

93. When once your cars are on the road conveying passengers, are they from time to time inspected by the City Council authorities?—Yes, the general inspection that takes place from day to day by the Traffic Inspector, and the inspection prior to the renewal of the license each year

94. You at the present time run about how many cars?—Ninety-two.

95. Can you tell us, approximately, what the cost of a car is?—The later types of car cost very nearly £1,500 each.

96. In addition to the ninety-two cars that are actually running at the present time, have you more on order?—We have eight practically completed.

97. Bringing your total up to 100?—Yes, and another one in addition that we are building ourselves—that is 101

98. What has been the capital expenditure—again approximately will do—by your company upon its plant, lines, rolling-stock, &c., in Auckland, upon the faith of the Orders in Council that have been obtained by the local bodies and delegated to your company?—Nearly three-quarters of a million.

99. Do you perceive in clause 5 any provision, any saving clause, which will make it certain that if the Bill passes, the owners of tramways will be allowed or entitled to continue to run the cars which have been passed—every one of them—by the Public Works Department?—No; but I hardly see how that clause 5 affects that question so much as clause 3.

100. What you say is that there is no saving clause in 5, and that, apart from clause 5, the Minister would have power to condemn all the cars of any tramway at present existing in New Zealand?—That is so.

101. Now, will you please continue with your own observations as to clause 5 of the Bill?—Subclause (a), the inspection, that has been dealt with. That is already carried out by the City Council and the Public Works Department.

102. There is no periodical inspection by the Public Works Department, except under the provisions of the Public Works Act after an accident—not necessarily a fatal accident?—That is so, but the cars are inspected after an accident, fatal or otherwise.

103. Do you say that cars are always inspected after an accident by the Public Works Department?—No. After a recent accident the car was inspected by an officer of the Public Works Department. Subclause (b) is the licensing That has just been dealt with. Subclause (c) is the prescribed number of passengers. That is already dealt with by the Auckland City Council by-laws.

104. As a matter of fact, is there overcrowding to any extent in Auckland?—The carrying-capacity of the cars in Auckland is limited by the licenses issued by the City Council. In the case of some cars only persons occupying seats are allowed to be carried. In other cars up to fourteen are allowed to stand.

105. Do the employees themselves prevent overcrowding?—They do.

106. And has any complaint ever been made by you against them doing so?—No.

107. Then just come to subclause (d)?—Well, the speed is limited in some instances by the Orders in Council.

108. And I suppose you will admit that where there is anything like congested traffic there ought to be a limit?—Undoubtedly so.

109. While on the subject of limit of speed, have you considered the question as to whether it would be reasonably practicable to have speed-indicators upon the cars, or whether it would be advisable?—I have considered that from time to time. We had speed-indicators that were tried by the Brakes Commission on the cars, but it was impossible to get an indicator that was reliable. Two different types were used to check each other, and then it was necessary from time to time to take them off the cars to check them. In one case we checked the speed-indicators by a motor-car travelling parallel with the car. Speed-indicators have been in use in the United Kingdom for a great many years—from the days of steam tramways, twenty years ago. The Board of Trade insisted upon all tramway locomotives being fitted with speed-indicators that were arranged to automatically cut off steam so that when the maximum to which the locomotive was set to run was reached, the power was automatically cut off, and the speed was reduced or the machine stopped; but those speed-indicators worked only one day in the 365. That was quite well known to the Board of Trade, and they have since been discontinued.

110. Why were they not working other days?—For the simple reason that the service could not be worked satisfactorily with the limit.

111. I suppose where you have a straight run without any traffic you can go very much faster than when you are travelling in a place which is more congested?—That is so. Speed-indicators on electric tram-cars would be extremely difficult to work, for the reason that, to be of any good the motorman has to watch them, and the motorman should not have anything on the car to watch, because he has enough to watch in the street. If he has to pull up when the indicator indicates the maximum speed he has to run at, he will be in trouble. The speeds are limited on a tram-car—that is to say, on the level a man has only two speeds to run at.

112. Then, again, if you have different speeds for different grades and different routes, and the motorman has to be constantly bearing that in mind and looking at his indicator, do you think that is conducive to his attending properly to his duties and seeing to the safety of the public?—I do not.

113. Put it this way: The speed-indicator is of course suggested, and one must agree that it is a proper suggestion if it can be introduced and used for the safety of the public, but your view is that it would not operate in that way, for the reasons you have given?—Yes. Again referring to the Board of Trade, the last regulation I recollect about speed-indicators was something to the effect that when a reliable indicator could be obtained a certain number were to be fitted