

INLAND SURFACE MAILS

EXTENSION OF FACILITIES

During the year arrangements were made for the restoration of the evening clearance of posting-boxes in the Wellington city and suburban areas. The restored clearance covers a wider area than formerly and now includes Lower Hutt, Petone, and Johnsonville. Auckland is the only centre where it has not yet been possible to restore the evening clearance. There, although every effort has been made to overcome the difficulty, a continued staff shortage has so far prevented the restoration of this service. As a measure of relief an additional mail, closing at 5 p.m., is made up at all post-offices in Auckland city and environs, but restoration of the evening clearance continues to be the Department's aim.

The use of newspaper delivery cars for the conveyance of evening postings of letters has been considerably extended. By this means letters posted up to 8 p.m. at the chief office in each of the four main centres are delivered in district centres by the first postman's delivery the following morning. Such mail-services have been established between Auckland and Whangarei, Auckland and Tauranga, Auckland and Rotorua, Wellington and New Plymouth, Wellington and Napier, Christchurch and Timaru, and Dunedin and Oamaru.

New postmen's deliveries were established during the year at Taupo, Brighton, Macandrew Bay, Broad Bay, Portobello, Nightcaps, Darfield, Waiau, and Wainuiomata. In addition, numerous extensions to existing deliveries, to serve new housing areas, were made.

MAIL-SERVICE CONTRACTS

The contracts covering the performance of inland mail-services in the Gisborne, Masterton, Napier, New Plymouth, Palmerston North, Wanganui, and Wellington postal districts expired on the 30th September, 1948, and were relet during the year for a further term of three years from the 1st October, 1948.

RURAL BOXHOLDERS

The number of rural boxholders continues to increase at a high rate, and on the 31st December, 1948, totalled 47,230, an increase of 3,658 on the figures for the previous year.

The increase in the number of boxholders has been brought about largely by the extension of existing services and the institution of new deliveries in furtherance of the more liberal policy now operating.

WINDOW-ENVELOPES ADDRESSED IN PENCIL: PROHIBITION IN POST

An amendment to the Postal Regulations made in December provides for the return to senders of window-enveloped articles posted for inland transmission when addressed in lead pencil or copying-ink pencil. Similar articles posted for overseas transmission have been prohibited for many years, in accordance with the regulations of the Universal Postal Union, because of the difficulty in deciphering addresses. The amendment to the New Zealand postal regulations brings the inland post provisions relating to these articles into conformity with the international provisions.