

1933.

NEW ZEALAND.

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
NEW ZEALAND BROADCASTING BOARD,
(FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1932.)

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly in pursuance of Section 21 of the Broadcasting Act, 1931.

REPORT.

To the HONOURABLE ADAM HAMILTON, MINISTER OF TELEGRAPHS, Wellington.

SIR,—

As required by section 21 of the Broadcasting Act, 1931, the members of the New Zealand Broadcasting Board present their first annual report.

The Board was set up on the 18th December, 1931, and took over the four stations at Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin, previously controlled by their predecessors—The Radio Broadcasting Co. of New Zealand, Ltd.—on the 1st January, 1932, the transfer being effected smoothly.

The question of coverage was deemed by the Board to be the most important of its problems, and a Commission was set up with instructions to report on the subject at the earliest practicable time. Mr. A. Gibbs, M.I.E.E., then Chief Telegraph Engineer, Post and Telegraph Department, and Dr. M. A. F. Barnett of the Scientific and Industrial Research Department, were the Commissioners, and in the course of their investigations they visited some eighty towns and covered over four thousand miles by motor-car in addition to steamer and train travelling. The recommendations of the Commission are mentioned later in this report under the heading "Technical."

It was also considered advisable to issue a questionnaire to each applicant for a receiving license, and much useful information in respect of the programme side of the Service was gathered in this way.

This report is furnished in two sections; the first dealing generally with the year's activities, and the second with finance.

GENERAL.

HOURS OF TRANSMISSION.

When the Board assumed control of the Service, the hours of transmission were at the rate of 10,612 per annum. The hours have been extended by the Board from time to time until at present the four stations are transmitting at the rate of 16,484 hours per annum. Transmissions totalled over 13,000 hours in 1932, and of this time, twelve hours were lost as a result of technical faults and power failures.

PROGRAMMES.

Compared with similar organizations in other countries, the Board's greatest handicap on the programme side is the unavailability of suitable relay lines to permit the relaying of programmes presented at the National Station (Wellington). At the request of the Board, the Post and Telegraph Department is investigating the possibility of obtaining equipment designed to make suitable relay circuits available. In addition, the possibility of rebroadcasting direct the Wellington programmes is being investigated by officers of the Board, in the hope that something may be done in this direction.

Entertainment formed the bulk of programmes, and no effort was spared to secure the services of new artists. The results, however, have been disappointing, for it is the experience that only a small percentage of those granted auditions reach the required standard. While the Board has endeavoured to encourage local artists, it has been forced to the conclusion that the number of artists in the Dominion capable of maintaining a satisfactory standard is comparatively small. This is readily understood, however, when consideration is given to the relatively small population of the Dominion.

During the year sixty-nine performances by musical societies were broadcast, most of these being arranged under a so-called subsidy scheme which has now been discontinued. Under the scheme mentioned, all societies in the same town received the same payment, irrespective of the merit of the broadcast performances. Such a method, in the Board's opinion, was not in the best interests of the Service, and in its place an "entertainment value" basis of payment is being adopted.

It is the Board's policy to secure, whenever possible, the services of artists and companies touring the Dominion, and during the year listeners heard: Josef Szigeti, Hungarian violinist; Paul Vinogradoff, Russian pianist; Gordon Bryan, English pianist; Alfred Quaife, English pianist; Phil Smith, Comedian, of the Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Co.; Clifford Ball, Carillionist; the Chorus of the Imperial Grand Opera Co.

Talks (Educative).

Under the auspices of the Workers' Educational Association, some 260 talks were delivered on such subjects as psychology, science, economics, natural history, literature, music, &c. The success of the educational session for schools presented once per week from the Board's Wellington Station by the Education Department is undoubted, and has encouraged the Board to explore the possibility of arranging similar sessions at the other three stations. Already the educational authorities at Auckland have approved such an arrangement, and it is hoped to introduce an educational session at that place at an early date.

