

The provision of facilities for direct dialling enables the toll operator at a calling station to dial the wanted subscriber at a distant automatic exchange without invoking the assistance of the operator at the distant exchange. Thus in the case of a toll communication from Wellington to Blenheim the toll operator at Wellington is able to dial the wanted subscriber at Blenheim direct, while in the case of a Blenheim subscriber wanting a toll conversation with Wellington the Blenheim toll operator is able to dial the number of the subscriber required at Wellington.

Direct dialling between exchanges is now in operation between Lower Hutt and Wellington (six circuits); between Paekakariki and Wellington; between Wellington and Blenheim (two circuits), both ways; between Wellington and Masterton, both ways; between Napier and all exchanges which have direct access to Napier, including Gisborne, Wairoa, and Hastings; between Dannevirke and Napier, both ways; and between Palmerston North and Dannevirke, both ways. Further extensions are being arranged, and ultimately all exchanges which can communicate direct with automatic exchanges will be able to dial the subscribers at such exchanges direct.

Another and an even more marked improvement in the speed of toll service was effected by the introduction between Napier and Hastings, and between Lower Hutt and Wellington, of the combined line and recording method of operating (commonly known as the C.L.R. method), the aim of which is to complete as many toll calls as possible while the calling party remains at the telephone. The adoption of this method of operating has resulted in a greatly improved and faster service.

In ordinary toll practice at the larger exchanges particulars of toll calls required by subscribers are recorded by one operator, and the actual line work (*i.e.*, the establishing of the connections) is done by another operator. This practice entails the dismissal of the subscriber after particulars of the call have been recorded, and the recalling of the subscriber when the attention of the station required is secured. Under the C.L.R. method of operating the special recording operator is eliminated, and the recording and line work is done by the line operator. This enables a toll call to be completed at the time of application.

The C.L.R. method saves toll-line and operating time. The subscriber also benefits in that he either obtains his toll connection or receives a definite report in connection therewith before hanging up his receiver.

In countries where the C.L.R. method of operation has been extensively applied a very large majority of the toll calls are completed while the calling subscriber remains at the telephone. Owing to toll-line limitations, such extensive application of the system is not practicable in New Zealand. It is the intention, however, to install the system between a number of places which have a large community of interest.

In order that the maximum efficiency under these two new methods of operation may be obtained, it is essential that the calling subscriber should furnish the toll operator with the telephone-number as well as the name of the wanted subscriber. The Department has intimated to frequent users of the toll lines that if they will furnish the names of the persons with whom they often communicate by toll the Department will supply lists showing the telephone-numbers of such subscribers. Already a number of toll users have availed themselves of the opportunity of obtaining such numbered lists. Toll operators are being required, at the time a call is being established, to furnish the called telephone-number to the calling party, in order that the calling party may note the number for future use.

By the introduction of these and other improvements in the methods of operating, all of which have been effected with due regard to economy, the average length of time involved in completing toll calls has been substantially reduced and the toll service still further popularized.

RETURN OF TOLL-CALL DELAYS AND CANCELLATIONS.

With the development of the telephone service and the growing tendency to resort to the telephone for long-distance communication, it is necessary that requests for toll communications should be satisfied with the least possible delay. It is satisfactory to record that the efforts made to obtain the highest possible efficiency in this direction are meeting with good results. The following return taken over a short period illustrates the number and percentage of calls satisfied within certain times after the receipt of the applications. It indicates also the percentage of calls cancelled, and the reasons for the cancellations.

Calls.

	Full Rate.		Half Rate.	
	Number.	Per Cent.	Number.	Per Cent.
Calls connected with less than 5 minutes' delay ..	238,529	77·9	30,635	57·2
" " 10 " ..	39,465	12·9	8,068	15·1
" " 15 " ..	14,085	4·6	4,372	8·2
Calls connected with more than 15 minutes' delay	14,038	4·6	10,418	19·5
Totals	306,117	100·0	53,493	100·0

Total number of calls during the period, 359,610.