

A certain number of bridges, which had passed beyond the end of their useful life to a dangerous condition, were put in hand for reconstruction so far as supplies of materials and man-power would permit. These are located chiefly in the Whangarei and Napier districts. Approximately 3,000 ft. of bridges were completed during the year, the largest being the 540 ft. Mataura River bridge, near Wyndham, in Southland County.

The completion of two overbridges—one near Auckland and one in the Dunedin district—has eliminated two further level-crossings, another at Auckland has been dealt with by a subway, and two more near Hunterville and Napier have been brought into use by completion of their approaches. The total number of crossings made safe under this programme is now 120.

The principal reconstruction work undertaken was that of the 17-mile section between Waiouru and Taihape. The formation is nearing completion, and the greater part of the length has been metalled and sealed. A 6-mile length, including two bridges, is in hand on the Pokeno-Paeroa highway, and 4 miles near Helensville, while $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles has been reconstructed between Waiuku and Kohekohe.

Shorter lengths have been carried out elsewhere, particularly in the Napier district and on the Wangamoa Hill, Nelson.

Sealing in the Auckland district comprised principally $3\frac{1}{4}$ miles of first-coat and 5 miles of second-coat adjacent to Otorohanga, 2 miles near Turua in Hauraki Plains County, $3\frac{1}{4}$ miles at Leamington, and 12 miles south of Putaruru.

In the Tauranga district, $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles was sealed on State highways and $3\frac{1}{4}$ miles on those in the Gisborne area. On the Taupo-Napier highway a recently-constructed section of 3 miles received a sealing-coat, and shorter lengths on other highways completed a total of 7 miles in the Napier district.

Very little new surfacing was undertaken in the Taumarunui and Taranaki districts, but Wanganui recorded $24\frac{1}{2}$ miles, including 9 miles on the Waiouru-Taihape section mentioned above.

The Wellington district accounted for $3\frac{3}{4}$ miles, principally in the second-coat sealing of the main Hutt road. Several sections in the Manawatu area were widened and treated with plant-mix.

On the Wangamoa Hill, Nelson, $6\frac{1}{4}$ miles was sealed, and the Canterbury districts returned 14 miles, including a 6-mile length in Ashburton County.

A plant-mix smoothing-coat was laid on the 16-mile Hinds-Orari section, and on $14\frac{3}{4}$ miles between Pareora and Deep Creek, both on the Christchurch-Dunedin highway.

Practically no sealing was done in Otago but in Southland $7\frac{1}{4}$ miles was surfaced on the Lorne-Riverton State highway, together with several short township sections.

At the Homer Tunnel, Milford Sound, ring-drilling preparatory to enlargement was carried out over the full length, and 922 ft. enlarged to full size. The concrete avalanche-protection at the Cleddau portal has been completed for a length of 246 ft., and all work is now suspended.

The construction of footpaths was continued to a limited extent, the principal items being three $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile lengths in the Auckland district and $\frac{1}{2}$ -mile near Wellington.

Flood damage has been very heavy in some districts, principally Taumarunui, Wellington, Nelson, and the West Coast. In Taumarunui and Wellington East restoration work has been practically continuous throughout the year, as far as supplies of plant and man-power would permit. The removal of slips has been greatly facilitated, in both time and cost factors, by the use of modern machinery.

The maintenance of signposts has been carried out on main highways by automobile associations, under subsidy from the Board, as usual.

The sixteenth examination for Foremen and Overseers of Road Construction was held on the 29th October, 1941, when only fifteen candidates presented themselves. Of the five candidates who sat for papers Nos. 1 and 2, two were successful in passing both. Five candidates passed paper No. 1 only, while four passed No. 2 only. To date, one hundred and forty-seven certificates have been issued.

The Board would like to express its sincere appreciation of the co-operation extended to it by local authorities and automobile associations during the year, and looks forward to a continuance of the same good relationship during the difficult period ahead.

As usual, the Public Works Department has rendered valuable services to the Board in matters relating to main highways administration, and the Board extends its thanks to the officers concerned.

The audited statement of accounts is also submitted herewith.

Signed on behalf of the Main Highways Board:

W. L. NEWNHAM, Chairman.