

The expenditure on the maintenance of wagons totalled £596,904, showing an increase over the previous year of £66,694 (12·58 per cent.) The number of wagons repaired in the workshops was 14,488 for heavy repairs and 6,616 for light repairs, as against 15,448 and 5,195 respectively for last year. The principal increases in expenditure were: Wagon repairs £60,573 and tarpaulins £10,308.

The following table shows the cost of maintenance per vehicle and per vehicle-mile over a period of four years :—

Cost per Vehicle.				Cost per Vehicle-mile.			
1934.	1935.	1936.	1937.	1934.	1935.	1936.	1937.
£	£	£	£	d.	d.	d.	d.
16	17	20	22	0·64	0·65	0·69	0·72

Examination, Lubrication, and Lighting of Rolling-stock.

The expenditure on examination and lubrication of rolling-stock was £35,251, an increase of £6,091 (20·88 per cent.) compared with the previous year. The increase was due to general causes.

The expenditure on the lighting of coaching vehicles was £29,797, an increase of £1,358 (4·78 per cent.), the main cause being higher consumption on account of increased mileage and the appointment of additional staff in train-lighting depots.

Locomotive Transportation.

The expenditure under this head was £1,347,129, an increase of £203,092 (17·75 per cent.) over the previous year. The restoration of salaries and wages to the 1931 level accounted for £33,854, while the introduction of the forty-hour week absorbed £39,718. The increased expenditure in each Island was as follows: North Island, £149,749; South Island, £53,343. The disparity in the increases shown is due to the higher cost of coal in the North Island, the advance under this head being 22·69 per cent. in the North against 5·79 per cent. in the South.

The quantity of coal used was 433,266 tons, an increase of 13,015 tons. This was due to an increase of 1,061,607 engine-miles (7·11 per cent.).

The average consumption of coal and cost of same per engine-mile, per engine-hour, and per 1,000 gross ton-miles are shown in the following table :—

	Consumption.		Cost.	
	1937.	1936.	1937.	1936.
	lb.	lb.	d.	d.
Per engine-mile	62·45	64·07	8·56	7·77
Per engine-hour	650·81	673·78	89·23	81·72
Per thousand gross ton-miles	389·72	405·90	53·43	49·23

The following table furnishes statistics of locomotive operation for the last five years :—

	1937.	1936.	1935.	1934.	1933
	d.	d.	d.	d.	d.
Cost per engine-mile	20·23	18·40	18·04	17·88	19·25
Cost per train-mile	26·84	24·51	23·91	23·68	25·66
Cost per engine-hour	212·03	193·42	190·78	189·87	201·61
Cost per 1,000 gross ton-miles	128·24	117·09	116·59	118·66	133·81
Engine-miles per engine-hour	10·48	10·51	10·58	10·62	10·49
Gross ton-miles per engine-hour	1,653	1,652	1,636	1,600	1,507

The cost per engine-mile increased over the previous year by 1·83d. (9·95 per cent.), due to increased wages-costs, the introduction of the forty-hour week, and to increased fuel-costs.

A slight improvement is again shown in the quantity of work performed per engine-hour.

Traffic Transportation.

The expenditure under this head was £1,797,058, an increase of £332,006 (22·66 per cent.).

Of the increase of £332,006, salaries and wages accounted for £302,107. The restoration of salaries and wages to the 1931 level accounted for £72,289, while the introduction of the forty-hour week absorbed £98,186. Man-hours increased by 883,677 (7·15 per cent.).

Taking the year 1926 as the standard, and fixing the index figure for that year at 100, the following shows the position in respect of traffic-transportation expenditure over a period of five years.

	1926.	1933.	1934.	1935.	1936.	1937.
Total expenditure	100	72	72	78	84	103

General Charges.

The expenditure under this head totalled £237,996, as compared with £232,293, an increase of £5,703 (2·40 per cent.). The increase was mainly due to the restoration of salaries and wages to the 1931 level. A rearrangement of the auditing staff also resulted in additional expenditure being incurred under this head.