Talks (General).

Every effort was made to afford listeners the opportunity of hearing the best speakers available, and it is evident that talks on general subjects have become very popular. The primary object of the general talks is to afford entertainment, but a number of them unquestionably have a high educational value. The arrival of distinguished visitors from abroad is noted by the staff of the Board, who endeavour to secure the services of those likely to present suitable matter. Among the many interesting personalities from overseas introduced to listeners were: The Right Hon. Stanley M. Bruce, P.C., Senior Minister of the Federal Ministry; Count de Baillet La Tour, President of the International Olympic Committee; Mr. Sydney Pascall, President, Rotary International; The Honourable Tugi, Prime Minister of Tonga; General E. J. Higgins, Salvation Army; Lieutenant-Colonel T. Orde Lees of the Shackleton Expedition; Mr. Don. Bradman, Australian Cricketer; Miss Edith Howes, New Zealand authoress; Miss Dora West, O.B.E., formerly Secretary to the Right Hon. Lloyd George.

Plays and Sketches.

During the year over three hundred plays and sketches were produced at the four stations. A good deal of favourable comment was evoked by the presentation of the play "The Flowers are not for You to Pick" (by Tyrone Guthrie), which introduced an entirely new technique from the point of view of microphone presentation. Included in the list of plays and comedies broadcast during the year were: "Oliver Cromwell," "What Every Woman Knows," "The Sport of Kings," "The Black Spot," "The Dumb Wife," "The Favourite of the King."

Overseas Rebroadcasts.

During the year the following rebroadcasts from overseas were arranged: The Opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge; three football matches played by the New Zealand Rugby Representatives in Sydney; The Imperial Grand Opera Co.'s performance of "Lucia di Lammermoor" in Sydney; a running description of the race for the Melbourne Cup; the Armistice Day Commemoration Service at the Cenotaph, London; the unveiling of the Anzac Memorial at Port Said; the Christmas Day programme, including a speech by His Majesty the King, from the new Empire Station at Daventry, England.

Outside Broadcasts.

The first outside broadcasts undertaken by the Board were those from the Ninety-mile Beach in connection with the attempts on the world's land speed record by Mr. Norman Smith. Others arranged during the year were: The races for the Sanders Cup held at Wellington; the Dominion sculling championships, at Hamilton; inter-Varsity eight-oar boat race, Wellington Harbour; Rugby League test—New Zealand v. England, at Christchurch; the unveiling of the Cook Memorial by His Excellency the Governor-General, at Christchurch; reception to delegates to the Ottawa Conference on their return to New Zealand; the final of the New Zealand golf championships, at Heretaunga; Plunket Shield cricket matches—Wellington v. Otago, at Wellington, and Canterbury v. Auckland, at Christchurch.

Sporting Broadcasts.

In addition to the broadcasts of sporting events mentioned in previous paragraphs, the Board, by arrangement with the Combined Committee of the New Zealand Racing and Trotting Conferences, broadcast descriptions of forty-one days' racing events during the year. Descriptions of the following races were relayed to and broadcast from the Board's four stations: The Grand National Steeplechase; The Grand National Hurdle Race; The Winter Cup; The New Zealand Trotting Cup; The New Zealand Cup; The Auckland Cup; The Auckland Trotting Cup.

Among other sporting events broadcast were: The New Zealand amateur boxing championships, at New Plymouth; the Blay v. Trowern boxing match, at Wellington; North v. South Island Rugby football match, at Christchurch; New Zealand v. Wellington Rugby football match, at Wellington; South Africa v. New Zealand cricket match, at Christchurch; South Africa v. New Zealand cricket match, at Wellington; South Africa v. Auckland cricket match, at Auckland; the final Association football game in the Chatham Cup competition, at Wellington.

During the year descriptions of seventeen professional wrestling matches, and seventy-five inter-provincial and interclub Rugby football matches were broadcast.

