

IMPROVING VISIBILITY AT CORNERS AND INTERSECTIONS.

Collisions at intersections are found to be one of the most prolific sources of traffic accidents, and special subsidies have been made available for the improvement to corner visibility.

Generally the rates of subsidy have been fixed as follows :

Improvement at Junction of				Subsidy rate.
State highway with main highway	..	..	..	£6 for £1.
State highway with county road	..	..	..	£2 for £1.
Main highway with main highway	..	..	..	£3 for £1.
Main highway with county road	..	..	..	£1 for £1.

Already proposals have been submitted in some of the most urgent cases not only for the taking of the land, but also for the setting-back of the fences and reconstructing the road at the intersection on easier curvature.

In other cases the acquisition of the land has been proceeded with in anticipation of the actual improvement work being carried out as funds allow or circumstances require.

LIGHTING ON MAIN HIGHWAYS.

As indicated in last report, an Advisory Committee on Highway Lighting was set up to recommend the system of lighting that should be adopted on the several sections of highway which carry an average of more than 2,500 vehicles per diem.

The Hutt Road between the Thorndon Ramp and Petone has been given prior claim, firstly, because it has the greatest density of traffic ; secondly, because the work of providing a dual carriage-way is already in hand ; and, thirdly, because the extra traffic incidental to the Centennial Exhibition demands that special precautions be taken to avoid night accidents to the many visitors who may not be familiar with the routes approaching Wellington.

When considering the system that should be adopted, the Advisory Committee was somewhat restricted in its deliberations on account of the confusion that might be caused to the navigation lights of the harbour and the signal lights of the railway, which parallels the road, if gaseous-discharge lamps of the sodium or mercury type were adopted.

Attention was therefore confined to the incandescent types, from which a satisfactory system has been evolved, when considered from the point of view of pavement brightness, glare, variation of light intensity, and general economy.

The greatest difficulty encountered in the design of the system was met when the committee reached the point of considering the details of installation. There are already three pole-lines along the road — the Railway telegraph-line on the eastern boundary, the Post and Telegraph line some 20 ft. therefrom, and the power-line supplying the Hutt Valley Power Board on the western side of the road.

It is proposed to suspend a staggered system of lighting between the telegraph poles on the one side of the carriage-way and the power-poles on the other, but before the power-lines can be interfered with it will be necessary to clear three feeders from the arms on one side of the power-poles and arrange alternate supply to the Power Board through the Melling Substation. The material required for the installation has now been ordered, and it is hoped to have it in operation before the end of the year.

The committee will now be in a position to consider the lighting of that section of No. 7 State Highway between Auckland and Papakura, though it would appear that the correct procedure would be to install the lighting system in stages as the widening work proposed is carried out.

In view of the importance of this matter the Board has purchased a Luckiesh and Moss visibility meter, also a street-lighting photometer, in order that values can be ascertained under varying conditions.

SIGNPOSTING, CENTRE-LINE MARKING, ETC.

A £3 for £1 subsidy was provided on the cost of signposting carried out on main highways by Automobile Associations during the year ended 31st March, 1939, as in previous years, involving an expenditure of £4,277 from the Main Highways Account. Up to the date mentioned the amount contributed by the Board towards this work totalled £22,896.

Where the Board or local authorities erected signs required by regulation, or for traffic safety, the expenditure incurred was treated as ordinary maintenance, as also was the cost of centre-line marking.

RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION FOR REGULAR MAINTENANCE-MEN.

During the past year further progress has been made in the provision of up-to-date accommodation for maintenance-men engaged on State highways under the direct control of the Board. Standard designs of cottages for single and married employees have been adopted for general use throughout the Dominion, but if local conditions warrant a departure from these designs buildings more suitable to the location are erected. As far as practicable, married surfacemen are located in centres where schooling facilities are available for their families, and single men in the more remote localities.

Proposals for additional accommodation are under consideration, and arrangements are in train for the acquisition of suitable building-sites.