

1942.

NEW ZEALAND.

# POST AND TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT

(REPORT OF THE) FOR THE YEAR 1941-42.

*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.*

To His Excellency Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Cyril Louis Norton  
Newall, G.C.B., O.M., G.C.M.G., C.B.E., A.M.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

I have the honour to submit to Your Excellency the report of the Post and Telegraph Department for the year ended on the 31st March, 1942.

I have the honour to be

Your Excellency's most obedient servant,  
P. C. WEBB.

General Post Office, Wellington C. 1,  
29th June, 1942.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL OPERATIONS AND BUSINESS OF THE DEPARTMENT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1942.

## RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS.

The receipts and payments of the Department for the financial year 1941-42 are shown in the following account:—

<i>Receipts.</i>				<i>Payments.</i>			
		£				£	£
Balance forward .. .. .		..	38,758	Salaries .. .. .		2,131,898	
Postages .. .. .		1,436,959		Conveyance of ocean and air mails .. .. .		161,893	
Money-order and postal-note com- mission .. .. .		62,595		Conveyance of inland mails .. .. .		165,984	
Private box and bag rents and and rural-delivery fees .. .. .		61,495		Conveyance of mails by rail .. .. .		98,350	
Miscellaneous receipts .. .. .		693,169		Maintenance of telegraph and tele- phone lines .. .. .		230,165	
Paid telegrams .. .. .		376,504		Renewals and replacements .. .. .		72,100	
Paid tolls .. .. .		995,373		Motor services and workshops .. .. .		183,612	
Telephone-exchange receipts .. .. .		1,761,918		Maintenance of Post and Telegraph buildings .. .. .		52,060	
			5,388,013	Miscellaneous .. .. .		803,700	
				Interest on capital liability .. .. .		667,196	
				Sick Benefit Fund .. .. .		7,178	
							4,574,136
				Paid to Consolidated Fund .. .. .			235,963
				Renewal and replacement of Assets Fund (investment) .. .. .			578,000
				Balance carried down .. .. .			38,672
			<u>£5,426,771</u>				<u>£5,426,771</u>
			£				
Balance brought down .. .. .		..	38,672				

The total cash value of the transactions of the Department, including the above, amounted to approximately £392,000,000.

STAFF.

COMPARATIVE RETURN OF PERSONS EMPLOYED IN DEPARTMENT.

					1st April, 1941.	1st April, 1942.
Permanent Staff—						
Administrative .. .. .	..	..	..	..	12	17
First Division .. .. .	..	..	..	..	4,734	4,766
Second Division .. .. .	..	..	..	..	6,317	6,325
Junior Assistants .. .. .	..	..	..	..	701	752
					<hr/>	<hr/>
					11,764	11,860
Temporary and Casual Staff .. .. .	..	..	..	..	1,608	3,508
					<hr/>	<hr/>
					*13,372	†15,368
Non-permanent Staff—						
Country Postmasters and Telephonists, including Rail- way officers .. .. .	..	..	..	..	1,645	1,624
					<hr/>	<hr/>
					15,017	16,992

\* Includes 1,395 serving with armed forces.

† Includes 3,929 serving with armed forces.

## OFFICERS ON WAR SERVICE.

At the end of the year the number of departmental employees released for service with the armed forces overseas and within New Zealand totalled 3,929, comprising 3,745 permanent officers and 184 temporary employees.

It has been necessary in the national interest to apply for the exemption from overseas service of 132 officers, all of whom are radio operators or technical officers. Appeals for the postponement of mobilization of 322 men called for home service were current at the end of March.

It is with regret that the following particulars of casualties among officers of the Department serving with the Forces are recorded: Killed in action, 22; died of wounds, 5; accidentally killed, 11; died of sickness, 2; died while prisoner of war, 2; missing, 30; wounded, 36; prisoner of war, 103: Total, 211.

Ten officers have received decorations for meritorious service and fifteen others have gained special mention in despatches.

## STAFFING UNDER WAR CONDITIONS.

To meet the shortage of trained personnel occasioned by the release of large numbers of officers for military service, unprecedented measures had to be adopted. The policy of recruiting women wherever practicable was continued throughout the year, at the end of which approximately 2,500 had been engaged for the duration of the war. Women are now functioning successfully as office assistants, chauffeurs, postwomen, and lift attendants. A number are also employed in departmental workshops and in automatic-telephone exchanges.

Every effort has been made to conserve man-power by the adoption of simplified systems of work and by the elimination of all but essential records.

The filling of positions by more or less inexperienced employees called for the introduction of a fairly comprehensive training scheme for junior officers. Schools have been established at Auckland, Christchurch, and Wellington, where the younger male and female employees are given sound theoretical and practical training.

