

Six of the eight counties with areas under 100 square miles are in the vicinity of Christchurch. All of the counties where the Counties Act is in operation with areas over 2,000 square miles are in the South Island. Sixty-two per cent. of all counties have areas between 200 and 1,000 square miles, or, omitting the eight smaller counties under 100 square miles and the nine counties over 2,000 square miles, 71 per cent. of the remainder have areas between 200 and 1,000 square miles.

The following table shows the distribution of population as between the various counties :

Table showing the Distribution of Population as between the various Counties in 1941-42

Population.						Number of Counties.
Under 1,000	..	..	..	..	..	10
1,000-1,999	..	..	..	..	..	18
2,000-2,999	..	..	..	..	..	21
3,000-4,999	..	..	..	..	..	27
5,000-7,499	..	..	..	..	..	22
7,500-9,999	..	..	..	..	..	11
Over 10,000	..	..	..	..	..	16
Total						125

There are four counties in each of the North and South Islands with a population of less than 1,000. The other two are the Chatham Islands and Great Barrier Island. One of the smallest counties, Waimairi, with an area of only 48 square miles, has the second largest population, 14,700. This county is highly urbanized, covering some of the better residential districts of Christchurch metropolitan area.

D. ROAD DISTRICTS

Road districts, as previously noted, were conceived as being within the area of any given county, and had their origin in an era when there were grave difficulties in the way of providing and maintaining district roads.⁽¹⁾ At the present time there are no Road Boards properly so called. Four so-called Road Boards are in reality Municipal Corporations; two others are on Waiheke Island, where there is no other local government authority; and another three are in the Sounds County, where the Counties Act is not in operation. These last nine Road Boards are entirely free of county control.

E. HARBOUR DISTRICTS

There are 47 Harbour Boards (including 21 where the Borough or County Council acts as Harbour Board) in New Zealand at the present time. The primary function of a Harbour Board is to maintain a port and provide facilities for its use.

The area served by the port is created into a harbour district for electoral and taxation purposes⁽²⁾. This area is in some cases a single county, in others it covers the areas of several territorial local authorities. These local authority areas are known as "constituent districts"⁽³⁾. Unlike hospital districts, constituent districts of harbour districts at times include only parts of a territorial local authority. Some areas in New Zealand are not in any harbour district. For electoral purposes the harbour district is divided into wards, from each of which one or more representatives are elected to the Harbour Board. Where two or more local authorities jointly elect one or more members, these are known as "combined districts"⁽⁴⁾.

Because of the situation and coverage of harbours, there are great variations in the size of harbour districts. Auckland Harbour District, for instance, covers an area from Helensville, 40 miles north of Auckland, to Te Awamutu, 100 miles south of Auckland; Wellington Harbour District extends to Feilding, 100 miles north of Wellington; on the other hand, Bay of Islands Harbour District covers the area of the Bay of Islands County only. In the case of the smaller coastal harbours, the local authority, usually the County Council, is by Order in Council constituted a Harbour Board, and its district is the area of its jurisdiction as a territorial local authority.⁽⁵⁾

Where the Harbour Board has rating-powers⁽⁶⁾ its rating-powers extend over its district or over only part thereof.

F. HOSPITAL DISTRICTS

As with harbour districts, hospital districts may extend over the area of two or more local authorities. The distribution of hospitals has been determined largely by the geographical features at a time when transport facilities were not so efficient as to-day. As a consequence there are a number of small hospitals serving small areas and small populations. There are to-day 42 hospital districts in New Zealand—27 in the North Island and 15 in the South Island. Some of the districts comprise only one county and local districts internal thereto. Among such are Mangonui, which includes only Mangonui County and Kaitia Town District; Whangaroa and Hokianga, each of which cover only the counties of the same names. At the other extreme several hospital districts cover the areas of many local authorities. Auckland Hospital District, for instance, covers the territories of 16 boroughs, 8 town districts, 5 counties, 5 road districts, and 1 ungoverned area—part of Waiheke Island; North Canterbury Hospital District includes 22 counties, 6 boroughs, and 1 town district.

The whole area of each territorial local authority is in one Hospital District⁽⁷⁾.

⁽¹⁾ See Public Works Act, 1908, Part VIII.

⁽²⁾ Some Harbour Boards have no rating-powers.

⁽³⁾ Harbours Act, 1923, section 21.

⁽⁴⁾ Ibid., section 22.

⁽⁵⁾ Ibid., sections 9-16 and section 30.

⁽⁶⁾ For a fuller discussion of rating-powers of Harbour Boards, see pages 73-74.

⁽⁷⁾ See Hospital and Charitable Institutions Act, 1926, section 3.