

Notwithstanding further disruptions as the result of heavy gales on the 31st August, service to all subscribers was restored in a temporary measure by mid-September—approximately two months after the major occurrence.

It is estimated that the cost of effecting temporary repairs to the Department's plant will be £100,000, while an additional amount estimated at £350,000 will be required to carry out pre-storm proposals for the reconstruction of the Sockburn--Rangitata River section of the Christchurch--Dunedin main toll line and the laying of some one hundred and forty miles of telephone exchange subscribers' underground telephone cable to replace aerial lines which were damaged beyond repair.

It is fitting that record should be made of the magnificent assistance and co-operation the Post Office received from the Army authorities in connection with the restoration work. Many requests made of them for the supply of accommodation, catering, transport, &c., were readily met. Grateful acknowledgment is also made of the assistance rendered by the Air Department, the Public Works Department, and electric-power authorities and other local bodies situated in the area affected. Mention is also made of the long hours of duty, much of it under difficult and trying conditions, which were cheerfully performed by all ranks of the Department's staff concerned.

RADIO SERVICES

PEACETIME SHIPPING SERVICES

With a view to improving facilities for peacetime shipping services, a two-channel 2½ kilowatt transmitter has been installed at Awarua Radio for operation in the 24- and 36-metre bands.

LONG-DISTANCE COMMUNICATION WITH SHIPS

The wartime restriction on the exchange of radio-telegrams with ships was lifted on the 1st January, 1946, from which date a new method of handling such traffic to and from vessels on long-distance routes was introduced at British-controlled radio-stations.

Under the new organization the world is divided into eight areas, each of which has a central radio-station for communication with shipping. All ships are normally in touch with at least one area station, and to facilitate the disposal of radio-telegrams to ships at great distances, messages are passed by radio channels without additional charge to the appropriate area transmitting-stations.

EXPERIMENTAL AMATEUR TRANSMITTERS

The ban placed on the use of experimental amateur transmitting equipment during the war was lifted on the 8th December, 1945. To date 823 amateur operators' licenses have been issued.

RADIO-TELEPHONE SERVICES

The radio-telephone services to Australia and the United Kingdom, which were closed in 1939 following the outbreak of war, were reopened on the 8th September, 1945, and on the 26th October, a radio-telephone service was established between New Zealand and the United States of America. This service was extended on the 16th January, 1946, to include calls to Canada, Cuba, and Mexico.

PROJECTED IMPROVEMENT TO NEW ZEALAND—UNITED KINGDOM RADIO-TELEPHONE SERVICE

During the year, radio propagation tests have been conducted between the British Post Office and the New Zealand Post Office with a view to determining the practicability of direct radio communication between the two countries. This work followed on from previous tests conducted during 1944–45. The information gained as a result of the tests will make a substantial contribution towards the development of radio-telephone and radio-telegraph services between New Zealand and the United Kingdom.