

A question which naturally arises in this connection is the effect mechanization will have on existing staffs. Up to the present stage installations have not caused any dismissals nor are they likely to do so for two reasons— firstly, the general trend is for departmental activities to increase to such an extent that any staffs displaced by mechanical aids are immediately absorbed elsewhere ; secondly, machines are in many cases installed to cope with additional work or work which was not attempted previously on account of the prohibitive cost which would have been entailed under a manual system.

MECHANICAL OFFICE APPLIANCES.

Public Service Regulation 19 reads as follows :—

Mechanical office appliances for adding, calculating, tabulating, and listing shall be brought into use wherever practicable and economical.

The approval of the Commissioner is necessary prior to the purchase of mechanical office appliances over £10 in value. All applications for purchase of machines are investigated and are approved only where the Commissioner is of the opinion that the acquisition of the appliances would result in a saving of time, labour, or money.

Since the import restrictions and the necessity for conserving sterling funds, all applications of this nature have received most careful scrutiny. In many cases it has been possible to transfer machines from Departments not making continuous use of them to other Departments whose needs were more urgent. In other cases arrangements have been made for Departments to share the use of machine appliances. Purchases have been approved since the import restrictions only in most urgent cases where it was not possible to make other arrangements or where the required machines could be purchased from stock.

SUGGESTIONS MADE BY OFFICERS.

The Public Service Regulations have provision whereby officers are invited to submit for the consideration of the Commissioner any suggestions having for their object improvements in the methods of working which will tend to increase efficiency and economy. Where circumstances justify such a course it is usual for the Commissioner to approve of payment of a monetary award.

The following suggestions were submitted during the year :—

Officer.	Suggestion.
R. G. Dick, Assistant Surveyor-General, Lands and Survey Department, Wellington	Suggestion to print a manual for use of field officers ; adopted, and award of £25 granted.
M. J. Lawless, Accountant, Native Department, Wellington	Suggestion to schedule deductions from salaries annually. Salary abstracts to show only net amount payable each half-month.
J. M. Murray, Liaison Officer, Internal Affairs Department, Wellington	Suggestion for improvements to files and filing system.
A. M. Prichard, Assistant Commercial Pilot, Public Works Department, Wellington	Experiments and suggestions regarding parachutes for supply-dropping ; adopted, and award of £25 granted.
G. T. Railton, Draughtsman, Lands and Survey Department, Head Office.	Suggestion of methods of sealing envelopes and filing papers.
E. S. Summers, Traffic Inspector, Transport Department, New Plymouth	Suggested design for an illuminated sign to be used on traffic-patrol cars ; adopted, and award of £1 ls. made.
R. W. Wills, Accountant, Lands and Survey Department, Nelson	Suggested tables of interest products. Adopted subject to amendment, and £5 awarded.