

- (7.) Providing for the joint use of telephones by persons occupying the same premises.
- (8.) Providing a fixed scale of charges for telephone removals and installations of miscellaneous equipment.
- (9.) The providing of annual charges in respect of all miscellaneous equipment, the upkeep of which was previously on a very unsatisfactory basis.
- (10.) The providing of a uniform extra mileage rate in respect of stations beyond base-rate areas, with proportionate charges for party-line stations.

In addition to the foregoing, the new rating system contains a number of minor innovations designed to increase the popularity and foster the development of the telephone system.

The new rates for business stations (individual-line service) vary from £8 per annum at the small country exchanges to £15 per annum at the Class I (four city) exchanges, while the rates for residential stations vary from £6 to £8 10s. per annum respectively. The base-rate areas within which these rates are applicable vary from thirteen square miles at Class IV (non-continuous attendance) exchanges to twenty-eight square miles at Class I exchanges. Two- to four-party line service is available at Class I exchanges, and two- to ten-party line service at all other exchanges. Within base-rate areas the annual rates for two-, three-, and four-party business stations, respectively, vary from £6, £5 10s., and £5 at Class IV exchanges to £10, £9 5s., and £8 10s., respectively, at Class I exchanges, with correspondingly lower rates for residential stations. The charges for five- to ten-party line service (which is not available within base-rate areas) are computed on the distance of the respective stations from the exchange, the minimum rental being £3 per annum.

Although sufficient time has not elapsed to determine the full effect of the new system of rating upon telephone business, development in the suburban and country districts has already been stimulated. This will undoubtedly enhance the value of the telephone to business people by placing them in telephone communication with an increasing number of customers.

The fact that the number of applications for new connections shows no signs of diminishing, and that comparatively few connections were relinquished when the new rates came into operation, indicates that the new scale of charges is not unreasonable. The habit of using the telephone grows steadily, and all indications point to an increasing rather than a diminishing demand for telephone service.

TELEPHONE-STATIONS.

CURVE SHOWING THE GROWTH IN THE NUMBER OF TELEPHONE-EXCHANGE STATIONS IN NEW ZEALAND DURING THE PERIOD 1923-24.