These schools will also play an important part in the Department's scheme for the rehabilitation of departmental officers returning from overseas, as it is intended to provide refresher courses for our soldier-employees before they recommence their departmental duties.

## APPEAL BOARD.

Appeals totalling 573, received from 147 officers, were adjudicated upon during the year by the Post and Telegraph Appeal Board, with the following results: Allowed, 5; conceded by Department, 4; withdrawn, 154; did not lie, 10; disallowed, 398.

In two other cases the Appeal Board recommended that the appellants be allotted the same grading and salary as the appointee.

## NATIONAL SAVINGS.

The work undertaken by the Post Office in connection with the National Savings Movement has resulted to date in a total of 261,875 National Savings Accounts being opened, exclusive of those accounts opened with the trustee savings-banks at Auckland, Dunedin, Invercargill, and New Plymouth.

For the year ended the 31st March, 1942, the Post Office received contributions amounting to £4,947,654. Since the inception of the movement the total investments in National Savings effected through the Post Office amount to £6,197,028.

## PATRIOTIC FUND: CONTRIBUTIONS BY POST OFFICE STAFFS.

Since the Post Office Patriotic Fund was established in March, 1940, the sum of £7,400 has been contributed to the National Fund and £3,700 to the Provincial Funds, a total of £11,100.

## DEPARTMENTAL MOTOR-VEHICLES.

Under the abnormal conditions obtaining during the year no new vehicles were purchased. A considerable saving in mileage was effected by the restricted use of the existing units.

## WORKSHOPS.

The total value of the work performed in the various workshops during the year amounted to £306,799, of which £119,056 represents the value of services rendered to other Government Departments.

## BUILDINGS.

During the year the erection of the following departmental buildings was completed: Chief post-office buildings at Christchurch and Invercargill; post-office buildings at Katikati and Mount Maunganui; post-office and residence at Mosgiel; automatic-telephone-exchange building at Mount Albert; line store and garage buildings at Dunedin, Stratford, and Wanganui; garage buildings at Hamilton, Linwood, New Brighton, Rakaia, Roxburgh, and Waitara.

Additions were made to the chief post-office building at Auckland; to the post-office buildings at Helensville, Kaeo, Kawakawa, New Lynn, Papanui, Waitoa, and Waitotara; to the workshops building at Invercargill, and to the garage building at Hawera.

Improved accommodation was provided at Nelson, Port Nelson, and Timaru.

At the end of the year new post-office buildings were in process of erection at Brighton, Clydevale, Lower Hutt, Motueka, and Te Kuiti, staff quarters at Awarua Radio, post-office and quarters at Owaka, and an automatic exchange at St. Heliers.

Major additions to the departmental building at Herd Street, Wellington, and the Ponsonby automatic exchange and extensive alterations to the Auckland chief post-office, Awarua Radio staff quarters, Auckland (Newmarket) store and workshops buildings, Dargaville post-office building, Waihi post-office building, and the old chief post-office building at Wanganui also were in progress at the end of the year.

The Putorino post-office building was destroyed by fire on the 10th August, 1941.

Residences for the Postmasters at Feilding and Kaikohe and the Chief Postmaster at Oamaru were purchased during the year.

## POSTAL SERVICES.

### INLAND MAIL-SERVICES.

Inland mail-service contracts in the Auckland, Hamilton, and Thames Postal Districts were relet for a further term of three years from the 1st January, 1942.

At the end of March, 1942, there were 34,080 rural boxholders, which represents an advance of 697 compared with the figures on the 31st March, 1941.

### AIR MAILS.

#### INLAND.

For the twelve months ended the 31st March, 1942, the weight of letters carried by air within the Dominion was 73,802 lb. In addition, 7,356 parcels were conveyed by the inland air services.

#### EMPIRE AIR SERVICE.

The enemy occupation of Malaya and the Netherlands East Indies brought about the suspension of the Australia-India section of the Empire Air Service in February, 1942.

During the ten months of the year that the service was in operation approximately 2,000,000 letters for the New Zealand Forces were despatched to the Middle East by air, the average transit-time being approximately twelve days.

#### TRANS-PACIFIC AIR SERVICE.

The Trans-Pacific Air Service, which commenced in July, 1940, was suspended in December, 1941, owing to the extension of the war to the Pacific. On the nineteen trips made during the year a total of 16,134 lb. of mail was received in the Dominion (4,925 lb. for New Zealand) and 14,329 lb. of mail was despatched (5,999 lb. originating in New Zealand).

