

the year 1946 and an increase of 247,000 tons over the 1938 year. For the three months ended March, 1948, a total of 2,125,000 tons of cargo was handled at New Zealand ports, compared with 1,930,000 tons for the three months ended 31st March, 1947, an increase of 195,000 tons for this three-months period.

The main increase in cargo handled was at the Port of Auckland, where during the year ended December, 1947, the cargo handled was 300,000 tons more than during the preceding year, and 360,000 tons more than during the year ended December, 1938.

The increase in berthage space and shed accommodation has been insufficient to meet the large increase in cargo handled, and the result has been congestion of wharf sheds and the overloading of port facilities and railway services. The Port of Auckland in particular has been congested and, apart from delays to shipping through major disputes, the shortage of berthage space has been a factor resulting in vessels lying idle in the stream. Full use cannot be made of the Export Wharf at that port until grit-arresters have been installed in the Kings Wharf Power-station. The erection of the Bulk Import Wharf, which has been authorized by the Auckland Harbour Board, will improve the berthage position of the port, but this wharf will not be available for some years.

(c) CONGESTION OF WHARF AND RAILWAY SHEDS—SHORTAGE OF RAILWAY TRUCKS

The congestion of wharf and railway goods-sheds, particularly with the large increase in the total cargo handled during the year, necessitated the reintroduction of the Cargo Control Emergency Regulations and the appointment of Cargo Control Committees at a number of ports. These Committees performed a very useful service during the war years in directing merchants to take delivery of goods and in removing goods from wharf sheds to stores off the wharf. The regulations were reintroduced in October, 1947.

On a number of occasions at railway ports it has not been possible to work overtime on discharging jobs, and, in particular, no overtime was worked at the Port of Lyttelton on discharging vessels from the end of November, 1947, to the end of January, 1948, due to shortage of railway wagons. The Railways Department has placed orders overseas for additional trucks, and as these come to hand the position will improve. The Agriculture Department has authorized the use of lorries for taking delivery of phosphate cargoes when there is a shortage of railway trucks, and this has helped the position considerably.

(d) INCREASE IN TONNAGES HANDLED PER VESSEL

Overseas vessels are carrying greater inward cargoes and full export cargoes and there is a greater tonnage handled for each trip than pre-war.

The telescoping of meat has resulted in a saving of freezer space of approximately 30 per cent., and this has had the effect of greater tonnages of freezer cargo being shipped in each vessel.

Regarding coastal vessels, while these vessels are taking much longer to turn round to-day, they are handling full cargoes, and compared with 1939 there has been an increase of 50 per cent. in the average tonnage of cargo handled per round trip. This is not, however, sufficient to offset the additional time taken in turn round.

(e) REDUCTION IN WORKING-HOURS

The reduction of hours of work on the waterfront from 10 p.m. to 9 p.m. on week-days and the cessation of Saturday afternoon work (except where a ship is finishing) represents an average loss of nine hours per week, or 13 per cent. on pre-war working-hours.