

1942.

NEW ZEALAND.

# AIR DEPARTMENT

(REPORT ON THE) FOR THE YEAR 1941-42.

Presented in pursuance of Section 7 of the Air Department Act, 1937.

## REPORT BY THE HONOURABLE F. JONES, MINISTER IN CHARGE OF THE AIR DEPARTMENT, FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1942.

MR. SPEAKER,—

I have the honour to present to Parliament the report of the Air Department for the year ended the 31st March, 1942.

Because it is impracticable to publish detailed information of defence programmes during wartime and on account of the very serious shortage of paper-supplies, it has been decided to reduce drastically the scope of the Department's report.

I desire to express to all concerned my appreciation of the efficient and energetic manner in which they have met the many problems and difficulties of this period.

## REPORT BY THE CHIEF OF THE AIR STAFF FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1942.

The Hon. the MINISTER OF DEFENCE.

I HAVE the honour to submit the following report on the Royal New Zealand Air Force for the year ended 31st March, 1942.

*Personnel.*—The enlistment of personnel for the Royal New Zealand Air Force has proceeded satisfactorily, although there has been some difficulty in maintaining adequate reserves of certain classes of volunteers for technical trades.

*Awards.* A total of 107 awards to New Zealand air personnel was made during the year, bringing the figure since the outbreak of war to 188.

*Casualties.*—(a) Overseas: Since the outbreak of war the following casualties to New Zealand air personnel have been officially reported: The comparative figures as at 31st March, 1941, are shown in parentheses. Killed, 529 (156); missing, believed killed, 51 (20); missing, 135 (59); prisoners of war or interned, 132 (50); missing, believed prisoners of war, 6 (nil): total, 853 (285).

(b) In New Zealand: During the year there were thirty fatal flying accidents, involving the loss of fifty-four lives. Two lives were lost in falls from aircraft, four deaths were recorded in non-Service accidents, and two deaths were due to natural causes.

*Training Organization.* (a) Flying Training: The flying training organization necessary to meet commitments under the Empire Air Training Scheme was completed in May, 1941. Since that date all commitments have been met. Good reports have been received from other Empire countries in regard to the general standard and efficiency of New Zealand trainees, and reports on the actual training of New-Zealanders in Canada have indicated that they are generally above average in the final placings. Service Flying Training Schools have been reequipped with the most modern type aircraft for the training of pupils.

(b) Technical Training: There has been continued expansion in technical training, and a high standard has been maintained.

*Educational Services.*—During the year the educational services have been maintained and extended to include provision for radio mechanics, wireless operators, and the Air Training Corps.

*Air Training Corps.*—The organizing of the Air Training Corps proceeded during the year, and the success of this scheme should assist materially in maintaining the subsequent strength of the Royal New Zealand Air Force.

*Women's Auxiliary Air Force.*—Members of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force have been serving on Air Force stations since April, 1941, and have rendered excellent service. In addition to their employment as clerks, shorthand-typists, and in the officers' and airmen's messes, they are now employed as wireless operators, instrument-repairers, Link Trainer instructors, telephone operators, and equipment assistants.

*Medical Branch.*—The year has been one of increased work for this Branch, but the health of air personnel in New Zealand has been maintained at a high level.