

- (c.) That requisitions for stationery and office requisites from all offices, except those situated in Wellington City, shall be made quarterly. In regard to Wellington City, requisitions shall be submitted monthly. Emergency requisitions may, however, be submitted when occasion requires. To enable the supply of requisitions to be spread evenly over the year the Dominion has been divided into districts, and special dates for requisitioning allotted to each.

A new form of requisition has been printed, and has been in use since the 1st January of the present year.

Stores Accounts, Post and Telegraph Department.—During the year an important step has been taken by the Permanent Head of the Post and Telegraph Department, by transferring the accounting, and the work incidental thereto, from the stores branch to the Chief Accountant's office. This is undoubtedly the right course to adopt. It is the opinion of the Commissioners that officers in charge of stores should confine their attention to the purchase and receipt of stores and to the supply of the requirements of Departments, and should have as little to do as possible with the accounting. Quite apart from the administrative effect, not only will economy result from the change, but there will also be a considerable simplification of the system. It is estimated that the change will permit of the saving of the services of at least four officers—a reduction of $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent. in staff, and a decrease in cost of 48 per cent. or £805 for the year.

General.—(a.) Central store: Reference is made in the First Report to the possibility (in view of the large sums expended annually on stores administration) of the consolidation of the interests of the several Departments in the direction of the establishment of a central store. Special inquiries have already been made from such of the Australian States as have given recognition to the practice; and the replies, with accompanying departmental reports, are under consideration in view of the desirability of providing one store common to the whole of the Departments or groups of Departments. This will necessitate the appointment of a Controller and staff; but, as the central-store question will take time to consider, and in view of the unsatisfactory position existing with regard to stores-control in the Public Works Department, a Stores Manager is being appointed for this Department.

(b.) Purchase-order: Suitable forms have been printed for the ordering of stores. This will secure uniformity in purchase-arrangements, and, the forms being prepared by carbon process, will enable a clear record to be kept for accounting purposes.

(c.) Purchase of stores under competitive quotation: In the case of stores not exceeding £100 in value in any one class, which are not included in any contract schedule, supplies are now to be obtained by competitive quotation where the requirements of any Department necessitate such purchases. Quotation forms must be issued containing the terms and conditions under which quotations are invited; and when obtained a comparative summary must be prepared, checked, certified correct, and submitted to the Permanent Head, who is to decide which quotation shall be accepted, with the exception that the Minister's approval must be obtained in cases where it is not intended to accept the lowest quotation.

The economical dealing with, and the proper care of, both stores and departmental property should be finally arranged at an early date. With the co-operation of and loyal assistance from officers engaged in duties connected with stores-management, system and good order should prevail, resulting in efficiency, economy, and discipline. Conferences of officers will be arranged for as occasion demands.

RECORDS.

The new system of recording recommended for general adoption is now installed in the following Departments: Agriculture, &c. (partially), Customs (Head Office and Collector), Defence, Dominion Laboratory, Government Statistician's, Internal Affairs (now including Electoral and Government Advertising), Labour, Lands, Marine (now including Machinery), Meteorological, Post and Telegraph (Secretary's office, Chief Inspector's office, Inspector of Telegraph-offices, and in the chief post-offices at Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin, Invercargill, Oamaru, Timaru, and