

1942.
NEW ZEALAND.

NATIONAL SERVICE DEPARTMENT: EMPLOYMENT DIVISION.

REPORT OF THE CONTROLLER OF EMPLOYMENT.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

REPORT.

To the Hon. the MINISTER OF LABOUR.

National Service Department,
Wellington, 30th June, 1942.

SIR, —

I have the honour to present herewith for the information of His Excellency the Governor-General the report upon the activities of the Employment Division, covering the year 1st April, 1941, to 31st March, 1942, except where otherwise indicated.

I have, &c.,

A. J. RIDLER,
Controller of Employment.

ADMINISTRATION.

The Employment Division's activities during the year under review in so far as they relate to employment-promotion measures have been curtailed with the falling off in the numbers of men requiring assistance. At the same time, the staffs generally have been working at high pressure, particularly in district offices, in view of the general expansion in relation to rehabilitation and man-power (industrial) work.

This report deals only with the employment-promotion schemes and the State Placement Service which come directly under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Labour, the other activities of the Division being the responsibility of the Minister of National Service.

The administration generally, together with the schemes in operation, are as outlined in last year's annual report.

FINANCIAL.

Provision for expenditure incurred in the promotion of employment is subject to appropriation by Parliament in terms of the Public Revenues Act, 1926, and during the year under review the sum of £1,604,287 (gross) was appropriated from the Consolidated Fund under vote, "Labour," for this purpose.

As the amount appropriated included £104,287 (gross) to cover the administration expenses of the Employment Division of the National Service Department, provision was made for the net administration expenses in connection with the employment-promotion schemes and the State Placement Service to be recovered from vote, "National Service."

The net payments during the year ended 31st March, 1942, and corresponding figures for the previous year, including administration expenses recovered from vote, "National Service," were as follows:—

	1941-42.		1940-41.	
Employment-promotion schemes—	£	£	£	£
Scheme No. 4b	158,206		296,274	
Scheme No. 4F	8,863		20,145	
Scheme No. 13	1,095,770		2,069,422	
Scheme No. 16	4,422		12,318	
Scheme No. 16A	606		577	
Insurance of workers ..	657		3,082	
Transport of workers ..	1,042		1,567	
Youths farm settlement ..	345		826	
Miscellaneous	3,145		7,647	
Rural housing bonus ..	15,376		928	
	1,288,432		2,412,786	
Administration expenses	97,162		100,814	
	£1,385,594		£2,513,600	

It will be seen from the above statement that the total expenditure under the employment-promotion schemes during the year ended 31st March, 1941, was £2,412,786, as compared with £1,288,432 during the year under review, a reduction of £1,124,354.

NUMBERS EMPLOYED.

The following table shows the numbers of men engaged under the various schemes in full-time subsidized employment from January, 1940, to 4th April, 1942 :—

Date.	Scheme No. 4B.	Scheme No. 4C.	Scheme No. 16.	Scheme No. 16A.	Scheme No. 13.	Total.
1940.						
13th January	3,624	14	498	7	10,285	14,428
10th February	3,359	17	488	7	9,866	13,737
9th March	3,435	18	475	7	9,412	13,347
6th April	3,629	21	452	7	8,627	12,736
4th May	4,041	15	442	7	8,393	12,898
1st June	3,836	15	427	7	8,373	12,658
29th June	3,579	48	416	7	8,358	12,408
27th July	3,512	143	410	6	9,412	13,483
24th August	3,018	292	397	7	10,111	13,825
21st September	2,885	567	389	8	10,626	14,475
19th October	2,746	749	359	8	10,133	13,995
16th November	2,541	785	314	8	9,747	13,395
14th December	2,155	798	286	8	9,144	12,391
1941.						
11th January	1,880	777	275	8	8,449	11,389
8th February	1,759	702	253	9	7,105	9,828
8th March	1,655	544	220	9	6,363	8,791
5th April	1,500	384	199	11	5,426	7,520
3rd May	1,526	343	192	11	5,052	7,124
31st May	1,501	319	173	10	4,837	6,840
28th June	1,548	302	151	9	4,714	6,724
26th July	1,572	263	139	10	5,038	7,022
23rd August	1,581	254	122	10	4,993	6,960
20th September	1,478	220	109	10	4,976	6,793
18th October	1,212	190	97	10	4,858	6,367
15th November	969	164	91	11	4,822	6,057
13th December	697	137	79	11	4,258	5,182
1942.						
10th January	528	124	76	11	3,703	4,442
7th February	372	91	68	10	3,332	3,873
7th March	255	79	50	10	2,668	3,062
4th April	194	70	47	10	2,092	2,413