At the request of the Board, the proprietors of Broadcasting Station KFI, Los Angeles, California, during the progress of the Olympic Games, transmitted daily interesting comments on Olympic events at an hour to suit reception conditions in New Zealand.

It is evident from the many letters received that broadcasts of sporting events have a particular appeal to country listeners, to invalids, and to inmates of hospitals.

Special Services.

Among the special services may be mentioned talks on health, agriculture, gardening, and cookery. Weather forecasts were broadcast daily from the Board's four stations, and time signals twice daily from the National Station (Wellington). For the special information of wool-growers, details of the prices realized at all wool-sales were transmitted from the four stations.

Some 150 appeals were broadcast during the year for information regarding missing persons or persons whose whereabouts were required on account of the serious illness of relatives.

Inquiries for missing motor-vehicles which are broadcast at the request of Automobile Associations or of the Police Department totalled 280.

Numerous appeals for charitable purposes were broadcast during the year, but in recent months so many were being received that it became necessary to limit the number transmitted.

Religious Services.

Each Sunday evening religious services were broadcast from the four stations, the arrangement of the services being in the hands of Church Advisory Committees. The introduction of a daily morning devotional service of a quarter of an hour met with general approval.

Children's Hour.

The children's hour was continued at all stations on the same lines as before. Many voluntary helpers assisted in the work, and various charitable causes benefited as a result of appeals broadcast during these sessions.

News.

The news service is regarded as being primarily a service for country listeners, and every effort was made to include matters of interest to rural dwellers. By the courtesy of the daily newspapers in the four main cities, in addition to arrangements made by the Board itself, market reports and other items of interest to primary producers were broadcast regularly throughout the year.

TECHNICAL.

The main features of the scheme of development recommended by the Coverage Commission are briefly outlined hereunder:—

1YA (Auckland), 3YA (Christchurch), and 4YA (Dunedin), transmitters to be replaced by modern types having 100 per cent. modulation capacity and capable of an unmodulated radiation of 1 kw. (approximately 2 kw. to 2½ kw. rating).

2YA (Wellington) to be rendered more stable in operation and subsequently increased in power from 5 kw. to 10 kw.

A modern self-contained emergency transmitter to be installed at 2YA.

The location of the new transmitters was regarded as a matter of considerable importance by the Commission, who recommended that new sites should not be finally decided upon until test transmissions had been made by a stable portable transmitter and observations—including field strength measurements—taken thereon.

The general scheme advocated by the Commission was endorsed by the Advisory Council, and has been adopted—subject to any limitation that financial considerations may impose—by the Board.

The first step taken in furtherance of the proposals was to seek advice from the manufacturers (Standard Telephones and Cables (Australasia), Ltd.) of the transmitter at 2YA. The services of this company's expert engineer from overseas were made available, and the plant was carefully overhauled and some improvements effected. The engineer referred to is to submit a report indicating whether it is possible and economical to modernize the existing transmitter at 2YA.

The Board having decided that the transmitter at 3YA should be the first one replaced, a portable testing transmitter was purchased from Amalgamated Wireless (Australasia), Ltd., and is already being used for the purpose of site-testing in the Christchurch area. Tenders for the supply of a modern transmitter for Christchurch, as recommended by the Coverage Commission, close on 11th February, 1933.

A self-contained emergency transmitter (power 200 watts aerial energy) has been ordered for 2YA, and will be ready for operation early in 1933. The successful tenderers were the Amalgamated Wireless (Australasia), Ltd.

Tenders were called, and an order has been placed for a field-strength measuring-set to be used in conjunction with the portable testing transmitter. Standard Telephones and Cables (Australasia), Ltd., are supplying this apparatus.

During the year modern practice was followed in adjusting the acoustical properties of the existing studios at Auckland and Wellington with beneficial results. Adjustments and alterations have been made to the studio and transmitting equipment at the Board's four stations, with a view to obtaining the best reproduction possible from the existing plant.

