

No. 137.

The SECRETARY, Lyttelton Harbour Board, Christchurch, to the Hon. the MINISTER OF MARINE, Wellington.

SIR,—

Lyttelton Harbour Board, Christchurch, 3rd July, 1913.

I am instructed to inform you that, at its meeting held on the 2nd instant, the Board passed the following resolution: "That this Board is strongly of opinion that direct wireless communication should be established with Lyttelton."

While bringing this resolution under your notice I am instructed to point out that in the event of a serious accident occurring to a steamship anywhere between the Kaikouras and Timaru, Lyttelton would be the natural port from which assistance would be expected, and where the Board keeps a powerful sea-going tug-boat always under steam.

The late slight mishap to the s.s. "Maori," on which occasion a blade was cast off one of her propellers, when the information, after having been communicated through the "Niwaru," did not reach Lyttelton until after the arrival there of the "Maori" herself, has drawn attention to the dangers of the present state of affairs; and it is felt that, in view of the recent regulation compelling passenger-steamers to carry wireless installations, it is necessary that a port of the importance of Lyttelton should be equipped as a wireless station.

I have, &c.,

CYRUS J. C. WILLIAMS,

Secretary, Treasurer, and Engineer.

The Hon. the Minister of Marine, Wellington.

[P. & T. 71/48.]

No. 138.

The Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington, to the Hon. the MINISTER OF MARINE, Wellington.

(Memorandum.)

Postmaster-General's Office, Wellington, 12th August, 1913.

IN reference to the letter to you of the 3rd ultimo from the Secretary, Lyttelton Harbour Board, requesting that a wireless station be established at Lyttelton, I beg to inform you that there are strong technical objections to a station being opened at Lyttelton, and that in any case one is not required.

Lyttelton is well within the daylight range of the Wellington station. Under normal conditions in the daytime the Wellington station can work with vessels in Otago Harbour; and at night it has a much wider range. Stations at Lyttelton and Wellington would at night interfere with each other; and because of such interference practically only one could work at a time. As an indication of how interference affects working, it may be stated that even stations in Australia may interfere with signals being received in New Zealand from ships at a distance, and prevent their being deciphered.

In a short time wireless stations will be open near Bluff and at Awanui, near Doubtless Bay. Any ship on the coast midway between Bluff and Wellington or Wellington and Auckland will not be more than about two hundred miles from one of these stations, and may be closer; and under normal conditions ship and coast stations easily cover a distance of two hundred miles at night.

When abnormal conditions arise any wireless station may be out of action even at short range. The s.s. "Niwaru" incident recently was such a case. It happened that the ship operator left his post when the conditions began to improve and his signals were being read. In cases of danger a special signal, "SOS," is used; and this signal would be answered by any ship or coast station hearing it. Had the mishap to the s.s. "Maori," which was advised to the "Niwaru," been dangerous, the call "SOS" would have received attention, as the warship "New Zealand" was listening, and other vessels were in the Dominion waters. In such an extreme case the wireless operator at Wellington would have arranged for Christchurch to be communicated with by ordinary telegraph.

R. HEATON RHODES, Postmaster-General.

The Hon. F. M. B. Fisher, Wellington.

No. 139.

The HIGH COMMISSIONER to the Hon. the PRIME MINISTER.

Westminster Chambers, 13 Victoria Street, London S.W.,

22nd August, 1913.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th May last, and in reply to state that I at once addressed communications to the Colonial Office and the General Post Office with reference thereto. I annex copies of both these letters, also copy of the reply from the General Post Office upon the inquiry you desired should be made, and so soon as I obtain any information on the subject through the Colonial Office from the International Office it shall at once be transmitted to you.

I have, &c.,

C. WRAY PALLISER,

For the High Commissioner.

The Hon. the Prime Minister, Wellington.

Enclosure 1 in No. 139.

The SECRETARY TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, London.

SIR,—

13 Victoria Street, London S.W., 3rd July 1913.

I am directed by the High Commissioner to inform you that he has received a letter from his Government with reference to the system of ocean letters introduced by the Marconi International