It will be seen that the number of men for whom provision is still required to be made has been very substantially reduced, and this is the direct outcome of the acute labour shortage in all fields of industry brought about by war conditions which have increased the general acceptability to employers of those types of men whom they would not engage in normal times.

SCHEME No. 4B.

Under this scheme subsidies up to 75 per cent. of the wages-cost were provided for the employment of registered and eligible men on a contract basis for the improvement and development of farms.

From the very nature of the work undertaken the men engaged under Scheme No. 4B must be considered as reasonably fit, and during November, 1941, the scheme was suspended owing to the shortage of labour for maintaining and processing production, particularly on farms and in the cheese, woollen, and linen-flax industries. At that time it was left open for all work which had already been started to be continued to completion, even although labour was not then employed. The prosecution of urgent defence works following the entry of Japan into the war rendered the labour position more acute, and in February instructions were issued that no more men were to be placed under Scheme No. 4B and that all outstanding commitments were to be cancelled. Current contracts were allowed to continue to completion.

The following analysis shows what has been done under the scheme during the period under review :—

SUMMARY OF SCHEME No. 4B CONTRACTS FOR YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH, 1942.

Number of contracts	1,195
Total number of men allocated	2,096
Average number of men employed monthly	990
Total labour-cost	£225,572
Total of subsidies	£158,206
Estimated stock increase—	
Sheep	69,925
Cows	7,456
Cattle	3,339
Pigs	287
Work completed—	
Scrub-cutting	68,653 acres.
Gorse-grubbing	21,956 acres.
Stumping	4,360 acres.
Bushfelling	2,513 acres.
Drains dug, deepened, and widened	47,838 chains.
Fencing	23,123 chains.

Additional work carried out under the scheme comprises river-protection work, top-dressing, track and road formation to enable access to be given to isolated areas, flood-damage restoration, and ploughing of virgin land.

SCHEME No. 4F.

This scheme provides subsidies for twelve months on the basis of £1 10s. per week for the first six months and 15s. per week for the second six months in respect of the employment of inexperienced labour on operational farm work. In addition, a house allowance of £1 per week is payable in the case of married workers, whether experienced or inexperienced, where married accommodation is not available and the worker is consequently required to be separated from his wife and family.

Up to the 4th April, 1942, a total of 1,283 inexperienced farm hands had been placed under this scheme for training, and in an additional 242 cases house allowance had been paid. Of the number placed only 70 were still employed at the 4th April, and this number comprised the following :—

Single men on dairy-farms	..	..	..	..	..	17
Single men on sheep-farms	..	..	..	..	..	8
Married men on dairy-farms	..	..	..	..	..	17
Married men on sheep-farms	..	..	..	..	..	14
Total number on subsidy	..	..	..	..	..	56
House allowance (married men)	..	..	..	..	..	14

SCHEME No. 13.

70

This scheme provides for the full-time employment at award rates with local bodies and other employing authorities of registered and eligible men.

The steady decrease in the figures showing the number of men employed under this scheme reflects the ever-increasing demand by private industry for labour. It is known that a considerable number of those drawn from Scheme No. 13 for private work could not in normal times obtain such employment in the open market, but under present conditions employers generally will accept an inferior type of labour.

