

In the past, difficulties were experienced regarding labour and materials, but these were overcome to some extent when bulk stores were established at Kaitaia, Kaikohe, and Whangarei and a system of monthly bulk purchases of materials was put into operation early in the year. This step was essential, as the housing programme almost came to a standstill owing to lack of materials, but the supply position is still far from satisfactory. An improvement will result when the main store contemplated at Auckland is established.

Trade trainees from the Kaikohe School are being taken up by the Department. Maintenance is also being carried out in conjunction with the construction programme.

It is very encouraging to find that in 80 per cent. of houses built, the Maori owners are conscious of their improved living conditions and a greater sense of responsibility is evident. In spite of vigorous effort on the part of office and field staffs, however, the demand for improved housing conditions appears as an ever-increasing factor and it will take time to overtake requirements in the Auckland Province. Title difficulties are experienced with nearly every application, it being necessary to apply to the Native Land Court for one or more orders to be made before the applicant's title to the house-site is clarified.

WAIKATO-MANiapOTO NATIVE LAND COURT DISTRICT

An increasing number of Maoris are showing considerable interest in the Maori housing scheme since the Department's Building and Construction Branch commenced operations last year.

The Waikato-Maniapoto and Tokerau Districts are administered from the Auckland office, and the work of organizing the Building and Construction Branch for both districts has been considerable.

A bulk store with a storeman in charge was established in Hamilton, and a system of monthly bulk purchase of materials was put into operation early in the year. The supply position generally, however, has occasioned considerable difficulty and has not yet been completely overcome.

Maintenance is also being carried out in conjunction with the construction programme, and the absorption of trade trainees is being kept in view.

Progress in the Hauraki area has been made with difficulty as no carpenters are available in this area, and men have not been found who are willing to transfer to that locality. However, some buildings have been erected by contract, this being the only present means of providing houses in the district.

A considerable number of Maoris have migrated from the country to the cities, and these cases present greater difficulty, each requiring more attention and time on the part of the office staff. A scheme is now being devised for the expeditious handling of houses to be erected in the environs of Auckland.

WAIARIKI NATIVE LAND COURT DISTRICT

A practical approach by the Maori people themselves towards securing better living conditions has never been more evident in this district than during the past year. One indication of this is that applicants have accumulated deposits on houses to the extent of approximately £18,000, and this sum is held by the Waiariki District Maori Land Board on their behalf. But, apart from these deposits, large amounts aggregating £16,000 are also held by the Board under section 281 of the Native Land Act, 1931, on behalf of individual applicants for houses. All of these moneys are earning interest for the respective depositors until required.