

No. 141.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PRIME MINISTER.

Westminster Chambers, 13, Victoria Street, London, S.W., 15th November, 1902.

SIR,—

Pacific Cable.

I beg to transmit herewith copy of correspondence relating to the question of the proposed rates between Europe and intermediate stations to Australasia (including New Zealand), by which it will be seen how the matter at present stands.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

W. P. REEVES.

Enclosure in No. 141.

PACIFIC CABLE: PROPOSED RATES FROM EUROPE AND INTERMEDIATE STATIONS TO AUSTRALASIA. THESE rates have been fixed on the assumption that the rates *via* the Eastern to Australia are and will continue to be 3s. for each word for ordinary messages.

Each ordinary message sent by the Pacific will be subject to the payment of 1s. per word for transmission to Vancouver, and either 5d. per word terminal charge in Australia (which will carry the message to any part of Australia or Tasmania) or 1d. per word terminal charge New Zealand. On a message, therefore, from Europe to Australia the Board will retain 1s. 7d. (or 3s. - 1s. 5d.) for each word in such message.

The New Zealand Government has already announced that, on the completion of the Pacific cable, the through rates to and from Europe by the cable will be 3s. per word (Annual Report, Post and Telegraph Department for 1901, page 7).

It appears, therefore, to be generally understood that, on the completion of the Pacific cable, the rate from Europe to Australia will be 3s. per word (the present Eastern rate), and that the rate from Europe to New Zealand will be similarly 3s. per word (against the present rate of 3s. 4d. *via* the Eastern).

It is proposed to apply the same rate to all parts of Australasia connected with the cable—*i.e.*, to Norfolk Island and Fiji—colonies which it must be recollected have borne no share of the cost of the cable and who are deriving a direct benefit from the expenditure upon the cable by the contributing Governments.

As Suva (Fiji) is not further, say, from Southport than Southport is from Perth (Western Australia), there seems no reason why Fiji should not be put on the same terms as other parts of Australasia.

It is further proposed to fix the rate between Fanning Island and Europe at 2s. 6d. per word, and that between Fanning Island and North America or Australia at 2s. per word. It is not likely there will be much traffic either to or from Fanning Island. The traffic will be chiefly or wholly confined to messages or notices from or about passing vessels sent to Lloyd's or elsewhere.

It is not possible to fix the rates between the American Continent and Australasia until we learn from the Canadian Government the terminal charge which they propose to fix for delivery in Canada. But it is proposed that the rate should be 2s. (for the cable and the terminal charge in Australia), *plus* the terminal charge in Canada whatever it may be.

Government messages to Australasia will be charged half the ordinary rate so far as the cable is concerned, and the terminal charge in force in Australia and the cost of conveyance to Vancouver. This at present will be:—

	Ordinary.		Government.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.
Transmission to Vancouver	1	0	0	8
Cable	1	7	0	9½
Australian terminal charge	0	5	0	4
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	3	0	1	9½

Press messages will be charged, so far as the cable is concerned, at about one-third the rate of ordinary messages, or, say, 6½d. per word.

22nd October, 1902.

S. WALPOLE.

No. 142.

The SUPERINTENDENT, Pacific Cable Station, Doubtless Bay, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

(Telegram.)

Doubtless Bay, 26th November, 1902.

Just received following: "Inform Government that Canadian rates include all British North America."

No. 143.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PRIME MINISTER.

Westminster Chambers, 13, Victoria Street, London, S.W., 26th January, 1903.

SIR,—

Eastern Telegraph Company's Reduced Rates for Government Messages.

I beg to enclose, for the Hon. the Minister's information, copy of a letter I have received from the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company announcing that from the 20th instant the tariff for Government messages to and from New Zealand will be 1s. 7½d.

The letter also gives the reduced rates to and from Australia, New Caledonia, Fiji, and Norfolk Island.

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

W. P. REEVES.