The large majority of the 2,092 men still remaining under the scheme at the 4th April are definitely unfit and suitable for only the lightest type of work. Included in this number are :—

With public works	..	..	..	..	..	106
On holiday pay	..	..	..	..	..	94
On rabbit-extermination	..	..	..	..	..	225
On ordinary Scheme No. 13	..	..	..	..	..	1,667
Total	..	..	..	..	..	2,092

The work upon which these men are engaged is as follows :—

Streets, roads, and reserves	..	..	..	..	..	1,392
Drainage	..	..	..	..	..	24
River-protection	..	..	..	..	..	8
Sewerage and water-supply schemes	..	..	..	..	..	6
School-ground improvements	..	..	..	..	..	72
Public works	..	..	..	..	..	30
Land-development	..	..	..	..	..	30
Development of flax industry	..	..	..	..	..	76
Produce-growing and pig-raising	..	..	..	..	..	66
Rabbiting	..	..	..	..	..	225
Defence works	..	..	..	..	..	71
Recovery of essential war materials	..	..	..	..	..	21
Miscellaneous	..	..	..	..	..	71
Total	..	..	..	..	..	2,092

Those shown as employed on recovery of essential war materials are engaged on the demolition of the s.s. "Port Bowen," s.s. "Mokoia," the tug "Mana," and recovery of the Waipori pipe-line.

The following table shows the number in age-groups of those employed under ordinary Scheme No. 13, and indicates that they are mainly men getting on in years :—

Age-group.	Number.	Per-centage.	Age-group.	Number.	Per-centage.
20-24	10	0.6	50-54	273	16.4
25-29	29	1.8	55-59	511	30.6
30-34	46	2.7	60 years and over	418	25.1
35-39	88	5.3			
40-44	127	7.6		1,667	100
45-49	165	9.9			

All these men are in varying stages of unfitness for normal work, while 72 per cent. are over fifty years of age and 89 per cent. are over forty years of age. Those sixty years of age or over comprise mainly men whose wives are not yet eligible to receive age-benefit.

The work classification of these 1,667 men is as indicated hereunder :—

	Number.	Percentage.
Class 1: Fit for heavy local or distant work	42	2.5
Class 2: Fit for heavy but exempt from distant work	274	16.5
Class 3: Fit for manual work but not of a heavy nature	1,274	76.4
Class 4: Unfit or fit for the very lightest of work only	77	4.6
	1,667	100

Persistent endeavours are being maintained to place in private employment all men employed under Scheme No. 13.

RABBIT-EXTERMINATION.

In order to encourage the destruction of rabbits during the summer months when normal rabbiting activities are usually suspended, the major rabbit-extermination scheme was recommenced from 15th September, 1941, with subsidy on the basis of £3 10s. per week for registered and eligible men and £3 per week for men specially registered on the recommendation of the Stock Inspector. The scheme covered the employment of men by both Rabbit Boards and individual farmers. With individual farmers the scheme ceased on 31st March, 1942, and with Rabbit Boards will cease on the 30th April, 1942.

The greatest number of men employed under this scheme was 489 in the week ended 7th March, 1942, and as at the 4th April, 225 men were engaged.

Reports received from Stock Inspectors of the Department of Agriculture concerning this scheme show the following position up to 31st March :—

District.						Men employed.	Rabbits destroyed.
Hamilton	..	..	..	..	..	35	56,547
Wellington	..	..	..	..	..	13	13,613
Canterbury	..	..	..	..	..	103	372,631
Otago	..	..	..	..	..	467	624,873
						618	1,067,664

These figures do not take into account the considerable numbers of rabbits which have been destroyed by means of fumigation and pollard poisoning.

SCHEME No. 16.

SUBSIDIZED APPRENTICES IN BUILDING TRADE.

