

The percentages of the total wire-mileage in underground and aerial cables and open aerial wire respectively for the year ended 31st March, 1928, are as under :—

Telephone-exchange wire in underground cables	..	..	67 per cent.
Telephone-exchange wire in aerial cables	..	..	14 „
Telephone-exchange open aerial wire	..	..	19 „

In the telephone statistics of the world (compiled on the 31st March, 1926) the United States of America led as regards density, with 14·8 telephones per 100 of population; Canada was second, with 12·2 telephones; while New Zealand and Denmark took third place, with 9·2 telephones. Australia and Great Britain occupied seventh and tenth places respectively, with 6·1 and 3·0 telephones per 100 of population. The number of telephones per 100 of population of the world was 1·5.

AUTOMATIC TELEPHONE EXCHANGES.

The Department is proceeding steadily with its policy of introducing modern types of exchange switching equipment as it becomes necessary to replace obsolete or overloaded systems. Each case is considered on its merits, and the type of equipment selected is that best suited to meet the needs of the particular community.

The automatic exchanges at present working throughout the Dominion have given satisfactory service during the year.

AUCKLAND METROPOLITAN AREA AND DISTRICT AUTOMATIC TELEPHONE EXCHANGES.

Auckland.—In order to meet present and future demands for telephone service, provision is being made for additional extension equipment to be installed at the following exchanges: Mount Eden (800 individual lines and 100 two-party lines), Remuera (800 individual lines and 100 two-party lines), Takapuna (200 individual lines), Onehunga (200 individual lines), Wellesley Street (3,000 individual lines and 100 two-party lines).

The additions to the Wellesley Street Telephone Exchange building were completed during the year, and will provide accommodation for a further 10,000-line equipment to meet the future requirements of the Auckland Central Exchange area.

Battery-operated stand-by power plants have been installed at the Mount Eden, Remuera, and Ponsonby Exchanges, thus enabling a continuous telephone service to be maintained in the event of temporary failure of the city electrical-power supply.

Owing to a change from direct current to alternating current in the borough electrical-power supply, certain changes were necessary in the power equipment at the Devonport Automatic Telephone Exchange. The change-over was satisfactorily effected on the 30th November, 1927, without interfering with the continuity of the telephone service.

Hamilton.—Preliminary work in connection with the installation of an extension of 200 individual lines and 100 two-party lines has been completed, and a commencement will shortly be made with the installation of the equipment. Consequent upon the enlargement of the switch-room it was necessary to redesign and to extend the air-distribution section of the air-conditioning plant in order to meet the altered conditions.

CHRISTCHURCH METROPOLITAN AREA AUTOMATIC TELEPHONE EXCHANGES.

Christchurch.—The installation of full automatic switching equipment for the conversion of the Christchurch metropolitan area is well advanced. The conversion—a work of considerable magnitude—could not for a variety of reasons be pushed forward as rapidly as the Department would have wished. In view of the delays, manual switching equipment has been improvised to furnish service in the interim, but it will not be long now before the whole of the area will be served by a modern and thoroughly efficient automatic system.

DUNEDIN METROPOLITAN AREA AND DISTRICT AUTOMATIC TELEPHONE EXCHANGES.

Dunedin.—The conversion from manual to automatic working of the exchanges in the Dunedin metropolitan area was successfully carried out on the 28th May, 1927, since when the service has been highly satisfactory.

The exchange equipment provides for the following services: Individual, two-party selective ringing, and four-party selective ringing.

Individual service: Provision was made for 6,400 individual lines, 4,000 of which were installed at the Central Exchange, 1,400 at the South Dunedin Exchange and 1,000 at the Roslyn Exchange.

Two-party-line selective ringing: Two units capable of accommodating 100 lines or 200 subscribers each were installed, one at the Central Exchange and the other at the South Dunedin Exchange. This class of service has met the requirements of small business houses whose calling-rate does not justify the increased rental for individual lines.