

(ii) Rehabilitation Allowances and Hardship Grants

19. As a further result of satisfactory economic conditions, already mentioned, relatively small amounts were again paid during the year under these headings. The relative figures, and a comparison with those of the previous year, are as follows:—

	Years ended 31st March,	
	1949.	1948.
Rehabilitation allowances	£ 75	£ 192
Grants in cases of genuine hardship	4,166	6,594

SECTION V—TRADE TRAINING

(i) General

20. Although a diminution in trade-training activities could well have been expected now that the majority of ex-servicemen have been returned to some form of civilian work, applications for training, particularly in the building trades, have kept up remarkably well. This is due to an appreciable extent to applications received from ex J Force members, many of whom had no assured occupations prior to entering the Armed Forces.

21. Details of assistance under Training Schemes “A,” “B,” and “C” are set out in Table VII of the Appendix.

(ii) “A” Class Training (at Board’s Training Centres)

(a) General

22. Although there has been a tendency for applications to come forward more slowly than in former years, and the Board has found it necessary on occasions to advertise to ensure that the attention of all ex-servicemen who may be interested is drawn to the facilities offering, the response has, in general, been excellent. In isolated instances it has been necessary to defer the class until the required number has come forward. Since the passing of the Rehabilitation Amendment Act, 1947, making “A” Class trade-training assistance available to ex-servicemen of the British Commonwealth, an increasing number of applications has been received from English and Australian ex-servicemen. These men, if considered suitable for training, and provided they are not under contract—for example, assisted immigrants—are given the opportunity of accepting any vacancy after training arrangements have been made for all suitable New Zealand ex-servicemen available at the time.

23. Table VII in the Appendix gives the number of men who have benefited under the “A” Class Trade Training Scheme.

24. Rehabilitation-trained men now represent a very substantial part of the Dominion’s skilled building labour force, and, as such, have materially assisted in the national effort to overtake the housing shortage.

(b) Closure of Trade Training Centres

25. While it is the aim of the Rehabilitation Board to afford training in its centres to every eligible and suitable ex-serviceman who desires to qualify in one of the building trades taught, it nevertheless maintains a close watch on the prospective fields of employment in industry. Where the opportunities in any particular district appear to be diminishing, the Board discourages ex-servicemen residing there from entering that occupation. Oamaru is the only centre where definite steps have been taken to close training operations as soon as present trainees have completed their training course.