

The totals comprise a large number of comparatively small sums paid for mileages run at the convenience of the Department where the transfer or purchase of a departmental vehicle was not warranted and the arranging of hire from other sources was inexpedient.

Year.						Total Allowances.		
						£	s.	d.
1933-34	..	..	..	..	..	803	3	0
1934-35	..	..	..	..	..	1,571	10	2
1935-36	..	..	..	..	..	1,160	17	5

Plant Repair Depots.—The Department's plant repair depots at Whangarei, Rotorua, and Wellington have functioned satisfactorily during the year, and have been utilized by other Government Departments in the locality. These depots, which are set up principally as running-sheds, are staffed with skeleton staffs of three or four skilled men, who are used to carry out urgent running repairs of road-construction plant and arrange for major plant repairs by private enterprise on best tender.

The plant depot at Wellington also handles the repairs of Public Works Department plant passing through Wellington on transfer from remote districts, and operates the repair and distribution of compressed-air tools to the general construction works throughout New Zealand, wherever warranted.

This air-tool service is proving a decided economy to the Department, and saves the general stocking-up of costly spare parts at various places, whilst the maintenance is in the hands of one expert working full time upon the work.

Several skilled maintenance fitters are operating singly under the control of various district engineers, and are carrying out similar work to that done at the plant depots, but upon a smaller scale, private enterprise being utilized largely to handle major repairs on best competitive quotation.

Inspections of Passenger-carrying Vehicles.—All of the mechanical and structural inspections required by the Transport Department before issuing licenses to private operators were carried out by the Public Works Department's mechanical staff during the year, and certificates of fitness or permits to run were issued as follows:—

District.	Omni-buses.	Service Cars.	Service Coaches.	Passenger Trucks.	Total.
1. Whangarei	13	37	5	55	110
2. Auckland and Tauranga	214	121	32	27	394
4. Gisborne and Napier	78	143	36	1	258
5. Stratford and Taumarunui	12	99	8	26	145
6. Wellington	120	136	8	30	294
7. Nelson and Westland	21	92	1	5	119
8. Christchurch	56	51	10	6	123
9. Dunedin	51	72	4	13	140
10. Invercargill	24	27	4	8	63
Totals	589	778	108	171	1,646

Vehicles condemned, 38; vehicles withdrawn voluntarily, 104.

General.—Mechanical work, including the figuring of proposals, preparation of specifications and contracts, inspections and consultations on various mechanical matters, including steam-generation, water-supplies, pumping-schemes, heating-schemes, gasworks, supply of machine tools and workshops equipment, institution of domestic mechanical services, electric-lift installations, and supply of road-construction and special motor-vehicles was carried out for various Government Departments—including Naval Department, Defence Department, Post and Telegraph Department, Mental Hospitals Department, Cook Islands Department, Health Department, Lands Department, Forestry Department, Industries and Commerce Department, Justice Department, Native Department, Mines Department, Marine Department, External Affairs Department, Agriculture Department, and the Government Loans Board.

A considerable quantity of road-construction plant and motor-vehicles was obtained for local bodies on behalf of the Main Highways Board: the work involved covering the preparation of specifications, calling tenders, analysing tenders, and making the necessary recommendations to the Board.

NAVAL AND DEFENCE DEPARTMENTAL WORKS.

During the whole of the year covered by this report a construction programme has been in hand on behalf of the Navy Office and the Defence Department.

Works for the Navy Office include reconstruction of portion of the Devonport Station, Auckland, and the first year's programme in connection with the Kauri Point Depot.

Works for the Defence Department include major structures at Auckland and Wellington, and extensions in connection with the Air Force Bases at Hobsonville, Auckland, and Wigram (Christchurch).

The programme has involved careful and detailed planning, and works are receiving skilled supervision.