Since this scheme commenced in September, 1937, some 631 apprentices and 128 trainees have been placed, the position regarding these contracts on the 4th April, 1942, being as follows :—

				Carpenters.		Bricklayers.	Total.
				Apprentices.	Trainees.		
(a) Contracts in operation	..	..	..	46	1	..	47
(b) Contracts suspended	..	..	..	203	14	7	224
(c) Contracts terminated	..	..	..	183	81	4	268
(d) Contracts completed	..	..	..	166	27	12	205
(e) Contracts cancelled	..	..	..	9	5	1	15
Totals	..	..	..	607	128	24	759

Of the 47 contracts still in operation, 45 are in their third year and two in the second year.

SCHEME No. 16A.

SUBSIDIZED WORKERS IN BOOT-MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY.

A total of 23 men have been engaged under this scheme since its commencement in August, 1939, the position concerning these contracts at the 4th April, 1942, being as follows :—

Contracts in operation	..	..	..	..	..	..	10
Contracts terminated	..	..	..	..	..	..	12
Contracts expired	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
							23

STATE PLACEMENT SERVICE.

Last year's report referred to the difficulties faced by the Service in attempting to meet the requirements of the wartime labour market. As was to be expected, these difficulties have been further accentuated during the twelve months ended 31st March, 1942, and recourse to special powers for the redirection of labour into essential industries has been a logical development from the increasing difficulty in obtaining labour for works of extreme national importance.

Notwithstanding the partial easing of labour difficulties in consequence of emergency powers for the redirection of labour, there still remain shortages of workers in essential industry, and any shortage therein must be considered serious. All possible effort to relieve the position is being continued.

The use of female and youth labour, as well as the services of semi-fit and elderly male adults, is a trend which has been considerably accelerated in the period under review. The extent to which semi-fit and elderly male workers, not generally successful in obtaining continuous employment, have been absorbed into employment under the stress of war conditions is illustrated by the fact that on the register of the State Placement Service as at the 31st March of this year current enrolments were only 1,836 men fit solely for light work and 261 regarded as unacceptable to industry, whereas at the 31st March, 1941, the corresponding figures were 2,901 and 377.

PLACEMENT SERVICE STATISTICS.

On the 31st March, 1942, there were 4,513 males and 272 females enrolled for employment with the State Placement Service. The contraction in the numbers of both classes of workers available for placement since the same date in 1941 is indicated by the corresponding figures of males 9,442 and females 389. The following table illustrates the industrial fitness of enrolments current with the Placement Service as at the 31st March, of this year :—

Classification.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Verified first class, fit, and prepared to travel to distant employment	26	2	28
Verified first class, fit, but not prepared to travel	358	9	367
Verified second class, fit, and prepared to travel to distant employment	191	..	191
Verified second class, fit, but not prepared to travel	764	28	792
Unverified and not finally classified	1,077	163	1,240
Fit for light work only	1,836	45	1,881
Unemployable	261	25	286
			4,513
			272
			4,785

The above figures include men employed under Scheme No. 13 who are automatically registered with the State Placement Service with a view to ensuring that they are transferred to private employment as opportunities arise. Many of the persons registered are at present in employment and were registered with the Service merely for the purpose of obtaining more suitable employment.

An indication of the number of enrolments of persons with the Service effected throughout the year as against those current as at 31st March, 1942, is given by the information that 29,134 males and 4,397 females sought the assistance of the Service at some time or another during the period under review.

During the twelve months ended 31st March, 1942, 43,108 vacancies for male and 6,453 for female workers were notified to the Placement Service by employers. The corresponding numbers of vacancies for the year ended 31st March, 1941, were 46,370 and 7,702.

During the year ended 31st March, 1942, the Placement Service filled 30,331 private positions with male enrollees and 3,474 with female enrollees, while a further 2,024 vacancies with State Departments were filled by male enrollees. According to Placement Service statistical practice the figures below relating to placements refer to positions filled and not to individuals placed. (N.B.—One person may enrol and be placed on several occasions in the same year):—

Table of Male Placements—i.e., Private Positions filled.

