

(b) FINANCES AND STATISTICS.

The figures in Table No. 13, which sets out the principal operating statistics for the goods-service industry, have been estimated on the basis of the proportion of vehicle authorities for which reasonably reliable financial and statistical returns were received. In each of the three years under review the satisfactory returns received represented just under 80 per cent. of the total vehicle authorities granted. The figures for the three years are not strictly comparable, as the returns for 1936 were examined more carefully than in the two previous years to exclude extraneous items such as the purchase and resale of goods, &c., from the revenue figures, and assets and liabilities not connected with the services from the balance-sheets. The figures, however, afford a reasonably accurate statement of the position.

The chief feature disclosed by the table is the substantial increase in the profits earned by the industry, the net profits for the years 1933-34, 1934-35, and 1935-36 being £176,000, £215,000, and £265,000 respectively. The profit for 1935-36 represents a return of 20·56 per cent. on the operators' capital employed. Wages and drawings by working proprietors in lieu of wages are set out in the following table, which also shows the depreciation written off the vehicles. Detailed figures for 1935 are not available :—

	North Island.		South Island.		New Zealand.	
	1936.	1934.	1936.	1934.	1936.	1934.
Total wages, plus drawings in lieu of wages £	433,000	329,000	159,000	123,000	592,000	452,000
Wages, plus drawings, per vehicle-mile d.	3·69	3·04	2·85	3·72	3·42	2·94
Depreciation written off vehicles .. £	151,000	132,000	54,000	50,000	205,000	182,000
Percentage written off reducing value	19·51	19·27	17·60	18·80	18·69	19·12

(c) ASSETS AND LIABILITIES.

The balance-sheet of the industry for the Dominion as at 31st March, 1936, shows a healthy position. Of the total assets employed (£1,350,000), £879,000, or 65 per cent., is represented by operators' capital and £471,000, or 35 per cent., by other liabilities. Vehicles comprise £876,000, or 42 per cent., of the total assets employed, the vehicles having an average value of £260 each.

(d) CLASSIFICATION OF TRUCKS ACCORDING TO SIZE.

Table No. 14 shows an analysis of 2,684 of the 3,355 trucks for which vehicle authorities were granted as at 31st March, 1935, classified according to size of truck. The table indicates that the modal truck is a Class E (4-4½ tons gross laden weight) vehicle. The arithmetic mean has been worked out, and shows that the average is a Class F truck (4½-5 tons).

(e) CLASSIFICATION ACCORDING TO FLEETS.

Table No. 15 sets out particulars of the average number of trucks operated by licensees. The figures cover only 1,412 of the 2,024 operators licensed during the year ended 31st May, 1935. The table shows an average of 1·9 vehicles for each licensed operator. Actually the total number of vehicle authorities granted represents an average of 1·7 vehicles per licensee. According to this table there is a steady increase of gross revenue with an increase in the size of the fleet; fleets containing ten or more trucks showed an average revenue of £914 per vehicle, while those operated by "one-truck" operators showed an average revenue of £533. Over 57 per cent. of the licensees under review operated only one vehicle, which indicates the predominance of the "owner-driver" in the industry.

C. APPEALS.

Under the Transport Licensing Amendment Act, 1936, the Transport Co-ordination Board, one of the functions of which was to hear appeals from the decisions of Licensing Authorities, was abolished as from 1st April, 1936. From that date the Minister of Transport became the authority to hear and determine appeals.

During the year ended 31st March, 1936, the Board heard 14 appeals relating to passenger-services. The decision of the Licensing Authority was upheld in 9 cases, modified in 3 cases, and reversed in 2 cases.

Out of 37 appeals in connection with goods-services the decision of the Licensing Authority was upheld in 18 cases, modified in 11, and reversed in 6 cases. Ten appeals were withdrawn and 2 adjourned.

10. AIR SERVICES.

Since the abolition of the Transport Co-ordination Board as from 1st April, 1936, the Minister of Transport has become the Licensing Authority for commercial air services. The Board's activities in connection with air services are covered in its annual report for 1936. As all the continuous licenses granted by the Board were for a period of four years, there has been very little administrative work involved in this phase of the Department's activities during the year under review.

Following upon representations made by Cook Strait Airways, Ltd., the fare between Wellington and Blenheim was increased from £1 5s. to £1 7s. 6d. each way. Applications from two companies are now on hand for extensions of existing services.