

1924.  
NEW ZEALAND.  
ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE  
GOVERNMENT INSURANCE COMMISSIONER

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1923.

*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly pursuant to the Provisions of the Government Life Insurance Act, 1908.*

Government Insurance Office, Wellington, 1st July, 1924.

PURSUANT to the Government Life Insurance Act, 1908, I beg to make the following report upon the transactions of the Department for the year ended 31st December, 1923 :—

As foreshadowed in the last annual report, J. H. Richardson, Esq., C.M.G., who controlled for so long a period the destinies of the Department, retired from the Commissionership during the year; and I was appointed to succeed him on the 1st June, 1923.

*Staff.*—Considerable inconvenience has been caused to the Department by the difficulty experienced in securing qualified actuarial assistance. It has taken twelve months to get the position of Assistant Actuary filled, and then only by sending to Great Britain. Not a single qualified candidate was available in New Zealand, and the reluctance of young New-Zealanders to qualify, notwithstanding exhortation, and in the face of obvious opportunities, must apparently be accounted for by their unfavourable verdict upon weighing the monetary inducement against the difficulty and lengthiness of the study, ranging over the whole field of insurance, economics, accounting, banking, and finance, and consuming on the average about seven years. Whatever the cause, the result, following as it did after a similar and even longer delay in securing a previous appointee from Australia, has seriously hampered the work of the Department, as it concerns the best scientific and most indispensable assistance available to a life-insurance office. It has also had its effect upon the important actuarial work performed by this Department for other Departments of the State.

*Business.*—The year has been a good one, as is evidenced by the following comparison with the previous year :—

New policies issued—					1922.	1923.
(a.) Number	..	..	..	..	3,797	4,754
(b.) Insuring	..	..	..	..	£1,286,609	£1,581,722
Business in force—						
(a.) Number	..	..	..	..	59,487	60,545
(b.) Insuring (exclusive of bonus)	..	..	..	..	£15,995,235	£16,549,451
Income—					£	£
(a.) Premiums	..	..	..	..	473,141	489,171
(b.) Interest	..	..	..	..	294,914	315,425
(c.) Annuity purchase-money	..	..	..	..	10,593	10,042
(d.) Total income	..	..	..	..	778,915	814,638
Outgo for claims—						
(a.) Deaths	..	..	..	..	204,791	166,797
(b.) Matured policies	..	..	..	..	198,131	235,409
Accumulated funds					5,922,825	6,222,485

*Insurance without Medical Examination.*—During the year a system was instituted whereby insurance within certain limits may be effected without medical examination. It is particularly useful in out-of-the-way localities where no doctor is available. The results so far have been very satisfactory. Though a large number of policies has been effected, there has not up to the time of writing been a single claim.

*The Balance-sheet.*—On the 31st December, 1923, the total assets of the Department amounted to £6,489,868. The following statement gives the distribution of the assets at the end of the year as compared with the previous year :—

At 31st December, 1922.		Class of Investment.	At 31st December, 1923.	
Amount.	Percentage of Total Assets.		Amount.	Percentage of Total Assets.
£			£	
2,743,870	43·7	Mortgages on freehold property ..	2,674,831	41·2
854,240	13·6	Loans on policies .. ..	874,657	13·5
1,982,900	31·6	Government securities .. ..	2,180,270	33·6
233,025	3·7	Local bodies' debentures .. ..	252,601	3·9
136,895	2·2	Landed and house property .. ..	142,131	2·2
162,941	2·6	Miscellaneous assets .. ..	160,236	2·5
162,148	2·6	Cash in hand and on current account ..	205,142	3·1
6,276,019	100·0	Total .. ..	6,489,868	100·0