The shortest transit-time of mails forwarded by the service to the United Kingdom was nine days, and the average time approximately fourteen days.

In November, the route of the service was varied to include Suva as a calling-place, but on normal flights only two calls at that place were made before the service was suspended.

Subsequent to the suspension of the Trans-Pacific Service it was arranged for correspondence for the United Kingdom to be given air transit, if desired, from the first port of call in North America. The transit-time between the Dominion and Great Britain under this arrangement usually runs from twenty-five to thirty-five days.

#### TRANS-TASMAN AIR SERVICE.

The frequency of the Trans-Tasman Air Service was three times a fortnight up to December, 1941, when, with the suspension of the Trans-Pacific Service, it once again became weekly.

The total weight of mail-matter carried by the service in 1941-42 was—from New Zealand 90,034 lb. (77,913 lb. originating in New Zealand), and to New Zealand 72,030 lb. (63,488 lb. for New Zealand). The average weight of mail carried on each trip was 1,026 lb.

### RESTRICTION OF POSTAL SERVICES.

With the increasing need for conserving man-power it was necessary to suspend the operation of the "Householder" circular delivery system and the "Express Delivery" service and to restrict the frequency of postmen's deliveries in residential areas to once daily.

### PRISONER-OF-WAR CORRESPONDENCE.

Surface mail for prisoners of war is now despatched via New York and Geneva, while air-mail correspondence is despatched to New York, whence it receives air transit to Lisbon by the Trans-Atlantic Air Service. It is understood that air-mail letters for prisoners of war are often given air transit between Lisbon and Germany. Surface mail for prisoners is accepted free of postage, while in respect of air-mail articles cheap rates apply.

Letters from prisoners of war are being received in the Dominion at somewhat irregular intervals. Some appear to be reaching New Zealand via Lisbon and the United States of America and others via Lisbon and the United Kingdom, or via Baghdad and Australia. Advice was received recently that New Zealand prisoners were being permitted to forward their letters at cheap rates of postage for transmission via Turkey and Baghdad for connection with the Empire Air Service. The gain in transit-time that would normally have resulted from this partial air transmission has unfortunately been offset by the interruption to the Empire service.

### GIFT PARCELS FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM.

In order to conserve shipping space it was necessary, on the advice of the British Ministry of Food, to impose restrictions on the acceptance of gift parcels of foodstuffs and non-foodstuffs for the United Kingdom. Such parcels are restricted in weight to 5 lb., and the weight of any one foodstuff commodity enclosed must not exceed 2 lb.

The restrictions do not apply to parcels addressed individually to New-Zealanders serving with the Forces.

### POSTAGE-STAMPS, ETC.

#### NEW STAMPS.

The following new stamps, &c., all of King George VI design, were issued during the year: 3d. ordinary and 3d. "Official" (colour blue);  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. (brown) and 1d. (green) newspaper wrappers; 1d. (brown) post-cards; and 1s. 6d. prisoner-of-war letter-cards.

#### HEALTH STAMPS.

Health stamps were again issued in two denominations— $\frac{1}{2}$ d. and 3d. The stamps, which were of the same design as those issued during the previous year, were placed on sale on the 4th October, and were withdrawn on the 28th February. The value of the stamps sold was £7,427, and one-third of that amount, representing the health value, together with donations amounting to £4,608 collected by the Post Office, was paid to the several Health Camp Committees.

## STAMPS DEMONETIZED.

From the 1st January, 1942, a number of stamps of New Zealand, Western Samoa, and the Cook Islands were demonetized. The stamps covered by the demonetization orders included New Zealand stamps of the King George V series, air-mail stamps of 1931 and 1934, Health, "Silver Jubilee," and other special stamps issued between 1932 and 1936, Stamp Duty stamps of Queen Victoria design, and certain early postage-due stamps and items of postal stationery; the Western Samoan stamps demonetized included the "Native hut" series of 1921; and both the Western Samoan and Cook Islands Orders included various overprinted or special stamps of designs included in the New Zealand demonetization Order.

## DEAD-LETTER OFFICE.

As in the last war, it has been necessary to set up a special section of the Dead Letter Office to deal with undelivered correspondence addressed to members of the armed forces. During the year 122,000 letters were dealt with in the Army Correspondence Section, and of these it was possible to return to the senders 99·9 per cent.

