

(b) LOSS OF MAN-HOURS ON THE WATERFRONT

In order to obtain the relationship between the loss of man-hours on the waterfront through disputes involving stoppages of work, and loss of man-hours through accidents, sickness, penalties, and absence for other causes, the Commission has this year compiled comprehensive returns based on the availability record shown on each unionist's annual holiday card. The information on these cards, which is recorded for annual holiday purposes, credits the unionist with days on compensation up to a maximum of 144 days (24 weeks) in each leave year ending 31st July. In the case of sickness, credit is given where the worker is absent for six consecutive days or more and not exceeding 72 days (12 weeks) in each leave year, provided a medical certificate is produced. The returns have been completed on the above basis which is the only information readily available.

(i) DISPUTES INVOLVING STOPPAGES OF WORK

Published in the Appendix (page 75) is a table summarizing the man-hours lost through stoppages of work on the waterfront. During the year ended 31st March, 1949, the equivalent of 2.25 per cent. of the total of approximately 13,000,000 man-hours worked on the waterfront were lost through stoppages. This was an increase of 0.47 per cent. on the 1947-48 loss of 1.78 per cent.

Of the total of 294,616 man-hours lost during 1948-49, 223,653 man-hours, or 76 per cent., were lost at the Port of Auckland, principally in connection with the "Mountpark" and "Broompark" hatches dispute (May-July, 1948), and the boycott of the "Northumberland" (March, 1949). The other major dispute was the series of stoppages of short duration at various ports throughout New Zealand as a protest against the interim decision of the Waterfront Industry Authority granting an increase of 2½d. per hour in the basic rate of pay as against the union's claim for 1s. per hour.

As an indication of the source of trouble on the waterfront, it is interesting to note that during both 1947-48 and 1948-49 all major disputes originated at the Port of Auckland. Since the 1st April, 1949, a further major dispute, resulting in cessation of all overtime work, originated at the Port of Auckland and extended to other ports. The loss of earnings of £165,101 to waterside workers at the Port of Auckland for the period of two years four months from 1st April, 1947, represents a loss of wages of 3.08d. per hour to all waterside workers at the port for the whole of that period. Loss of wages of £267,510 for the same period for all ports represents a loss of 1.7d. per hour for all waterside workers throughout New Zealand for the period of 2½ years.

(ii) ACCIDENTS INVOLVING THE PAYMENT OF COMPENSATION

Published in the Appendix (page 76) is a return showing the loss of man-days and man-hours to unionists at all main and secondary ports on account of accidents involving the payment of compensation.

It is recognized that in waterside work there is ever present an element of danger. The return now published shows that of 7,163 unionists employed during the year, 2,111, or 29½ per cent., sustained accidents involving the payment of compensation.

A total of 613,536 man-hours was lost during the year through these accidents, as compared with a total of 294,616 man-hours lost through disputes involving stoppages of work. It will thus be seen that the loss of man-hours through accidents is over twice the loss of man-hours through disputes.

At the Port of Auckland, however, the loss of man-hours through disputes was 223,653 man-hours as compared with a loss of 141,750 man-hours through accidents. If Auckland figures are excluded, the loss of man-hours through accidents is over five times the loss of man-hours through disputes.