

FIGURES released in the annual report of the New Zealand Broadcasting Service for the year ended on March 31 last may mean that the Dominion now has more radio receivers per head of population than any other country. The total number of licences at the end of March was 393,899—an increase on the previous year of 14,657. "Only one or two countries were ahead of us before," the Director of Broadcasting told *"The Listener,"* "but I should think we are in the lead now."

Discussing plans for the future development of radio in New Zealand, the Director's report details steps being taken to improve the service to the West Coast of the South Island, the Bay of Plenty area, and North Auckland by the provision of more transmitters. These are described as the areas first needing attention. The improved coverage will be given by additional stations giving a three- to four-hour service daily in certain districts, and by relay lines installed to re-broadcast first-class programmes in different parts of the country.

The intention is also to provide alternative programmes from transmitters at least equal in power to those which operate at present in the four main centres.

When possible, stations which are at present broadcasting for only part of the day will have their hours increased. At Greymouth, Invercargill and Napier the hours of broadcasting have already been extended, those at Greymouth now being from 7.0 a.m. to 10.0 p.m. (Mondays to Saturdays), and from 8.45 a.m. to 10.0 p.m. on Sundays. When conditions permit the hours of these stations will be extended still further.

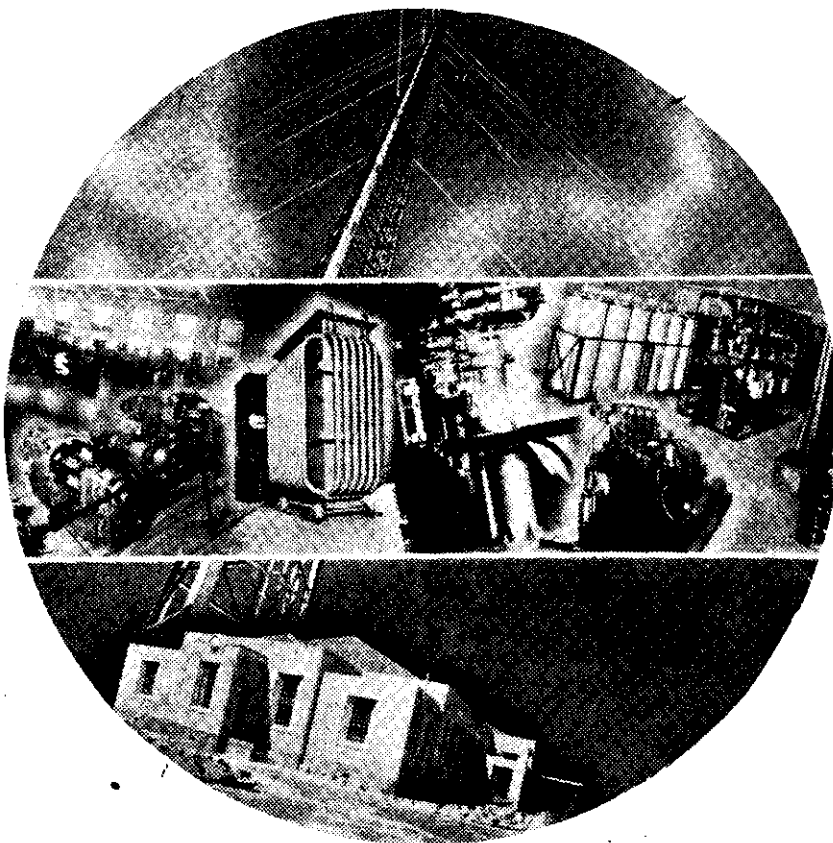
Improvements For Greymouth

The first steps towards improving and increasing the strength of Station 3ZR at Greymouth were taken a few days ago when Professor Shelley and a technical adviser visited the West Coast to consider a new site for the transmitting plant. On his return, Professor Shelley said that it was intended to make the Greymouth station at least as strong as 2YC. The station at the present time is quite a small one and is not considered adequate. As the projected transmitter



Spencer Digby photograph
PROFESSOR JAMES SHELLEY
Director of Broadcasting

N.Z. RADIO'S PLANS FOR THE FUTURE



was a powerful one, which would blanket reception if housed in Greymouth itself, a suitable site outside the town had to be found. However, although these preliminary step had been taken, it would be some time—perhaps a year—before a start could be made with the installation of the plant, which still had to arrive from the makers.

