

Numbers of category "A" men held in the industry on appeal as at varying dates were as follows :—

31st March, 1943	..	..	1,900	} Men aged twenty to forty years inclusive.
31st March, 1944	..	..	1,908	
31st March, 1945	..	..	1,100	} Men aged twenty-one to thirty-five years inclusive with fewer than three children and less than three years' overseas service.

The principal figures relating to releases from the Forces by the action of Armed Forces Appeal Boards and District Man-power Officers are—

Year ended 31st March, 1943 .. 271 The figure for this year includes a small number released for gold and scheelite mining.

Year ended 31st March, 1944 .. 163

Year ended 31st March, 1945 .. 232. Including 140 Third (Pacific) Division personnel.

208. Notified vacancies in the industry as at 31st March, 1946, totalled 184.

### (vi) Transport and Communications

209. Under this heading are included shipping, road-transport services, local-body bus and tram services, and all services provided by the Post and Telegraph and Railways Departments.

210. **Shipping.**—The maintenance of shipping services in times of war is obviously vital to the successful prosecution of war. For this reason it was the general policy of the Department to give absolute priority to shipping in the matter of labour requirements throughout the war years. By reason of its attendant wartime risks, seafaring was regarded in much the same light as service with the Armed Forces, and regular merchant seamen were not mobilized for military service. Generally speaking, no shortage of ships' personnel was experienced, and volunteers were forthcoming for vacancies as they arose.

211. **Road Transport.**—In the first two years of war road-transport services, in common with most industries, lost many experienced drivers to the Armed Forces. By May, 1942, it was necessary to withhold from military service by appeal experienced drivers required for cartage of materials for defence works in Auckland and Wellington. Experienced drivers engaged in other essential driving jobs were also being held on appeal where satisfactory arrangements for replacement could not be made. In March, 1942, a Man-power Utilization Council for the road-transport industry was set up, followed by the setting-up of local Utilization Committees in October of that year.

212. By September, 1942, petrol and tire restrictions, resulting in the curtailment of less-essential services and the zoning of deliveries, were responsible for some easing in the labour situation within the industry, this being taken up by a continuing withdrawal of personnel to the Forces. The industry was declared essential in October, 1942, although even at this point it required no special man-power priority. By December, 1942, some inflow of experienced drivers released from home service had set in, this being largely offset, however, by the continuing call-up of men fit for overseas service as these could be replaced. Although most employers experienced difficulties at some stage, the industry generally encountered no serious difficulties throughout the war, despite the relatively severe draw-off of men into the Forces. On 31st March, 1945, only 461 category "A" men were held on appeal in motor services, including garage employees.

213. **Local-body Bus and Tram Services.**—The operations of the tramway services in the four main centres and in Invercargill, Wanganui, and New Plymouth were declared essential in April, 1942. By this time the loss of staff to the Armed Forces was being severely felt, particularly in view of the overloading thrown on such services by restrictions on tires and petrol. The declaration at that stage did not cover conductors or car-cleaners, as it was considered that these classes of workers could be replaced, as vacancies arose, by the appointment of women.