

wholesale retirements have been made, but the policy of carefully reviewing each case where an officer completes forty years' service and has reached the age of sixty years, or reaches the age of sixty-five years irrespective of service, has been continued, and a number of officers have retired.

OVERTIME

It is still necessary for substantial overtime to be worked in many Departments of the Service. The danger of overtime becoming a habit is appreciated, and during the year steps were taken for all overtime to be reviewed. In each Department the need to work overtime has been carefully investigated and any necessary checks instituted to see that overtime is not worked except where the state of work warrants it, that the hours are not consistently excessive, and that the State is receiving value for the money expended on overtime.

OFFICIAL VISIT TO SAMOA

In October, 1944, the Commissioner paid a visit to Samoa accompanied by Mr. S. Roberts, Public Service Inspector. The Territory had not been visited by a Commissioner's representative since 1938. There were a number of matters which were settled "on the spot"; others required further investigation or Ministerial approval. All matters have been dealt with, and the following are worthy of special mention:—

Staff Appointments.—A new policy was approved under which the positions in Samoa, both in the Administration and the Reparation Estates, will be open to qualified applicants, whether Samoan or European. The effect is that quite a number of officers of full Samoan blood who, for a number of years, were deemed to be on the casual staff have now been appointed to the established staff. This should serve to encourage Samoans to improve their standard of education, and should provide reasonable opportunities for advancement within the Territory. It also serves as some reward to officers such as Native medical practitioners, dental officers, head teachers, and others who have given a very high standard of service.

Salary Scales.—Opportunity was taken to review the salary scales applying both to the established staff and to the casual employees. This resulted in substantial improvement in practically all salary scales. At the present time consideration is being given to the further improvement of salary scales in sympathy with the New Zealand adjustments following the Government Railways Tribunal decisions.

Cost of Living.—A representative sub-committee submitted detailed cost-of-living figures, and as a result the Hon. the Minister of Finance has approved the extension to Samoa of the second cost-of-living allowance. The effect is, therefore, that, in so far as cost-of-living allowances are concerned, the Samoan staff are in the same position as in New Zealand. In the case of casual employees, a proportionate increase in their rate was made.

Review of Departments.—Education Department: This year it was possible to hold a Public Service Shorthand-typists' Examination of the same standard as that obtaining in New Zealand. Seven girls were presented for examination, and three succeeded in passing the Junior Examination. To encourage development in this direction, a special increment is granted to girls in the Government Service who qualify.

Lands and Survey Department: Arrangements have been made under which the Surveyor-General in New Zealand will exercise some general supervision over the branch in Samoa and when vacancies occur will assist in filling them in the same manner as though the branch were officially under his control. It is proposed that the Surveyor-General should visit Samoa at some future date and report on the organization.

Public Works Department: The organization of this branch was found to be weak. In this case, also, it has now been arranged that the Public Works Department in New Zealand will assume some responsibility for general supervision of the branch. Already appointments have been made of several officers from the New Zealand Department, and it is anticipated that the necessary reorganization will shortly be completed.

Secretariat: It was found that additional senior assistance was required in this branch, and additional appointments have already been made.

Rehabilitation Grant.—The Public Service Association raised the question of approving some additional grant which would assist seconded officers in re-establishing themselves during a period of high costs in New Zealand. Approval has now been given for a special monetary grant together with authority for payment in cash of 50 per cent. of the accumulated furlough.

New Zealand Reparation Estates.—The same concessions which have been approved for the Administration staff have been applied to the Reparation Estates. Two new enterprises are worthy of mention:—

- (1) A sawmill which has just commenced to operate and from which it is anticipated that the whole Territory's requirements for banana-cases will be supplied;
- (2) *Desiccated-coconut Factory.*—This factory has a substantial output of coconut of high class and appeared to be functioning well.

It was evident that although there had been some disturbance of the labour market in Samoa during the war period and the influx of servicemen, the situation is now tending to return to normal.

RELATIONS WITH PUBLIC SERVICE ASSOCIATION

Relationships with the Public Service Association have continued on an amicable basis. The Association represents the majority of public servants, and the executive officers and secretarial staff have ready access to this office when desired. This continued close contact enables many matters affecting groups of workers and individuals to be settled in an expeditious way.