

## 1. INTRODUCTION

LAST year the Commission published a report covering its activities from date of first report—viz., 31st March, 1941—until 31st March, 1945, and comprehensive tables covering full particulars of its operations during the five-year period 1940-45 were also included in the report.

The tables published this year will show the cumulative position for the five-year period for each class of contract and details of operations during the year ending 31st March, 1946. The Commission intended publishing in its report this year full particulars showing costs of handling cargo during the past three years, but, due to restriction in size of report, this is not possible. The information will be printed later as an Appendix to the report.

## 2. MEASURES TAKEN TO EXPEDITE DESPATCH OF SHIPPING

Published in the Appendix (page 60) is a table showing the reduction effected in the time spent on the New Zealand coast by overseas vessels. From a perusal of this table it will be seen that overseas vessels were turned round during the year ended 31st March, 1946, on an average of approximately 20 days, as against an average of  $17\frac{1}{2}$  days during the year ended 31st March, 1945, and as against the pre-war average of  $35\frac{3}{4}$  days. The additional  $2\frac{1}{4}$  days taken last year was due to the cancellation of shift-work and extended hours (Sundays and holidays) in September, 1945. Notwithstanding this reduction in hours, overseas vessels were turned round in approximately  $15\frac{3}{4}$  days quicker than pre-war, and it is estimated that the saving can be attributed as follows:—

(a) Centralization of shipping at main ports	..	..	..	7 days
(b) Speedier work under contract system	..	..	..	5 days
(c) Working shifts, Sundays and holidays (half of year only)	..	..	..	$3\frac{3}{4}$ days
Total				$15\frac{3}{4}$ days

### (a) CENTRALIZATION OF SHIPPING

The policy of the British Ministry of War Transport for the centralization of cargo handling operations at the main ports was continued during the year, and as a result overseas vessels visited an average of only 2.14 ports, as against the pre-war average of 6.13 ports, and previous year's average of 2.5 ports. The number of vessels which arrived in ballast for loading only was much greater than normal and had the effect of reducing the average number of ports visited per vessel.

### (b) WORKING "ROUND THE CLOCK" AND SUNDAYS AND HOLIDAYS

Following repeated requests from the New Zealand Waterside Workers' Union for a reduction of hours of work on the waterfront, a conference of all interested parties (including representatives of British Ministry of War Transport) was held in July, 1945, and the Commission decided at the four main ports to restrict shift and extended hours (Sundays and holidays) work to overseas food vessels, overseas vessels carrying military supplies, vessels discharging coal, and feeder vessels.

A further conference was held in September, 1945, when, by agreement with the British Ministry of War Transport, the working of shifts and extended hours was cancelled at the four main ports, and this decision was extended to other ports in November, 1945.

The following vessels are, however, still required to work on Sundays and holidays:—

- (1) All vessels discharging and loading at ports of Westport and Greymouth.
- (2) Vessels discharging coal at all ports.