## MONEY-ORDERS, POSTAL NOTES, AND BRITISH POSTAL ORDERS.

Money-orders issued, postal notes sold, and British postal orders sold and paid during the year were as follows:—

	Number.	Value. £
Money-orders .. .. .	751,722	4,302,126
Postal notes .. .. .	2,408,020	980,952
British postal orders sold .. .. .	38,402	11,161
British postal orders paid .. .. .	10,222	5,537

## SAVINGS-BANK.

Deposits lodged in the Post Office Savings-bank during the year amounted to £32,044,733 and the withdrawals to £25,376,744, an excess of deposits over withdrawals of £6,667,989. The amount at the credit of depositors at the end of the year was £71,445,382, the interest accruing to depositors being £1,820,604.

## WORK PERFORMED FOR OTHER DEPARTMENTS.

The total sum handled by the Post Office during the year on behalf of other Departments was approximately £102,000,000, an increase of £7,000,000 on the previous year's figures.

The amount collected by the Department under the Social Security Act amounted to £15,132,427.

## MILITARY ALLOTMENT WARRANTS.

The number of military allotment and dependants' allowance warrants paid by the Department during the year was 1,301,006.

## REGISTRATION OF MOTOR-VEHICLES AND ASSOCIATED WORK.

At the 31st March, 1942, there were 34,701 licensed motor-vehicles in the Dominion. Compared with the previous year's figures, this represents a decrease of 6,941, or 2·22 per cent.

The number of motor-vehicles registered during the year was 11,973, a decrease of 3,578 compared with the registrations during the preceding twelve months.

Notifications of change of ownership recorded totalled 82,120.

The total amount of motor-registration fees collected was £614,392, an increase of £41,903 compared with the previous year.

The premiums collected on behalf of the thirty-seven insurance companies authorized to under-write business in terms of the Motor-vehicles Insurance (Third-party Risks) Act, 1928, totalled £490,176, an increase of £37,645 compared with the amount collected during the preceding twelve months. On this occasion the motor-registration fees and insurance premiums collected covered a period of thirteen months.

Mileage-tax was collected in respect of 794 vehicles, as compared with 493 vehicles during the preceding year. The gross amount of mileage-tax collected was £32,604, compared with £30,025 for the preceding twelve months.

There were 62,869 claims for refund of duty on motor-spirits, and the total amount of duty refunded was £316,085.

## TELEGRAPH SERVICES.

## TELEGRAPH TRAFFIC.

Compared with the previous year the number of telegrams increased by 361,234 (7·27 per cent.) and the revenue by £23,898 (6·77 per cent.).

## CONCESSION-RATE CABLEGRAMS TO AND FROM MEMBERS OF ARMED FORCES.

The concession-rate service for cablegrams to and from members of the Army and Air Force abroad has been replaced by a "Standard-text" service at a flat-rate charge of 2s. 6d. a message and extended to include messages addressed to naval personnel and to messages forwarded by members of the British Merchant Navy. The privilege afforded next-of-kin in regard to communicating with naval personnel is now available to next-of-kin of British Merchant Navy personnel.

## FREE TELEGRAPH FACILITIES FOR INVALIDED MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

For communicating on arrival with their relatives and friends, members of the armed forces returning home on hospital ships are each granted the facility of sending two free telegrams.

**EMPIRE PRESS RATE.**

To encourage the dissemination of news through the press during the war period, a reduction in the Empire press rate from 2½d. to 1d. a word was made on the 1st October, 1941.

**RADIO SERVICES.****OVERSEAS RADIO-TELEGRAPH EMERGENCY CIRCUITS.**

In order to ensure the continuity of overseas telegraphic communications in the event of dislocation of the cables, emergency radio-telegraph channels were arranged between New Zealand and the United Kingdom (two circuits), the United States of America (two circuits), and Australia (one circuit).

**RADIO BROADCASTING.****RECEIVING LICENSES.**

The total number of licenses as at the 31st March, 1942, was 371,257, representing an increase of 15,777, or 4·4 per cent., compared with the number current at the close of the previous year.

**TELEPHONE-EXCHANGE SERVICES.****TELEPHONE DEVELOPMENT.**

The number of telephone subscribers increased during the year from 171,965 to 176,171, an advance of 2·32 per cent. As a result of the restrictions placed upon the provision of new telephone connections in December, 1941, however, the number of telephones relinquished towards the close of the year exceeded the number of new connections installed.

Toll calls also reached a new high level during the year, the number handled being 16,886,371, compared with 15,711,671 for the previous year, an increase of 4·94 per cent.

**TELEPHONE-EXCHANGES.**

The number of exchanges in the Dominion is 349, of which 19 are automatic in operation.

