

1943
NEW ZEALAND

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONER

(THIRTY-FIRST REPORT OF THE)

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

To His Excellency Sir Cyril Louis Norton Newall, Marshall of the Royal Air Force, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Member of the Order of Merit, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief in and over His Majesty's Dominion of New Zealand and its Dependencies.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

As Commissioner under the Public Service Act, 1912, I have the honour to submit the following report as required by section 15 of the Public Service Act, 1912.

REPORT

As was the case last year, considerations of economy and the need for paper-conservation necessitate only a very brief report on the year's activities.

Staffing difficulties in the Service are still most acute. The total permanent and temporary staff (excluding casuals) as at 1st April, 1943, amounted to approximately 28,800. Of this number, some 7,350 are on military service. As mentioned in last year's report, on the outbreak of war there were approximately 14,000 male officers on the permanent and temporary staff. The difficulties caused to all Departments by the release of male officers indicated by the above figures can readily be imagined.

Close scrutiny continues to be given to the workings of all Departments by my own Inspectors and by departmental officers. All work which can possibly be left over until better times has been eliminated, and wherever possible departmental activities have been curtailed, so that all possible staff has been made available for military service or for the needs of War Departments and Departments vitally concerned with the country's war effort.

Public Servants on War Service.—It was with great regret that the loss of 124 officers on war service was recorded in my last report. Since that date this number has increased to 252. Of this number, 134 were in the Air Force, 107 in the Army, and 11 in the Navy. These officers, without exception, were of the type that could ill be spared, and the Public Service of New Zealand is the poorer by their passing. They have, by their sacrifice, set a standard which those left will find difficulty in attaining.

Administrative Changes.—The following changes in Administrative officers took place during the year:—

- Mr. E. J. Fawcett, M.A., was appointed Director-General, Department of Agriculture, in replacement of Mr. A. H. Cockayne, who retired on superannuation.
- Mr. R. B. Tennent was appointed Assistant Director-General, in replacement of Mr. Fawcett.
- Mr. F. G. Oborn was appointed Deputy Commissioner of Taxes in succession to the late Mr. E. S. Smith.

Overtime.—Unfortunately, it is still necessary to work long periods of overtime in most Departments of the Public Service. This can hardly be avoided as there is a considerable lapse of time before the numerical replacements provided are competent to fill the places of the officers who have left. During the year the conditions of payment of overtime were considerably improved. The Public Service Regulations previously provided that overtime should be payable for the time worked in excess of forty hours weekly at ordinary rates of pay, and provided that the officers' salaries did not exceed £470 per annum. From 1st October, 1942, overtime became payable at ordinary rates of pay for time worked between forty and forty-four hours per week, and at time-and-a-half rates for time in excess of forty-four hours per week. Provision was also made to pay overtime to officers receiving salaries up to £565 per annum. Sunday and statutory holiday duty was previously paid for at time-and-a-half rates. Under the amendment, provision was made for payment at double rates for these days.

Minimum Salary for Married Officers. The minimum remuneration for married officers in the Public Service was increased from £230 8s. 1d. per annum to £243 per annum as from 1st September, 1942. In addition to this amount, a cost-of-living allowance of £26 per annum is payable, so that in effect the minimum remuneration for a married officer is now £269 per annum.

Paper-conservation.—During the year two officers have been given full-time duties connected with paper-conservation. All requests to the Government Printing Office involving the use of paper have been reviewed by this Committee prior to approval being given to printing. Opportunity was also taken for inspections to be made as to existing stocks of paper and forms held by different district offices. As a result of the operations of these officers consumption was cut down very considerably, and the position regarding paper-supplies of the Government Printing Office was vastly improved. Another indirect benefit of this survey of departmental forms has been the abandonment of the furnishing of certain returns which under present conditions could hardly be deemed essential. The work of this Committee is continuing.

Petrol-conservation.—Reference has previously been made to the fact that petrol-conservation officers and/or committees have been established at many towns throughout the country. These officers continue to do excellent work in so far as co-ordination of travelling, curtailment of unnecessary travelling, and the use of existing means of transport are concerned.

Appeal Board.—During the year the Public Service Board of Appeal sat on three occasions. The Board considered 108 appeals, of which 6 were allowed, 86 were not allowed, and 16 were withdrawn. These appeals were all in the nature of non-promotion appeals.

Normally the elected members of the Public Service Board of Appeal would retire in May next, and an election would be necessary to appoint their successors. The elected members are at present Mr. J. Turnbull, State Advances Corporation, Hamilton, and Mr. D. A. Young, Land and Deeds Department, Hokitika. In view of the fact that those members of the Service who are serving overseas would be disfranchised by their absence, authority was obtained to avoid an election this year, and the present members continue to act for a further twelve months.

Offences by Officers.—It was necessary to take action against some thirty-eight officers during the year for misappropriation (four cases), neglect of duty (ten cases), and unsatisfactory conduct (twenty-four cases). In the cases of misappropriation the four officers forfeited office; for neglect of duty the services of seven officers were dispensed with and three officers received lighter penalties; for unsatisfactory conduct the services of nineteen officers were terminated, three officers were fined, and two officers were dealt with more lightly.

