

1864-5.

VICTORIA.

REPORT

OF THE

GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT

OF

ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH,

ON THE

ADVANCEMENT AND CONDITION OF HIS DEPARTMENT FOR THE YEAR
ENDING 31st DECEMBER, 1864.

(WITH THREE APPENDICES AND A CHART.)

PRESENTED TO BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY'S COMMAND.

By Authority:

JOHN FERRES, GOVERNMENT PRINTER, MELBOURNE.

REPORT.

Electric Telegraph Department
(General Superintendent's Office),
Melbourne, 2nd January, 1865.

SIR,

I have the honor to forward to you, for the information of His Excellency the Governor in Council, the following Report as to the general condition of my department for the year ending 31st December, 1864.

WORKS COMPLETED AND IN PROGRESS.

At the date of my Annual Report for 1863, the sum of £6000 had been provided under a general head to defray expenditure for extensions, large repairs, &c., but this amount was subsequently supplemented by Parliament to the extent of £4000, in order to admit of the construction of a line to Wood's Point.

Contracts have been issued for the several works required, their present condition being as follows:—

1. Hamilton to Casterton (approaching completion).
2. Red Bank to St. Arnaud (completed, and about to be opened).
3. Benalla to Wood's Point (in progress).

The undermentioned stations have been opened for business during the year:—

Mortlake (Mount Shadwell), 17th June.

Sale (Gipps Land), 22nd September.

Port Albert, 1st December.

Extensive repairs have been effected on the sections of line between Beaufort and Streatham, Ballarat and Daylesford (*via* Creswick), Geelong, and Cape Otway.

On these sections, collectively, upwards of 1000 new posts have been provided, and the wires, insulators, &c., have been placed in a state of thorough repair throughout.

The work of removing and re-erecting along the railway the section between Sandhurst and Echuca (including a special wire for railway service) is now progressing rapidly, and it is expected that the new line will be available for business within the ensuing six weeks.

A telegraph office for the accommodation of the railway service, but accessible to the public generally, will be opened on the railway wire at either Goornong or Runnymede.

LOCAL COMMUNICATION.

The posts and connecting wires for the inter-departmental telegraphic connection are now being placed in position, and I hope to be able to complete this work in the course of another month. The connection between the General Post Office and the Chief Telegraph Office has already been completed, and works satisfactorily.

WORKING OF LINES.

Since the date of my previous Report, the lines have continued to work generally satisfactorily, but temporary interruptions have occasionally occurred through lightning storms, and other atmospheric disturbances, delays from such causes have, of course, been unavoidable. So far as could be ascertained, there have been no actual interruptions from malicious interference with the wires, during the past year, but the insulation on many sections of the lines, has been, from time to time, so much injured by the thoughtless acts of idle persons, whose inclinations lead them to make targets of the insulators on the tops and sides of the posts, that it has been found necessary to issue notices, offering a reward of £25 for such information as might lead to the detection of the offenders. Although arrests have been made, no positive convictions have been secured, but the prompt action of the department in this respect, has been productive of good results indirectly.

The working of the direct western (intercolonial) line has been so much improved, that messages are now commonly passed without repetition from Melbourne to Adelaide; the gain thus accruing to the service is obvious, and a considerable increase in the transactions for the year, on account of intercolonial business, marks public appreciation of the increased facilities for communication at present enjoyed.

The means of communication with Sydney, *vid* Albury, are, I may say, nearly equally facile, and a reference to the returns will show a corresponding increase in business under that head.

The interior circuit, *vid* Echuca, Deniliquin, Wagga Wagga, &c., is found to be peculiarly valuable in connection with the intercolonial (New South Wales) business, at times when the direct line may be interrupted at any part of the route, and conversely a similar advantage is secured when a break occurs on the northern or interior line.

A like security against absolute stoppage has been attained on the western route, by the provision of the interior line, *vid* Ballarat, Streatham, Hexham, and Hamilton to Portland, this connection will be still further perfected, when the extension now in progress between Hamilton and Casterton may have been completed, and that a line may have been extended from Casterton to Penola, where it will join the line to Mount Gambier; this I hope to see accomplished within the present year.

The working of the old coast line, *vid* Warrnambool and Portland, is so constantly liable to be affected injuriously through the sea fogs, gales of wind from the southern ocean, (to the full force of which it is, in many places, necessarily exposed), and by other uncontrollable causes, that no extended argument is required to prove the necessity for perfecting the interior line, *vid* Hamilton and Casterton, to Penola and Mount Gambier, with the least possible delay.

The extracts, from the Record Book, in which entries are made daily, as to the condition and working of the various lines throughout the colony (exhibited by appendix A.), shew a marked improvement on similar returns accompanying my previous Reports.

It will be observed, that during five months out of the year, the lines in this colony were free from absolute interruption, although, during that period, the perfect working of the lines was, in several instances, more or less affected from atmospheric causes; the whole year shows a loss of only six (6) full days, and forty-nine and one half (49½) hours in broken periods, extending over nine stated occasions of partial interruption. In the majority of these cases, it will be observed, that the cause was attributable to trees falling on the line.

Taking into consideration the comparatively unprotected state of the lines along the ordinary highways and bush roads of the country, I look upon this result as satisfactory.

In connection with this portion of my Report, I beg to submit the following statements, shewing the regularity and average rate of transmission of reports of later English news received, *vid* Adelaide, for Melbourne, and for Sydney, during 1864.

RETURN showing Particulars relating to the Transmission of Reports of English News from Melbourne to Albury during the Year 1864.

COMMENCED.		ENDED.		Average Number of Words per Hour.	Remarks as to Weather and Working of Lines.
Date.	h. m.	Date.	h. m.		
January 21 ...	1.45 p.m.	January 21 ...	4 p.m.	1300	Lines worked well, weather fine
February 10 ...	7.30 p.m.	February 11 ...	2.30 a.m.	1350	Ditto ditto ditto
March 11 ...	3 p.m.	March 11 ...	7 p.m.	1400	Ditto ditto ditto
April 13 ...	7.30 p.m.	April 13 ...	11.30 p.m.	1350	Ditto ditto showery
May 10 ...	11.45 p.m.	May 11 ...	4 a.m.	1350	Ditto ditto fine
June 9 ...	7.15 p.m.	June 9 ...	11 p.m.	1350	Ditto ditto ditto
July 11 ...	11.45 p.m.	July 12 ...	3.30 a.m.	1400	Ditto ditto ditto
August 10 ...	5 a.m.	August 10 ...	10.30 a.m.	1350	Ditto ditto ditto
September 7 ...	11.50 a.m.	September 7 ...	5 p.m.	1350	Ditto ditto ditto
October 12 ...	10 p.m.	October 13 ...	4.50 a.m.	1350	Ditto ditto ditto
November 10 ...	7 a.m.	November 10 ...	8 p.m.	1300	Ditto ditto showery
December 10 ...	8.30 a.m.	December 10 ...	1.40 p.m.	1200	Lines worked badly, atmospheric disturbances

RETURN showing Particulars relating to the Transmission of Reports of English News from Mount Gambier to Melbourne during the Year 1864.

