

1944

NEW ZEALAND

TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT

(ANNUAL REPORT ON)

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Leave

The Hon. J. O'BRIEN, Minister of Transport, Wellington.

SIR,—

Transport Department, 13th July, 1944.

Herewith I have the honour to submit the annual report of the Transport Department for the year ended 31st March, 1944.

I have, &c.,

G. L. LAURENSEN, Commissioner of Transport.

REPORT

1. Summary of Contents :—

- (a) Private cars licensed at 31st December, 1943, numbered 196,804, an increase of 6,802 over the number at the same date in 1942: trucks and vans numbered 46,292, an increase of 2,075.
- (b) Long-distance civilian motor-vehicle traffic was not in existence during the year.
- (c) Road accidents increased from 1,919 in 1942 to 2,112 in 1943.
- (d) Deaths from road accidents fell from 167 in 1942 to 145 in 1943.
- (e) Persons injured increased from 2,416 in 1942 to 2,746 in 1943.
- (f) Substantial increase in prosecutions for traffic offences.
- (g) Continuation of Transport and Taxi Control Committees and zoning for purpose of saving petrol, tires, and motor-vehicles.
- (h) Extension of road traffic safety instruction in schools.
- (i) Suspension of direct war and emergency organizations -e.g., Traffic Control Corps, L. of C.M.T. Coys., National Road Transport E.P.S.
- (j) Release of a number of used trucks from the Armed Services and new truck chassis under lend-lease proposals.
- (k) New regulations establishing principle of preference for discharged servicemen entering the road transport industry and giving Licensing Authorities power to control payments for goodwill on sales of transport businesses.

2. Number of Motor-vehicles. The following summary shows the numbers of the principal types of motor-vehicles registered in the Dominion as at 31st December, 1942, and 1943 :—

Type.	Number on Register as at 31st December,		Difference : + Increase ; - Decrease.
	1942.	1943.	
Cars	190,002	196,804	+ 6,802
Trucks and vans	44,217	46,292	+ 2,075
Buses and service cars	1,360	1,385	+ 25
Taxis and rental cars	2,252	2,371	+ 119
Motor-cycles	15,480	11,355	- 4,125
Trailers	10,841	13,504	+ 2,663
Others (including Government and local-body vehicles)	22,657*	11,301†	- 11,356
Totals	286,809	283,012	- 3,797

* Includes vehicles belonging to the Armed Services.

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3. The exclusion in 1943 of vehicles operated by the Armed Services destroys any comparison between certain of the figures as between that year and 1942. There were 20,000 less cars on the road in 1942 than in 1941, but the 1943 figure (196,804) showed an increase of just under 7,000 over that for 1942. Trucks and vans, which had decreased from 47,597 in 1941 to 44,217, rose to 46,292 in 1943—the increase in this case being due to the release of a number of vehicles from the Armed Services for civilian requirements.

4. Roads and Road Traffic.—Private-car traffic during the year was under 10 per cent. of its pre-war volume and was confined to trips of short distances. Business-car traffic was approximately one-third of its normal pre-war volume. The volume of truck traffic was also well below pre-war level—the mileage of privately-owned trucks showed a reduction of approximately 40 per cent., while that for trucks operated by carriers was substantially less due to the elimination of long-distance haulage in favour of the railways and various other measures aimed at saving tires and petrol. In the field of public-road-passenger transport vehicle-mileage has been reduced by eliminating all long-distance services paralleling the railways, by a substantial reduction in Sunday services, and by the cessation of trips for sports meetings, races, picnics, sight-seeing, and such like.