

1941.
NEW ZEALAND.

NEW ZEALAND NAVAL FORCES.

REPORT OF THE CHIEF OF THE NAVAL STAFF FOR THE PERIOD 1st APRIL, 1940,
TO 31st MARCH, 1941.

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

REPORT.

The Honourable the Minister of Defence.

SIR, -

Navy Office, Wellington, 29th May, 1941.

I have the honour to address to you the following report on the New Zealand Naval Forces and proceedings on the New Zealand Station during the year 1st April, 1940, to 31st March, 1941. In view of present conditions certain information which would normally have been included in this report has been omitted.

SECTION I. - STATE AND ADMINISTRATION.

2. On 1st April, 1940, the New Zealand Naval Forces consisted of H.M.S. "Leander" (broad pendant of the Commodore Commanding New Zealand Squadron), H.M.S. "Achilles," H.M.S. "Philomel" (non-seagoing training and depot ship at Devonport, Auckland), H.M.S. "Wakakura," H.M.S. "Humphrey," H.M.S. "James Cosgrove," H.M.S. "Thomas Currell," and the Royal Fleet Auxiliary "Nucula" (hulk for storage of oil at Auckland, no longer seagoing).

3. H.M.S. "Hector" (armed merchant cruiser), which had been temporarily allocated to the New Zealand Station by the Admiralty, was withdrawn in June, 1940.

4. As a temporary war measure the office of the Chief of the Naval Staff and First Naval Member of the New Zealand Naval Board and the appointment of Commodore Commanding New Zealand Squadron were on 1st January, 1940, combined. The officer holding these two appointments was also in command of H.M.S. "Leander."

5. In the light of further experience it was found necessary for the Chief of the Naval Staff to be available at Wellington and to be free to attend conferences on other stations when necessary. Accordingly, the appointment of Commodore Commanding New Zealand Squadron was placed in abeyance, and the Chief of the Naval Staff and First Naval Member of the Board took up permanent duty at Navy Office in Wellington on 16th October, 1940. This arrangement has proved very satisfactory, as the Chief of the Naval Staff is now available to advise War Cabinet and the Government.

SECTION II. - PERSONNEL (CONTINUOUS SERVICE).

6. The scheme for the direct entry of New Zealand cadets for service as commissioned officers in the New Zealand Naval Forces has been announced. It was proposed to enter during the year two Cadets, two Cadets(B), and two Probationary Paymaster Sub-Lieutenants. In view of the short time between the announcement of the scheme and the date when applications had to be received, the number of candidates offering for the qualifying examination was not large. (The syllabus is difficult and requires special preparation.) The result was that no candidate was able to satisfy the examiners and the Interview Board that he had attained the standard required for acceptance as a Cadet in the Executive or Engineering Branch, and only one candidate was accepted for entry as Probationary Paymaster Sub-Lieutenant.

7. Further applications were called during the latter part of the year, and as a result one further suitable candidate was entered in each of the Executive and Accountant Branches. During the year, therefore, the following officers were entered :-

One Cadet.

Two Probationary Paymaster Sub-Lieutenants.

The Cadet left New Zealand to undergo training in the Royal Navy under the conditions identical to candidates entered in England for service in the Royal Navy. The Probationary