

7. REGULATION OF COMMERCIAL ROAD TRANSPORT.

TRANSPORT LICENSING ACT, 1931.

A. PASSENGER SERVICES.

(1) APPLICATION FOR LICENSES, ETC.

During the year ended 31st March, 1940, the four district transport licensing authorities dealt with 735 applications covering applications for new licenses, renewal of existing licenses, transfers of licenses, and amendments of licenses.

Of these, the No. 1 District Licensing Authority dealt with 244, the No. 2 with 303, the No. 3 with 126, and the No. 4 with 62 applications.

Ninety-nine applications for new licenses were dealt with, of which 72 were granted, 15 adjourned, and 12 refused or withdrawn.

The applications for renewal of licenses totalled 336, 325 being granted, 9 adjourned, and 2 withdrawn or refused.

Applications for amendment to licenses totalled 243, of which 227 were granted, 7 adjourned, and 9 refused or withdrawn.

Fifty-seven applications for transfers of licenses were dealt with, 48 being granted, 6 withdrawn or refused, and 3 adjourned.

(2) NUMBER OF LICENSES IN FORCE.

At the 31st March, 1940, there were 822 passenger services licensed, excluding the 75 services licensed in the four metropolitan areas.

(3) REVIEW OF LICENSES.

In accordance with the usual procedure, a careful survey of passenger fares, parcel rates, and finances of all passenger services was made with a view to ensuring that the public was receiving its proper share of all the benefits that accrue to the licensing system.

The Licensing Authorities reviewed 124 passenger-service licenses during the year.

(4) INSPECTION OF ACCOUNTS AND RECORDS.

Including the investigation of operators' fares and finances, the accountant inspectors attached to the district offices of the Department interviewed 60 operators and inspected their accounts and records.

(5) FINANCES AND STATISTICS, 1938-39.

The main statistics for the passenger-service industry (excluding metropolitan services) are set out in Tables 5 and 6.

An increase of some 3,378,000 passengers carried for the year ended 31st March, 1939, over that of the previous year was the most striking fact revealed by recent statistics covering the licensed passenger-service industry. The total passengers carried for the year was 26,655,000, of whom one-half (13,387,000) travelled in groups of services whose average vehicle-journey was less than five miles.

All licensed services covered nearly 25,500,000 miles, an increase of nearly 2,000,000 miles over the previous year. £312,000 was paid in wages to employees and £44,000 was earned by owner-drivers. Passengers paid £1,195,000 in fares, and total revenue amounted to £1,317,000. These figures bring out the important part which licensed passenger services play in New Zealand economic life.

Steady profits were maintained, £132,790, while financial stability remained satisfactory. Net capital invested in the industry increased by nearly £94,000 to £918,000, of which £577,000 represented the value of vehicles.

Services running within closely-populated areas carried 24,772,000 passengers and covered 14,214,000 miles. The corresponding figures for rural services was 1,583,000 passengers and 10,688,000 miles. Passengers carried by rural services increased by 33½ per cent. over the previous year, as against 15½ per cent. in the more settled areas.

The average depreciation rate for all vehicles was 13 per cent. of original value, or 21 per cent. of the value of the vehicles as at 1st April, 1938. One-half of the vehicles whose age was reported were under four years old and three-quarters were under seven years old.

B. GOODS SERVICES.

(1) APPLICATIONS DEALT WITH.

With the passing of the Transport Law Amendment Act, 1939, all town carriers and those ancillary users operating over distances in excess of thirty miles in competition with the open railways were brought under the Transport Licensing Act, 1931.

During the year the four district Transport Licensing Authorities dealt with 5,145 applications as follows:—

Applications for	Granted.	Adjourned.	Refused or withdrawn.	Total.
New licenses	1,588	144	107	1,839
Renewal of licenses	2,126	53	28	2,207
Transfers of licenses	388	28	14	430
Amendments to licenses	521	48	100	669

The number of temporary licenses issued during the year totalled 8,890, compared with 10,694 in the year 1938-39.