COMMENCED.		ENDED.		Average Number of Words per Hour.	Remarks as to Weather and Working of Lines.
Date.	h. m.	Date.	h. m.		
January 21 ...	1.45 p.m.	January 21 ...	4 p.m.	700	Lines worked badly west of Mount Gambier, weather stormy
February 10 ...	7.30 p.m.	February 11 ...	2.30 a.m.	1150	Lines worked well, weather fine
March 11 ...	3 p.m.	March 11 ...	7 p.m.	1250	Ditto ditto ditto
April 13 ...	7.30 p.m.	April 13 ...	11.30 p.m.	1000	Lines worked badly, atmospheric disturbances
May 10 ...	11.45 p.m.	May 11 ...	4 a.m.	1000	Lines worked badly, weather stormy
June 9 ...	7.15 p.m.	June 9 ...	11 p.m.	1200	Lines worked well, weather fine
July 11 ...	11.45 p.m.	July 12 ...	3.30 a.m.	1250	Ditto ditto ditto
August 10 ...	5 a.m.	August 10 ...	10.30 a.m.	1000	Ditto ditto ditto
September 7 ...	11.50 a.m.	September 7 ...	5 p.m.	1000	Ditto ditto ditto
October 12 ...	10 p.m.	October 13 ...	4.50 a.m.	900	Lines worked badly, weather stormy and showery
November 10 ...	7 a.m.	November 10 ...	8 p.m.	800	Lines worked very badly, atmospheric disturbances
December 10 ...	8.20 a.m.	December 10 ...	1.40 p.m.	850	Ditto ditto ditto

The average speed of transmission would have shown more favorably, had all the reports been forwarded direct, specially, but in the majority of cases, composing the record above indicated, the average rate includes transmission to several intermediate stations, whose interruptions, from various causes, are frequently the source of much unnecessary delay, but whose wants are more economically supplied, by the reports being forwarded simultaneously with those for Melbourne and Sydney. In most instances such reports are in fact transcripts, or "dropped copies."

LINES IN OTHER COLONIES.

I am in the receipt of the interesting and comprehensive Report of Mr. Todd, the Astronomical Observer and Superintendent of Telegraphs in South Australia, dated 6th April, 1864, for the year ending 31st December, 1863.

The Report satisfactorily exonerates the South Australian Department from a considerable amount of censure incorrectly ascribed, publicly, to the South Australian section of the intercolonial lines during 1863, on account of delays in the receipt of later news from England, reported on the arrival of the Royal Mail Steamers.

The causes which lead to errors and delays in telegrams, are also discussed in a comprehensive and intelligent manner.

I consider the following extract on this subject as being worthy of consideration.

"It is of course our duty to guard against mistakes in every possible way, and to adopt every possible precaution which circumstances permit; and this is done. It has been suggested that a system of fines would act beneficially by inducing greater care on the part of the operators, and perhaps it might. Unfortunately, however, the system would press unfairly on our best operators, who, as such, are placed at the instruments which do the most business; and, as it would be reasonable to expect, the number of errors would—the operators being equal—vary with the number of messages; that operator who had most to do, would make the greatest number of mistakes. Indeed the one who had less to do, and therefore more time to be careful, should, from that very circumstance, make proportionally much fewer errors.

"Thus it will be seen, that while one operator at a busy station will, with every care, be certain to make mistakes, through the pressure of business, another operator, who may perhaps be really less careful and painstaking, yet having less to do, and more time to do it in, will be, from that circumstance, more exempt from errors.

"It is better in practice to treat each case on its own merits; and if an operator is found to be habitually careless, the Superintendent should have the power of summarily dismissing him.

"The question, however, in which the public is mainly interested is, whether the person using the telegraph should not be indemnified against loss from mistakes made by the operators. By clause 7, of our printed regulations, the liability of the Government is limited to £5, and that only where a message is repeated at the additional cost of 50 per cent., and the same regulation is generally adopted throughout the world, as I mentioned in my Report for 1861. A system of insured messages has been adopted on some of the English and American lines; but on the former it is very seldom availed of by the public, and each company only holds itself responsible for delays or errors on its own lines.

"The Electric and International Telegraph Company insure repeated messages (on which 50 per cent. additional charge is paid), at the following rates:—

" For any sum up to	£100 0 0	...	£1 0 0
" Above £100 0 0 to	£200 0 0	...	£2 0 0
" " £200 0 0 to	£300 0 0	...	£3 0 0
" " £300 0 0 to	£400 0 0	...	£4 0 0
" " £400 0 0 to	£500 0 0	...	£5 0 0
" " £500 0 0 to	£600 0 0	...	£6 0 0
" " £600 0 0 to	£700 0 0	...	£7 0 0
" " £700 0 0 to	£800 0 0	...	£8 0 0
" " £800 0 0 to	£900 0 0	...	£9 0 0
" " £900 0 0 to	£1000 0 0	...	£10 0 0

and twenty shillings for £100, or fraction of £100 above that sum.

"The company will not be responsible for any amount beyond the sum for which the message is insured, and the rates paid, nor do they hold themselves liable in any case for delays arising from interruptions in the working of their telegraphs. I think we might safely adopt a similar system on the Australian lines, although I believe it would be seldom used; but I would prefer a reduced charge of twenty-five per cent. instead of fifty, for repeating.

"On the Indian lines, prior to May, 1859, all private messages had to be repeated at half price extra. Since that date, it has been optional, and the repeated messages comprise about one-fifth of the whole number."

The only extensions of lines in South Australia during 1863, were from Kadina to Port Wallaroo, about seven miles, and from Penola to Kincaig, thirty-one miles, but an extension north-eastward, *viâ* Gawler Town to Wentworth, was strongly advocated; this extension would meet the New South Wales interior direct line, *viâ* Deniliquin and Euston.

The total expenses for working and maintenance during the year amounted to £9,108 0s. 8d., being £678 1s. 7d. in excess of the net revenue of the department, a fact which is attributed to the number of unremunerative country stations. In the South Australian Department, as I have already mentioned in previous Reports, every source of revenue is brought to account, Government telegrams being paid for on the same scale as private messages.

I am not in receipt of any authentic information in reference to the lines in New South Wales and Queensland up to a later period than the end of 1862 (conveyed by the

Annual Report of Mr. Cracknell, the Superintendent of the New South Wales Department), and to which I have already alluded in my Report for 1863. I understand, however, that considerable extensions are in progress northward in Queensland, and that in New South Wales the financial condition of the department still continues to exhibit most satisfactory results; here also, as in South Australia, a revenue is derived from Government telegrams, and is carried to the account of the department. A sum has been provided to extend a line from Deniliquin southward, and westward to Wentworth, for the South Australian direct communication, and to afford increased facilities in collecting the Customs duties on the Murray.

The direct or interior line between Adelaide and Sydney, will of course deprive this department of the revenue now derived from the proportionable division of charges collected at each terminal, on account of *through* messages between New South Wales and South Australia; the reduction thus effected will probably amount to £1,200 per annum. But although, at first sight, a direct loss may thus accrue to this division of the present intercolonial service, yet, considering the greatly increased certainty of communication to be secured by the new line, and the additional business likely to accrue to the Victorian lines through the opening of new offices in a district of country, the occupants of which have large interests in Victoria, I am inclined to look upon the establishment of the interior line in a favorable light, as tending eventually to prove a benefit rather than a loss to this department.

To bring about such a result, however, it would be very desirable, I might almost say absolutely necessary, that we should extend our Swan Hill line down the Murray as far as Euston (80 miles), so as to meet the New South Wales line at that point, by which means the advantages of the interior connection would be secured to this colony, and a direct communication with Melbourne afforded to settlers on that portion of the Murray at present most remote and ill provided with facilities for prompt correspondence with the southern seaboard.

COMPLAINTS OF ERRORS, DELAYS, ETC.

I have caused a record to be kept of every case reported to me during 1864, in which charges of negligence, &c., have been preferred against the department.

There have been in all twenty-six complaints, or an average of one every fortnight; of these seven were traced to delays in delivery, through inadvertance or carelessness on the part of messengers.

In three cases, the fault was shown to be attributable to insufficient or imperfect address; the department was, therefore, exonerated.

In nine cases, the fault was traced to delays in transmission, through the negligence of operators or clerks.

In one case, the message was mislaid and never transmitted by the officer to whom it was entrusted.

In four cases, the errors complained of were traced to oversight on the part of operators in transcribing; and in two cases, the fault was traced to the persons, who had been despatched by the senders to deposit the telegrams for transmission, having destroyed the telegrams and appropriated the money intended to have been paid for charges.

In every case where blame has been clearly traced to any officer or servant of the department, punishment, either by fine (varying from £1 to £5), removal from position, reduction in pay, deprivation of leave of absence, or other imposition has followed, proportioned to the aggravation or frequency of the offence.

