

## Passenger Cars for the "Southerner"

TEN passenger cars were refurbished in time for inauguration of the new "Southerner" service between Christchurch and Invercargill on 1 December 1970. All these were drawn from the South Island stock of 56 ft. first-class cars, Nos. 1876-77, 1929-35, and 1970-75. Four were converted at the Otahuhu workshops (Nos. 1931, 1935, 1971, and 1975), and the remainder at Addington.

The four cars converted at Otahuhu retained the small "coupe" compartment at one end, as did Nos. 1972 and 1974, but all these compartments were fitted out for the use of the train hostesses. The seating capacity in the main passenger saloon remains at 29, and the tare of these six cars ranges from 26.7 to 27.2 tons. Smoking is permitted in these cars.

The other four cars converted before December 1970, Nos. 1876, 1877, 1930, and 1935, had their small compartments removed and additional seats fitted to increase the passenger capacity in the enlarged saloon to 33. These cars weigh from 26.8 to 27.3 tons unladen, and are labelled for non-smoking passengers.

Alterations to the cars included the removal of the pressure-ventilation equipment from the cars so fitted, and the installation of Goko combustion heaters to all cars; the laying of wall-to-wall carpet; the fitting of new seats (but still of the armchair style with adjustable reclining backs); the provision of fluorescent lighting; and a completely new colour scheme. Most of the seats, as before, are normally turned to face the direction of travel.

It is understood that at least two more of these cars are being similarly altered to provide spares for the new service, and to enable more accommodation to be provided during holiday periods.

A drawing of one of these cars in its original condition, comprising a plan and elevation to a scale of 1:126 (3/32nd inch to one foot), was published in these pages in 1963, Vol. 20, p. 82, issue No. 97.

The seats have foam rubber cushions, and are upholstered in teal blue stretch vinyl. Ample leg-room is provided by the 48½-inch (1.242 m.) pitch of the seats.

The interior walls of the cars are finished in beige vynide to match the gold carpet,



Photograph: N.Z. Railways Publicity

Thick golden wall-to-wall carpet and comfortable armchair-style foam-rubber seats newly upholstered in teal blue stretch vinyl compose an invitation to restful travel. The interior walls are finished in beige vynide, and the ceiling is white formica to reflect the fluorescent lighting. Most of the seats are turned to face the direction of travel.

and the ceilings are white formica. Fluorescent lighting provides soft, clean illumination throughout the train.

The former steam-heat equipment (and in some cars a pressure-ventilation system) has been replaced by an oil-fired air heater in each car. When heating is required, warmed air is blown through ducts and vents to enter the car at floor level. In warm weather, the heater fan can be used to maintain a constant air circulation throughout the car. Air escapes through ventilators in the ceiling.

Each car measures 58 ft. 10 in. (17.932 m.) over couplers, has a maximum width of 8 ft. 11 in. (2.717 m.), and stands 11 ft. 4 5/6th in. (3.463 m.) high above rail level. Each smoking car has a toilet compartment at one end and a hostess compartment at the other. The passenger compartment between them, with 29 seats, is 39 ft. 6 in.

(12.019 m.) long and 8 ft. 0 1/2 in. (2.457 m.) wide at floor level.

Each train normally comprises seven vehicles: smoker, non-smoker, smoker, buffet car, non-smoker, smoker, and a guard's van, reading from the south end. Total seating accommodation is thus 153. Excluding the locomotive, which normally is one of the 63-ton Japanese-built "Dj" class 1,050 h.p. AC/DC diesel-electric locomotives, the seven-vehicle train weighs about 190 tons (193 tonnes) ready for service.

Externally the rolling stock is finished in a rich blue with a waistband in a lighter shade of arctic blue edged with thin golden yellow lining. The underframes and bogies are black, and the roofs are white. The locomotives used remain in their standard red livery, apparently because it is considered impracticable to assign specific locomotives to the service on a long-term basis.