

deserving cases, especially those in which officers have been laid aside by sickness. The cottages and flats which are maintained at holiday resorts for the use of contributors during periods of annual or sick leave have proved very popular and it has been possible to provide approximately 500 officers and their families with holiday accommodation at very reasonable cost.

Now that the Department's ex-servicemen have resumed duty from the Forces and rehabilitation difficulties have been substantially solved, the Department's rehabilitation scheme, which was established in 1943, has been extended to provide an official welfare organization which is interested in the welfare of officers generally. This organization is designed to assist officers in their individual problems and to encourage the development of cultural and recreational activities.

### SUGGESTIONS BOARD

The number of suggestions received was 255. Of these, 45 were adopted or partly adopted. For the best suggestions rewards are given, and amounts were allotted to 32 officers, the total being £149.

## POSTAL SERVICES

### INLAND MAIL-SERVICES

#### MAIL-SERVICE CONTRACTS

The contracts covering the performance of inland mail-services in the Auckland, Hamilton, Thames, and Whangarei Postal Districts expired on the 31st December, 1947, and were relet for a further term of two years nine months from the 1st January, 1948.

#### RURAL BOXES

In accordance with Government policy, the rural delivery system has been considerably extended during the year, and this extension of facilities is reflected in the increase in the number of rural boxholders served.

The number of boxholders on the 31st December, 1947, totalled 43,572, an increase of 2,982 on the figures for the previous year.

## AIR MAILS

### INLAND

The weight of letters carried by air within New Zealand during the twelve months ended the 31st March, 1948, was 325,202 lb. In addition, 65,205 parcels were carried.

The frequency of the trunk services in the Auckland-Wellington-Christchurch-Dunedin-Invercargill link was increased during the year, but there was no extension of the network to serve additional towns. On the 1st October, when the National Airways Corporation assumed control of the service operated by Air Travel, Ltd., between Nelson-Westport-Greymouth-Hokitika, the Corporation found it necessary to discontinue the call previously made daily at Greymouth. Consequently air mails to and from Greymouth are now forwarded via Hokitika, but there is comparatively little delay in transporting such mails between Hokitika and Greymouth by surface means.

### TRANS-TASMAN SERVICE

The weight of mail despatched from New Zealand by the Trans-Tasman service during the year was 128,626 lb. In the reverse direction the weight of mail-matter carried totalled 200,055 lb.

Except for a few minor interruptions, a daily time-table, Monday to Saturdays, has been operated, with occasional services on Sundays.