The cases above mentioned do not include verbal references to the office, relating to some trivial omission or obvious clerical error. These are, no doubt, numerous; but in the majority of such instances as have come under my personal observation, I have found that the errors have been almost invariably traceable to imperfect manuscript through bad

caligraphy, misplacing of punctuations, or other causes within the control of the writer, or sender, of the message.

Past experience leads me to consider, that if the public generally would conform more closely to the "Rules and Conditions under which Messages are authorised to be transmitted," fewer errors and delays would occur. Thus, under Clauses 1 and 6, it is directed that messages should be written in ink, and that they should bear a proper date, address, and signature; yet it daily occurs that messages, more or less imperfect in these essentials, are presented for transmission, and in some instances are necessarily received, and forwarded accordingly.

It not unfrequently happens that a telegram, composed of a few hurried lines, without date, headed by a vague address, and signed in almost undecipherable characters, is presented by a messenger, who, in reply to the enquiries of the receiving clerk, can give only most unsatisfactory answers, as—that the sender had "just left" by a steamboat, or train, as the case might be, the tenor of the message probably having reference to the disposition of some business of urgency, in connection with rapid means of transport; the sender cannot be communicated with in time to correct imperfections; the message is urgent, and its non-transmission would occasion annoyance, possibly pecuniary loss; the clerks and operators make the best sense in their power of the document, and it is forwarded to its destination, only to afford perplexity and speculation to the receiver of the telegram, should he be found, and to be eventually added to the many errors of "omission and commission" for which the telegraph is nominally held accountable. Subsequently, a complaint is made, founded on the misreading, imperfect or incorrect punctuation, or other cause leading to error or delay in the message, and in too many instances the explanations, although based on actual facts, are received (if they are accepted at all) in a dissatisfied and ungracious spirit.

The provision made by the latter portion of Clause 10 of the "Regulations and Conditions," whereby absolute certainty of despatch and accuracy in transmission are, as far as practicable, secured to the public, is too often neglected, either through oversight, or from motives of economy, by the sender. The clause to which I refer provides, that the sender of any telegram may obtain a copy of the same, repeated back from the hand of the person to whom the message may have been addressed, on payment (by the sender) of half rate in addition to the ordinary charges. As this would, under ordinary circumstances, be equivalent to the receipt of an acknowledgment from a correspondent, in regard both to promptness of transmission and accuracy in the transcribing of the telegram, I am inclined to hope, that as the practice of telegraphic correspondence may in time become better understood, the precaution under mention will be more extensively availed of by the public generally.

One material fact in connection with this division of my Report, and one which I consider tells favorably for the department, is, that only a mere fraction of the complaints before mentioned have emanated from persons using the telegraph extensively, *i.e.* persons who are in the habit of sending and receiving a large number of messages daily. This, I think, results from the greater aptitude possessed by such persons for transacting correspondence by telegraph, and generally through the greater attention given by them to the authorised regulations of the service.

When it is considered that during the past twelve months 256,380 telegrams, containing at a moderate average 2,563,800 words, have passed, during the manipulatory process of telegraphic transmission, reception, and delivery, through the hands of the one hundred and sixty-six clerks, operators, messengers, &c., engaged in the service, that in only twenty-six instances were reports of delays or errors brought officially under notice, and that only twenty-one of that number could fairly be traced to negligence of officers of the department, I do not think that the service can be considered as being other than satisfactory.

I am far from averring that it is quite so perfect in many respects as could be desired, or as I hope eventually to see it; but I can confidently state my belief that every reasonable effort is made, in practice, to reduce the number of delays, errors, &c., to their *minimum*, and that strenuous endeavors are used to secure the *maximum* amount of promptness and accuracy in the despatch of business at the various offices under my superintendence.

Sir W. O. S. Brooke, F.R.S., Superintendent of Telegraphs in India, mentions, in his Report for 1859-60, while alluding to the subject of errors, &c., on the Indian lines, as follows:—

“I have ascertained that in 105,893 messages sent in Bengal, Bombay, Madras, the East Coast, Ceylon, Scinde, and the North-western Provinces, 1,005 contained errors, being one message erroneous in every sixty-five. The 105,893 messages contained 2,342,812 words, of which 1,982 were erroneous, being one word erroneous in 1,182.”

He remarks—

“The true wonder is that so few mistakes occur. The sufferer by such blunders generally appeals to the press, and cites his case as a specimen of the general working of the department. The conclusion is not just. Nothing is heard or known of the 1,182 words which have been sent correctly, while loud indignation is naturally expressed for the one error in that number.”

It will, therefore, be seen that the chances of freedom from error appear to have been less favorable on the Indian lines than on our own.

One fruitful source of inconvenience at the Melbourne Office arises from the delay sometimes occasioned in issuing telegrams for delivery, owing to the messengers being pre-engaged.

The practical value of telegraphic communication obviously depends, in a considerable degree, on the amount of promptness attending the conveyance of the telegram from the office where it may have been received to the hands of the person to whom the message may be addressed; to secure the best results in this respect, a staff of messengers is of course maintained, proportioned as nearly as practicable to the demands of the service, but it occasionally happens, at irregular intervals and from causes not to be foreseen or provided for, that a more than ordinary number of messages are received for delivery in suburban localities, or at points more than usually distant from the office; such telegrams commonly engross the time of the messengers from one to three hours, and in the meantime, the remaining members of the staff, engaged on town duty, have largely increased duties to perform; so much is this the case that delays of longer or shorter duration must occasionally occur; with the view, however, of providing a remedy to meet the difficulty, I propose, should funds for the purpose be obtainable during the present year, to adopt the plan of telegram delivery, either partially or wholly, by means of messengers mounted on active ponies or light horses, in the same manner as has been the practice in Sydney for some years past; the system I am informed is found to work advantageously in that city, and I have every reason to believe that good results would follow its introduction here.

FINANCIAL CONDITION OF THE DEPARTMENT.

The following statement embraces in detail full particulars in reference to the revenue and expenditure of the department, during 1864.

STATEMENT showing the Actual Cash Revenue derived from each

Month.	Melbourne.	Ararat.	Avoca.	Bellarat.	Beechworth.	Belfast.	Belvoir.	Benzalla.	Buninyung.	Camperdown.
January ...	£ 1,176 9 11	£ 28 10 4	£ 8 9 4	£ 166 18 4	£ 63 5 11	£ 22 3 11	£ 3 7 5	£ 6 6 3	£ 7 15 10	£ 8 5 3
February ...	1,074 4 6	21 2 2	12 10 0	149 14 9	59 14 3	21 10 10	2 9 10	8 12 7	5 1 6	10 1 8
March ...	1,226 18 7	19 4 0	12 1 1	141 3 1	72 18 10	25 9 6	2 5 0	9 1 9	6 9 2	8 11 11
April ...	1,144 19 4	14 7 7	10 15 0	147 3 10	67 3 2	27 18 0	3 15 7	7 5 3	5 19 2	10 16 10
May ...	1,179 13 5	14 11 9	11 10 1	154 7 10	64 9 5	26 3 11	3 16 7	5 18 3	4 0 3	11 4 9
June ...	1,043 5 11	12 3 5	10 12 6	138 15 2	50 3 9	25 2 0	3 4 6	5 3 8	3 18 4	9 0 0
July ...	1,084 10 1	15 14 4	10 9 7	153 2 2	52 0 11	24 3 10	3 0 10	4 12 9	8 16 10	12 0 8
August ...	1,138 5 11	14 14 10	12 6 6	187 8 6	53 6 9	24 0 1	2 11 0	5 19 8	4 6 5	8 17 6
September ...	1,268 2 6	16 15 6	24 3 4	306 9 7	50 15 6	28 1 7	1 8 3	5 11 1	7 3 6	7 14 5
October ...	1,300 12 0	18 13 4	14 6 10	247 12 9	67 2 7	34 18 3	2 14 6	8 2 4	6 4 1	14 5 0
November ...	1,306 19 11	16 18 9	21 12 3	244 6 7	74 13 2	33 5 0	4 3 6	6 17 0	6 0 10	8 14 1
December ...	1,296 5 4	23 8 10	15 13 10	256 5 10	43 1 2	40 2 6	4 1 7	6 19 4	7 7 6	12 4 4
Total ...	14,240 7 5	213 19 10	164 8 4	2,293 8 5	738 15 5	332 19 5	36 18 7	80 9 11	73 1 3	121 16 4

