

While the majority of vessels are to-day loaded and discharged under contract, there are certain bulk cargoes—namely, phosphate and sulphur—which are still worked on a wage basis. The Commission is investigating costs of handling these bulk cargoes with a view to them being placed under contract at all ports as soon as possible.

(b) COSTS OF CARGO HANDLING

Tables have now been printed by the Commission and are available to shipping companies and the union showing the stevedoring cost for various cargoes for each class of contract for the three years ended 31st March, 1946. Costs for the year ended 31st March, 1947, are being finalized and will be printed later as an Appendix to this report.

(c) PROFIT DISTRIBUTION

Included in the Appendix (pages 25–61) is a table summarizing the results of co-operative contract stevedoring and showing the amount of profit distributed at each port for each class of contract and the average profit per winch-hour for the six-year period 1940–46, for the year ended 31st March, 1947, and totals to that date.

An amount of £205,328 was distributed during the year at a “winch” time rate of 10·65d. per hour, as against £187,594 distributed for the year ended 31st March, 1946, at a rate of 10·48d. per hour, an increase of £17,734. The total amount of profit distributed from the commencement of contracting until the 31st March, 1947, was £1,061,233 at a “winch” time rate of profit of 9·36d. per hour.

5. AVERAGE HOURS OF WORK

Published in the Appendix (page 66) is a table showing the average hours of work per man-week (ordinary and overtime) by unionists for the fifty-two weeks ended 30th March, 1947. The average hours per week for all main and secondary ports was $42\frac{3}{4}$ ($33\frac{1}{4}$ ordinary time, $9\frac{1}{2}$ overtime), for the year ended 30th March, 1947, as against $41\frac{3}{4}$ ($28\frac{1}{4}$ ordinary time, $13\frac{1}{2}$ overtime) for the previous year. The average overtime hours were reduced by four hours per week and ordinary-time hours were increased by five hours per week, which shows an average increase on all hours of one hour per week over last year. The reduction in overtime hours is due to the cancellation (as from 8th September, 1945), of shift-work and work on Sundays, holidays, and Saturday afternoon (except where a vessel can finish by 5 p.m.). This is the first year where the full impact of this reduction is shown in the average overtime hours per week.

6. RATES OF PAY : AVERAGE WAGE

No alteration was made in the basic rate of pay of waterside workers during the year. As from the 1st August, 1946, the rate of pay for Saturday morning was increased from time and a quarter to time and a half. A further improvement in working-conditions was also granted by the Commission from that date by the payment of 2s. meal-money where a worker is ordered back and attends, or is transferred from a job finishing after noon and before 5 p.m., for overtime at 6 p.m. or later, or at 1 p.m. on Saturdays.

Tables are published in the Appendix (page 67) showing the average wage of waterside workers in the following returns:—

- (a) Return showing the average wage of unionists per man-week worked for years 1940–46, 1946–47, and 1940–47. (NOTE.—This return has been based on the man-weeks worked and does not show the true average weekly wage over the whole year, as all men are not employed for fifty-two weeks—see return of earnings according to income groups, Appendix, page 68).