Scarcities Cause Delays

The hampering effects of wartime scarcities and post-war production problems upon Service developments are mentioned in the Report. The most serious effect of wartime conditions was in curtailing development and reducing maintenance work. As soon as labour and materials are available a heavy programme of expenditure must be faced in overtaking arrears of construction and in the replacing of equipment.

Discussing future expansion, the Report points out that the difficulty in providing housing for studio and transmitting equipment (as well as the difficulty in obtaining that equipment) will be likely to cause considerable delay in effecting improvements.

Mobile Recording

Research into shortwave propagation and reception, in which the Service has co-operated with the BBC, is to be continued in the future, and a new development (for New Zealand) will be the provision of full-scale mobile recording equipment. Two vans designed for this purpose—one for each island—will be maintained, and one will be ready for the road soon.

The aim in using these vans, the Director told *The Listener*, will be to get in touch with talent outside the

cities, reach people in country towns and districts—especially those who can talk of the early days, and give some idea of how their districts and towns evolved, make recordings of native birds and gather material for feature programmes.

"It will be our aim to bring the interests of various parts of New Zealand to the notice of New Zealanders in general," Professor Shelley said.

The mobile recording vans will have the best possible equipment and will be capable of making high-class recordings, either out of doors, or with microphones placed in suitable rooms or halls.

In the sphere of shortwave propagational research, the Service has been co-operating with the BBC in taking measurements at Quartz Hill (near Makara) of the field strength of the BBC transmissions received there, and the R.N.Z.A.F. has assisted considerably by supplying measurements of the horizontal angle of arrival in New Zealand of BBC transmissions. New equipment is to be provided now to enable the NZBS to carry on these observations. There is still a good deal to be found out—the transmissions do not always arrive here at the angle they might be expected to—and by gathering observations over a period, the Service hopes to be able to contribute to the knowledge and predictability of shortwave broadcasting.

Duplication of Recordings

From time to time a need arises for a number of copies of certain recordings. Where the number required is small, this can be done by "dubbing" each disc from the original, but this is not a satisfactory method for larger quantities. In this case, it is preferable

to have a special die made from the original and then press out the number of copies required. There is at the present time no such plant in New Zealand, and the intention is to install a small one. This will be of assistance not merely to the NZBS but also to other Departments requiring quantities of special recordings.

Scripts and Hours

The year under review has been a remarkable one for the increase in the number of scripts submitted for broadcasting. Altogether, 651 were examined, compared with 270 in 1944-45; 227 in 1943-44; 304 in 1942-43. Of the 651, 406 were dramatic scripts, 155 were short stories, and 90 were continuity

Light Music is Well Ahead

THE annual report of the NZBS contains a programme analysis of the total transmitting-time of the 14 stations of the National network for the week ended March 31, 1946, showing that the time was occupied as follows:

	per cent.
Serious music - - -	19.3
Light music - - -	46.3
Modern dance music - -	5.7
Plays, sketches, and dramatic serials - - -	6
Sporting commentaries - -	4.7
Talks, general education (including schools broadcasts) -	4.7
News and commentaries - -	8.2
Church and devotional services	2.3
Children's sessions - - -	2.8

scripts. The Service accepted 274. Of these total stated, 106 were submitted by New Zealand authors, but the majority were not of a sufficiently high standard, only seven being acceptable.

During the year, the aggregate transmission time of all the stations, both National and Commercial, amounted to 77,329 hours. Only 60 hours of scheduled transmission time were lost (21 hours were lost due to mains power failures beyond the control of the Service, and 36 were lost through failures of technical equipment).



THE HON. F. JONES
Minister of Broadcasting