

Pioneer City Television Station Has Closed Down

The Bell television station, a pioneer in television transmission in New Zealand, closed down last night after more than three years' service.

Run by the Bell Radio-Television Corporation of Auckland, the station has been transmitting as many as three nights a week since July, 1957. The first Government experimental transmission was on February 23, 1959.

Along with Seddon Memorial Technical College, the corporation was granted an experimental transmission licence by the Post Office. Under the terms of the licence, no advertising or entertainment was to be transmitted.

Live Programmes

Most of the programmes were on film, but a fair proportion, particularly at the start, were live.

The first transmissions were on the 405-line system, but the station changed to 625 lines when the Government announced its intention to adopt that system for regular transmissions.

The station, which was allotted the call-sign ZL1XQ, also had three changes of frequency since it began transmissions. It was limited in its power to 180 watts, about a third of the Broadcasting Service's transmitter, Channel 2.

"We built all our equipment," said the managing-director of the corporation, Mr A. Bell, yesterday. "Now we feel that we have done our job

in furthering the cause of television in New Zealand."

Mr Frank Baker, projection manager, said in last night's telecast that the real reason the station had been on the air was to assist in the training of all radio and television technicians in the Auckland area.

On Low Power

Signals from the Bell station, Channel 6, had been unfavourably compared with Channel 2 and overseas stations, without people appreciating the low power on which Channel 6 was operating, he said.

Auckland viewers will miss the Bell programmes on Thursday and Sunday nights, but the Broadcasting Service may soon introduce transmissions on these nights.