Although reception from the Empire short-wave station at Daventry has been disappointing, it is hoped that as the season advances, better conditions will obtain and the rebroadcasting of speech will be practicable.

SUBSIDIZED PRIVATE BROADCASTING STATIONS.

After considering the report furnished by the Coverage Commission and accompanying maps showing reception conditions in various parts of the Dominion, the Board decided to render financial assistance to a number of private broadcasting stations operating in areas where reception of transmissions from the Board's stations is unsatisfactory. The following such stations are at present receiving subsidies from the Board: 1ZH Hamilton, 2YB New Plymouth, 2ZF Palmerston North, 2ZD Masterton, 2ZJ Gisborne, 2ZH Napier, 4ZP Invercargill, 3ZR Greymouth.

In addition to financial assistance, regular relays of programmes from the Board's stations are provided for stations 1ZH Hamilton, 2ZF Palmerston North, and 2ZD Masterton. Unfortunately, it is not practicable to cater for the other stations in this way.

ADVISORY COUNCIL.

The names of the members of the Advisory Council appointed by His Excellency the Governor-General under section 4 of the Broadcasting Act, 1931, to advise the Board, are given hereunder:—

Mr. J. H. Owen, Wellington (Chairman),	Mr. W. A. Waters, Palmerston North,
Mr. A. B. Chappell, Auckland,	Mr. C. R. Russell, Christchurch,
Mr. J. S. Anchor, Hamilton,	Mr. H. Booth, Dunedin,
Mr. F. T. Davis, New Plymouth,	Mr. A. W. Jones, Invercargill.

Many important matters were dealt with by the Council at the three meetings held during the year, and helpful recommendations were made to the Board.

FINANCIAL REPORT.

The Board's first Balance-sheet certified by the Audit Department, together with the relative Revenue Account, appears at the end of this report.

As required by the Minister of Telegraphs and in terms of section 16 of the Broadcasting Act, 1931, the Board acquired from the Minister the assets of the Radio Broadcasting Co. of New Zealand, Ltd., at a cost of £59,839 17s. 2d. This amount is secured by first mortgage to His Majesty the King chargeable on all the Board's property. The principal is reducible by quarterly instalments, and is to be repaid before the 31st December, 1941.

Under an agreement between the Board and the Minister of Telegraphs, interest on the balance of principal owing is set off to the extent of interest credited to the Board on license fees held on behalf of the Board by the Post and Telegraph Department and not payable immediately for the working-expenses of the Service. During the year the sum of £5,039 17s. 2d. was paid off the principal.

BALANCE-SHEET.

As the transmitting equipment and associated apparatus are comparatively old, and as the policy of the Board, following the recommendation of the Coverage Commission, is to replace most of this plant with modern installations, it has been deemed advisable to provide for relatively heavy depreciation on the book value of this class of assets. Half of the cost of the arbitration proceedings between the Radio Broadcasting Co. of New Zealand, Ltd., and the Minister of Telegraphs, which was charged to the Board, has been written off in this year's accounts. Certain of the assets taken over, such as alterations to studios, have been depreciated proportionately to the duration of the tenancies, while assets of little or no value to the Board have been heavily depreciated, and, in some instances, entirely written off. The valuations of machinery and plant, office and studio equipment, and land and buildings, as shown in the Balance-sheet as at 31st December, 1932, represent the valuations of these assets as shown in the award of the Arbitrator, plus the actual cost of additions during the year, but less provision for depreciation. There is also included in the assets item, machinery and plant, the sum of £2,379 10s., being prepayment for plant and equipment not installed at 31st December, 1932.

The Board has no Capital Fund; all additions to plant and renewals and replacements of plant in view will be made from revenue. The Board, having adopted a policy of replacement of plant, following the recommendations of the Coverage Commission, has this year transferred the sum of £14,000 from Revenue Account to Renewals and Replacements Reserve.

REVENUE ACCOUNT.

