

PASSENGER REVENUE

Rail-passenger revenue increased by £88,447 or 3·21 per cent. despite a decrease of £41,616 in the amount received from the Armed Forces and £3,507 from season tickets. Most of the increased revenue came from a substantial rise in the number of first-class and sleeping-berth journeys and can be attributed to the restoration of the full timetable of the Auckland-Wellington "Limited" expresses, the running of the North Island "Daylight Limited" express during January, 1950, the augmented services provided for the Empire Games, the restoration of the Christchurch-Invercargill expresses to a daily (except Sundays) service, and the provision of sleeping-cars on the ordinary Auckland-Wellington expresses. A portion of the increase in revenue from passengers was due to the circumstance that, as from 1st February, 1950, seat reservations, and therefore bookings, were accepted two months in advance of the date of travel as against one month at the end of the previous year; also to the fact that an Easter period occurred in this year whereas there was none in the last financial year.

Passenger journeys at ordinary fares—viz., 7,881,255—increased by 173,206 (2·25 per cent.), while journeys on season and trip tickets (mostly suburban)—viz., 18,013,998—declined by 445,798 (2·41 per cent.). Ordinary-fare revenue produced £2,501,650, an increase of £91,954 over last year or 3·82 per cent., while season and trip sales at £346,275 represented a decrease of £3,507 or 1 per cent. Passenger-train mileage increased by 7·50 per cent.

The following items of "passenger" information will be of general interest:—

Item.	Number Reserved.		Revenue.		Variations.	
	1950.	1949.	1950.	1949.		
	Number.	Number.	£	£	£	Per Cent.
Reserved seats ..	1,416,180	1,384,408	88,511	86,794	1,717	1·98
Sleeping-berths ..	47,833	26,496	60,988	33,782	27,206	80·53
Platform tickets ..	..	..	3,191	2,846	345	12·12
Pillows ..	..	..	19,456	18,652	804	4·31

From November, 1949, in fulfilment of an obvious need, bassinettes were made available for hire to sleeping-car passengers on the Auckland-Wellington expresses at a charge of 2s. 6d. each. In the four and a half months since the inauguration of the service the hirings have numbered 189.

Train-hostess service was introduced on the South Island "Limited" express in August, 1949, and later extended, in a limited way, to some of the North Island expresses. The system is under trial, and the duties of the hostesses include assistance to sick and aged passengers, mothers with children, and other passengers who may require help. The cost of the service to date, including structural alterations to three cars to provide kitchenettes, equipment, and uniforms (£3,100) is not considered high in relation to the results obtained.

The increases in the sales of platform tickets and the hire of pillows were due principally to the running of the additional expresses on the North Island Main Trunk railway, and particularly in connection with the Empire Games.

Passenger revenue is affected by road competition, the principal routes affected being:—

- Auckland-Waikato-Rotorua.
- Auckland-Helensville.
- Auckland-Wellington.
- Auckland-New Plymouth.
- Wellington-Napier.
- Wellington-Feilding.
- Blenheim-Christchurch.