Month.	Hamilton.	Heathcote.	Hexham.	Ingleswood.	Kerang.	Kilmore.	Kyneton.	Logwood.	Malton.	Maryborough.	Mortlake. (1)
January ...	£ 42 7 3	£ 10 0 8	£ 5 12 9	£ 20 15 3	£ 4 2 10	£ 7 10 4	£ 9 11 11	£ 3 3 8	£ 16 9 10	£ 34 9 1	...
February ...	37 8 2	9 1 6	5 9 10	18 7 1	8 6 1	6 9 7	12 1 3	4 3 3	15 0 9	19 17 1	...
March ...	30 11 11	10 3 2	6 10 0	17 11 8	10 19 2	9 2 8	15 6 5	3 1 6	18 7 9	22 19 3	...
April ...	33 19 8	9 14 1	7 10 5	19 5 8	6 12 0	7 14 2	10 4 10	4 6 10	22 10 3	28 9 5	...
May ...	37 17 2	7 13 4	5 6 9	24 16 7	5 17 10	9 2 7	12 18 9	4 1 6	13 9 3	22 0 10	...
June ...	22 16 11	9 16 2	2 4 6	10 18 3	5 5 8	4 3 11	10 1 1	3 9 10	16 7 3	23 11 8	2 10 5
July ...	29 6 5	9 10 0	6 7 1	19 8 3	4 18 10	6 9 8	8 7 0	1 16 10	14 14 4	22 16 7	6 18 10
August ...	21 18 2	7 19 3	5 1 10	18 2 10	5 5 0	3 1 1	11 6 11	3 6 11	13 13 1	19 10 1	4 1 10
September ...	28 4 5	8 9 3	3 3 4	15 4 11	5 11 10	3 17 5	6 17 2	3 8 6	13 1 2	18 16 6	4 14 2
October ...	30 10 8	9 6 7	3 6 7	25 13 7	8 2 9	6 3 7	12 1 10	4 3 4	16 7 0	25 7 7	9 2 9
November ...	30 2 11	11 9 9	2 15 4	20 8 3	8 10 0	7 16 7	11 18 4	5 5 5	17 0 3	24 9 8	6 18 3
December ...	46 13 1	11 10 10	3 8 0	21 16 7	5 5 5	6 3 1	12 14 1	2 5 6	18 17 8	25 2 3	6 11 5
Total ...	391 16 9	114 14 7	52 16 5	232 8 11	78 17 11	77 16 8	133 9 7	42 13 1	190 18 7	287 10 0	40 17 8

Month.	Sassafras Point.	Stawell.	Strathairn.	Swan Hill.	Talbot.	Taraful.	Tarnagulla.	Wahgunah.	Wangajatta.	Warrambool.	Williamstown.
January ...	£ 5 7 0	£ 10 7 11	£ 6 9 0	£ 10 6 6	£ 18 1 10	£ 2 12 5	£ 7 14 7	£ 7 14 7	£ 26 2 9	£ 40 15 7	£ 25 12 0
February ...	5 1 3	9 13 7	6 10 2	23 12 0	18 3 10	4 4 4	8 11 5	5 10 3	13 17 10	45 13 7	17 14 10
March ...	3 16 10	7 16 8	10 19 6	19 2 2	19 15 9	3 4 1	8 1 1	10 13 1	20 0 8	50 12 9	20 0 8
April ...	4 7 5	9 16 1	5 19 11	13 3 10	19 1 3	4 11 6	8 15 3	6 8 8	21 17 8	49 11 9	19 5 7
May ...	4 2 8	8 12 2	4 16 1	17 9 4	18 7 0	4 18 9	6 3 8	9 7 3	21 15 2	53 15 8	16 9 9
June ...	2 6 1	10 0 9	3 14 10	12 5 5	26 9 3	3 1 7	4 16 8	6 6 6	17 4 4	41 18 0	16 4 10
July ...	2 12 8	7 0 6	4 12 4	12 14 5	16 19 4	3 4 11	6 1 0	8 3 2	16 16 6	41 13 7	15 13 11
August ...	3 4 1	9 10 8	4 14 8	16 12 11	20 11 0	3 1 11	6 16 10	4 19 6	12 16 5	38 1 10	13 18 5
September ...	2 13 1	10 1 2	6 10 2	15 14 1	19 14 9	5 17 6	7 18 3	16 6 9	13 4 11	37 3 10	13 10 9
October ...	2 16 10	20 9 11	4 14 0	13 17 4	26 1 10	8 18 5	7 7 11	8 9 3	22 10 2	51 10 4	11 17 5
November ...	1 14 2	9 7 5	4 9 1	16 8 8	25 16 7	6 1 4	6 16 1	13 2 3	24 2 5	32 11 9	16 15 11
December ...	5 13 3	12 9 0	7 0 9	11 19 5	22 19 6	8 0 10	7 7 6	20 8 8	17 7 6	31 18 10	16 18 11
Total ...	43 15 4	125 5 10	70 10 6	183 6 1	251 2 4	57 17 5	86 10 3	117 9 11	227 16 4	521 7 6	204 3 0

* Office opened 13th June, 1864.

* Office opened 1st December, 1864.

DEBTOR AND

Dr.

To Total Cost of Working and Maintenance of Lines from 1st January to 31st December, 1864:—
 Salaries and Wages £ 28,765 5 2
 Contingencies 7,211 1 1

To Balance £ 9,001 3 8
 44,977 9 11

Electric Telegraph Station in Victoria during the Year 1864.

Cape Schank.	Carisbrook.	Cuttlemaine.	Chiltern.	Clunes.	Colac.	Creswick.	Darlington.	Dunolly.	Echuca.	Geelong.	Gisborne.
£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1 8 4	8 13 5	57 13 7	21 1 6	13 16 2	6 5 3	17 14 5	33 6 3	12 2 1	20 0 9	124 15 7	2 3 5
0 5 3	8 11 3	53 7 2	26 18 7	17 5 5	5 9 5	16 9 10	43 1 7	14 0 3	26 4 2	101 12 9	3 2 9
0 16 7	9 3 2	54 2 0	23 10 3	15 11 6	6 0 4	16 18 5	44 9 10	14 6 7	23 6 9	96 0 5	2 6 11
0 16 2	6 7 5	56 7 11	27 14 3	17 15 3	4 2 8	13 2 9	44 17 5	14 2 9	19 18 2	94 18 3	1 18 4
0 16 2	8 10 7	44 2 2	17 11 4	12 9 11	5 10 4	11 8 6	51 17 5	15 18 9	26 17 8	89 19 9	2 7 11
0 4 0	8 7 0	53 10 5	21 15 7	12 15 10	5 15 5	11 16 4	46 19 5	13 19 11	25 15 5	82 5 9	2 0 4
0 13 8	6 8 3	39 8 5	22 18 5	10 3 6	5 17 9	12 4 10	55 6 2	14 6 0	31 10 6	76 10 1	1 18 11
0 15 6	7 5 8	41 0 1	24 10 4	12 19 3	6 8 1	15 0 1	63 18 6	14 10 8	33 13 5	77 13 11	2 4 3
0 7 0	6 16 11	44 13 3	17 18 8	14 19 4	5 12 9	15 16 5	138 2 10	13 9 9	50 1 10	92 15 1	4 18 4
0 5 0	9 13 4	40 3 1	25 12 3	19 6 10	9 7 8	19 13 8	98 12 8	19 7 6	49 14 0	89 0 4	2 10 1
0 17 0	8 13 9	57 5 3	31 17 2	14 17 8	8 5 2	17 4 0	111 18 2	15 1 6	56 18 2	87 9 3	2 14 6
0 17 8	7 3 4	52 15 8	24 1 10	14 16 5	9 11 11	18 6 6	92 4 6	13 13 10	50 11 0	97 10 6	2 12 1
8 2 4	95 14 1	594 9 0	283 10 2	176 17 1	78 6 9	185 15 9	824 7 5	174 19 7	415 0 1	1,110 12 5	30 17 8

