

1940.
NEW ZEALAND.

MILITARY FORCES OF NEW ZEALAND.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

REPORT.

Wellington, 15th June, 1940.

The Hon. the MINISTER OF DEFENCE.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit the following report on the New Zealand Military Forces for the period 1st June, 1939, to 31st May, 1940.

GENERAL REMARKS.

The past year has been one of intense activity.

At the commencement of the year the Territorial Force was in the process of reorganization from a cadre to a peace establishment within reasonable reach of its war establishment. This involved an increase of 6,000 all ranks. The staff to deal with these extra numbers was in the process of expansion.

The National Military Reserve was in process of formation.

Plans for home defence were being revised and completed.

Shortly after the outbreak of war on 3rd September the Government decided to raise a special force of one division and ancillary troops for service overseas or for home defence.

This necessitated not only a continuance of the added activities mentioned above, but also the task of raising, training, accommodating, and equipping this force, as well as the extra staff necessitated by this rapid expansion.

The results achieved can be regarded as very satisfactory.

I wish to thank the other armed services and those Government Departments which have assisted the Army in the war effort. Without exception appeals for help have been answered with the utmost promptitude, efficiency, and cordiality.

IMMEDIATE MEASURES ON THE OUTBREAK OF WAR.

MANNING COAST DEFENCES.

Immediately on the outbreak of war measures were taken to man coast artillery and anti-aircraft defences at the three defended ports of Auckland, Wellington, and Lyttelton. The units concerned were brought up to war strength by embodiment of those already serving, and the enlistment and training of the number required for this purpose. This manning was carried out with the most satisfactory despatch.

The establishment has been maintained in spite of a continual turnover of men released to join the Expeditionary Force. In this respect the Special Reservists who were trained over the twelve months prior to the outbreak of war proved most valuable and fully justified the money expended on their training in peace.

COAST-WATCHING STATIONS.

All coast-watching stations allowed for in our mobilization plans were established within a few days of the outbreak of war. The personnel for these stations are found by the Navy, the Army, and the Marine Department, and in some cases by Harbour Boards. Over some portions of the coast-line aerial reconnaissance is provided at regular intervals. The position is under frequent review by the appropriate committee of the Organization for National Security.