

1949
NEW ZEALAND

TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT

(ANNUAL REPORT OF)

Presented to Both Houses of the General Assembly by Leave

FOREWORD BY MINISTER OF TRANSPORT

MR. SPEAKER,—

During 1948-49 the Dominion's transport system served the public and met the requirements of industry and trade with reasonable efficiency. Over-all increases in passenger and freight traffic volumes were recorded, and although there is still room for improvement in the rate of flow of traffic through the transport system, there was some quickening of the rate during the year.

Another satisfactory feature was the progress made in modernizing and expanding our transport plant. Five new vessels entered the coastal fleet, 3,000 new LA wagons became available on the railways, and the number of motor-vehicles licensed increased by 26,000 (including 9,000 cars, 7,000 trucks, and 4,000 trailers).

Apart from a few local exceptions the great bulk of transport charges remained constant during the year.

The general shortage of labour is still being felt in the transport field, and many thousands of transport workers have carried more than their share. I would like to pay a warm tribute to the seamen, the railwaymen, the drivers of public motor-vehicles, the tramwaymen, and all the others who have not only kept our transport system functioning, but have been able to make a general advance in efficiency.

Honourable members will recollect that last year I placed before them certain general statistics I had prepared relating to the transport industry as a whole. I have had these brought up to date and would again like to point out that although complete accuracy cannot be claimed they are sufficiently near the mark for the purpose of general comparisons.