

The substantial rise under this last heading is partly due to a large increase in the number of trailers.

Table No. 1 of the Appendix shows the number of motor-vehicles licensed as at 31st December, 1938, grouped according to highway districts.

The number of motor-vehicles licensed as at 31st March, 1939, classified according to postal districts, are set out in Table 2.

Table No. 3 of the Appendix sets out the number of motor-vehicles licensed each year since 1925. Since the system of registration was instituted there have been several changes, both in definition and in method of classification. An additional complication has been introduced by the fact that whereas since 1932 the number of vehicles "licensed" has been recorded, previously the number of vehicles "registered" was recorded. It is necessary to appreciate the distinction between these terms. When a new vehicle arrives it is registered by the owner and simultaneously is licensed for one year or lesser period. If the license is not renewed the next year the vehicle is classified as a "dormant registration." After a registration has been dormant for two years it is cancelled. If the vehicle is subsequently relicensed it is registered afresh as a new vehicle. Prior to 1932 the number of vehicles licensed was obtained by subtracting from the total registrations the number of dormant registrations. This method was not sound, however, because the date upon which the dormant registrations were totalled did not coincide with that on which the total registrations were ascertained.

It has been found necessary to endeavour to arrive at a common basis whereby the growth of the motor-vehicle in New Zealand might be measured from year to year. Table No. 3 shows the result of this effort, but attention is directed to the fact that, owing to the differences of definition and classification, the figures other than the yearly totals cannot be taken as strictly comparable. This table shows the figures as at 31st December each year. The figures for trailers have been excluded from the totals. The chief feature of the table is the steady growth in the numbers of motor-vehicles in this country, interrupted temporarily during the depression years.

The number of "dormant" registrations—i.e., vehicles which although registered had not been licensed for the current year—as at 31st March, 1939, were as under:—

Type of Vehicle.	1936-37 Register.	1937-38 Register.	Total.
Cars	5,735	6,577	12,312
Light trucks (2 tons and under laden) .. .	4,145	3,102	7,247
Heavy trucks (over 2 tons laden) .. .	1,615	1,571	3,186
Service cars	44	42	86
Taxis	19	23	42
Rental and private-hire cars	20	18	38
Contract vehicles and passenger trucks .. .	53	35	88
Omnibuses	19	38	57
Traction-engines	68	58	126
Trailers	721	1,271	1,992
Tractors	200	200	400
Motor-cycles	4,160	4,870	9,030
Other motor-vehicles	57	95	152
Totals	16,856	17,900	34,756

Section 10 of the Motor-vehicles Amendment Act, 1927, provides that after a registration has remained "dormant" for two complete years it is to be cancelled. The following sets out the 1935-36 registrations cancelled on 1st June, 1938, in accordance with this section:

Type of Vehicle.	Number.
Cars	3,361
Light trucks	2,656
Heavy trucks	1,072
Service cars	22
Taxis	25
Passenger-trucks	37
Rental and private-hire cars	18
Motor-buses	11
Traction-engines	40
Trailers	508
Tractors	191
Motor-cycles	3,096
Other vehicles	18
Total	11,058