

BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

MAN-POWER

The labour force strength of the works industry has increased during the past year by 5·8 per cent., whereas the labour force employed on State and State-subsidized works (all classes) has increased by 8·7 per cent. during the same period. The following statistical information will no doubt be of interest to you :—

	1947.	1948.	Increase.	Decrease.
			Per Cent.	Per Cent.
Works industry (excluding professional and clerical)—				
Housing	12,476	14,015	12·3	..
Other buildings	6,041	6,020	..	0·3
Engineering works	8,865	9,561	7·8	..
Maintenance (all classes)	5,327	5,007	..	6·0
State forest development	1,078	1,128	4·6	..
	33,787	35,731	5·8	..
State and State-subsidized works (excluding professional and clerical)—				
Housing (State rental, departmental, small-farm settlement, and Maori, including site development)	5,006*	6,047*	20·8	..
Other buildings	1,892	1,992	5·3	..
Engineering works	8,626	8,888	3·0	..
State forest development	1,078	1,128	4·6	..
	16,602	18,055	8·7	..
*Includes rehabilitation trainees	1,913	2,431	..	..

The total labour force, including clerical and professional employees, is approximately 38,450, of whom approximately 19,950 are employed on State and State-subsidized works. The labour force employed in the works industry is still far short of the pre-war level of approximately 47,000, including professional and clerical services, of whom approximately 28,500 were employed on State and State-subsidized works.

Immigration has benefited the works industry very little, as up to the end of February, 1948, only 270 immigrants had become available to the industry, and losses during the same period resulting from departures to overseas destinations totalled 155, making a net gain of 115. Assisted passages for building and construction workers recently instituted by the Labour and Employment Department should produce more favourable figures. A steady flow of immigrants into the works industry is very necessary, particularly in view of the accumulated demands on the industry for housing, education, and hospital buildings and hydro-electric works. The works named are regarded as having highest priority. However, in addition, there exists pressure for postal and police buildings, industrial buildings, river control and soil conservation, railway construction, electrification, and improvements, and works of almost all types which are regarded as urgent and essential.

Concerning immigrants for the building and construction industry, it is necessary to emphasize that the real demand is for skilled tradesmen, and this should not be overlooked by those responsible for the selection of immigrants.

The overall increase in man-power during the past year is 1,944, which indicates that, in addition to the increases resulting from immigration—115—and additional rehabilitation trainees—518—there has been a further gain of 1,311, which suggests that the last-named increase resulted mainly by transfer from other avenues of employment.