

The quantity appraised during 1948-49 was the greatest in any single year since the inception of the Forest Service. The sampling method of appraisal was used in the mensuration of the following quantities :—

					Bd. ft.
1946-47	..	..	..	..	11,407,000
1947-48	..	..	..	..	26,512,000
1948-49	..	..	..	..	11,113,000

The reduction in this year was due to the greater number of areas for which the sampling method was not suitable.

For the approximate estimation of timber stands for possible future timber sales, eight reconnaissances were made covering 4,090 acres, disclosing estimated stands of 34,500,000 board feet. To check the appraisal work of field staff, the Check Appraisal Officer carried out eighteen checks, while Conservators' staffs made sixteen checks.

FOREST WORKING PLANS

To ensure continuity in the execution of a deliberately determined policy or object of management, a written working plan containing a carefully specified set of physical prescriptions is prepared for each forest and supported by at least one map. In forest management, continuity is essential in view of the long-term nature of forestry, and the written working plan is necessary in view of unavoidable changes in forest staff during the life of a tree stand.

In New Zealand the preparation of a working plan for each State forest is required by statute ; plans are approved by the Minister, and may be altered only by the Minister on the recommendation of the Director of Forestry. The number of State forests is 627, though this number is capable of reduction by amalgamation of adjacent, and in some instances contiguous, State forests. At the present time 54 State forests are under management pursuant to statutory working plans.

In the past, working plans were prepared on a full-dress scale, including a fairly elaborate description of the forest as to both history and existing conditions, and a fully developed statement of objects of management and of prescriptions designed to achieve those objects. Following the strong recommendations of the Fifth British Empire Forestry Conference, it was decided to accelerate the completion of working plans by preparing skeleton or abbreviated working plans for the numerous State forests which are managed on a broad extensive basis—as distinguished from those forests which are managed on an intensive scale, and for which more elaborate working plans are necessary. Accordingly, standard headings were chosen under which only the bare essentials are to be recorded in each abbreviated working plan, and 20 such working plans are at present at various stages of completion. Of these, the majority are so designed as to implement the policy referred to in last year's report—namely, of deferring for some years the felling of indigenous forest stands or of confining such felling within planned limits.

In this connection it is desired to add that there are 56 "managed State forests" (localities are given in Appendices). These forests are not all under forest management in the narrower technical sense of management for sustained yield, accompanied by a proper arrangement of age-classes in each forest. They are rather staffed forests, or forests to be staffed with forest officers when adequate field staff becomes available. Of the 56 "managed forests," 43 are at present controlled by forest officers residing on the forests. For each "managed forest" a virtual skeleton working plan was written in the year 1946 as a basic report for Government ten-year plans, each basic report briefly summarizing the past history of the forest, existing conditions, the policy intention, and the works proposed. These requirements are being adhered to in so far as available labour and accommodation will permit, and are being incorporated, with the necessary amendments, into working plans as required by the Forests Act.