

The examination of new drivers, the retesting of persons over seventy years of age, and those who have failed to renew former licences continue to occupy a great deal of time, and this year over 29,000 persons were examined. The following table indicates the number of drivers tested in the four districts :—

District.	Total.
Auckland	10,155
Wellington	8,029
Christchurch	6,670
Dunedin	4,574
Total	29,428

Full use has been made of the forty-nine sets of loadometers operated by the traffic staff, and 4,380 vehicles have been weighed in rural districts. A close check is kept on the weight of loads as well as the speed of these vehicles.

The volume of traffic during the year has been at a high level, and at race meetings and special functions record crowds have been handled. In the North Island the use of inter-car radio has been of great value when controlling heavy traffic volume, while its use has been of assistance in apprehending traffic offenders and calling medical aid where injured persons were concerned. At the end of the year twenty-five cars were equipped with two-way radio.

Dominion-wide campaigns were made against defective brakes and wrongly adjusted lights in an effort to keep vehicles at a high standard of efficiency, and prosecutions were authorized in the worst cases, particularly where drivers failed to dip lights when likely to cause embarrassment to other road-users.

The enforcement staff is responsible for the supervision of the petrol-rationing scheme and is required to check the records kept by resellers of petrol.

F. TRAFFIC OFFENCES

During the year 11,116 offences were reported by Traffic Inspectors ; of this number, 6,222 were prosecuted and the remaining 4,894 were entered as warnings and offenders warned accordingly. Convictions were entered in 6,073 instances, 88 cases were dismissed, and the remaining 61 withdrawn. The increase of 899 offences is largely accounted for by the additional vehicles registered and a tightening-up on overloading and speeding offences by heavy motor-vehicles.

In addition to the 4,894 offences where written warnings were forwarded, the traffic staff report that 48,858 persons were warned verbally on the road.

The following schedule shows comparative figures relating to the number of traffic offences reported over the last six years :—

Year Ended 31st March,	Offences Reported.	Prosecuted.	Convicted.	Dismissed.	Withdrawn.	Warned.	Percentage of Warnings.	Fines Recorded.
								£
1944 ..	5,288	3,491	3,338	74	79	1,797	34	5,275
1945 ..	7,341	4,803	4,598	76	129	2,538	35	6,923
1946 ..	10,650	6,467	6,288	69	110	4,183	39	8,498
1947 ..	10,123	5,456	5,303	80	73	4,667	46	8,288
1948 ..	10,217	5,303	5,171	82	50	4,914	48	9,312
1949 ..	11,116	6,222	6,073	88	61	4,894	44	10,993

Tables 15 to 17 in the Appendix show the nature of offences resulting in convictions during the year ended 31st March, 1949, together with a summary of speeding offences for the years 1945-46 to 1948-49 inclusive, and information relating to traffic offence notices issued in each of the four districts administered by the Department.