

REGULATION OF COMMERCIAL ROAD TRANSPORT

TRANSPORT LICENSING AUTHORITIES.—Road transport services are licensed by three District and four Metropolitan Licensing Authorities, the Metropolitan Authorities dealing only with passenger services (including taxis) in their districts. Appeals against decisions of Licensing Authorities may be made to the Transport Appeal Authority.

Mr. C. L. Bishop was appointed as Authority for the Nos. 3 and 5 Licensing Districts on the death of the former Authority (Mr. S. V. Raines).

In all, 9,528 applications concerning transport licenses were handled by Licensing Authorities during the year, compared with 6,283 applications in the previous year. During the year 7,502 applications were dealt with by District Authorities and 2,026 by Metropolitan Authorities.

That the industry has continued to be an attractive avenue for investment is indicated by the fact that 2,092 applications for new licences (including 615 by taxi operators to charge separate fares for racegoers and early-morning-tram passengers) were dealt with by the Licensing Authorities during the year. Of these applications, 1,294 were granted.

A. PUBLIC PASSENGER SERVICES

(a) **LICENSING.**—During the year under review 1,993 applications were dealt with by the District and Metropolitan Licensing Authorities. Seven hundred and sixty-six new licences were granted, 394 licences were amended, 563 were renewed, and 120 transferred. Of the new licences granted, 615 have been issued by the Auckland Metropolitan Authority permitting taxi-operators to charge separate fares for the carriage of passengers to early-morning trains and to race meetings. In addition, in 24 cases new contract licences have been granted or the areas serviced by existing licences have been extended. In 18 instances approval has been given for the operation of new licences or new routes in suburban districts. Five new licences have been granted for the carriage of service personnel and their families from camps to various centres throughout the Dominion. In rural districts routes have been extended and new licences granted in 39 instances. These figures show that the passenger-transport facilities available to the public have been extended. Details of extensions to routes and new licences granted are set out in Table 42, while Tables 27 and 28 show the manner in which the Licensing Authorities dealt with applications relating to passenger licences.

(b) **FINANCIAL AND OPERATING STATISTICS 1947–48.**—Tables 43 to 47 in the Appendix detail financial and traffic statistics for licensed passenger-services in the Dominion, comparing the position of the industry in 1948 with that in 1940. No comparable figures were prepared between 1940 and 1948. The following outstanding features are thrown into sharp relief by the figures set out in these tables :—

(1) *Growth of the Industry.*—During the period 1940–1948 there has been a substantial increase in the volume of work undertaken by the industry. The mileage run has increased from approximately 28 million to 46 million, while 81 million passengers were carried in 1948, compared with 36 million in 1940. Revenue has increased from £1,515,000 to £4,124,000, and profits from £120,000 to £318,000.

The increase in road passenger transport activity in the four main centres is associated with population increases in these cities. Furthermore, omnibuses now undertake part of the work previously handled by tramways, while there is a tendency for new bus, rather than tram, services to be instituted to meet the needs of new and growing suburbs.

Vehicles running from local centres to surrounding districts and over medium distances have also substantially increased in importance. This means that there has been a marked improvement in the transport facilities afforded the rural population. Motor transport is a factor of considerable importance in breaking down the isolation of rural communities, many of which are not conveniently served by rail. By the introduction of rural road services the public are offered improved facilities for pleasure, shopping and cultural activities.