

are congested until supplies of equipment can be obtained from overseas. Every opportunity is being availed of to ensure that the requirements of New Zealand will receive the highest degree of priority possible.

Owing to the necessity for providing a large number of toll circuits for the exclusive use of the Armed Services, difficulty has been experienced in maintaining a satisfactory service for civilian toll traffic. The improved situation in the Pacific area has, however, permitted the release of a number of these circuits for civilian use, and provided there is no deterioration in the war situation some improvement in the toll service can be anticipated.

The number of toll calls handled during the year was 18,087,043, compared with 17,618,832 for the previous year, an increase of 468,211, or 2·66 per cent.

PUBLIC CALL OFFICES

The number of public call offices (coin-in-the-slot telephones) in the Dominion as at the 31st March was 1,420, compared with 1,368 at the corresponding date last year. The total collections from the machines for the year was £97,355, an increase of 11·32 per cent. over the previous year's returns.

INSTALLATION OF CARRIER-CURRENT TELEPHONE EQUIPMENT

In the report for the year 1940-41 reference was made to the commissioning of a new single-core co-axial submarine cable across Cook Strait and to the ordering of a twelve-channel carrier telephone system to operate over the cable. Due to war conditions, delivery of the carrier equipment has only recently been effected. The installation of the equipment has now been completed, and this, together with the systems previously in operation, has enabled the full planned capacity of the cable, amounting to twenty-one telephone and eleven telegraph channels, to be obtained. The recent installation has made available additional long-distance toll circuits from Wellington to Blenheim (three), Christchurch (two), Nelson (one), and Greymouth (one).

In addition to the twelve-channel carrier system, a number of single- and three-channel systems have been installed to provide additional circuits in various parts of the Dominion.

NEW AUTOMATIC-EXCHANGE EQUIPMENT

For the past three years the Department has had in hand a comprehensive extension of the automatic-exchange switching system at Auckland, involving the modernizing and extension of equipment at exchanges throughout the Auckland metropolitan area. During the year the final stage of the work was completed by bringing into service new automatic exchanges at Avondale and St. Heliers and additional equipment at the existing exchanges at Takapuna and Remuera.

RADIO SERVICES

TRANSFER IN CONTROL OF AERADIO STATION

On the 1st June, 1943, the Air Department (R.N.Z.A.F.) assumed control of the Mangere Aeradio Station, which was previously administered by the Post and Telegraph Department.

RADIO LICENSING

RECEIVING LICENSES

The total number of radio receiving licenses current at the 31st March, 1944, was 375,455, representing an increase of 7,290 (1·9 per cent.) compared with the number current at the close of the previous year.

RADIO-DEALERS

During the year regulations were gazetted substantially reducing radio-dealers' license fees.

BLIND PERSONS

The concession of free radio receiving licenses for blind persons who are the heads of their respective households has been extended to all blind persons, irrespective of their domestic status.

APPENDIX

Table No. 1
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR THE YEARS 1942-43 AND 1943-44

Year.	Balance forward.	Receipts.	Payments for Working-expenses.	Balance of Receipts over Working-expenses Payments.	Other Disbursements.			Balance
					Depreciation Fund Investment, including Expenditure on Renewals, and Replacements of Assets.	Contributions to Post and Telegraph Officers' Sick-benefit Fund.	Interest on Capital Liability.	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1942-1943 ..	38,672	5,863,621	4,340,362	1,523,259	823,000	6,890	692,637	39,404
1943-1944 ..	39,404	6,251,242	4,344,591	1,906,651	1,208,000	4,911	693,480	39,664