Nature of Placement.	1936 : May to December.	1937 : January to December.	1938 : January to December.	1939 : January to December.	1940 : January to December.	1941 : January to December.	1942 : January to March.	Total.
Permanent (of three months' duration or more)	9,530	17,650	12,885	11,370	10,827	12,303	3,386	77,951
Temporary (of more than one week's duration but less than three months)	5,384	12,051	9,416	8,569	9,224	9,207	2,056	55,907
Casual (up to one week's duration)	4,329	17,092	17,354	12,879	11,262	10,293	1,561	74,770
Totals	19,243	46,793	39,655	32,818	31,313	31,803	7,003	208,628

SHORTAGE OF SKILLED LABOUR.

The shortage of skilled labour in industry has continued to be felt to an increasing extent during the period under review. The special measures adopted last year by the Dominion Auxiliary Workers' Training Council in association with the Placement Service for the training, by means of short courses, of auxiliary workers in certain trades have continued to be operated during the twelve months ended 31st March, 1942. These courses have applied to boot and shoe clickers, makers-up and finishers, as well as to other tradesmen in the boot and shoe manufacturing industry, and to fitters and turners and welders in the engineering industry, while a trade school for the speedy training of carpenters was recently opened at Miramar, Wellington. Each of these measures has contributed only to the amelioration of the adverse labour position in the industries concerned. Figures relating to numbers of workers trained by means of each of the auxiliary training schemes will be provided by the Labour Department, to which Department the Secretariat of the Dominion Auxiliary Workers' Training Council is attached.

Apart from the trades and occupations in which emergency training facilities have been available, there continues to be evident a shortage of skilled and semi-skilled manufacturing operatives. The woollen and clothing manufacturing industries could absorb considerably more workers, and particular attention is given to meeting the requirements of these important war industries. Again the newly-launched linen-flax industry has felt the need of numbers of suitable men who could be trained for the skilled and semi-skilled factory processes involved. The Service has been of considerable assistance to the various factory managements in this respect, but here again the absorptive capacity of the industry has not been fully reached.

Other industries, such as tannery-works and lime-quarries, have particularly felt the pinch for labour during the last twelve months, and the Service has encountered the greatest of difficulty in referring men to either industry. The bushfelling and sawmilling industry remains short of a number of experienced workers, particularly bushmen, the shortage of whom constitutes a serious bottle-neck in the production of timber for defence, housing, and other constructional purposes.

PROVISION OF RURAL LABOUR.

The widespread shortage of farm labour commented upon in previous annual reports has continued to be felt in even an increasing degree during the last twelve months. The contraction of the number of workers available, either single or married, has compelled the launching of a Women's Land Corps as a measure designed to offset the withdrawal of male labour for military purposes. What male labour has remained available for engagement has, to an increasing extent, comprised married farm workers with two, three, or more children, and for them accommodation has generally been unavailable.

During the period 30th June, 1941, to 31st March, 1942 (approximating to the farming season), the State Placement Service has filled 2,339 farm vacancies with male enrollees. This figure is considerably short of the 5,265 placements of male workers effected during the period 1st July, 1940, to 31st March, 1941. The explanation of this is, of course, easily discernible in the shrinking numbers of male workers available, and to an extent also in the tendency of farmers to rationalize farm-management in an attempt to offset the shortage of hired labour. During the period ended 31st March, 1942, 2,206 of the 2,339 placements effected were in respect of experienced workers, and of this number 549 only related to married farm workers. Thus the bulk of the placements made relates to experienced single farm workers. As at the 31st March, 1942, vacancies for farm workers current with the Service totalled 584; 560 were for experienced workers, and of this number 446 related to single experienced youths or men.

Of the 2,339 male placements referred to in the period under review 38 related to placements of married farm workers who have proceeded to farm-engagements where only single men's quarters have been available and who in consideration of this have been paid the special accommodation allowance of £1 per week introduced by the Government in 1940 to assist in overcoming the shortage of farm labour. During the period reviewed 37 single and 13 married men have also been placed under the Government's Farm Training Subsidy Scheme No. 4f.

