

In the Hutt Valley 29,000 square yards of road have been formed and metalled for 275 housing units, 12,000 square yards of road have received a priming coat, 18,326 lineal feet kerbed and channelled, 39,000 lineal feet of sewers and storm-water drains laid, 56,000 lineal feet of water reticulation completed, and 5,200 square yards of concrete footpaths laid.

CONSTRUCTION AND IMPROVEMENT OF ROADS

The past year has seen some increase in roading activity, particularly in the direction of providing access to farms and to soldiers' settlement blocks.

Routine maintenance and metalling and the improvement of existing roads by widening, re-forming, and the elimination of small radius bends were continued.

On the Jackson's Bay—Haast Road 1 mile between Okura and Turnbull River was formed and metalled, and apart from the replacement of a number of small temporary bridges and additions to the Arawata River Bridge the work on this road is practically completed.

At the Chatham Islands a good start has been made with the roading programme. Formation has been completed for 6 miles, and a bridge 130 ft. long erected, over the Nairn River.

Work completed for the year amounted to 83 miles of formation, 150 miles of metalling, and 1,174 ft. of bridging; and a further 700 ft. of bridges are in progress.

PLANT AND MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT

The increased activity on hydro-electric construction and Wellington Water-supply Scheme has absorbed a quantity of major plant items.

One of the large tower excavators obtained from the United States of America has been working satisfactorily at Otaki on river clearing and straightening work, and is now shifting over 3,000 cubic yards per ten-hour shift worked.

The Department has continued to hire plant to other Government Departments and to local bodies, and the reciprocal arrangements with the latter have been sustained.

The system of pooling adopted for the mechanical plant continues to maintain the effective distribution and use of the present equipment, which now approaches 10,000 items.

The mechanical condition of the plant has improved during the year, notwithstanding the shortage of repair staff and materials.

Design and manufacture of special plant has been put in hand.

Items of plant which have become too expensive to maintain have been disposed of through the War Assets Realization Board, while a few replacements have been made.

DEFENCE WORKS

Maintenance of camps and establishments belonging to the Armed Services has been continued throughout the year, as has maintenance and caretaking of surplus camps and buildings awaiting disposal by the War Assets Realization Board.