertainment over such long hours of transmission while giving effect to the sales messages of advertisers, the Service made large use of recorded plays, studio presentations, audience-participation features, and programmes of standard gramophone recordings, all of which were designed to appeal to the diversified tastes of listeners. The Service has produced its own scripts in presenting programmes of topical interest, including important anniversaries and national occasions.

USE OF LOCAL TALENT.

Wherever possible the use of local talent has been encouraged at all the main stations. There have been combinations of artists, both vocal and orchestral, who have found in the Service effective means for the use of their talents. This aspect also has had a place in connection with the production unit in that artists in local centres have been recorded and broadcast in national programmes throughout the network. Encouragement was given to local bands by the broadcast of sessions featuring band