

AMATEUR WIRELESS LICENSES.

New regulations for radio receiving, amateur transmitting and receiving, and experimental stations were gazetted on the 5th March, 1925. The annual fee for a radio-receiving-station license, which was raised from 5s. to £1 10s., might at first appear excessive, but it must not be overlooked that provision is made in the Broadcasting Regulations for £1 5s. out of every license fee to be paid to the person or company by whom or by which broadcasting is undertaken under those regulations. A first-class broadcasting service is required to be given from four stations, and when the expense of establishing and maintaining such a service is considered it will be agreed that the license fee is not high. A similar amount is payable to the broadcasting licensee out of every license fee of £2 2s. now charged for a license for an amateur transmitting or an experimental station.

District Telegraph Engineers are now empowered to issue amateur operator's certificates, and licenses for amateur transmitting and receiving and experimental stations.

FEE FOR SHIP OPERATOR'S CERTIFICATE.

During the year the fee for examining a candidate for a ship operator's certificate was increased from 5s. to 15s. However, the fee of 5s. for examining in telegraphy only, for a first-class certificate, a candidate who already holds a second-class certificate was not altered.

PRESS RATE ON TELEGRAMS EXCHANGED WITH ISLAND STATIONS.

The rates for Press telegrams to or from Chatham and Rarotonga (Cook Islands) were fixed by Order in Council dated the 16th June, 1924. The rate for such messages exchanged between the mainland of New Zealand and Chatham Islands is 5s. per 100 words or fraction thereof, and between New Zealand and Rarotonga 4½d. per word, with a minimum of 7s. 6d. for such message.

TELEPHONE-EXCHANGE SERVICE.

DEVELOPMENT.

During the year extensive construction work was carried out at many exchanges to make provision for immediate and future requirements, and in some instances, chiefly in suburban areas, what was regarded as adequate accommodation was fully utilized immediately it became available.

The present rating system has undoubtedly popularized the telephone in country districts, and brought it within the reach of many backblock settlers to whom telephone service, in the event of sickness, is invaluable. It has also promoted the amalgamation of exchanges situated at no appreciable distance apart. During the year Petone, Heretaunga, and Kahutara exchanges have been amalgamated respectively with Lower Hutt, Upper Hutt, and Featherston. Under much the same conditions the Ngakawau and Millerton exchanges (two miles and a half apart) were closed by the establishment of a central exchange at Granity. With each amalgamation the subscribers have reaped the advantage of being able to communicate with a greater number of subscribers without the payment of toll fees, while in some cases extended hours of attendance have also been obtained without any corresponding increase of rental.

From a point of view of development the position is extremely satisfactory, and fully justifies the claim made in 1923 that the comprehensive revision of the rating system then being undertaken would stimulate and promote telephone development in all areas, and would be in the interests of subscribers as well as the Department.

The growth of the telephone-exchange system is exemplified in the following table, which shows quinquennially since 1905 the number of exchanges, the total wire-mileage, the revenue, and the total number of telephone stations, together with the number of telephones for each 1,000 population in New Zealand :—

Quinquennial Year.	Number of Exchanges.	Miles of Wire.	Revenue.	Number of Telephone Stations.	
				Total.	Per 1,000 Population.
1905	85	11,028	79,061	13,423	14.78
1910	153	35,233	144,298	29,681	28.67
1915	250	113,479	303,856	54,261	47.18
1920	291	177,509	419,318	80,723	65.27
1925	340	331,453	867,218	120,097*	87.26

* Includes approximately 4,000 non-exchange stations.

ATTENDANCE AT TELEPHONE EXCHANGES.

In the Telephone Regulations of September, 1923, provision was made for the observance of a more extended attendance at exchanges with from fifty to two hundred subscribers than was available hitherto.

At exchanges of between fifty and one hundred subscribers the attendance now given is from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., while exchanges at which the number of subscribers is between one hundred and two hundred are open from 6 a.m. to midnight. This extension of the hours of service is much appreciated by subscribers, and the hours fixed have proved very suitable.