Mossamb.	Nowstead.	Port Albert. (2)	Portland.	Queenscliff.	Raglan.	Redbank.	Rotherham.	Sale. (2)	Sandhurst.	Sandridge.	Smythesdale.
£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
3 2 4	0 19 5	...	44 3 11	13 9 9	6 16 8	3 0 7	16 17 0	...	92 2 11	7 0 6	18 10 1
1 13 3	2 1 10	...	45 4 9	14 11 8	8 4 10	2 9 10	22 15 8	...	86 14 6	6 5 0	16 13 10
3 4 9	2 5 2	...	34 15 9	12 1 7	5 15 3	1 6 7	19 16 6	...	92 10 0	4 15 1	13 17 0
2 2 1	1 13 6	...	33 16 1	7 13 9	5 5 5	1 13 6	21 11 2	...	94 14 7	5 17 10	13 4 11
2 14 2	3 12 9	...	39 0 0	6 9 3	9 17 6	2 18 9	29 1 6	...	102 17 5	4 13 5	15 7 5
3 15 6	2 7 0	...	26 17 4	3 0 4	3 6 0	3 3 4	20 14 4	...	95 10 10	4 7 8	15 4 9
3 9 1	3 2 9	...	28 18 11	7 2 1	7 9 5	1 19 4	18 18 8	...	92 12 4	6 11 3	17 5 0
3 5 2	3 11 11	...	23 12 5	6 4 1	9 18 9	1 13 8	28 0 8	...	111 6 10	4 7 10	21 1 10
5 0 3	2 17 8	...	26 18 8	8 4 3	12 8 3	2 16 6	41 7 6	6 19 10	103 17 3	4 2 2	26 0 10
9 8 9	5 9 0	...	38 14 0	7 11 2	9 14 3	9 13 6	31 16 8	37 6 8	134 8 2	8 5 8	30 18 9
5 19 2	2 8 11	...	41 8 6	7 16 2	9 18 0	3 10 10	28 7 4	31 16 8	110 1 0	7 3 11	44 0 6
3 1 6	3 1 2	14 6 0	44 15 4	8 15 4	8 5 0	2 7 6	35 3 7	70 1 8	117 4 2	7 6 11	26 19 7
51 16 0	31 11 1	14 6 0	420 4 8	107 19 6	97 2 4	37 18 11	314 10 7	166 4 10	1,234 0 0	70 17 3	259 4 6

Yackandoh.	Spencer street.	WILLIAMSTOWN Junction.	Werribee.	Little River.	West Geelong.	Geelong.	Ballarat.	Woodend.	Kyneton. (2)	Cuttlemaine.	Sandhurst.
£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
9 0 1	8 6 3	0 10 2	3 8 10	2 1 0	1 2 6	9 6 11	2 6 0	4 12 5	...	1 6 7	2 1 7
7 12 3	6 14 1	0 7 6	3 14 5	2 8 2	0 19 2	9 15 11	2 12 8	3 17 1	...	2 2 0	1 8 10
7 9 10	13 0 3	0 4 0	4 14 4	1 14 6	1 12 1	11 5 3	2 14 9	3 14 10	...	2 9 10	4 0 6
9 5 3	7 13 10	0 5 4	2 15 7	1 7 5	1 14 9	5 6 5	3 0 3	2 17 9	1 5 4	1 13 2	2 6 0
7 10 11	7 9 10	0 3 6	3 2 7	1 14 5	0 15 5	5 4 1	3 16 0	3 3 4	1 13 1	1 8 8	1 11 0
6 3 6	7 3 0	0 3 6	2 5 11	0 15 3	1 1 8	9 6 10	1 18 0	2 6 4	1 13 5	1 2 2	1 18 4
6 17 5	6 19 3	0 9 7	3 3 9	1 5 0	0 16 0	6 6 2	2 5 6	1 15 4	2 11 4	0 18 8	2 15 0
10 3 1	5 5 1	...	2 8 3	0 16 8	1 1 7	3 2 6	2 19 9	2 8 9	0 13 10	0 19 6	2 7 6
5 10 3	10 17 5	0 4 6	3 7 1	1 3 4	0 11 3	2 14 8	3 12 9	2 6 2	2 14 1	2 14 1	3 12 4
7 11 7	11 11 3	0 3 0	3 17 0	0 11 0	0 4 6	6 17 11	4 0 0	3 0 7	2 15 2	0 16 6	3 0 3
7 3 3	10 13 11	0 3 0	2 16 2	0 10 1	0 8 9	7 4 9	4 5 2	3 6 9	2 6 5	1 11 3	5 16 0
7 2 3	13 4 2	0 2 0	2 18 11	1 11 3	1 11 6	6 3 0	2 18 6	3 11 1	3 2 2	1 3 2	2 1 10
94 9 7	108 18 4	2 16 1	37 13 3	15 18 1	11 19 2	82 14 5	36 9 4	57 0 5	18 16 11	18 5 7	30 19 2

* Office opened 22nd September, 1864.

* Office opened 12th April, 1864.

CREDIT STATEMENT.

Cr.

By Total Cash Receipts paid into Treasury on account of collections from 1st January to 31st December, 1864	£ s. d.	29,121 18 1
By Amount due on account of Intercolonial business for same period :	£ s. d.	
New South Wales...	644 11 8	
South Australia ...	753 16 9	
Queensland ...	81 11 5	
By Value of charges on Government business	...	1,479 19 10
		14,375 12 0
		44,977 9 11

Certified correct—

SAML. W. MCGOWAN,
General Superintendent of Electric Telegraph.

STATEMENT showing the Amount chargeable for Government Business and the Working Expenses of each Office in the Department during the Year 1864.