The excess of income over expenditure for the year ended 31st December, 1932, after providing for depreciation of assets, writing off half the costs of arbitration and transferring £14,000 to Renewals and Replacements Reserve, is £2,357.

Owing to the extended hours of broadcasting in the second half of the year, the expenditure on programmes during that period was considerably in excess of the amount expended during the first six months. With the general development of the Service, it is likely that the expenditure on programmes will be still greater in subsequent years.

H. D. VICKERY, Chairman.

LESLIE MACFARLANE, }
GEO. R. HUTCHINSON, } Members of the Board.

Wellington, 31st January, 1933.

THE NEW ZEALAND BROADCASTING BOARD.

REVENUE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1932.

<i>Expenditure.</i>			<i>Income.</i>	
	£	s. d.		£ s. d.
To Expenditure on programmes, including payments to artists, performing rights, relay lines, music, salaries and expenses of programme staff, records, stationery, and sundry miscellaneous items	33,605	10 8	By License fees	98,128 17 10
Maintenance of plant, power, salaries of engineering and operating staff	6,893	16 2		
General expenses, including rent, rates, insurance, interest, lighting, heating, legal, audit, printing, stationery, salaries, wages, telephones, travelling-expenses, repairs and maintenance of buildings, renovations, and sundry miscellaneous charges	12,844	11 7		
Administration salaries and expenses, including expenses of Advisory Council	5,315	8 0		
Coverage Investigation Commission	733	15 0		
Subsidies to " B " stations	1,097	15 10		
Arbitration expenses (one-half)	567	7 6		
Depreciation of assets	20,713	13 1		
Transfer to Renewals and Replacements Reserve	14,000	0 0		
Excess of income over expenditure	2,357	0 0		
	<u>£98,128</u>	<u>17 10</u>		<u>£98,128 17 10</u>

BALANCE-SHEET AS AT 31ST DECEMBER, 1932.

<i>Liabilities.</i>			<i>Assets.</i>		
	£	s. d.		£	s. d.
Liability to Post and Telegraph Department, fixed by Minister of Telegraphs as price of assets acquired	59,839	17 2	Cash—		
Less repayments as per agreement	5,039	17 2	Main Account, Bank of New Zealand	10	0 7
	<u>54,800</u>	<u>0 0</u>	Imprest Account, Head Office, Bank of New Zealand	2,844	16 5
Balance owing	54,800	0 0	Station imprests, Bank of New Zealand	37	14 4
Sundry creditors	2,857	16 8		<u>2,892</u>	<u>11 4</u>
Reserve for Renewals and Replacements	14,000	0 0	Petty cash funds	70	0 0
Excess of income over expenditure	2,357	0 0	Stocks on hand and works in progress	270	19 10
	<u>£74,014</u>	<u>16 8</u>	Prepayments	809	14 3
			Post and Telegraph Department (license fees, &c.)	26,987	11 9
			Machinery and plant acquired 1st January, 1932, plus additions for year, less depreciation	28,102	0 10
			Office and studio equipment acquired 1st January, 1932, plus additions for year, less depreciation	8,613	2 6
			Gramophone records acquired 1st January, 1932, less depreciation	1,609	18 4
			Music library acquired, 1st January, 1932, less depreciation	493	4 0
			Land and buildings acquired 1st January, 1932, less depreciation	3,598	6 4
			Arbitration expenses	567	7 6
	<u>£74,014</u>	<u>16 8</u>		<u>£74,014</u>	<u>16 8</u>

H. D. VICKERY, Chairman.

LESLIE MACFARLANE, }
 GEO. R. HUTCHINSON, } Members of the Board.

E. C. HANDS, General Manager.

I hereby certify that the Revenue Account and Balance-sheet have been duly examined and compared with the relative books and documents submitted for audit, and correctly state the position as disclosed thereby.—G. F. C. CAMPBELL, Controller and Auditor-General.

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