

A further 117 applications have been received during the year, making a grand total of 1,077. Of these, 323 have been approved by the Board of Native Affairs, and have been dealt with as follows: erected, 148; purchased, 24; repaired, 15; awaiting to be built, 136.

Five houses have now been erected for returned servicemen and 4 of them were completed during the last year. In addition, 2 dwellings have been renovated, 3 purchased (which afterwards had certain alterations effected), and there are 3 new dwellings in the course of erection for ex-servicemen of the last war.

The East Coast Commissioner is now supplying timber for Maori housing from his mill at Te Reinga.

Of all the applicants in this district for an advance under the Native Housing Act for the erection of a dwelling, approximately 40 per cent. are already in occupation of their new homes or the house is in course of erection for the applicant.

AOTEA NATIVE LAND COURT DISTRICT

The establishment of bulk stores and consequent ability to handle bulk purchases from both surplus war assets and manufacturers has greatly increased the efficient operation of the Maori housing scheme.

Improvements in the living conditions of twenty-nine families have been effected during the year, and of the 10 new homes erected the majority were based on the standard-type plans. There are distinct advantages in the use of this plan service, and the increasing demand for its use is encouraging. The growing consciousness of the Maori people for improved housing accommodation is becoming more pronounced as time goes on. In addition to the 10 new homes erected, 14 major addition and alteration projects were completed, and maintenance work was carried out on several securities. The requirements of three families have also been satisfied by the purchase of existing houses.

The heaviest concentration of work was carried out in the Taranaki district, where the compactness of the district allows closer supervision. The bulk store and timber-yard in Hawera has given greater scope for the handling of bulk stores in that district, and with another store at Manunui nearing completion the Tuwharetoa district will benefit.

In addition to the work carried out under the Native Housing Act, the building construction organization in this district has covered the erection of various buildings on Maori Land Board, land-development, and Native Trust securities. One new house has been erected; repairs and additions have been carried out in respect of 3 dwellings, and 4 more are in progress. One cow-shed has been erected, and the building of another is under way, while additions and alterations have been carried out to the cookhouse at Morikau Station.

The appointment of a number of Welfare Officers will form a valuable link between applicants and the building organization, and their work will assist in concentrating services towards the betterment of the living conditions of those cases most urgently requiring assistance.

Much has yet to be accomplished to bridge the gap between the provision of accommodation for large families and their ability to repay advances made to them for housing. However, a review of the year's activities shows that the cost per square foot of accommodation provided by this organization is considerably lower than at present undertaken by private contractors.