

Branch.	1922-23.	1933-34.	1934-35.	1935-36.	1936-37.
<i>Expenditure.</i>					
Head Office	9,612 2 8	7,788 11 9	8,612 5 5	9,193 9 7	10,067 13 2
Harbours	4,826 13 2	1,792 3 3	2,071 3 7	2,333 3 11	2,668 5 0
Lighthouses	49,532 14 2	38,306 13 11	40,190 0 8	43,928 18 8	48,849 4 11
Mercantile marine	15,150 17 11	18,868 11 0	19,629 5 3	20,256 11 9	23,129 2 0
Inspection of Machinery	27,015 0 0	14,279 19 6	15,130 5 5	15,863 12 0	18,191 10 1
Fisheries	9,580 7 1	8,948 11 2	10,191 16 10	9,785 3 4	12,319 8 5
Miscellaneous services	2,655 3 8	25 19 6	.. ..	5 0 0	.. ..
Grants and subsidies	1,510 0 0	550 0 0	550 0 0	250 0 0	250 0 0
Depreciation	8,156 0 10	13,303 8 10	13,140 4 9	12,961 3 2	12,960 7 5
	128,038 19 6	103,863 18 11	109,515 1 11	114,577 2 5	128,435 11 0
Interest on capital	15,716 7 3	20,634 1 0	14,331 17 2	13,917 8 0	13,483 19 9
Totals	143,755 6 9	124,497 19 11	123,846 19 1	128,494 10 5	141,919 10 9
Financial result	Deficit. 63,798 18 3	Surplus. 3,301 15 9	Surplus. 9,685 14 8	Surplus. 3,093 1 8	Deficit. 1,510 3 10

A deficit of £1,510 3s. 10d., after making allowance for approximately £13,000 depreciation and interest charges of over £13,000, is most satisfactory. The total expenditure shows a rise from £102,187 last year to £116,046 for 1936-37, an increase of approximately £14,000, of which £6,000 is represented by the restoration of staff salaries. The income of the Department has also risen from £131,659 in 1935-36 to £140,181 in 1936-37, the principal increase being £4,700 in light dues from shipping—a reflection in the Department's accounts of the improved general trend of trade. Income from fisheries has also increased from £869 in 1935-36 to £2,056 in 1936-37, due to the making provision for 10 per cent. of fresh-water-fishing-license revenue to be paid to this Department. This extra fisheries income is to cover, to some extent, the activities of the Fresh Water Fisheries Research Section, which has now been accommodated in a laboratory in Wellington.

The restricted rock-oyster season in Auckland during the past year brought results comparable with previous years.

HARBOURS.

An important function of the Marine Department is the investigation, in conjunction with Treasury, of all applications for loans by Harbour Boards or harbour authorities under the Local Bodies' Loans Act. The financial and engineering aspects of each application receive close scrutiny from both national and local points of view. This is a necessary feature, particularly as public funds are being expended in capital works which may, or may not, have a purely local value and it is now noticeable that Harbour Boards are beginning to study their progress more from a national point of view than formerly. When it is considered that three minor adjoining ports in New Zealand have a collective public debt of over £2,000,000 without yet accomplishing the provision of a harbour capable of berthing foreign-going vessels, the need for close scrutiny of proposed works and co-operation of harbour authorities will be apparent.

Most of the larger New Zealand harbours are controlled by local Harbour Boards, the smaller ports being vested in County Councils, with the exception of Picton and Westport harbours, which are controlled by the Marine Department. The minor harbours, not vested in a local body, are also controlled by this Department.

Westport Harbour.—The chief improvement carried out during the year was the electrification of the harbour lights, and arrangements are now well in hand for the construction of an extension to the breakwater and repairs to the existing one. From a shipping point of view this harbour was maintained in an excellent manner during the past year, the depths both on the bar and in the berthing-area being well above normal.

The average of monthly mean depths on the bar at L.W.O.S.T. was 16 ft. 3 in., a considerable improvement on the 14 ft. 4 in. for the previous year, and 14 ft. for 1934-35. For April the mean depth on the bar was 14 ft. 3 in., and from then on a gradual increase was maintained until October, when a mean depth of 17 ft. 4 in., the highest for the year, was reached. The following table shows the number of days in each year during the past ten years on which the specified depths were maintained:—

Depth.	1927-28.	1928-29.	1929-30.	1930-31.	1931-32.	1932-33.	1933-34.	1934-35.	1935-36.	1936-37.
Over 14 ft. .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	365	365	366	365
„ 16 ft. .. ..	..	365	365	365	..	365	360	357	361	365
„ 18 ft.	366	350	363	340	366	350	279	353	355	356
„ 20 ft.	351	249	345	208	360	287	152	263	263	328
„ 22 ft.	217	168	276	43	252	144	42	81	90	257
„ 24 ft.	102	107	99	..	53	14	..	15	6	86
„ 26 ft.	17	26	11	..	10	..	..	..	..	7
„ 28 ft. .. ..	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..