Recruitment of Cadets.—During the year 679 cadets and junior male office assistants were appointed to the Public Service. The number has, unfortunately, dropped during the past two years—in 1940, 845 cadets were appointed, and in 1941, 771. Although the needs of the Service were just as great it was not possible to obtain more than the 679 above mentioned. Of this number, some 305 had qualifications equivalent to the School Certificate Examination or higher. Many more vacancies occur in Wellington than in other centres, and 277 of the 679 appointees were required for duties in this city. Board and lodging is extremely difficult to obtain in Wellington, and it is thought that this has probably had an adverse effect on the recruiting figures during the past year. Again, the class of lads available for recruitment is in many cases the same class that is within a month or two of military service. This probably has an unsettling effect on the applicants, and possibly many of them did not think it worth while to accept employment necessitating their leaving their home towns when they would be available for employment for only a few months. In recruiting cadets, however, the fact that a boy may be available for only a few months has not militated against his enrolment in the Service. The long view has been taken that the youth should, if possible, have a settled position to return to when he is free from military obligations.

Public Service List of Officers.—Since the passing of the Public Service Act, 1912, a list of officers employed in the Public Service has been gazetted annually. For convenience this list shows, as well as the salary payable to the officer as at 31st March in which the list is published, the salary payable for the year ending on the following 31st March. As the Public Service Classification List is now a volume consisting of approximately 250 pages, it will be appreciated that the gazetting of the list involved a considerable amount of paper. As a paper-economy measure it was decided this year that, although the Classification List should be prepared, it would not be published as a supplement to the *Gazette*.

Uniformity Committee.—Many matters of principle involving the four main civilian State Services—*i.e.*, Post and Telegraph, Railways, Education (Teachers, &c.), and Public Service under the control of the Public Service Commissioner, received consideration by the Uniformity Committee. The Committee consists of the Administrative Heads of the Services mentioned, with the addition of the Secretary to the Treasury. In this manner some degree of uniformity is obtained in the application of principles affecting all Services.

Private Employment of Officers.—Section 59 of the Public Service Act, 1912, and Public Service Regulation 25 expressly forbid Public Servants to accept employment beyond their Public Service employment unless with the approval of the Commissioner. In normal times very strict attention was paid to these provisions, and any infringement without the required permission was severely noticed. However, owing to war conditions, it has frequently been necessary for Man-power Officers in the various centres to call for casual labour at extremely short notice. Authority has been given to District Man-power Officers to use Public Servants for casual work of this nature at their discretion. Use of Public Servants has been made in connection with waterfront labour, work in wool and cool stores, and seasonal work connected with primary production. These arrangements have been approved only while the present state of the labour market continues, and will definitely not continue after the termination of the war.

Declaration of Public Service as an Essential Undertaking.—The Public Service as defined by the Public Service Act, 1912, was declared to be an essential undertaking as from 31st July, 1942. As from that date, therefore, the provisions of the National Service Emergency Regulations 1940 and the Industrial Absenteeism Emergency Regulations 1942 became operative in all Departments under the control of the Commissioner. There is no doubt that, taking the Service as a whole, the declaration of essentiality has had a beneficial effect in that loss of staff where no sufficient reason for leaving was available has been greatly curtailed. No great difficulty has been experienced in reconciling Public Service procedure regarding engagement of staff and termination of employment with the requirements of the National Service Regulations.

Engagement of Staff for War Work. It has been necessary to engage from outside the Public Service certain staff to meet the abnormal growth of departmental business arising through war conditions. This staff is, of course, in the main only engaged on a temporary basis. It has become very apparent that the salary scales now applying in the Public Service are considerably below rates paid for comparable positions outside the Service. Many temporary appointments have been necessary to meet the requirements of the Ministry of Supply, and suitable men have been most difficult to obtain at Public Service rates of pay. It has, of course, been recognized for a considerable time that there are compensations for Public Service rates of pay being below rates of pay operating outside the Public Service. The Service offers continuity of employment, more settled working-conditions, and other benefits such as superannuation, &c. Even taking into consideration these benefits I have no hesitation in saying that Public Service rates are now lagging when compared with outside rates of pay. In no cases are these differences more marked than in the case of administrative officers. In many cases administrative officers running large and important Government Departments are receiving salaries

lower than men in outside employment responsible for very small business concerns. It is recognized that with the passing of the Economic Stabilization Regulations the present time is not an opportune one to consider increasing the rates of pay of public servants. The matter, however, is placed on record, and should receive urgent consideration as soon as possible. Rates of pay for administrative officers are, of course, subject to appropriation by Parliament. Indeed, all salaries beyond £765 per annum must be approved in this manner. Naturally rates below £765 per annum can only be considered in comparison with the remuneration received for the higher positions in the Service. A general re-grading of the Public Service was due in 1942. Owing to war conditions this was postponed, to take place at a time not more than two years after the termination of the war. Careful consideration will require to be given to this problem when the re-grading actually does take place.

