

1948
NEW ZEALAND

STATE COAL-MINES

(REPORT ON THE WORKING OF) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1948

Prepared in Accordance with the Requirements of Section 184 of the Coal-mines Act, 1925

REPORT

BY THE HON. A. McLAGAN, MINISTER OF MINES

MR. SPEAKER,—

I have the honour to present to Parliament the Balance-sheet, Statement of Accounts, and reports on the operations of the State Coal-mines for the year ended 31st March, 1948.

The Kamo Colliery was taken over as a State coal-mine on 5th January, 1948. The ex-employees of the Waro Colliery, at Hikurangi, which ceased operations during 1947, were found employment in the mine, in which the main work so far has been directed towards the provision of an improved haulage system, reconstruction work which had been neglected by the former owners, and further development. The acquisition by the State of the ownership of unworked coal will enable a planned drilling programme to be carried out, and with a proper assessment of the available coal resources it is proposed to plan the mine workings to attain a greatly increased production and to develop a modern system of underground haulage, possibly using belt conveyors on main roadways.

In the Waikato field, operations proceeded steadily at the Wilton Mine. Plant ordered for the partial mechanization of this mine is not yet all to hand, difficulties in obtaining electric motors and steel being the main reason for the delay.

At Benneydale, the development of the Mangapehi Mine to the dip was continued in excellent coal. Considerable repair work has proved necessary owing to the heaving floor conditions encountered, and pillar-extraction has proved risky owing to the high incidence of spontaneous combustion. Operation of late months has been confined to development work, with a resultant lower output.

A slight increase in output was obtained at the Tatu Mine, near Ohura, underground conditions being unchanged.

In the Buller field, the production of coal from combined underground and opencast areas at Stockton showed a substantial rise. The original mine, known as Fly Creek, continued mainly on pillar extraction and the installation of a water sluicing system in the East Area. The new mine, named Webb in honour of the former Minister of Mines (Hon. P. C. Webb), is developing in good coal. Orders have been placed for plant and equipment for the complete mechanization of this colliery.

To replace the present haulage system, which has been in operation at the Stockton mines since 1908, an order has been placed for a bi-cable aerial 9,125 yards in length and capable of transporting 250 tons per hour. The aerial, which has its terminal