

the job is nearly completed. Difficulties with the workmen over dust in the Morgan East dip workings were met during the year, with a resultant slowing up of development in this section. A full investigation was made by the Coal-mines Council and this, coupled with medical examination of some of the workers, enabled the Council to fix suitable conditions under which work could proceed with proper regard for the health of the employees.

In the Strongman Colliery, production showed an increase compared with the previous year. Coal-winning operations in this colliery were mainly confined to the development of solid places, although two pairs of miners were engaged in extracting head coal in the No. 1 North section.

The Blackball Colliery worked steadily throughout the year, in which output increased substantially over 1942-43. All the coal was won in the course of development work, and, although the quality of the product was quite satisfactory, the coal was of a soft, friable nature and gave only a low percentage of lump coal after passing over the screening plant. Heavy costs for timbering and pumping out the large volume of water in the mine were again incurred.

There was some improvement in output from the Wallsend Colliery, where production was secured almost wholly from development of solid places. In the Dobson Mine dip development was continued in difficult country and at very high costs. Pending boring, this development was suspended, but has again been resumed now that the boring revealed a seam of coal 10 ft. thick 15 chains ahead of the workings. Further boring is being undertaken as rapidly as possible to prove the extent of the coalfield ahead of the mine, as this data is essential to enable a proper working policy to be determined.

At the Mangapehi Colliery, in the North Island, an increased output was secured, and satisfactory results were obtained from development and prospecting work. At the Tatu Colliery, near Ohura, the main work was development and pushing ahead with the installation of a new power unit which is necessary before either development or coal-winning can be effectively undertaken. In this colliery a special study of a method of working to minimize the problems associated with a bad roof and heaving floor is being made. Unexpected faults or "wants" have upset the original developmental plans and have prevented improvement in output up to the present, and the future of this colliery is very uncertain.

The James Colliery closed down on the 23rd July, 1943, all of the extractable coal having been won from the mine.

Full details in respect of the operations and financial results of the collieries appear in the annual report of the State coal-mines (C-2A).

A comparative statement for the last two financial years is shown hereunder—

Mine.	Output 1943-44.		Output 1942-43.		Percentage Increase in Gross Output.	Percentage Increase in Net Output.
	Gross.	Net.	Gross.	Net.		
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.		
Liverpool	135,260	131,010	165,837	160,260	*18·44	*18·25
Strongman	105,701	104,270	94,170	92,180	12·24	13·11
James†	12,003	11,813	29,529	28,770	*59·35	*59·93
Blackball	45,029	44,315	34,527	34,294	30·41	29·22
Mangapehi	70,929	69,442	‡52,062	50,915	36·23	36·38
Tatu	28,949	22,852	29,620	24,440	*2·27	*6·50
Wallsend	58,742	55,284	‡6,883	6,441
Dobson	61,876	60,656	‡7,081	6,913
Glen Afton Opencast, No. 1 ..	6,176	6,175
Totals	524,665	505,817	419,709	404,213	25·00	25·14

NOTE.—The difference between the gross and the net output is the allowance for mine consumption and waste.

* Decrease. † Colliery ceased operations on 23rd July, 1943. Output includes 6,883 tons slack lifted from dump. ‡ Output for six weeks only.

The disposals, inclusive of stock on hand at the beginning of the year, were as follows :—

Supplied to	1943-44.	1942-43.	Percentage Increase.
	Tons.	Tons.	
Depots	136,121	132,990	2·35
Railways	132,431	96,328	37·47
Other Government Departments	22,028	23,758	*7·28
Shipping	15,118	10,289	46·93
Gasworks	169,396	107,667	57·33
Other consumers	31,351	26,235	19·5
Totals	506,445	397,267	27·48

* Decrease.