

The following table shows the total sales of State coal from the State mines as compared with the previous year, and the average f.o.r. price realized by each mine, *exclusive of subsidy* :—

Mine.	Total Sales, 1943-44.	Total Sales, 1942-43.	Percentage Increase.	Average Price f.o.r. realized.	
	Tons.	Tons.		s.	d.
Liverpool	131,015	159,900	*18·06	18	6·38
Strongman	102,798	92,240	11·44	23	3·64
James†	12,519	27,927	*55·17	9	1·22
Blackball	44,559	30,542	45·9	16	10·82
Mangapehi	69,391	50,862	36·42	20	8·91
Tatu	22,893	24,321	*5·87	21	0·07
Wallsend	56,375	‡5,910	..	20	9·30
Dobson	60,720	‡5,565	..	21	3·09
Glen Afton Opencast, No. 1 ..	6,175	..	..	24	7·92
Totals	\$506,445	397,267	27·48	..	

* Decrease. † Colliery ceased operations on 23rd July, 1943. Sales include 6,883 tons slack lifted from dump. ‡ Output for six weeks only. § Increase, 109,178.

The sales of coal, &c., through the medium of the depots totalled 370,740 tons, value £648,651, as against 290,036 tons, value £499,010 for the previous year.

HOUSING

Owing to lack of man-power and essential materials, the provision of housing accommodation in mining townships is not proceeding as rapidly as might be desired, and consequently the employment in the mines of quite a number of suitable men has been prevented.

To improve the position temporarily in the Waikato District the Government has obtained a number of huts, which have been transported to and erected at the Renown and Wilton Mines and cooking and other facilities provided. These huts have been made available to the coal-mining companies concerned on favourable terms, and are being occupied by single men directed to the coal-mining industry.

CO-OPERATIVE MINING, STATE COAL RESERVE

Eighteen co-operative parties working portions of the State Coal Reserve near Greymouth produced during the year 1943 97,995 tons, the number of men employed being 149. During the previous year the same number of parties produced 87,591 tons.

Up to the end of 1943 co-operative parties have produced a grand total of 1,811,189 tons of coal and have in the same period paid royalties to the State amounting to £87,559.

RESCUE-STATIONS

As predicted in my previous Statement, the three rescue-stations at Dobson, Rotowaro, and Ohai were in full operation during 1943, and the training of crews in mine-rescue work is proceeding satisfactorily.

Since the inception of the scheme, 168 certificates of proficiency in mine-rescue work have been issued, after examination, to trainees at these three stations.

It has been decided to establish a rescue-station in the Buller District, and steps to that end have been taken. The establishment of such a station in this district is considered a vital precaution in view of the active mine fires in the vicinity of Denniston, Stockton, and Millerton Collieries.

SOCIAL AMENITIES

During the year assistance continued to be rendered to organizations in mining communities which had for their object the provision of recreational facilities, both sporting and otherwise, for miners and their families. It is pleasing to record that full use is made of these facilities, which were brought into being by the efforts and with the assistance of the miners themselves, the coal-mine owners, and the Government.

CARBONIZING AND BRIQUETTING

The following figures show the production of the low-temperature coal-carbonizing and briquetting plant of Waikato Carbonization, Ltd., at Rotowaro, during 1943 :—

Raw coal carbonized	35,964 tons.
Carbonized coal produced	17,622 tons.
Average percentage of carbonized coal to raw coal	49 per cent.
Carbonettes manufactured	10,890 tons.
Tar and oil treated	343,001 gals.
Pitch produced	732 tons.
Light and heavy oils produced	1,715 gals.
Creosote produced	169,192 gals.
"Char" sold for producer-gas plants	8,751 tons.
"Char" sold for other purposes	189 tons