Name of Station.	Total Cash Revenue.		Value of Messages on Public Service.		Number of Messages.		Total Number of Messages transmitted.	Amount paid for Salaries and Wages.		Contingencies.	Total Cost for Maintenance of each Station.		
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	Private.	O.H. M.S.		£	s. d.		£	s. d.	£	s. d.
General supervision, including maintenance and repairs of 2,326½ miles of line	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,821	11 8	2,510	6 6	4,331 18 2
Melbourne	14,240	7 5	1,818	7 11	56,879	5,477	62,356	4,191	19 8	742	14 0	4,934 13 8	
Ararat	213	19 10	73	1 10	1,433	307	1,730	509	13 0	28	4 10	530 17 10	
Avoca	164	8 4	39	18 6	1,396	172	1,568	449	3 0	25	17 10	475 0 10	
Ballarat	2,293	8 5	579	1 2	19,108	1,122	20,230	900	0 8	250	16 9	1,150 17 5	
Beechworth	738	15 5	392	10 9	4,604	787	5,391	779	14 0	115	11 6	896 5 6	
Belfast	332	19 5	295	0 8	2,410	436	2,846	527	13 0	78	19 11	606 12 6	
Belvoir	36	18 7	38	19 0	372	146	518	353	10 0	20	8 9	373 18 9	
Benalla	80	9 11	195	7 1	706	405	1,111	399	3 0	48	3 7	447 6 7	
Buninyong	73	1 5	10	13 0	652	59	711	328	10 0	15	16 5	344 6 5	
Camperdown	121	16 4	17	7 2	878	96	974	374	3 0	89	2 11	463 5 11	
Cape Schanck	8	2 4	5	19 7	76	33	109	180	0 0	50	15 9	230 15 9	
Carisbrook	95	14 1	159	7 5	1,123	189	1,312	228	10 0	30	8 7	258 18 7	
Castlemaine	594	9 0	503	10 5	5,884	1,036	6,920	614	0 6	103	19 10	723 0 4	
Chiltern	285	10 2	61	12 10	2,778	296	3,074	399	3 0	43	2 8	442 3 8	
Clunes	176	17 1	27	16 8	1,967	70	2,037	328	10 0	30	18 10	339 8 10	
Colac	78	6 9	0	11 11	956	7	963	303	10 0	28	0 8	331 10 8	
Creswick	185	15 9	148	9 4	2,007	121	2,128	333	10 0	41	15 6	395 5 6	
Daylesford	824	7 5	83	7 1	7,867	173	8,042	374	3 0	127	8 1	501 11 1	
Dunolly	174	19 7	29	6 0	1,797	183	1,982	502	13 0	38	14 0	541 7 0	
Echuca	415	0 1	179	2 0	2,346	559	2,905	424	3 0	73	8 6	497 11 6	
Geelong	1,110	12 5	214	17 10	9,289	521	9,810	925	14 8	159	12 9	1,085 7 5	
Gisborne	30	17 8	3	1 8	338	27	365	351	18 0	39	12 10	391 10 10	
Hamilton	391	16 9	80	2 7	2,142	318	2,460	299	3 0	40	1 7	339 4 7	
Heathcote	114	14 7	210	13 8	673	240	913	449	3 0	30	11 3	479 14 3	
Hexham	52	16 5	57	13 6	370	106	476	389	3 0	115	9 6	514 12 6	
Inglewood	232	8 11	33	18 7	1,861	164	2,025	537	13 0	46	19 3	574 12 3	
Kerang	78	17 11	62	19 4	433	81	514	149	3 0	33	16 3	182 19 3	
Kilmore	77	16 8	173	13 5	732	299	1,031	449	3 0	38	6 1	487 9 1	
Kyneton	133	9 7	151	15 9	1,274	435	1,709	328	10 0	42	7 4	370 17 4	
Longwood	42	13 1	5	14 2	348	30	378	399	3 0	111	11 0	510 14 0	
Maldon	190	18 7	65	8 1	1,397	100	1,697	352	10 0	39	7 9	391 17 9	
Maryborough	287	10 0	188	13 11	2,701	208	2,909	502	13 0	54	5 7	556 18 7	
Mortlake	40	17 8	119	19 10	281	185	466	99	15 0	117	14 9	217 9 9	
Moonambel	51	16 0	161	17 5	520	172	692	253	10 0	34	1 1	287 11 1	
Newstead	31	11 1	311	18 3	378	241	619	149	3 0	23	1 2	172 4 2	
Port Albert	14	6 0	2	4 8	87	10	97	19	5 0	121	5 2	140 10 2	
Portland	420	4 8	175	16 10	2,441	219	2,660	527	13 0	99	9 5	627 2 5	
Queenscliff	107	19 6	304	5 6	2,477	912	3,389	488	1 4	109	17 9	597 19 1	
Raglan	97	2 4	9	8 5	989	62	1,051	424	3 0	65	0 6	489 3 6	
Redbank	37	18 11	6	5 3	363	32	395	149	3 0	40	8 5	189 11 5	
Rutherglen	314	10 7	105	17 3	2,081	154	2,235	328	10 0	48	8 6	376 18 6	
Sale	166	4 10	12	0 2	808	42	850	93	2 0	92	8 3	185 10 3	
Sandhurst	1,234	0 0	557	10 8	8,414	866	9,280	821	10 8	178	0 5	999 11 1	
Sandridge	70	17 3	139	4 0	519	83	602	250	0 0	43	18 10	293 18 10	
Smythesdale	269	4 6	21	16 3	3,327	137	3,464	326	0 0	26	16 4	352 16 4	
Snapper Point	43	15 4	4	15 10	473	34	507	328	10 0	41	17 5	370 7 5	
Stawell	125	5 10	20	12 5	859	95	954	378	10 0	33	0 2	411 10 2	
Streatham	70	10 6	4	14 11	473	23	496	112	2 0	85	12 4	197 14 4	
Swan Hill	183	6 1	168	5 3	881	195	1,076	399	3 0	38	11 7	457 14 7	
Talbot	251	2 4	121	18 10	2,493	281	2,774	348	0 0	46	13 2	394 13 2	
Taradale	57	17 5	52	7 3	641	120	761	328	10 0	32	5 7	350 15 7	
Tarnagulla	86	10 3	5	3 9	964	44	1,008	328	10 0	39	18 10	368 8 10	
Wahgunyah	117	9 11	15	6 0	1,084	73	1,157	328	10 0	46	5 8	374 15 8	
Wangaratta	227	16 4	454	0 3	1,849	325	2,674	399	3 0	39	5 6	438 8 6	
Warramboul	521	7 6	235	17 5	8,003	291	8,294	378	10 0	58	9 2	436 19 2	
Williamstown	204	3 0	230	0 8	2,333	790	3,123	353	10 0	114	18 4	468 8 4	
Yackandandah	94	9 7	10	17 11	1,098	88	1,186	328	10 0	26	0 9	354 10 9	
Albury	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	450	0 0	38	5 0	488 5 0
Mount Gambier*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	340	14 4	56	4 8	396 19 0
Cape Otway†	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	113	6 8	19	13 11	133 0 7
Point Lonsdale†	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	450	0 0	22	15 5	472 15 5
RAILWAY CIRCUIT.													
Spencer Street	108	18 4	992	3 0	841	6,186	7,027	...	...	30	5 7	30 5 7
Williamstown Junction	2	16 1	499	9 1	38	5,915	5,953	...	...	18	14 3	18 14 3
Werribee	37	13 3	910	18 5	401	11,570	11,971	...	...	16	7 1	16 7 1
Little River	15	18 1	894	6 3	168	11,749	11,917	...	...	13	3 6	13 3 6
West Geelong	11	19 2	641	5 7	117	7,728	7,845	...	...	13	9 5	13 9 5
Geelong	82	14 5	226	12 9	679	2,225	2,904	...	...	13	5 5	13 5 5
Ballarat	36	9 4	365	18 8	332	2,604	2,936	...	...	14	11 5	14 11 5
Woodend	37	0 5	82	9 8	420	773	1,193	...	...	10	6 6	10 6 6
Kyneton	18	16 11	69	16 2	184	582	766	...	...	47	17 4	47 17 4
Castlemaine	18	5 7	132	4 5	191	979	1,170	...	...	13	2 2	13 2 2
Sandhurst	30	19 2	300	2 8	227	1,447	1,674	...	...	17	13 9	17 13 9
Total	29,121	18 1	14,375	12 0	184,441	71,939	256,380	28,765	5 2	7,211	1 1	35,976	6 3

* Boundary repeating station } No revenue collected.
 † Look-out shipping station }

PERMANENT EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT.

		£	s.	d.
Total Expenditure for lines, stations, &c., as per previous statement, up to 31st December, 1863		222,846	5	11
EXPENDITURE DURING 1864.				
Extensions, alterations, &c.	£ 7,500	0	0	
Redbank to St. Arnaud	1,189	6	6	
Hamilton to Casterton	2,000	0	0	
To Wood's Point	4,310	13	6	
Rent of Chief Office	850	0	0	
		15,850	0	0
		£238,696	5	11

RAILWAY CIRCUIT.

The Department of Railways in account with the Department of Electric Telegraph.

Dr.

Cr.

1864—1st January to 31st December.		£	s.	d.	1864—1st January to 31st December.		£	s.	d.				
To Nominal Value of charges on telegrams (for railway service specially) transmitted between the undermentioned Railway Telegraph Offices:—					By Cash Revenue collected for the transmission of private telegrams from the undermentioned Railway Telegraph Offices:—								
Telegraph Offices:—					Telegraph Offices:—								
Spencer street station, Melbourne	£990	10	0		Spencer street station, Melbourne	£108	18	4					
Williamstown junction station	499	9	1		Williamstown junction station	2	16	1					
Werribee station	909	15	6		Werribee station	37	13	3					
Little River station	880	14	10		Little River station	15	18	1					
West Geelong station	641	5	7		West Geelong station	11	19	2					
South Geelong station	226	3	10		South Geelong station	82	14	5					
Ballarat station	365	18	8		Ballarat station	36	9	4					
Sandhurst station	300	12	8		Sandhurst station	30	19	2					
Castlemaine station	130	6	7		Castlemaine station	18	5	7					
Kyneton station	68	15	3		Kyneton station (opened 12th April)	18	16	11					
Woodend station	79	15	9		Woodend station	37	0	5					
		5,093	7	9					401	10	9		
To Value of stores, stationery, acids, &c., supplied to the above-mentioned offices		208	16	5		By Salaries paid by Railway Department for operators acting also as booking clerks, &c., at the above-mentioned offices 2,388	11	5					
						Proportion for telegraph service (say one half)	1,194	5	8½		1,194	5	8½
						By Balance carried down in favor of Electric Telegraph Department					3,706	7	8½
		£	5,302	4	2					£	5,302	4	2

1864—December 31st.

