

No. 140.

The GENERAL MANAGER, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited),
Dunedin, 7th January, 1914.

SIR,—

gator, and Friendly groups have reached a point where alterations in the itineraries of the steamers have become necessary. To meet the conditions as they now are, the best arrangement we can make is to send the "Navua" from Wellington on the 16th instant and Auckland on the 21st instant to Suva, Levuka when required, thence direct to Nukualofa, Haapai, Vavau, and Apia, come direct from Apia to Suva and from Suva to Auckland, thence to Wellington—this round trip to be repeated every twenty-eight days. The new running means that the "Atua" and "Tofua" will not be required to come through to Auckland, but as against that the new running of the "Navua" will put Wellington in direct monthly communication with the three groups; whereas formerly Wellington had communication with Fiji only via Westport, and with the Friendly Islands and Samoa by transshipment at Auckland. The opportunity for more extended dealings with these groups by the inclusion of Wellington in the direct service should be of very considerable importance to the Dominion, and we hope it will be considered sufficiently so to receive your approval notwithstanding that the day of despatch from Auckland to Fiji is unavoidably brought rather close to the date of the Vancouver mail-steamer.

I beg to enclose copy of the January time-table, in which the revised island sailings are detailed [not printed].

I have, &c.,

R. McK. McLENNAN,
For General Manager.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

[South Sea Isld. m/s 14/2.]

No. 141.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the GENERAL MANAGER, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 20th February, 1914.

In reference to your letter of the 7th ultimo announcing changes and developments following requirements in your services to and from the Fiji, Navigator, and Friendly groups of islands, I am afraid you will find that the time-table you propose will be objected to by business people in Auckland, if not elsewhere. The facts are that up to the time of the proposed change the Auckland business people have had a fortnightly service with Fiji, in addition to any advantages reaped from the passage of irregular traders. The new service leaves a blank of twenty-four days between the departure of the "Navua" and the next Vancouver boat, and then an interval of four days only before the next despatch. Auckland's business connection with the islands is so intimate that it may fairly claim the best possible service for the performance of its communications therewith. And it must be urged that the goodness of a mail-service largely depends upon its regularity. Although I am satisfied you have proposed the best arrangement possible at the moment, I hope to hear that you are able, without injuring the direct Wellington connection, to put Auckland more nearly in the intermediate position between dates that it has hitherto held than your letter proposes to do.

Meantime I formally approve on behalf of the Postmaster-General of the new time-table. It may be necessary, however, to write you further giving formal notice of the cessation of the subsidy with a view to determining whether the Department is getting the full value of the subsidy. At present the subsidy of £1,690 is paid for communication between Auckland and Fiji thirteen times in the year, and your company receives poundage on other mails shipped on the Fiji steamer—namely, those for Samoa and Tonga. I should suppose that the time has arrived in the development of the South Sea Island business when the subsidy might be dispensed with without detriment to your company, a poundage on the Fiji mails probably being a full equivalent.

I have, &c.,

W. R. MORRIS, Secretary.

The General Manager, Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited), Dunedin.

[P. & T. 36/32.]

No. 142.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the GENERAL MANAGER, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 1st April, 1914.

I have the honour to inform you that Government has decided that it cannot see its way to continue to pay the subsidies of £1,200 and £1,690 per annum respectively for the Auckland-Rarotonga-Tahiti and Auckland-Fiji mail-services, as the services are not now required for mail or trade purposes. The subsidies will, therefore, be abolished at the end of June next.

I have, &c.,

W. R. MORRIS, Secretary.

The General Manager, Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited), Dunedin.

[Acknowledged 8th April, 1914.]