

The following table shows the average late arrivals of the express, mixed, and suburban trains for the year :—

AVERAGE LATE ARRIVAL OF TRAINS, YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1936.

Year ended	Period ended													Average for Year, in Minutes.
	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Feb.	March.	
<i>Express and Mail Trains.</i>														
1936 ..	7.32	6.39	4.47	2.91	2.15	3.85	2.32	2.61	2.20	7.99	6.84	16.90	8.00	5.68
1935 ..	4.87	5.31	3.96	3.84	2.11	3.20	1.56	1.13	1.59	9.56	5.22	7.02	5.88	4.25
<i>Long-distance Mixed Trains.</i>														
1936 ..	8.43	7.08	6.33	3.74	3.29	5.69	4.35	4.35	6.56	6.38	5.33	12.76	12.66	6.68
1935 ..	7.32	5.62	4.64	5.09	3.38	4.33	2.48	3.39	4.15	8.13	5.42	7.62	7.33	5.30
<i>Suburban Trains.</i>														
1936 ..	0.82	0.88	0.74	0.38	0.34	0.47	0.46	0.31	0.35	0.63	0.54	0.85	1.06	0.65
1935 ..	0.67	0.74	0.68	0.50	0.30	0.39	0.21	0.35	0.28	0.94	0.42	0.61	0.50	0.51

These figures include delays arising from all causes, including slips, floods, washouts, engine and other mechanical failures, and traffic delays at stations.

The average late-running of trains for the year is slightly higher than last year. Slips, floods, washouts, and other line interruptions were responsible for the increase in the average delays. These interruptions were of unusual magnitude, and were the result of the unusually severe weather conditions which were experienced during the months of May, June, and July, 1935, and February and March, 1936.

A résumé of the more important alterations to the train services is as follows :—

From the 5th May, 1935, the Monday mixed train leaving Greymouth at 7.40 a.m. and arriving Christchurch at 4.50 p.m. was accelerated to arrive Christchurch at 4.10 p.m. As from the 3rd May, 1936, the Monday mixed trains between Christchurch and Greymouth and *vice versa* were cancelled and replaced by the mail trains. The mail trains now run between Christchurch and Greymouth four days per week—viz., Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays.

The suburban services in the Dunedin—Port Chalmers and Dunedin—Mosgiel areas were reviewed, and, as from 6th May, 1935, a number of the trains were accelerated.

From the 17th August, 1935, the 11.10 a.m. goods train with car attached from Ashburton to Christchurch was replaced on Saturdays by a fast mixed train timed to leave Ashburton at 12.15 p.m. and arrive Christchurch at 2.40 p.m.—four minutes earlier than previously.

Operating from Sunday, 1st December, 1935, an additional Sunday train was provided in the evening between Auckland and Otahuhu, and the 7.30 p.m. Auckland—Papakura train was rescheduled to leave Auckland at 9.0 p.m. This alteration provided an improved service for residents in the Auckland—Papakura area.

As from the 13th December, 1935, the Friday morning train from Towai to Whangarei was extended to run from Moerewa, thus providing settlers in the area between Towai and Moerewa with a train service which allows them more time to transact business at Whangarei on market days.

As from 21st January, 1936, additional trains were provided between Ross and Hokitika on Tuesdays. The train leaving Ross at 1.55 p.m. provides an improved service for stock consigned to Addington for the Wednesday's sale, and the return train leaving Hokitika at 6.35 p.m. provides a connection with the mail train from Christchurch on Tuesdays in addition to the Thursday and Saturday connection.

To enable the carriages which are attached to the night goods trains between Christchurch and Greymouth to be steam-heated, arrangements have been made to run the cars next the engine. The provision of steam-heating on these trains is much appreciated by passengers.

As a result of increased traffic, it has been necessary to review the train service on the Otago Central Branch during the year, and a new time-table has been arranged to operate on and after the 3rd May, 1936.

The mixed train which left Dunedin at 7.52 a.m. on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays and arrived Cromwell at 5.40 p.m., also the 7.30 a.m. Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mixed train from Cromwell to Dunedin, have been cancelled. The 7.52 a.m. Monday, Wednesday, Friday Dunedin—Cromwell and the 9 a.m. Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday Cromwell—Dunedin fast mixed trains have been converted to passenger trains to run daily.

A night goods train has been provided to leave Dunedin at 9 p.m. Sundays to Fridays inclusive, Cromwell arrive 8.30 a.m. A goods train in the opposite direction has also been provided, this train to leave Cromwell at 3 a.m. daily and arrive at Dunedin 3.30 p.m.

The Monday, Wednesday, Friday passenger trains between Gore and Kingston have been run daily since the 18th December, 1935. These trains now connect at Kingston with the road motor service to and from Queenstown.

The policy of giving the best possible despatch to goods by trains running during the night in order, as far as possible, to give delivery at the time of commencement of business the following morning has been continued throughout the year. The costs for night working are more expensive, but the Department, realizing the desirability of giving the best possible despatch and delivery, incurs