

NEW EXCHANGES ESTABLISHED

During the year the undermentioned new telephone exchanges were opened:—

Place.	County.	Type of Exchange.	Date Opened.	Number of Subscribers as at 31st March, 1949.
Ahaura	Grey	Rural automatic	8th December, 1948	91
Becks	Maniototo ..	Rural automatic	30th November, 1948	57
Glen Murray ..	Raglan	Rural automatic	15th May, 1948 ..	96
Mangakino ..	Taupo	Manual	2nd August, 1948 ..	115
Oparau	Kawhia	Rural automatic	27th May, 1948 ..	88
Tokoroa	Matamata ..	Manual	25th March, 1949 ..	248

In addition, the Albany exchange in the Waitemata County was converted to rural automatic working giving service to 232 subscribers at the end of the year.

PROPOSED NEW EXCHANGES

The following is a list of places at which it is proposed to install new telephone exchanges as the next phase of the development plan:—

Place.	County.	Place.	County.
Awhitu	Franklin.	Panetapu ..	Otorohanga.
Donnellys Crossing ..	Hobson.	South Hillend ..	Southland
Harihari	Westland.	Te Pahu	Raglan.
Mount Maunganui ..	Tauranga.	Wataroa	Westland.
Murupara	Whakatane.	Whitianga ..	Coromandel.
Ohai	Wallace.	Whangamata ..	Thames.
Otira	Westland.		

It is also intended to convert the Orini exchange (Raglan County) and the Waipahi exchange (Clutha County) to rural automatic working during the next twelve months.

Although it is proposed that ultimately all the exchanges named in the foregoing list will be automatic, some will be established on a manual basis as a temporary measure until such time as automatic equipment comes to hand from overseas.

The establishing of rural automatic exchanges is in accord with Government's policy of providing a twenty-four-hour telephone service throughout country areas. It is the intention to open automatic exchanges in many other country areas as soon as practicable, and the necessary preliminary surveys are now in hand.

Altogether twenty-four rural automatic units have been received. Six have already been installed, five during the past twelve months and the remainder have been allocated to specific areas. Fifty more are on order and will begin coming to hand towards the end of the year. The housing and installation of these small automatic units presents few problems, but many hundreds of man-hours and large quantities of line material are absorbed in reticulating a rural area by telephone cables and pole-lines to provide the circuits necessary to serve these relatively sparsely-populated districts, and the lack of staff and adequate supplies of poles are retarding factors.