

7. The Board recapitulates its functions which are set out in paragraph 4 of its previous report as follows :—

- (a) To hear and determine appeals from District Licensing Authorities and the Central Licensing Authority under section 43 of the Transport Licensing Act, 1931.
- (b) To conduct inquiries and investigations directed by the Minister of Transport under section 11 of the Transport Law Amendment Act, 1933, and as a result of such inquiries and investigations to make such recommendations as it may think fit “for the purpose of securing the improvement, co-ordination, and development, and better regulation and control of all means of and facilities for transport and all matters incidental thereto.”
- (c) To license commercial air services under the Transport Licensing (Commercial Aircraft-services) Act, 1934.
- (d) To institute and conduct inquiries and investigations on its own initiative under section 11 of the Transport Law Amendment Act, 1933, for the same purpose as those directed by the Minister. Under this heading also may be grouped the routine work of the Board incidental to the performance of its duties under this and other heads.

8. Apparently there is a belief that the Board, on account of its name, has some real power to co-ordinate transport services. Actually this is not the case, except with regard to air services. Where road services are in competition with rail or sea transport, the Board has no authority to do more than to require the road service to conform to what the Board thinks desirable, and the Board can only exercise this authority when an appeal is brought to it. The railways, or marine transport, as the case may be, are then free to take such countervailing action as they see fit. The Board draws attention to its report on competitive transport, contained in Appendix II of its report to Parliament of last year.

9. The Board has not been invited by the Hon. the Minister of Transport to express its views on any of the problems which have come before it from time to time, and in this respect we do not wish to embarrass the Minister in any way by stating such views in detail. Consequently our report is somewhat limited in its extent. In the period covered by our former report, so much of the Board's time was occupied in dealing with current and accumulated appeals, air-service applications, and investigations desired by the Minister of Transport, that some other important matters did not reach the stage of final consideration or recommendations.

10. The law under which the Board carries out its duties remains unaltered from last year, except that an amendment was made by the Transport Licensing Amendment Act, 1935, which came into force on the 26th October, 1935. The main provision affecting the Board was a provision extending the maximum term of passenger-service licenses to three years. This provision has not been made to apply to goods-service licenses.

11. Mr. Alderton, a member of the Board from the beginning of its operations, resigned from the Board on the 31st March, 1936.

APPEALS.

12. Appeals during the year have not been so numerous as last year. This is partly due to none having been dealt with in February and March, 1936, but if those pending were added to the number actually disposed of, there would still have been some difference between the two years.

13. With regard to passenger transport, the licensing system has been operating for four years. The industry has reached a stage of stability which has justified the extension of the period of licenses as mentioned above, and few appeals have been filed against decisions of Licensing Authorities. So far as the Board is aware, both passenger-transport operators and the travelling public have been satisfied with the way in which the system has worked.

14. Although no passenger transport appeals of very apparent importance have been heard, the Board took the opportunity—in the case of an appeal by the Rotorua Bus Company against a license granted to S. Emery—to refer in detail to the question of passenger-fares. There is great variation in the fares charged over similar routes in different parts of the country, and although most of them are moderate, there are some which the