WOMEN'S LAND CORPS.

In association with the Women's War Service Auxiliary, the Placement Service has, since the launching of the Women's Land Corps towards the close of 1941, assisted in the interviewing of applicants and the referral of selected candidates to farm-engagements under the scheme, which provides for the payment of a subsidy on the basis of 15s. per week during a period of six months' training as farm workers. At the 31st March of the current year 104 women or girls had been placed on farms under the Land Corps while 15 further placements were at that date in the course of being arranged. Thirty-one vacancies for Land Corps members were current with the Service on the 31st March. The extent to which farmers on the one hand have availed themselves of the labour available through this measure and women on the other have undertaken to perform farm duties has been somewhat disappointing, particularly is this so in consideration of the publicity which has been given to the almost complete absence of male labour. It is hoped that this measure will be further developed as a means of assisting the farming community to maintain the level of production.

SEASONAL FARM WORK.

The shortage of seasonal farm workers of various kinds during 1941-42 season gave every indication of being too considerable to be filled by the ordinary means at the disposal of the Service. Accordingly three measures of a special character were put into operation with what has transpired to be gratifying success. The measures in question were (a) the opening of a special seasonal Placement Office at Motueka to handle the labour requirements of the tobacco-growing industry, and to a lesser degree the hops, small-fruit, and pip-fruit growing industries; (b) the prosecution of a school-boy and University student vocational farm placement scheme on even more comprehensive lines than a similar scheme operated in the long vacation of 1940-41, resulting in 630 placements; and (c) the evolution of special machinery for the temporary withdrawal from military camps of experienced seasonal farm workers prepared to volunteer to assist in cropping, harvesting, and sowing work.

THE PLACEMENT SERVICE AND THE WAR.

The Service has continued to work in close liaison with Man-power Committees and Armed Forces Appeal Boards in dealing with the recruiting of workers from industry into the armed forces, and to a lesser extent in the withdrawal from the armed forces of key workers to fill vacancies in industry.

Apart from these duties the Service has undertaken a number of special assignments in the direction of locating skilled and other labour urgently needed for works of vital national importance. In all such instances the Service has been remarkably successful, such, for example, as in the referral of building tradesmen and labourers to defence undertakings, bomb-splinter proofing of oil-fuel depots, mine-sweeper construction, and munitions works.

GOVERNMENT YOUTH CENTRES.

Government Youth Centres instituted in 1938 for the provisions of vocational guidance and placement facilities to juveniles have continued to operate in Auckland, Napier, Wellington, and Christchurch, while the Dunedin Vocational Guidance Association, an organization of similar character but outside departmental control, has, as in past years, co-operated with the Youth Centre system in dealing with juveniles. The shortage of adults in the labour market has emphasized the demand for the services of youth labour, but the supply of this labour has been quite unequal to the calls made upon it, notwithstanding that youths have been leaving school for employment in such numbers as to occasion considerable concern regarding the possibility of a post-war unskilled labour problem among youths. During the twelve months ended 31st March, 1942, a total of 2,649 boys and 2,813 girls enrolled with the Youth Centres or the Dunedin Vocational Guidance Association for placement, and 2,008 boys and 2,077 girls were placed in employment. The following table gives particulars of enrolments, placements, and vacancies in respect of boys up to eighteen years of age and girls up to the age of twenty-one recorded by the Centres and the Dunedin Office during the twelve months ended 31st March, 1942. Boys over the age of eighteen and girls over the age of twenty-one become the care of the adult Placement Service:—

Centre.	Enrolments.		Placements.		Vacancies.	
	Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.
Auckland	436	419	432	327	2,956	457
Napier	30	32	22	11	50	16
Wellington	468	451	396	224	1,316	1,042
Christchurch	1,365	1,391	926	1,156	1,327	1,348
Dunedin	350	520	232	359	416	301
	2,649	2,813	2,008	2,077	6,065	3,159

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