

WIRELESS EQUIPMENT, EXTENSION, ETC.

The efficiency of all New Zealand coast stations has been well maintained during the year, and, as a result of a vigilant and effective watch having been kept for signals of distress from ship stations, good service was rendered on the 3rd September in connection with the stranding of the s.s. "Mesna" on Hakofis Reef.

Radio-Wellington has been equipped with a continuous wave-valve transmitter which permits of the use of different types of transmitters, and reduces to a minimum the interference with adjacent radio-telephone broadcasting transmissions.

The transmitting equipment at Radio-Awarua has been supplemented by a $1\frac{1}{2}$ -kilowatt transmitting set which provides a more effective means of communicating in daylight with ships on the southern steamship routes. Consideration is now being given to an extension of the hours of attendance and the duration of the watch at this station.

The proposed modernization of the radio station at Awanui (New Zealand) and Apia (Samoa) by the installation of continuous wave transmitters in place of the present spark equipment is still in abeyance pending possible developments in connection with the erection in New Zealand of a high-power station, which would probably incorporate the specific services at present performed by Radio-Awanui.

A radio-telegraph station was established at Kawau Island on the 8th April, 1924, for the handling of traffic between the island and the Auckland radio-station. The charge for telegrams is 2½d. per word, with a minimum charge of 1s. 3d. for each message. Since its inception the station has been operated economically and has maintained an uninterrupted service. The establishment of this station has proved a great convenience to settlers, visitors, and shipping interests, and as the existence of the station becomes more widely known the service will probably be availed of to a greater extent.

Radio-telegraph stations were erected during the year on the islands of Aitutaki, Mangaia, and Niue, and were opened for traffic respectively on the 10th June, 6th August, and 2nd October. The stations at Aitutaki and Mangaia are equipped with $\frac{1}{2}$ -kilowatt spark sets, and communicate with Rarotonga, while the Niue station is equipped with radio-telephone equipment for communication with Apia, Samoa. The stations are manned by Native operators. The charges for telegrams per word are as follows: Mangaia and Aitutaki, 1s. 9d.; Niue, 1s. 6d. The Aitutaki station was temporarily closed from the 29th December to the 23rd January on account of apparatus troubles. Further trouble in this respect necessitated the closing of the station temporarily on the 3rd February, pending receipt from New Zealand of a new magneto. The station was still closed for traffic on the 31st March. The Mangaia station was temporarily closed from the 27th November to the 30th December owing to the operator being indisposed. The Niue station has maintained an uninterrupted service since its inception.

RADIO BROADCASTING.

The Post and Telegraph Amendment Act provides that after the 1st April, 1925, it shall not be lawful for any person to sell, offer for sale, or have in his possession for sale in the way of his business, any apparatus designed or intended for use in connection with radio-telegraphy unless he is the holder of a license issued to him by the Minister of Telegraphs. Further, every licensed dealer must keep a true record of all sales made by him of apparatus for radio-telegraphy. The record must set out in respect of each sale the date thereof, and the name, occupation, and address of the purchaser, and particulars of the articles purchased.

Regulations for radio broadcasting stations and the sale of radio apparatus were gazetted on the 12th March, and became operative on the 1st April, 1925. Under the new scheme the proportion of the fees to be paid to the broadcasting licensee is fixed at £1 5s. out of the annual fee received from every licensee of a radio station, and 90 per centum of the fee for each radio-dealer's license.

Radio-dealers' licenses are divided into three classes: Class 1, licenses of dealers carrying on business in Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin, or Wellington; Class 2, licenses of dealers carrying on business in centres of population other than the aforementioned four main centres, having a population of more than five thousand; Class 3, licenses of dealers carrying on business in centres of population having a population of five thousand or less.

The annual fees for licenses of Class 1, 2, and 3 are £10, £5, and £2 respectively.

It is forbidden by regulation for a broadcasting station to be used for the dissemination of propaganda of a controversial nature, while the use of mechanically operated musical instruments will be permitted only provided their use is strictly limited to a comparatively small part of the programme.

A penalty of a fine not exceeding £50 or a term of imprisonment not exceeding six months is provided for acts in contravention of or failure to comply with particular regulations, and a fine not exceeding £10 or a term of imprisonment not exceeding one month for an offence against any other of the regulations.

As soon as the broadcasting of good programmes commences it is anticipated that the number of applications for licenses will be very large, and until this takes place and the new company is formed the companies at present operating stations in the four centres have agreed to co-operate with the Department, and have promised to carry out an improved service in order that "listeners in" may not be under any disadvantage until the new stations are erected.