

In addition to the above, notice of intention to take under the provisions of Part II of the Servicemen's Settlement and Land Sales Act, 1943, had, as at 31st March, 1946, been issued in respect of eleven properties comprising a total area of 29,300 acres. It is anticipated that upon subdivision approximately sixty sections will be derived from this area.

Up to 31st March, 1946, the following number of ex-servicemen have been established either on permanent tenure or are working on wages or other similar basis with a promise of a permanent tenure on completion of the development programme :—

Land District.	Total.
North Auckland	29
Auckland	106
Gisborne	11
Napier	31
New Plymouth	36
Wellington	46
Blenheim	21
Nelson	4
Hokitika
Christchurch	54
Dunedin	15
Invercargill	24

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These figures do not include ex-servicemen assisted by way of rehabilitation loans to purchase established properties.

Further details of the areas actually acquired during the year are shown later in this report in schedule form. It will be seen that some areas have been acquired for the Native Department for the settlement of Maori ex-servicemen.

In accordance with the policy of the Rehabilitation Board, purchases are still being restricted in the main to areas that are reasonably developed and do not require extensive use of fertilizers for maintenance of pastures. This policy permits subdivision and settlement with a minimum of delay.

Difficulty is still being experienced in the erection of buildings, including houses. The shortage of materials and labour causes delay in completion once contracts for buildings are let. All building-work with the exception of work on those areas controlled by the Superintendent of Land Development, Te Kuiti, is under the supervision of the Department of Housing Construction. The Superintendent at Te Kuiti has his own organization for this work. As at the 31st March, 1946, the following buildings had been completed or were in the course of erection: houses, 271; cowsheds, 173; other buildings, 154.

The shortage of materials has precluded extensive development operations on the various development blocks which have been under the Department's control for some time. In the main, work on these blocks during the year has been confined to cultivation, fencing, draining, normal farming operations, and to maintaining existing improvements as far as possible. Certain blocks and portions of blocks have been made available for the settlement of ex-servicemen, and this principle will be continued when any given block is deemed ready for settlement.

The following comments are made in respect of operations in the different districts :—

SUPERINTENDENT OF LAND DEVELOPMENT, AUCKLAND

During the year twelve properties, totalling 5,561 acres, were acquired for the settlement of ex-servicemen. Pre-settlement work comprised topographical and boundary surveys, schemes of subdivision, road construction, farm buildings, water-supplies, fencing, and the purchase of stock and chattels.