

IMPROVEMENTS.

Seven WAB and/or Ws locomotives were equipped with improved travelling-bogies and five locomotives were equipped with electric headlights.

One hundred and four locomotives were equipped with "Waikato" spark-arresters in order to enable soft coal to be more extensively used.

CARRIAGES.—NEW CONSTRUCTION.

Ten new carriages, comprising two sleeping-cars and eight second-class main-line cars, were completed and passed into service during the year. Construction work on seventeen new main-line carriages is well advanced.

IMPROVEMENTS AND CONVERSIONS.

Two sleeping-cars were converted to second-class day-cars and equipped with chair-seats.

Five carriages were fitted with steam-heating equipment.

The programme of improving the seating-accommodation has been proceeded with during the year. Fifty-four second-class cars which had longitudinal seating were equipped with chair-seats of the "Addington" type.

The lavatory accommodation on seventy-four cars was improved in accordance with an improvement programme which has been under way for the past few years.

The number of carriages in service at the end of the year was 1,500, of which number twenty-one were sleeping-cars.

Seven carriages were equipped with S.K.F. roller bearings, making a total of fifty-nine cars equipped with these bearings to date.

The installation of ball bearings in the passenger rolling-stock has been an important phase of the endeavours that have been made to improve passenger services. With the ordinary type of axle-box, hot-boxes are liable to occur, notwithstanding that a high standard of care may be exercised in their maintenance. The inconvenience of delay and disturbance of passengers when a hot-box occurs on a passenger vehicle is a serious matter, and one that the Board has been most anxious to avoid. It had been decided, prior to the constitution of the Board, that a number of axle-boxes of the ball-bearing type should be installed, and the result has amply justified this decision. The first bearings were placed in service late in 1931, and up to the present there have been no delays due to axle-boxes running hot on the vehicles that are equipped with roller bearings.

BRAKE-VANS.

Two fifty-foot and nine thirty-foot brake-vans were constructed during the year and passed into traffic, and three forty four feet postal vans were converted to brake-vans.

Four hundred and ninety-eight vans were in service at 31st March, 1934, of which total 485 were brake-vans and thirteen postal vans.

WAGONS.

The construction of new rolling-stock to replace vehicles scrapped was continued during the year, a total of 216 wagons being constructed, comprising two petrol-wagons, five bogie horse-boxes, 171 four-wheeled sheep-trucks, ten four-wheeled frozen-meat trucks, and twenty-eight four-wheeled ventilated wagons.

The number of wagons scrapped during the year totalled 494, comprising thirty-six bogie vehicles and 458 four-wheeled vehicles.

At the close of the year 211 wagons were under construction in the workshops, comprising twenty bogie sheep-trucks, six bogie frozen-meat trucks, sixteen bogie covered goods-wagons, seventy-one four-wheeled sheep-trucks, eight four-wheeled frozen-meat trucks, and ninety four-wheeled ventilated wagons.

The total number of wagons in service at 31st March, 1934, was 27,418.

TRANSPORTATION.

The train-mileage for the year (exclusive of shunting and departmental mileage) was 10,163,474, as against 9,828,853 for the previous year, an increase of 334,621 train miles. Of the total train-mileage run 4,550,559 were passenger-miles and 5,612,915 goods-miles, an increase of 201,792 and 132,829 respectively as compared with the previous year. The particulars of the revenue train-mileage run in the various sections are as follow :—

Section.	1933-34.	1932-33.	Variation.
Kaihu	13,808	13,136	+ 672
Gisborne	37,108	40,324	— 3,216
North Island Main Line and Branches	6,228,946	6,008,264	+220,682
South Island Main Line and Branches	3,740,547	3,624,551	+115,996
Westport	60,492	60,671	— 179
Nelson	38,923	39,240	— 317
Pictou	43,650	42,667	+ 983
	10,163,474	9,828,853	+334,621