

E. COMMUNICATIONS

Post Office and Radio Station

A radio station is maintained by the Administration for overseas communication, and a single-line telephone system connects the villages on the island.

Full postal services are provided at Alofi, and the following table gives a summary of the transactions over the past five years :—

	1945-46.	1946-47.	1947-48.	1948-49.	1949-50.
Money-orders issued	£7,177	£9,531	£7,840	£19,668	£22,577
Money-orders paid	£3,781	£4,894	£3,364	£4,728	£2,268
Post Office Savings-bank deposits ..	£8,709	£4,501	£4,927	£6,865	£5,402
Post Office Savings-bank withdrawals	£1,359	£972	£464	£906	£820
Number of radio messages handled	2,001	2,346	2,790	3,093	2,986

The Niue Post Office Savings-bank is a branch of the New Zealand Post Office Savings-bank. The figures given above relate only to local transactions in Niue, as it is not possible to give an accurate indication of the total transactions for the year.

Technical assistance in the operation and maintenance of the Niue postal and radio system is given by the New Zealand Post and Telegraph Department, which supplies the European staff on secondment.

Transport

Niue has some seventy miles of main highway roads. These roads are of improved earth construction and surfaced for about thirty miles with makatea or coral sand, which is obtained from deposits on the upper terrace. The coastal road, which is about forty miles long, passes through all twelve villages. In addition, there are three cross-island roads, from Alofi to Hakupu, Liku, and Lakepa villages, which are approximately seven, nine, and eight miles long respectively. These main roads are 12 ft. wide and are the all-weather type: there are no bridges or viaducts. As secondary highways there are almost twenty-four miles of unimproved earth, non-surfaced roads which have been made by the islanders to open up new areas for crop cultivation. The transport of goods and produce to and from the port of Alofi is carried out by the Administration and privately owned motor-trucks. There are no passenger transport services.

At Alofi there is no harbour, and shipping is worked at a poor anchorage in deep water. Cargo is transhipped by launch-towed whaleboats plying between the ship's side and a concrete jetty erected alongside a narrow boat passage blasted years ago through the fringing coral reef.

The transport section of the Administration, which is staffed by thirteen Niueans and a European mechanic in charge, is responsible for the maintenance of thirteen motor-vehicles, the launch engine, two Diesel engines, three small generating plants, and a generating plant which supplies power for the hospital. The Public Works Department equipment is also serviced, and includes a Diesel tractor, Diesel-operated air-compressor, three 240v. generating plants, and two small stationary engines.

The 30 cwt. truck which arrived in December is kept in continual use by the Medical Department, being used for district work and the conveying of patients to and from the hospital. The truck averages over 1,000 miles a month on this work. An additional car has also been obtained for the use of the Administration.

Improvement in the availability of spare parts from New Zealand has had the effect of speeding up the servicing and repair work on all vehicles.

Extensive alterations have been carried out in enlarging the Transport Department's workshops and office. All work can now be undertaken inside the building, which was not possible previously.