

The legal position was, nevertheless, fundamentally unsatisfactory and continually occupied the attention of Inspectors. It was discussed in connection with the formulation of the Tailoring Trade Regulations, which were brought into operation in 1925. Again, in 1926, an investigation was undertaken with the intention of amending the Act.

There were at that time fewer than 150 outworkers in the Dominion, 100 of these being in Auckland and Dunedin, but as no cases of sweating or of undue hardship were discovered the matter was not proceeded with.

In 1932 the matter was mentioned in the House of Representatives, and, in accordance with an order that a return showing details of houses registered as factories should be laid before the House, the following was prepared and submitted:—

Industrial District.	Trade in which engaged.					Totals.
	Clothing.	Dressmaking and Millinery.	Baking.	Upholstering.	Umbrella-making.	
Northern .. .. .	5	6	1	1	..	13
Taranaki .. .. .	..	4	..	..	..	4
Wellington .. .. .	6	5	..	1	1	13
Nelson .. .. .	..	1	..	..	..	1
Westland .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..
Canterbury .. .. .	1	5	..	..	..	6
Otago and Southland .. .. .	6	2	..	..	..	8
Totals .. .. .	18	23	1	2	1	45

It was alleged that the registration procedure had led to abuses, but the table reproduced above shows how very few in number were the registrations of houses as factories.

The post-depression revival of trade appears to have been accompanied in the clothing industry with virtually full employment of existing machinery and expansion of production was sought by means of "outwork." In Auckland, for instance, where in 1936 fifteen houses were registered as factories, no fewer than thirty-three new applications were received in March and April of that year.

Accordingly, when revision of the Factories Act was undertaken, new provision for outwork was made. The Factories Amendment Act, 1936, revoked the labelling requirements, provided that the regulation of outwork could be extended to materials other than shoddy and textiles, and required outworkers to obtain a licence from the Inspector. Licences were only to be issued—

- (a) Where the number of outworkers operating from a factory was not more than one to every ten persons employed in the factory;
- (b) Where the applicant was in necessitous circumstances or unable to work in a factory;
- (c) Where the premises were suitable; and
- (d) Where employment would be at a rate of remuneration equal to or greater than the rate for similar work in the factory.

The Department considered that the first consideration was the worker's circumstances, and that a separate room should always be set aside in the house as a work-room. Where all the conditions were fulfilled licences were not withheld. All premises were dealt with under these provisions, and the registration of houses as factories discouraged.