

The present load limitations are as follows:—

- (i) Statutory limitations in respect of any load—  
 Two-axled heavy motor-vehicles .. .. 10 tons gross weight.  
 Multi-axled heavy motor-vehicles .. .. 6 tons on any one axle.
- (ii) Classified roads—

Classification of Road.	Axle-load Limitation.	
	Two-axled Heavy Motor-vehicles.	Multi-axled Heavy Motor-vehicles and Trailers.
Class Three .. .. .	5½ tons	5 tons.
Class Four .. .. .	4 tons	3½ tons.
Class Five .. .. .	3 tons	2½ tons.

Apart from raising the classification of certain lengths of the main-highways system following reconstruction of the roads to a higher standard than formerly, there has been comparatively little alteration in the classification of roads generally or new classifications effected during the past year. The position is now becoming stabilized in most districts and apart from the roads adjoining the larger centres, where a higher standard of construction generally prevails, there are only a few districts where the roads have not yet been classified.

The mileages of rural roads, main highways, and State highways, classified under the different classifications, are as follows:

(1) CLASSIFICATION OF ALL RURAL ROADS AT 31ST MARCH, 1940.

	Total Formed Roads.	Class Three.	Class Four.	Class Five.	Total Classification.
	Miles.	Miles.	Miles.	Miles.	Miles.
North Island .. .. .	26,568	5,471	8,838	2,498	16,807
South Island .. .. .	21,953	6,541	2,472	275	9,288
Totals .. .. .	48,521	12,012	11,310	2,773	26,095

(2) CLASSIFICATION OF MAIN HIGHWAYS (RURAL SECTIONS) AT 31ST MARCH, 1940.

(This section includes State Highways shown under Table (3) following.)

	Main Highways.	Class Three.	Class Four.	Class Five.	Total Classification.
	Miles.	Miles.	Miles.	Miles.	Miles.
North Island .. .. .	6,590	3,034	3,134	148	6,316
South Island .. .. .	5,427	4,541	142	42	4,725
Totals .. .. .	12,017	7,575	3,276	190	11,041

(3) CLASSIFICATION OF STATE HIGHWAYS (RURAL SECTIONS) AT 31ST MARCH, 1940.

	State Highways.	Class Three.	Class Four.	Class Five.	Total Classification.
	Miles.	Miles.	Miles.	Miles.	Miles.
North Island .. .. .	2,126	1,205	869	..	2,074
South Island .. .. .	1,686	1,554	..	..	1,554
Totals .. .. .	3,812	2,759	869	..	3,628

Although there are still 22,426 miles of unclassified roads in rural areas, many of these have only clay surfaces and the loads permitted on the great proportion are governed by the classification of the key roads which have to be travelled to gain access to the unclassified roads. Only 976 miles of the main highways, or 8 per cent. of the whole system, now remains unclassified.

B. TRAFFIC CENSUS.

The last comprehensive census of traffic using the main-highway system was conducted by the Main Highways Board in 1937-38. This census indicated an extraordinary increase in the utilization of the system during the three years which had elapsed since the previous census.

From records of the amount of petrol consumed by motor-vehicles it is seen that the general increase in traffic on all roads continued until the introduction of petrol-rationing in September, 1939.