

Native Surveys.—The area returned under this heading is low, being only 7,924 acres, 55 per cent. of which is from the Auckland districts. This work, it is anticipated, will increase largely in the near future, as the need for titles, whether leasehold or Native freehold, of the consolidated and developed blocks arises.

Town and Suburban.—This heading does not include Government housing schemes, which are separately dealt with elsewhere. A slight falling-off is noted in this item, 264 town sections and 131 suburban sections being returned as against 275 and 151 last year. The costs this year remain at £2 12s. per town lot, while those of the suburban areas show an increase to £1 an acre, probably owing to the fact that the average area of these this year was smaller, being $8\frac{1}{2}$ acres as against 11 acres last year.

Housing.—The work for the Housing Construction Branch has increased enormously, and for the year under review has aggregated the full time of six surveyors and their parties. In all, preliminary surveys of 1,985 acres were made, and in addition, 584 acres were divided into 2,175 lots, the cost of the latter being £1 8s. per lot. As the preliminary surveys appear to be well in advance of annual requirements it is anticipated that there will be a reduction in the volume of housing survey work during the coming year.

Roads.—This item also shows a large increase, this year 204 miles as against 84 miles. The greater part of this is due to deviations consequent upon the improvements in alignments and gradients being effected on main highways. Where these surveys run through closely settled country a survey equal in accuracy to the rural standard surveys is laid down, and with similar permanent marks. These will be linked up with further standard or triangulation surveys when convenient and so form a part of the basic control of the survey system.

Inspections.—The inspections carried out during the year did not disclose any serious faults in the surveys, and no cases were submitted for inquiry by the Survey Board. Owing to pressure of urgent work, the number of inspections was low and inadequate for the purpose of ensuring a thorough check on each surveyor's work.

Accuracy.—Staff surveyors' reports show that a general high standard of accuracy is being maintained.

Other Work.—Under this heading a total of £3,532 is returned. This work is of such a nature that it cannot be shown under the classified headings in the tables. It may, however, be further subdivided as follows: Location of boundaries, pegs, and miscellaneous compass surveys, £1,149; investigational and inspection surveys, £763; maintenance of survey marks of basic control, £857; measurements and plans for Police Court cases, £254; and expenses of office routine, reports, transfers, and other work which cannot be allocated to any particular survey, £509.

OFFICE.

Plan Examination and Recording.—The number of plans submitted for examination and record remains practically the same as the previous year, and the staff has been kept fully occupied. No arrears have been allowed to accumulate as regards the examination of plans, although, in order to do this, some of the other phases of activity have had to suffer. In particular, map drawing for photolithography is in one district—Auckland—practically at a standstill. The dearth of trained junior draughtsmen due to the non-appointment of trainees during the depression years is now very apparent and, although cadets since appointed are making excellent progress generally, it will be a considerable time before the position is eased.

Uniform System of Recording.—During the year the Inspecting Draughtsman, Mr. R. C. Airey, visited each office, and thoroughly investigated the methods in use in each office. As a result of this inspection a uniform system has been tentatively drawn up and submitted for comment by each Chief Surveyor. The scheme and the comments are now being considered for final decision.

Computing Branch, Head Office.—Towards the end of the year, this branch was strengthened by the appointment of two cadets, and arrears of harmonic analysis of the tidal survey were put in hand. The adjustment of standard traverses in Hawke's Bay is now almost complete and, with these out of the way, it should be possible for the staff to cope with the adjustment of the triangulation now in hand and with that coming forward from the field.

The work of measuring the times and heights of high and low waters for the seven standard ports for the year 1939 was carried out as usual on the tide-predicting machine at the Tidal Institute, Liverpool University, from the harmonic constants computed in this branch. The seven ports for which tide-tables are published are Auckland, New Plymouth, Wellington, Lyttelton, Dunedin, Bluff, and Westport.

Provisional values of various points in and around Hauraki Gulf have been supplied to the Admiralty survey ship, H.M.S. "Endeavour," now carrying out a hydrographic survey in those waters.

Map Publications.—Full details of these are contained in the report of Mr. R. G. Dick, Assistant Surveyor-General, appended hereto. Your attention is drawn to the increasing use made of these publications both by the general public and Government Departments, the value disposed of being £5,050, which is £3,800 in excess of actual printing costs.

Aerial Survey Mapping.—The progress of this branch is more fully set out in the report of the Assistant Surveyor-General appended hereto. The branch has been unfortunate in losing the services of its Ground Control Officer, Mr. J. A. Henderson, who had to be placed on important work elsewhere, and also in the long delay in receiving its second precise stereoscope. An increased staff and equipment will be necessary before the programme of 3,000 square miles per annum can be put in operation.