To Balance brought down in favor of Electric Telegraph Department ... £3,706 7 8½

Certified correct.

W. R. BUCHANAN,
Accountant.

SAML. W. MCGOWAN,
General Superintendent of Electric Telegraph.

Electric Telegraph Department, General Superintendent's Office,
Melbourne, 5th January, 1865.

In my Report for 1863, I had occasion to allude to a deficiency in the receipts, for that year, amounting to £1,066 14s.

I stated in explanation, that from a comparison with the returns for previous years, and after noting the fluctuations in the business of the department from year to year, I did not consider the decrease for 1863 as any indication of a permanent decline in the revenue collections on account of the business of the telegraph; the correctness of this view

has to some extent been verified by the results of the past twelve months, as may be seen by the following—

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT.

	£	s.	d.	In favor of 1864.		
				£	s.	d.
Year 1864: Cash Collections (within the colony)	29,121	18	1			
.. 1863: Do. do.	24,732	16	7			
				4,389	1	6
.. 1864: Cash Collections (Intercolonial Account)	1,479	19	10			
.. 1863: Do. do.	1,035	19	1			
				444	0	9
Cash Increase in favor of 1864				£4,833	2	3

The Return of Messages transmitted and received during the year shows as follows:

		Increase.
Year 1864: Private Telegrams	184,441	
.. 1863: Do. do.	166,482	27,959
		Decrease.
.. 1863: Government Telegrams	78,038	
.. 1864: Do. do.	71,939	6,099
Total Increase in favor of 1864		21,860

These results are, I think, satisfactory; but it is my duty again to direct your attention to the item in the "Debtor and Creditor Statement," under the head "Value of Charges on Government Business."

That it is as equitable on every ground, that this department should be credited in this way with the services it renders to the Government, as that the Railway Department and the Water Supply Department should receive *cash* payments for the services they respectively provide for the convenience and advantage of the Government, or its servants, cannot, I consider, in fairness be questioned.

The amounts shown from year to year, under this head, are not set down arbitrarily, but are the result of a daily record kept against each department of the Government Service, the basis of the charge being of course the authorized tariff for the transmission of telegrams.

I therefore beg to submit, that the practice adopted in New South Wales and South Australia with such beneficial results during several years past, should be authorized here, viz: That telegrams on Government Service should be paid for in *cash*, or that an acknowledgment, equivalent thereto, should be made to this department publicly in the Government accounts of receipts and expenditure, published at stated periods during the year.

Until either of the courses I have suggested be adopted, it is in my opinion exceedingly improbable that the commercial value of the Electric Telegraph Service in this colony can be even approximately determined.

From an intimate knowledge, obtained by observation during some years past, of the character of most of the telegrams despatched on Government Service, I consider that a reduction in the number of such telegrams, supposing that *cash* payments were required, would not be effected to a greater extent than, say twenty-five, or at most, thirty per cent.

The matters referred to in Government telegrams are for the most part of such a nature that delays, public inconvenience, involving possibly pecuniary loss, or that the ordinary course of post would fail to meet the object desired, would result from the absence of the use of the facilities afforded by telegraphic communication; the great and appreciable value of the telegraph, under such circumstances, does not therefore require to be illustrated, nor do I consider it necessary to adduce special argument in support of the statements already made in reference to the use of this service for facilitating the business of the administrative departments of the Government.

The following return shows the amount chargeable to each department on account of telegraph business during 1864.

YEAR 1864.

RETURN showing the Amounts actually chargeable to each Government Department for Telegrams transmitted during the Year ending 31st December, 1864.

Departments under control of Chief Secretary.	Departments under Attorney-General.	Departments under Minister of Justice.
Legislative Assembly	Judges	County and other Courts
Chief Secretary's Office	Law Officers of the	Police Magistrates ...
Registrar-General ...	Crown	Coroners
Gaols	Prothonotary ...	
Penal Establishments ...	Chief Commissioner of	
H. M. C. S. Victoria ...	Insolencies ...	
Chief Medical Officer ...	Master-in-Equity ...	
Police	Sheriff	
Public Library		
Shorthand Writer		
Magnetic Survey		
Botanical Gardens ...		
Audit		
Educational		
Electoral		
Lunatic Asylum		
Total	Total	Total

Departments under the Treasurer.	Departments under Commissioner of Lands and Survey.	Department of Public Works.
Treasury	Crown Lands	Public Works
Government Storekeeper	Geological Survey ...	
Government Printer ...		
Volunteers		
Military		
Total	Total	Total

Departments under Commissioner Trade and Customs.	Department of Post Office.	Department of Mines.	Department under Commissioner of Railways and Roads.
Customs	Post Office	Mines	Railways
Distilleries			Roads
Immigration			
Total	Total	Total	Total

RECAPITULATION.

Departments under the Chief Secretary	£	s.	d.
Departments under the Attorney-General	5,535	0	5
Departments under the Minister of Justice	221	13	1
Departments under the Minister of Justice	134	7	0
Departments under the Treasurer	265	4	1
Departments under the Commissioner of Lands and Survey	243	19	3
Departments under the Commissioner of Public Works	186	18	0
Departments under the Commissioner of Trade and Customs	267	3	5
Departments under the Postmaster-General	157	12	8
Departments under the Minister of Mines	67	16	10
Departments under the Commissioner of Railways and Roads	5,375	15	3
Miscellaneous, including free transmission of shipping intelligence to fourteen stations	1,920	2	0
Total	£14,375	12	0

Certified correct.

W. R. BUCHANAN, Accountant.

SAML. W. MCGOWAN,
General Superintendent of Electric Telegraph.

Electric Telegraph Department,
General Superintendent's Office,
Melbourne, 5th January, 1865.

£5,288 2s. 5d. chargeable for telegrams on Police Service, is a reduction on last year to the extent of £3,901 11s. 9d., effected, I believe, through a modification having been adopted in the system formerly practised of despatching to every police station a telegraphic report of any criminal offence committed within the colony. At present, and for some time past, such communications by telegraph have been restricted to the area of certain police districts, within whose boundaries it might be reasonably anticipated the offenders would be discovered. Crimes of unusual magnitude, or possessing features of a peculiar character, are still, however, notified to all police stations.

In considering the expenditure of the department for salaries and other expenses, contingent on the annual maintenance of the various stations, it is necessary to allow for the savings effected at many places through combining the duties of postmaster with those of telegraph manager.

In some localities, as will be seen by the following return, a loss to the Post Office Department has accrued through combining the offices; but if it be remembered that in a majority of such cases, the duties of postmaster were previously performed by perhaps a storekeeper, or other resident, holding no direct or strict connection with the Government Service, in so far as might relate to the operation of the "Civil Service Act," I think, on the whole, that notwithstanding the apparent loss to the Post Office Department, there may have been in reality a gain, through the increased facilities obtained for satisfactorily conducting the business of that service.

STATEMENT showing Particulars in connection with the Combination of Post Offices and Electric Telegraph Stations in Victoria.

