

The New Zealand Radio Record

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Home Journal

(Incorporating the "Canterbury Radio Journal.")

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WELLINGTON, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 1931.

AN EXAMINATION FOR RADIO SERVICEMEN.

THE New Zealand Electrical Federation has taken a wise step in introducing an examination for Radio Servicemen, for such an examination has been long overdue. At the present time the radio-trician is in rather an unsatisfactory position. He has to comply with many of the regulations pertaining to the installation of electrical apparatus, yet no steps are taken to ascertain that he knows them. Certain other duties that anyone installing a set must perform can, according to the regulations, be carried out only by a licensed wireman—few licensed wiremen are radiotricians.

Apart from this there is a pressing need for an examination to bring the trade to the status of other trades. A man would not enter your home and interfere with the drainage system unless he had a license or was acting under the supervision of a licensed drainlayer who had passed a certain examination. Yet there is nothing to prevent anyone interfering with your radio set. You may or may not know the man who does the job. In any case you are not aware of his qualifications and accordingly take a certain risk. Complaints regarding the inefficiency of certain types of "servicemen" are common and with the popularity of the electric set there is now a more pressing need for the straightening out of the position.

THIS is what the Electrical Federation is endeavouring to do this month, and we wish them every success. Much will, of course, depend upon the examination itself. With nothing to guide them, other than overseas examinations, the Federation has no easy task. They must be guarded against setting a too easy or a too academic paper. Although theory is the basis of all sound practice, too high a standard in this direction can easily be asked, and men who, placed before a set would have no difficulty in locating and rectifying trouble, may be non-plussed by a question involving knowledge of, say, vectors and calculus. Yet the radio engineer will be quite at home with these calculations. The examination is not one that aspirants to an Institute would be required to pass, but it should seek to ascertain the practical knowledge of the candidate. Another important aspect of the examination will be the questions on the regulations. This was one of the reasons for its institution, for too few radio dealers or their servicemen are conversant with the wiring regulations which concern them. Often dangerous apparatus is installed through sheer ignorance of the regulations, and as modern radio demands the use of relatively high voltage current there is a very real source of danger if that apparatus is handled by men unacquainted with the hazards they are creating. The wiring

regulations have been framed with the object of protecting the every-day user of the apparatus.

Examinations for radio servicemen are regularly held in some of the older countries, where radio is recognised as a trade on a par with all others, and as such must set a definite standard to which those entering it must conform.

NO doubt the institution of the examination will be only the commencement of a general "cleaning-up" regarding radio installations. Without a doubt there are literally thousands of radio sets that at the present time do not conform to the regulations, and thereby place their owners in a questionable position in the case of damage by fire to the property on which they are installed. For the past two years mains energised electrical apparatus has been used for the operation of radio sets, and although the Underwriters' Association has made certain demands there is no evidence of these being enforced or of steps having been taken to make the regulations known. In fairness to the owner of such apparatus the regulations should be made more widely known.

That the position is receiving some thought is shown by the fact that certain insurance companies are issuing their policies subject to radio apparatus complying with the fire underwriters' regulations with regard to radio. They are even sending inspectors to examine the radio installations. When existing sets have been thus dealt with it will be an easy matter for all future ones to be brought into line.

Just how the home constructor will fare under the stringent regulations is problematical. Of course, the battery set constructor will not be affected, but the a.c. enthusiast will be somewhat suppressed. In the interests of radio generally it would be regrettable to frame regulations forbidding the manufacture of home-made power apparatus. The regulations should be constructive. Generally speaking, the only enthusiast who will undertake construction of power apparatus is he who has had a fair amount of experience, and provided he knows the regulations he will comply with them. This fact must be borne in mind by the authorities. Of course, when the amateur wishes to graduate into the professional or semi-professional ranks, it is only right that he should be subjected to a searching test such as that now instituted.

Licenses Now Exceed Sixty Thousand

Numbers Steadily Rise

ON September 30, there were 67,575 radio licenses in New Zealand, and of these 66,000 odd were for receiving sets. On this date last year there were approximately 56,000 licenses. The following table sets out the position in detail:—

	Receiving	Dealers'	Transmitting and Receiving	Experi- mental and Special	Free
AUCKLAND	19,621	250	99	1	93
CANTERBURY	10,644	149	92	2	44
OTAGO	8,146	123	54	2	31
WELLINGTON	27,628	374	167	4	51
	66,039	896	412	9	219
TOTAL: 67,575.					

RADIO GOODS *What to Buy and Where*

BURGESS RADIO BATTERIES, All Radio Dealers.

LOFTIN-WHITE AMPLIFIERS Stewart Hardware Ltd.,
Courtenay Place, Wellington.

MULLARD VALVES All Radio Dealers.

RADIOLA RECEIVERS and Farmers' Trading Co., Ltd.,
Expert Radiola Service (N.Z.)... Hobson Street, Auckland.