

The Board's policy of extending dustless surfacing wherever possible was greatly appreciated, and although the number of improvement works in progress was limited it was pleasing to the Board to observe that the arrears of maintenance were being gradually overtaken and the surface condition of the highways were, generally speaking, good.

Once again the Board is happy to record that local authorities and automobile associations have on all occasions been most helpful and willing to co-operate with the Board in endeavouring to cater for the ever-increasing demands made by road-users.

EXAMINATION FOR FOREMEN AND OVERSEERS OF ROAD CONSTRUCTION

The twenty-second examination for Foreman and Overseers of Road Construction was held on 17th November, 1948, when sixteen candidates presented themselves for examination.

Nine papers on general road construction and maintenance, and nine papers on tar, bituminous, and concrete road construction, were returned. Four candidates were successful in passing paper No. 1, and seven passed paper No. 2. Four secured a partial pass, and seven who had previously secured a partial pass completed the examination.

SIGNPOSTING, CENTRE-LINE MARKING, ETC.

The amount expended by the Board during the year in subsidizing the erection and maintenance of road signs by the automobile associations of New Zealand was £5,225. The marking of centre-lines on paved surfaces and the lettering of standard warning notices on pavements adjacent to railway-crossings and other dangerous localities has also received attention.

ADVANCES TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES

During the year ended 31st March, 1949, the Board entered into twenty agreements with local bodies in regard to advancing to them their shares of the cost of works carried out on main highways. The principal of these advances amounted to £35,306 2s. 10d. The total of principal advanced to local authorities since the inception of the Board is £392,440 2s. 10d., of which the sum of £52,833 5s. 5d. was outstanding at 31st March, 1949.

PLANT

The facilities provided by the Board to enable local authorities to acquire plant under the hire-purchase system were again taken advantage of to a considerable extent. The purchases for 1948-49 amounted to £55,631 6s. 8d. The total value of plant purchased under this system since its inauguration is £529,266 4s. 11d., of which sum £94,600 3s. 6d. remained outstanding at the 31st March, 1949.

OPERATIONS OF MAGNETIC TRUCK AND TRAILERS

During the year the magnetic truck and one trailer-type magnet operated in the North Island, and the other trailer-type operated solely in the South Island. These machines, which are utilized for clearing main highways of iron or steel puncture-producing