

SUGGESTIONS BOARD

The number of suggestions received during the year was 209, and 47 were adopted or partly adopted. The most meritorious suggestions were rewarded monetarily, a sum of £161 10s. being paid to 38 officers.

POSTAL SERVICES

Notwithstanding a shortage of trained personnel, mail and other postal services have been improved considerably during the past twelve months. At many places additional mail-exchanges have been introduced, both by air and surface means, and faster transmission of surface letter-mails has been arranged by making use of road motor services.

In accordance with the policy of assisting in the development of rural areas, the Department has extended many rural mail-services and introduced a number of new ones. In addition, the frequency of some rural deliveries has been increased. It will not be possible for many years to achieve the ideal of postal service to the gate of every household; nevertheless, no opportunity is being lost in the meantime to extend rural deliveries where the need exists and reasonable arrangements can be made for their operation.

In pursuance of the policy of providing as far as possible for a house-to-house delivery of correspondence, the Department has taken steps to establish postmen's deliveries at some of the smaller country places not hitherto provided with this service. Nine such deliveries have recently been established, and many extensions to existing deliveries, incorporating new housing areas, have been authorized.

Unfortunately, shortage of staff has prevented the inauguration of some services that are justified—for example, the restoration of the night clearance of correspondence from street receiving-boxes in the Auckland metropolitan area. Every effort is being made to overcome these difficulties.

For the number of letters and other articles posted during the year see Table No. 3 in Appendix.

INLAND AIR MAI LS

The total weight of letters carried by air within New Zealand during the twelve months ended the 31st March, 1949, was 338,568 lb. Of this weight, approximately half consisted of outgoing or incoming overseas air-mail. In addition, 77,607 parcels were carried.

Services generally were considerably improved during the year. Many were increased in frequency, and a new service connecting Rotorua and Hamilton with the Trunk service was inaugurated on the 27th September.

The service to Greymouth, which was suspended on the 1st October, 1947, owing to lack of adequate aerodrome facilities, was restored on the 9th August, 1948, by using smaller aircraft.

Calls at Gisborne, which were suspended on the 14th May, 1948, on account of flood damage at the aerodrome, were resumed on the 20th December.

The National Airways Corporation plane "Kereru" which crashed near Waikanae on the 18th March while in flight between Whenuapai and Paraparaumu carried 70 lb. of mail (including 26 lb. of parcels) from Auckland for Wellington, Blenheim, Nelson, and the West Coast. With the exception of 3 lb. of letters for Wellington and $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of letters for Hokitika, all the mail was destroyed by fire.