

For about six months of the period there was no regular surface transport, and traffic was confined to occasional overseas vessels. There were comparatively few opportunities for tourist bookings on these ships, and preference was given to urgent and compassionate cases. The uncertainty of return passages also had its effect on tourist business. When the t.s.s. "Wahine" entered the trans-Tasman service in September, 1947, the position improved immediately, and by the end of the following November the projected sailings to April, 1948, were fully booked.

The trans-Tasman airways have been utilized to the fullest capacity, and, although the service has been extended, the unsatisfied demand was not eased greatly. Additional trips up to 31st March were booked out quickly.

The priority system that operated on the air service up to the end of September reacted somewhat adversely in the case of tourists. The possibility of off-loadings due to weather conditions has been a source of trouble in tourist bookings where New Zealand reservations are affected, as delays involve extra work and cause some embarrassment to the Bureaux responsible, under existing hotel and transport difficulties, for the best possible rearrangement of itineraries.

Suspension of the flying-boat service at the end of February caused temporary confusion, but the subsequent use of charter Skymasters was quite helpful. Few passengers were inconvenienced seriously. It was noticeable that during the period the Skymasters were used there was no off-loading. In every case passengers with firm bookings were able to travel on the scheduled dates.

Several conducted parties were operated, all proved popular, and an extension this type of business is being arranged for the coming season.

*South Africa.*—Owing to transport difficulties tourist traffic from South Africa has been irregular. With the exception of a party of visiting footballers who arrived via Australia under the auspices of the Department, the volume of tourists and others dealt with by the Bureaux has been small.

Inquiries received indicate that as soon as adequate transport facilities are initiated the tourist movement from this territory will probably be of some importance to New Zealand.

Mr. H. Middlebrook, Honorary New Zealand Government Agent at Durban, who for many years was an able representative of the Department, died last year, and promotional activities in the Union and the Rhodesias now devolve upon the Honorary New Zealand Government Agent at Johannesburg. Further representation in this territory must receive consideration as soon as travel conditions make such action appropriate.

*North America.*—Prior to the outbreak of war a national advertising campaign in North America had resulted in a most encouraging number of inquiries, and up to the middle of 1939 an increasing number of North American tourists were visiting New Zealand.

With the outbreak of war our tourist promotional activities ceased and it had been hoped that early in the post-war period the Department's representation would have been re-established.

During the past two years there has been increasing evidence of the promotional work of other countries seeking American tourist traffic, and consideration has been given to a resumption of New Zealand's activities in this connection. The agency arrangements and goodwill which were developed prior to the war period are still available as a basis for developmental work in anticipation of future returns. Experienced officers are available within the Department for this phase of activity when it is considered that the time is opportune.