Name of Office.	Allowance formerly made, or Expenditure incurred annually by Post Office Department, for Salaries and Wages payable to the Officers being combined.	Annual Expenditure now borne by the Post Office Department.	Estimated Saving.	Estimated Loss.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Ararat	497 14 0	100 18 6	396 15 6	
Avoca	317 15 0	117 15 0	200 0 0	
Belfast	300 0 0	78 10 0	221 10 0	
Belvoir	30 0 0	20 0 0	10 0 0	
Benalla	50 0 0	39 5 0	0 15 0	
Buninyong	100 0 0	...	100 0 0	
Camperdown	50 0 0	...	50 0 0	
Carisbrook	60 0 0	...	60 0 0	
Chiltern	100 0 0	78 10 0	21 10 0	
Clunes	100 0 0	78 10 0	21 10 0	
Colac	60 0 0	...	60 0 0	
Creswick	300 0 0	306 5 0	...	6 3 0
Daylesford	50 0 0	195 5 0	...	146 5 0
Dunolly	350 0 0	157 0 0	193 0 0	
Echuca	50 0 0	78 10 0	...	28 10 0
Gisborne	80 0 0	...	80 0 0	
Heathcote	425 0 0	133 9 0	291 11 0	
Hexham	20 0 0	...	20 0 0	
Inglewood	457 0 0	78 10 0	378 10 0	
Kerang	30 0 0	30 0 0	...	
Kilmore	433 9 0	230 2 4	203 6 8	
Kyneton	350 0 0	306 3 0	43 17 0	
Longwood	20 0 0	39 15 0	...	19 15 0
Maldon	100 0 0	133 9 0	...	33 9 0
Mortlake	60 0 0	30 0 0	30 0 0	
Moonambel	70 0 0	20 0 0	50 0 0	
Newstead	40 0 0	15 0 0	25 0 0	
Port Albert	110 0 0	...	110 0 0	
Portland	300 0 0	191 16 8	108 3 4	
Raglan	50 0 0	121 13 6	...	71 13 6
Redbank	50 0 0	20 0 0	30 0 0	
Rutherglen	60 0 0	...	60 0 0	
Salc	110 0 0	...	110 0 0	
Sandridge	50 0 0	88 10 0	...	38 10 0
Smythesdale	160 0 0	133 12 6	26 7 6	
Snapper Point	40 0 0	50 0 0	...	10 0 0
Stawell	300 0 0	15 14 0	284 6 0	
Streatham	40 0 0	25 0 0	15 0 0	
Swan Hill	60 0 0	23 17 6	36 2 6	
Tulbot	200 0 0	200 9 0	...	90 0 0
Taradale	100 0 0	...	100 0 0	
Tarnagulla	60 0 0	...	60 0 0	
Wahgunyah	40 0 0	...	40 0 0	
Wangaratta	60 0 0	30 5 0	20 15 0	
Warrnambool	300 0 0	251 4 0	48 16 0	
Yaakandandah	60 0 0	...	60 0 0	
	£6,640 18 0	£3,578 17 0	£3,506 15 6	£444 14 6

The cost of the Stores, and Fuel, Light, and Water, are not included in the above.

Although the advantages of telegraphic communication cannot, in my estimation, be too widely extended for the convenience of the general public, and as an active agent of advancing settlement and civilization, yet, looking at the progress of the department in a commercial point of view, I think it is to be regretted that so many non-remunerative or non-paying offices have been established.

In some cases, such offices may be termed a public necessity, as at Cape Otway, Queenscliff, and Cape Schanck, where they indirectly create a revenue to the department through the business originating by means of their agency; but the offices at Ararat, Avoca, Belvoir, Benalla, Buninyong, Camperdown, Colac, Carisbrook, Creswick, Dunolly, Gisborne, Heathcote, Hexham, Kilmore, Kyneton, Longwood, Maldon, Moonambel, Newstead, Raglan (Beaufort), Redbank, Sandridge, Snapper Point, Stawell (Pleasant Creek), Streatham, Taradale, Tarnagulla, Wahgunyah, and Yackandandah, have been maintained during the past year at a cash loss to the department, amounting collectively to no less a sum than £8,415 5s. 1d., distributed as shown in detail by return (Appendix B.) attached hereto.

With the knowledge of this fact before me, I have declined to recommend many applications received in the form of memorials and petitions, seeking for additional telegraph offices, where no reasonable prospect of better results than are above referred to could be anticipated.

Many of the offices mentioned are maintained partially for the general benefit of the service, as intermediate main-battery stations, where line repairers are stationed, and could not conveniently be dispensed with; but, on the other hand, many have been granted on the over-sanguine representations of memorialists, who believed (and possibly at the time had fair grounds for their confidence) that no loss to the department could accrue through opening an additional station at some particular place. To withdraw the communication, or to close the offices at any of these localities, would now be felt as a grievous hardship, yet they are in reality an absolute drag on the general usefulness of the service, by retarding its extension to more distant, and in many instances more necessary, points of communication. To meet this question hereafter, I consider that we might judiciously adopt the practice introduced in New South Wales, where I believe it is found to work satisfactorily, of accepting a guarantee to the Government, from one or more responsible persons, securing the department against any pecuniary loss prospectively contingent on the opening of any new office, sought for by residents of a particular locality, or on account of expenditure to be incurred in extending a line for the same purpose. I do not see any objection to the adoption of such a plan here, and I am sure that in many places such a guarantee might readily be obtained, for the sake of immediately securing the advantages of telegraphic communication.

A reference to the estimates will show that the working cost of each office is reduced to most reasonable limits, and, as compared with other branches of the public service, that the rates of remuneration are, relatively with the hours of duty, lower than in any other department. I think it may, therefore, be safely assumed, that no extravagance or unnecessary expenditure would be sanctioned at any "guaranteed" office beyond the indispensable requirements of the service.

TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION WITH ENGLAND VIA JAVA AND INDIA.

This project remains without practical development since the date of my previous Report (11th April, 1864) Parliamentary paper, No. 41.

In the meantime the Persian Gulf Cable has been successfully laid and worked; but owing to difficulties in connexion with a portion of the land line passing through Persia, this most important link of telegraphic communication between Great Britain and her eastern dependencies, has up to the present period, been only partially completed. The present year will, however, no doubt, see the satisfactory termination of the works now in

progress, or to be yet carried out for perfecting telegraphic communication between London and Kurrachee; when this most desirable and highly important result may have been accomplished on such a permanent basis as may afford a fair degree of security for the ultimate integrity of the communication, then, and in my opinion not until then, should the Australian Colonies be again solicited to unite in subsidising or supplying substantial aid to any scheme for establishing a connection between a point on the northern shores of this Island and the Indian possessions by means of submarine cables *vid* Java, Sumatra, and Singapore.

So much has been already so ably, and so fully written on this subject by persons competent to form a judgment thereon, and so frequently has it been my duty to discuss the question in previous Reports, that I feel it to be unnecessary to allude to the matter in any more detailed form at this period, particularly as very little, if indeed any, additional information has been gained, in reference to the practical details of the proposition, since the date of my previous Report.

WEATHER REPORTS, ETC.

Meteorological reports continue to be forwarded regularly, at the hours of 9.30 a.m. and 3.30 p.m., daily; brief records as to the direction and force of the wind, and general state of the weather, being transmitted at the same time from the stations at Portland, Cape Otway, Queenscliff, Cape Schanck, and Port Albert; these observations are publicly exhibited at the Melbourne Office, together with similar observations received from Sydney and Adelaide, whither our own weather reports are forwarded in exchange.

I hope to be able, within the coming year, in conjunction with Mr. Ellery, the Government Astronomer, to establish the system of "weather signalling and forecasting," mentioned in my previous Report; the basis of the system will be the same as that at present and for some years past adopted with such beneficial results in England, under the very able direction of Admiral Fitz Roy.

EXTENT OF LINES.

I beg to forward herewith (Appendix C.) a tabular statement, showing all the lines completed and in progress, at the present date; the names of the stations and the mileage measurement of single lines, and additional wires now brought into operation.

A chart of all the lines, corrected up to this date, showing also their points of connection with the intercolonial lines in the adjoining colonies, is attached.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

SAML. WALKER MCGOWAN.

The Honorable the Chief Secretary,
&c., &c., &c.