

The Commission met representatives of employers and workers on 26th April, 1945, when submissions were made by the union for an increase of 4d. per hour in wages, together with several other claims, and counter-proposals were also made by the employers.

In order to maintain the relative position which waterside workers had held with other workers for over twenty-two years, the Commission granted an increase of 3½d. per hour in the basic ordinary time rate of pay with *pro rata* increase in overtime hours. Payment was approved as from 1st April, 1945, the new rate being 3s. 1½d. per hour, plus 4d. per hour to cover the two cost-of-living bonuses. The 4d. per hour is a flat rate and does not increase in overtime hours.

5. AVERAGE WAGE

Tables are published in the Appendix showing:—

- (a) Return showing the average wage of unionists per man-week worked for years 1940–45, 1945–46, and 1940–46. (NOTE.—This return has been based on the man-weeks worked and does not show the true average weekly wage over the whole year, as all men are not employed for fifty-two weeks—see return of earnings according to income groups.) (Appendix, page 56.)
- (b) Return showing earnings of unionists for year ending 31st March, 1946, analysed according to income groups. (Appendix, page 57.)
- (c) Return showing average total earnings, profit distributions, ordinary and overtime hours, weeks and holidays worked by unionists with highest earnings for year ending 31st March, 1946. (Appendix, page 59.)

Notwithstanding the increase in wages by 3½d. per hour, the average wage per man-week has dropped from £10 13s. 7d. during year ended 31st March, 1945, to £10 6s. 7d. this year, and the annual income has shown a substantial drop, particularly at the port of Auckland. During the year ending 31st March, 1945, at the port of Auckland 588 men earned over £600, while this year only 123 men earned over that figure. The reverse position applied at the port of Wellington, where the average wage and income increased. The over-all port average, however, shows a fairly substantial drop.

6. AVERAGE HOURS OF WORK

The cancellation of shifts and extended hours of work (except coal vessels) has resulted in a reduction in the average overtime hours of work, which has been more than offset by an increase in the average ordinary time hours. The average hours per week for main and secondary ports was 41¾ (28¼ ordinary time, 13½ overtime) for year ended 31st March, 1946, as against 41¼ (22¾ ordinary time, 18½ overtime) for the previous year. As the reduction in overtime hours of work took effect about halfway through the year, next year's figures should show a further drop in average of overtime hours worked. Table is published in Appendix, page 55.

7. GUARANTEED WAGE

Payments made during the year were as follows:—

				£
Auckland	..	..	..	3
Wellington	..	..	..	9
Lyttelton	..	..	..	410
Dunedin	..	..	..	Nil
			Total	<u>422</u>

The guaranteed wage of £3 6s. per week which previously applied to "A" grade workers at ports of Auckland, Wellington, and Lyttelton was extended to the port of Dunedin from 20th March, 1946. As stated in last year's report, the guarantee on the present basis does not convey any material benefit to the great majority of waterside