

1. INTRODUCTION

At the commencement of the year under review, Mr. A. E. Bockett, General Manager of the Commission, was acting as sole Commissioner pending some agreement being reached between employers, employees, and the Government as to the future of Commission control of the industry. After protracted negotiations, agreement was reached for the establishment of the Commission which took office on the 10th November, 1947. The new Commission consisted of a Chairman, two members nominated by the New Zealand Waterside Employers' Association, two members nominated by the New Zealand Waterside Workers' Union, and a Government member who is the Deputy Chairman of the Commission. Judge Dalglish, Deputy Judge of the Court of Arbitration, was appointed Chairman of the Commission. The members of the Commission were appointed to hold office for a term of five years and were appointed on a full-time basis.

The powers, functions, and responsibilities of the new Commission are similar to those conferred on previous Commissions. An alteration was made in voting powers and procedure whereby decisions are arrived at on a majority vote, and provision is made that the Commission's decision is to be pronounced by the Chairman and no dissenting opinion is to be expressed by any other member of the Commission.

Prior to the appointment of the Commission, assurances were given by the New Zealand Waterside Employers' Association and the New Zealand Waterside Workers' Union that employers and employees would accept and observe all decisions of the Commission, whether such decisions were arrived at unanimously or on a majority of votes, and that both of the organizations would do all in their power to ensure that the Commission would function successfully in the interests of the industry and the country as a whole.

2. DESPATCH OF SHIPPING

The functions of the Commission are to ensure the utmost expedition in the loading and discharging of ships. The need for the rapid handling of goods and turn-round of ships in New Zealand is vital to the whole economy of the country and is of no less importance to-day than during the war years.

Published in the Appendix (page 71) is a table showing the time spent on the New Zealand coast by overseas vessels each year from 1939 to March, 1948. Vessels which discharged and loaded spent an average of 56 days on the coast for the year 1947-48, as compared with an average of 52 days for the year 1946-47 and 42 days in 1939. Overseas vessels which loaded only spent an average of 23 days on the coast in the year 1947-48, as compared with the average of 26 days in the year 1946-47 and 27 days in 1939.

The various factors affecting the turn-round of shipping are summarized hereunder :—

(a) RATES OF WORK

Published in the Appendix (pages 30-51) are tables showing the rates of work for the loading and discharging of all vessels worked under the co-operative contracting system for the years 1940-47 and for the year 1947-48.

(i) OVERSEAS VESSELS

The all-ports average rate of work for the loading of overseas vessels has been maintained during the year, but there was a drop in the rate of loading overseas vessels at Auckland. The rate of loading butter at that port fell from 780 boxes per gang per hour for the year 1946-47 to 742 boxes per gang per hour for the year 1947-48, while the rate of loading mutton and lamb fell from 768 carcasses in 1946-47 to 729 carcasses in 1947-48.