

GENERAL ELECTION AND LICENSING POLL, 1938.

The general election and licensing poll, held on the 15th October, resulted in the usual large accretion of telegraph traffic. Adequate arrangements were made throughout the Dominion for the prompt handling of election returns and the large number of other telegrams and telephonic calls incidental to the election.

The traffic generally was handled accurately and expeditiously, and, as usual, officers accepted willingly the long hours of duty and the arduous working-conditions which the election occasioned.

TELEGRAPH WEATHER REPORTS.

Further development of commercial aviation within the Dominion has necessitated greater coverage so far as the meteorological service for aviation is concerned. As a result, the work performed by the Department in the preparation and transmission of weather reports is increasing. The number of weather reports transmitted to Wellington daily from various offices throughout the Dominion rose to 201 during the year. In 1934 the number of reports handled daily was only 76.

MULTI-CHANNEL VOICE-FREQUENCY TELEGRAPHY.

As foreshadowed in the report for last year, multi-channel voice-frequency telegraphs have been introduced in the Dominion, the initial application of the system being the provision of three channels between Wellington and Christchurch and eight channels between Wellington and Blenheim, while further extensions are pending. This system of utilizing carrier speech channels for telegraphic communication makes it possible to operate up to eighteen two-way teleprinter or Morse telegraph channels over one carrier speech channel.

PRINTING TELEGRAPHS.

By the installation of teleprinter machines at Motueka and Hokitika and additional machines at Wellington, Greymouth, Christchurch, and Dunedin, further progress was made in the mechanization of the Department's telegraph system. Thirty offices in the Dominion are now equipped with machine-printing telegraph apparatus.

TELEGRAPH BATTERIES AND POWER-SUPPLY.

The old-type batteries previously in use at Greymouth were replaced during the year by secondary batteries, and the office is now operated on the universal battery system, which, as has been proved at other offices at which circumstances have favoured its adoption, is more economical and more reliable.

TELEPHONE TOLL SERVICE.

The number of toll calls handled during 1938-39 reached the record total of 15,566,998, an increase of more than 1,000,000 calls (or 7.5 per cent.) over the previous year's figures and of 6,500,000 (or 73.3 per cent.) over the number handled six years ago.

The revenue return for the year was £695,731, an increase of £57,924, or 9 per cent., over the figure for the previous year.

Figures indicating the volume and value of toll traffic during the last three years are shown hereunder:

Year ended	Number.	Increase.	Value.	Increase.
		Per Cent.	£	Per Cent.
31st March, 1937	13,143,171	14.9	562,543	12.55
31st March, 1938	14,480,207	10.1	637,367	13.38
31st March, 1939	15,566,998	7.5	695,731	9.08

AFTER-HOUR TOLL FACILITIES.

Wherever practicable, the telephone communication system of the Dominion is available to the public at any hour of the day or night. After the post-office is closed at places at which there is a telephone-exchange, members of the public may make toll calls from the exchange, and when exchanges which do not observe continuous attendance are closed it is possible, in most cases, to arrange a call from the Postmaster's residence.

At all exchanges where the demand warrants it, facilities for dealing with after-hour calls are provided, a special telephone and, in many instances, a special cabinet being installed for the purpose.

The latest innovation for dealing with after-hour toll calls is the "multi-coin" machine, a facility which takes shilling, sixpenny, and penny coins and from which members of the public may obtain toll calls in much the same way as local calls are made from public call offices.

Multi-coin installations were provided during the year at Christchurch and Dunedin, and machines will be installed at several other centres during 1939.

TOLL ACCOUNTS.

An innovation at the four chief centres during the year was the enclosing of toll accounts in envelopes. It is intended to envelope toll accounts at all offices as soon as stocks of the old type of self-enveloping account form are exhausted.