

until their return, and can also communicate direct with the 15-watt sets used either as fixed or portable stations. At the Kaingaroa Airstrip a permanent aerial has been erected for a transportable radio used to facilitate aircraft landings.

When it became necessary to establish a fire-control headquarters at Taupo and a fire headquarters at Atiamuri, the radio sections of these headquarters were equipped largely and staffed wholly by the Navy and later by the Army, as the Forest Service operators and most of their equipment were already fully employed and could not be released for other work. The radio equipment at Taupo was used as three fixed stations and two (later three) mobile stations, and that at Atiamuri as one fixed and one mobile station. Full use was made of the radio for the rapid passing of messages between ground stations and between air and ground, the observers in many instances giving direct instructions to fire-fighting parties. The field telephone was used only to a limited extent and portable telephones were used where lines were available. Extensive use was naturally made of the line telephone, temporary lines being run from the Taupo Telephone Exchange to the fire-control headquarters. Difficulty was experienced in obtaining and maintaining contact with Wellington and other places due to unavoidable delays, noisy conditions, and interruptions, and also to breaks in the lines on account of burned poles, the importance of these defects being magnified by the urgency of the situation. As a precaution in the event of telephone and power-line failure, the Post and Telegraph Department's emergency wireless telegraph station at Rotorua was available for communication with Kaingaroa, but was not used. The excellent co-operation and valuable assistance rendered by the Post and Telegraph Department, the Navy, the Army, and the Air Force in providing and maintaining communication facilities are gratefully acknowledged.

In the King-country, also, radio was used for reporting fires to Ranger stations at Te Kuiti and Ohakune, this work being carried out by Army personnel with wireless trucks stationed at Te Kuiti, Pureora, Ohakune, National Park, and Tokaanu. Meteorological tenders of the Air Force located at Mangapeehi and Moerangi furnished weather reports to (a) Army trucks at Te Kuiti and Ohakune, where they were handed to Forest Officers; and (b) to Ohakea, whence they were forwarded to the Forest Service at Wellington and Auckland via the Air Department, Wellington, and Whenuapai respectively, and also to the Forest Service, Palmerston North.

From experience gained during the emergency period the following developments in the communications system are envisaged: (a) a radio link between Head Office, Wellington, and the offices at Rotorua, Auckland, and Christchurch; (b) provision of powerful mobile radio stations in suitable locations; (c) installation of radio in additional forest areas; (d) provision of suitable lightweight portable radios for steep terrain; and (e) provision of equipment for laying field telephone cable.

61. *Community Planning.*—The assistance of officers of the Housing Division has been made available for planning community centres with suitable amenities at Kaingaroa, Golden Downs, Ngaumu, and Gwavas State Forests. Some progress has been made with those mentioned in last year's report. Schemes are also under consideration for Balmoral, Hanmer, Karioi, Waipoua, and Tairua Forests. The provision of the best possible living conditions is considered essential for the recruitment and retention of competent staff.

CHAPTER VIII.—EXTRACTION AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

62. *State Forest Block Sales and Permits.*—Timber appraisals carried out during the year totalled 173 (168), the quantity of timber measured being 146,867,000 board feet (155,129,900). Of the appraisals made, 143 (118) were in State forests, the balance, which covered 40,312,000 board feet (42,757,700), being for other Departments and private owners. In addition, 8 (12) reconnaissances were carried out for the approximate estimation of timber quantities, disclosing timber containing about 217,415,000 board feet (112,291,000) on a total area of 21,194 acres (16,598). As a test of the accuracy of the timber-cruisers' work, 8 (2) check cruises were carried out from Head Office and 19 (13) from Conservators' offices.