

1926.
NEW ZEALAND.

STORES CONTROL BOARD

(ANNUAL REPORT OF).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Leave.

SIR,—

Stores Control Board, Wellington, 10th July, 1926.

I have the honour to submit herewith the annual report of the Stores Control Board for the period ended 31st March, 1926.

I have, &c.,

F. J. BROOKER, Secretary.

The Hon. K. S. Williams, Chairman, Stores Control Board.

REPORT.

PURCHASES.

DURING the year ended the 31st March, 1926, the total expenditure on stores amounted to the sum of £4,690,569 8s. 8d. With the exception of a few instances in which the requirements were too urgent to allow of the usual procedure being followed, tenders or quotations were invited for the whole of the stores required. For the requisitioning Departments 11,196 requisitions were dealt with, and 448 contracts were arranged for daily supplies, mostly perishable foodstuffs, &c. These figures do not include the requisitions and contracts dealt with by the three purchasing Departments (Railways, Public Works, Post and Telegraph) on account of their own Departments. General contracts covering the requirements of all Departments were arranged on favourable terms for the supply of cement, typewriters, motor-spirit, motor lubricating-oils, motor-tires, kerosene, "Ford" spare parts, and "Overland" spare parts. Contracts for the supply of coal and firewood have also been arranged at Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin, Invercargill, New Plymouth, and Blenheim.

STANDARDIZATION.

The special committee appointed to consider the standardization of stores required by all Government Departments has completed its work. All stores have been classified under suitable headings, such as "Ironmongery," "Brushware," "Oils and Paints," &c., and specifications prepared. In all thirty-five schedules have been drafted, and these are at present being printed by the Government Printer. Terms and conditions of contract have also been prepared, and so soon as the printed schedules are available tenders will be invited for supply for a definite period, which may vary, according to the different classes, from one to three years. When complete the contracts will relieve the purchasing officers of a large proportion of their present duties, as Departments, instead of submitting requisitions, will place their orders direct with the contractors.

MOTOR-VEHICLES.

At the present time the various Departments own over a thousand motor-vehicles, of which approximately half are owned by the Post and Telegraph Department. Although most Departments have kept a record of running and maintenance expenses, there has been no uniformity of method, with the result that the same make of car running under approximately the same conditions has shown widely varying costs, according to the method of costing adopted by the particular Department owning the vehicle. The matter has received consideration on several occasions, and last year it was decided to appoint a special committee consisting of three expert officers, one each from the Post and Telegraph, Railways, and Public Works Departments. The committee investigated the problem very thoroughly, and came to the conclusion that it was practicable to adopt a uniform system, and to enable this result to be achieved drafted sets of suitable forms. The forms provide for a complete history of each vehicle from the time it is purchased until it is finally disposed of, including original cost, interest on capital, and depreciation. Better provision will also be made for recording tools and spare parts. Competent mechanical field inspectors will be appointed whose duty will be to see that the cars are kept in thoroughly efficient condition and not allowed to be running when they are in need of overhaul or adjustment. Controlling costing officers will be appointed for each of the larger Departments, and one will be attached to the Treasury to supervise the costing systems of the smaller Departments. At the present time the covering instructions have been drafted, and so soon as they are printed the new system will be brought into operation.

PREFERENCE TO LOCAL AND BRITISH INDUSTRIES.

The policy of preference to local and British industries has been continued, and appreciation of the policy has been expressed by many firms and commercial organizations. There is no doubt that the Board's policy in this respect has been of great assistance to both local and British manufacturers.

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