

Since the presentation of last year's report, the Government Railways Industrial Tribunal has made some 25 orders arising out of claims presented by the railway service organizations and by the Department. These orders dealt with rates of remuneration and conditions of employment of the Department's staff and have conferred considerable benefits upon those employees coming within the Tribunal's jurisdiction.

Relationships with the various service organizations have continued on a most friendly footing, and the frequent contacts throughout the year with the national executives and with their officials have not only evidenced a spirit of mutual confidence, but have also proved of considerable assistance in staff administration.

A total of £67,508 was paid under the Workers' Compensation Act during the year in respect of employees suffering injury in the course of their employment.

MILEAGE OF LINES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNT

The mileage of lines open for traffic decreased to 3,525 miles 44 chains. An increase of 1 mile 71 chains resulted from the opening of the Naenae-Taita extension, while the opening of the Turakina-Okoia deviation involved a decrease of 4 miles 10 chains.

The Capital Account on 31st March, 1948, was £77,089,031, an increase of £1,734,788. Nearly £1,400,000 of the increase is accounted for by the importation of LA wagons from Great Britain. The remainder represents work on the Turakina deviation, the Wellington-Hutt Valley line, Sawyers Bay-St. Leonards duplication, and miscellaneous station yard rearrangements, buildings, and other works.

IMPROVEMENTS AND ADDITIONS

The most important additions and improvements during the year were the extension of Hutt Valley line from Naenae to Taita, and the opening of the Turakina deviation.

The Naenae-Taita line, which serves the extensive Government housing settlement at Taita, was brought into operation on 14th April, 1947. The Turakina deviation was opened for traffic on 7th December, 1947, and this work will be of a permanent value in railway operation. Prior to the opening of the deviation, goods-trains out of Aramoho travelling south to Turakina were limited to 190 tons for an AB engine and 280 tons for a K class engine. The use of the deviation allows the tonnage to be increased to 420 tons and 640 tons respectively.

Estimated annual savings as a result of the opening of the deviation are: Train miles, 46,000; rail-car miles, 1,326; and assisting-engine miles, 36,000.

Work has also progressed on the Sawyers Bay-St. Leonards duplication; the earthwork was completed and track-laying commenced.

The new goods office at Wellington was also completed during the year, and a special effort has been made to provide improved staff amenities at workshops, locomotive depots, and stations.

CONCLUSION

The past year has brought its complement of difficulties and hard work, and I thank the staff, one and all, for their loyal service and co-operation.

I have also much pleasure in expressing, on behalf of my predecessor, Mr. J. Sawers, who has recently retired, his sincere thanks to all railway men for the co-operation and loyalty which they gave him throughout his term of office.



General Manager.