

Following on the addition to the usual programme of a dinner-music session at the Wellington station, this session has been instituted at the Auckland, Christchurch, and Dunedin stations.

Dunedin Station: A new studio has been provided at Station 4YA, Dunedin, and the silent night usually observed on Mondays at this station has been abolished, thus bringing it into line with the other stations in observing only one silent night during the week. The output power of the station has also been increased to approximately 500 watts.

The operating-frequency of station 2YA, Wellington, has been altered to 720 kilocycles (approximately 416·7 metres).

Increased use continues to be made of the Department's telephone-lines as an adjunct to the broadcasting service. A record length of circuit was brought into use on the 18th March, when the company's stations at Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin, as well as the auxiliary station at New Plymouth and a privately-owned station at Invercargill, were connected by land line, submarine cable, and carrier-current channels, totalling approximately 1,247 miles in length. Lesser lengths of circuit are in almost daily demand, and the popularity of relays of this nature bears pleasing testimony to the efficiency of the lines made available. In view of the prejudicial effect on toll traffic, there will at times be a limit to the availability of telephone-lines for this purpose, but the departmental policy is to provide lines whenever practicable, especially for relays which may be classed as of a national or international character. In order to make the lines available, it is occasionally necessary to divert toll traffic to less-direct routes.

Seven low-power private broadcasting-stations were opened during the year, two being at Invercargill, two at Masterton, and one each at Napier, Eketahuna, and New Plymouth. In addition, private broadcasting-station 3ZC, Christchurch, was permitted to inaugurate a short-wave broadcasting session. The number of private broadcasting-stations is now twenty. The station opened at New Plymouth is operated by the North Taranaki Radio Society, which is assisted by the Radio Broadcasting Co. of New Zealand, Ltd. The plant and apparatus were supplied by the Radio Broadcasting Co., which also retains the services of the station operator.

The Department's radio inspection staff has continued its activities in the direction of localizing and, where possible, removing sources of disturbance to radio reception. Many and varied are the cases dealt with, among which may be mentioned the following: Faulty street-lamp connections, magnetic battery-chargers, tramway-rail bondings and signalling-apparatus, diathermy and X-ray equipment, high-tension transmission-lines, and telegraph and telephone equipment. With the co-operation of the owners of the lines or equipment concerned, considerable success has been achieved in clearing the ether of extraneous noises. In some localities, however, the removal of the trouble presents difficulties involving considerable labour and expenditure, particularly in regard to a certain type of power-line induction, but it is hoped that the disturbance will disappear in the latter case as improved fittings become available.

The Department has also been actively engaged in detecting persons operating radio receiving stations without licenses; and, during the year, the number of prosecutions totalled 277. The fines inflicted totalled £300.

BROADCASTING AND COPYRIGHT.

In terms of the Copyright (Temporary) Amendment Act, 1928, a claim was lodged by the Australasian Performing Right Association, Ltd., Sydney, for payment of damages for infringement of copyright in connection with the operation of the radio broadcasting service in New Zealand during the period covered by the Copyright (Temporary) Amendment Act, 1928—namely, the 1st October, 1927, to the 31st August, 1929, inclusive—and a Commission, in the person of Mr. Andrew Duncan Thomson, of Lower Hutt, Wellington, was appointed in accordance with the provisions of section 6 of the Act to hear and determine the claim, which was the only one received.

After hearing evidence, the Commission awarded to the applicant association payment at the rate of 6 per cent. of the proportion of radio receiving-station license fees paid or due to the Radio Broadcasting Co. of New Zealand, Ltd., in consideration of their operating the broadcasting service for the period in question. This percentage coincided with that fixed under the authority of section 5 of the Act to be withheld from the license fees accruing to the Broadcasting Co. for the purpose of meeting copyright claims during the period covered by the Act.

From the 1st September last the amount to be paid the Performing Right Association in respect of broadcasting copyright is the subject of arrangement between the association and the Radio Broadcasting Co.

REVISION OF RADIO REGULATIONS.

Arrangements are in train for the whole of the New Zealand Radio Regulations to be reviewed and consolidated in one volume. This is in consequence of the great development in recent years of radio-electric communication, and also having in view the amendments to the International Radio-telegraph Convention made by the Washington Conference of 1927, which became operative from the 1st January, 1929. The work is expected to be completed at an early date.

RADIO-DEALERS' LICENSES: INCREASE IN FEES.

From the 1st April, 1929, the fees for radio-dealers' licenses were increased, as mentioned in last year's report, to £15 for a Class I license, £7 10s. for a Class II license, and £2 for a Class III license. Prior to these increases the percentage of dealers' fees paid to the Radio Broadcasting Co. was 90; it is now reduced to 45.