**NEW AUTOMATIC-TELEPHONE-EXCHANGE EQUIPMENT.**

The telephone-exchange at Gisborne was cut over to automatic working on the 5th July, 1941. The first stage of the comprehensive programme to extend the automatic-switching system in the Auckland metropolitan area was completed during the year, and the second stage of the programme is being proceeded with as rapidly as possible. This stage comprises the establishment of new exchanges at St. Heliers, Mount Albert, and Birkenhead, and the installation of additional switching-equipment at the Remuera and Takapuna exchanges.

**PUBLIC CALL OFFICES.**

During the year the number of public call offices (coin-in-the-slot telephones) installed in the Dominion increased from 1,240 to 1,293, an increase of 53. The total collections from the machines for the year was £78,736, an increase of 8·8 per cent. over the previous year.

**APPENDIX.****Table No. 1.**

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR THE YEARS 1940-41 AND 1941-42.

Year.	Balance forward.	Receipts.	Payments for Working-expenses.	Balance of Receipts over Working-expenses Payments.	Other Disbursements.			Payment to Consolidated Fund.	Balance.
					Depreciation Fund Investment, including Expenditure on Renewals, and Replacements of Assets.	Contributions to Post and Telegraph Officers' Sick-benefit Fund.	Interest on Capital Liability.		
1940-1941 ..	38,467	5,106,193	3,615,902	1,490,291	788,280	6,720	665,000	30,000	38,758
1941-1942 ..	38,758	5,388,013	3,827,662	1,560,351	650,100	7,178	667,196	235,963	38,672

**Table No. 2.**

POSTAL ARTICLES POSTED AND DELIVERED IN NEW ZEALAND DURING THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1941.

					Letters, Letter-cards, and Postcards.	Registered Articles.	Accounts, Circulars, Newspapers, Packets, &c.	Parcels.
Posted ..	..	..	..	..	139,760,347	3,236,319	113,090,120	5,874,105
Delivered ..	..	..	..	..	146,056,884	2,740,855	124,231,137	5,078,133
Total ..	..	..	..	..	285,817,231	5,977,174	237,321,257	10,952,238

Table No. 3.  
POST OFFICE SAVINGS-BANK.—GENERAL STATEMENT.  
BUSINESS OF THE POST OFFICE SAVINGS-BANK IN NEW ZEALAND FOR THE YEARS ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1941 AND 1942.

Year.	Number of Branches of the Post Office Savings-bank open at the Close of the Year.	Number of Deposits received during the Year.	Total Amount of Deposits received during the Year.	Average Amount of each Deposit received during the Year.	Number of Withdrawals during the Year.	Total Amount of Withdrawals during the Year.	Average Amount of each Withdrawal during the Year.	Excess of Deposits over Withdrawals during the Year.	Interest for the Year.	Number of Accounts opened during the Year.	Number of Accounts closed during the Year.	Number of Accounts remaining open at Close of the Year.	Total Amount standing to the Credit of all Open Accounts, Inclusive of Interest to the Close of the Year.	Average Amount standing to the Credit of each Open Account at Close of the Year.
1941	939	1,775,375	28,607,222	£ 16 2 31	31,449	415,253	£ 17 9 53	28,075 15 51	666,709 13 41	123,149	90,922	992,792	62,956,737	£ 63 8 3
1942	927	2,124,028	32,044,733	£ 15 1 91	41,142	25,376,744	£ 17 19 86	667,989 8 91	320,604 6 81	136,495	89,504	1,039,733	71,445,381	£ 68 15 0

Table No. 4.

PAID TELEGRAMS FORWARDED AND THE REVENUE DERIVED THEREFROM, THE NUMBER AND CLASSIFICATION OF TELEPHONE-STATIONS AND THE REVENUE DERIVED THEREFROM, AND THE NUMBER OF RADIO-RECEIVING LICENSES.

Year ended 31st March,	Paid Telegraph Traffic.				Telephone Service.						Toll Service.		Radio-receiving Licenses.			
	Ordinary.		Press.		Subscribers Main Stations (a).	Extension Stations, all Classes (b).	Revenue from (a) and (b).	Service Privately Owned Phones connected with Public Telephone-offices.	Number of Public Call Offices.	Number of Toll Stations.	Total Telephone-stations.	Telephones per 1,000 of Population.	Number.	Value.	Percentage of Households equipped.	
	Number.	Value.	Number.	Value.												
1941	4,620,631	£ 294,885	343,192	£ 57,721	169,224	49,446	£ 1,710,387	6,441	1,240	1,995	228,346	139.70	16,092,301	£ 886,635	355,480	91.8
1942	5,015,445	£ 319,898	309,612	£ 56,606	173,302	52,187	£ 1,761,918	6,669	1,293	1,989	235,440	144.31	16,886,371	£ 995,373	371,257	94.9

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; printing (592 copies), £11.