

800 acres situated on the Main North Road at Himatangi, near Foxton, has been acquired. Preparatory work in the planning of buildings, procurement of equipment, &c., is proceeding. The work is of considerable magnitude, however, and it is expected that up to three years may elapse before the new station will be ready for service.

During the year, radio propagation tests have been continued between New Zealand and the United Kingdom, and from these tests important information is being obtained to enable the engineering of a reliable service. For the Makara receiving-station, improved facilities will be required for reception from the United Kingdom, and the provision of the necessary antenna system is being investigated.

PHOTO-TELEGRAM SERVICES

Photo-telegram services were opened with the United Kingdom and with Australia on the 20th November, the first official pictures received being of the wedding of Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh. Arrangements are now being made to open a radio photo-telegram service with the United States of America.

TELEPRINTER OPERATION OVER RADIO CHANNELS

During the year, tests have been conducted to determine the practicability of operating machine-printing telegraph equipment over radio circuits. The tests, which were very satisfactory, indicate the practicability of employing equipment of this type on any radio channels, including the overseas radio-telegraph services.

RADIO-TELEPHONE SERVICE FOR MOBILE VEHICLES

Preparatory work is almost complete for the early provision at Auckland and Wellington of fixed post-office radio stations for the land mobile radio-telephone services. It is anticipated that similar services will be brought into operation at Christchurch and Dunedin later in the year.

Initially the service in these centres will cater only for public utility bodies (fire brigades, ambulances, &c.), but the scheme will be progressively expanded to cater for private organizations.

The service will provide, on a rental basis, communication by radio between the premises of mobile radio subscribers and vehicles equipped and operated by them. The Post Office will own and maintain all equipment at the fixed transmitting-stations and at the subscribers' premises, but that in the vehicles will be provided and maintained by the subscribers. Speech from the subscriber's premises will be conveyed by land line to the fixed radio station, whence it will be transmitted to the vehicles. Conversely, speech from the vehicles will be received at the fixed radio station and relayed by land line to the subscriber's premises.

A demand exists for mobile services at the four centres mentioned, and arrangements are now in hand to provide for requirements at those places. Only a few inquiries have as yet been made for the establishment of mobile radio stations in other areas. The Department is prepared to consider favourably the installation of further fixed stations as and when sufficient applications are received from organizations representing publicly and privately owned utilities at provincial centres.

In the light of overseas experience, it is certain that the very-high-frequency mobile radio scheme will offer wide scope for the improvement of public and private utility services throughout the country.

Considerable interest has been displayed by overseas administrations in the inauguration of the New Zealand scheme, and requests for information have been received from the British and Australian Post Office Departments.