Another factor which does not assist the Commissioner in recruiting professional officers of the status of medical officers or the higher scientific officers to the Public Service is the limitation of £300 per annum for the retiring-allowance which may be granted to an officer after completing the required period of service. This limitation of the retiring-allowance was fixed at a time when the sum represented comparative affluence. Some thirty years have passed since this amount was fixed, and, in my opinion, this matter should receive urgent consideration in the interests of the officers in the Service, in the interests of the Service generally in keeping a contented staff, and in assisting the recruiting of professional officers of the type mentioned above.

Examinations.—The usual departmental examination was held during the year. This examination is for the purpose of qualifying officers for advancement beyond Class VI—*i.e.*, a salary of £335 per annum. Twenty-seven candidates presented themselves at seventeen centres and thirteen succeeded in passing the examination.

Shorthand-typists Examinations for entry into the Public Service and promotion within the Public Service were held in November, 1942, with the following results:—

	Number of Candidates.	Credit Pass.	Pass.	Fail.	Did not Sit.
Special	51	2	21	28	..
Intermediate	82	1	36	44	1
Senior	461	23	227	205	6
Junior	961	59	527	358	17
	1,555	85	811	635	24

Efficiency of the Service.—Section 15 of the Public Service Act, 1912, requires the Commissioner to report as to the efficiency of the Public Service. I have to advise that I am of the opinion that, considering the difficulties which have been encountered during the past year, the Public Service has maintained its high degree of efficiency. With staff possessing little training there must, of necessity, be delays in certain Departments in dealing with the work; but, generally speaking, the calls made on the Service have been well met.

Roll of Honour: Additions since Last Report.—It is with extreme regret that I record the passing of the following officers who have lost their lives in the service of their country since the last report. This opportunity is taken of expressing to their relatives the deep sorrow of the Public Service in their loss:—

Name.	Department.	Name.	Department.
Amoore, D. P.	Mental Hospitals.	Galloway, J.	Public Works.
Andrew, N. R.	Industries and Commerce, Tourist and Publicity.	Gibson, H. A.	Printing and Stationery.
Andrew, R. K. A.	Mines.	Grant, M. D.	Agriculture.
Ball, J. P.	Customs.	Harrison, G. N.	Transport.
Bell, C. D.	Land and Survey.	Harvey, E. W.	State Advances.
Bell, J. C.	State Advances.	Hatten, N. S.	Social Security.
Bennett, J.	Health.	Hoare, B. P.	Agriculture.
Bevan, R.	State Fire Insurance.	Hodgson, J. R.	Public Trust.
Blewett, R. T.	Customs.	Houston, J. D.	Land and Income Tax.
Brown, K. C.	Internal Affairs.	Hunter, R.	Public Works.
Brown, W. W.	Customs.	Hutchin, J. L.	Native.
Burgess, L. B.	Internal Affairs.	Ironside, C. G.	Customs.
Carnecross, M. E.	Scientific and Industrial Research.	Ives, C. E.	Mental Hospitals.
Chatwin, D.	Public Works.	Jackson, G. H.	Land and Income Tax.
Clark, A. G.	Agriculture.	Jolly, M. C.	Justice.
Clark, D. B.	Lands and Survey.	Jones, R. M.	State Forest.
Cobden, A. P.	Air.	Keat, L. M.	Lands and Survey.
Collett, H. W. A.	Internal Affairs.	Keroopa, H.	Lands and Survey.
Collier, J. A.	Public Works.	Land, A. C.	State Advances.
Cooke, P. F. M.	Customs.	Leaf, H. W.	Native.
Craig, L. L. A.	Land and Income Tax.	Lee, W. P.	Public Trust.
Crawford, H. H.	Customs.	Lewis, J.	Lands and Survey.
Crombie, W. D.	Public Works.	Lloyd, G. S.	National Commercial Broad- casting.
Crowther, V. E.	Social Security.	Long, A. C.	Treasury.
Cummings, C. J.	Government Life Insurance	Love, E. To W.	Native.
Dalzell, E. T. P.	Public Works.	Lüdemann, H. J.	Education.
de Thierry, G. H.	Public Works.	Lynch, P. L.	Justice.
Devlin, K. J.	Marketing.	Lyons, D. G.	Land and Income Tax.
Dromgoole, S. H.	State Forest.	McCann, H.	Labour.
Easton, K. H. T.	Lands and Survey.	McRae, R. N. W.	Internal Affairs.
Edwards, N. J.	Public Trust.	McEachen, E. J.	Public Works.
Farquharson, H. W.	Transport.	McElroy, R. J.	Lands and Survey.
Ferguson, W. J.	Labour.	McFarlane, C. R. H.	Agriculture.
Foster, F. R.	Public Works.	McIntyre, M. A. G.	Mental Hospitals.
Fox, J. J.	Broadcasting.	McKeen, C. J.	Printing and Stationery.
		McKinnon, A. C.	Public Works.

Name.	Department.	Name.	Department.
Mackintosh, S. H. ..	Social Security.	Stewart, J. G. ..	Education.
McLean, A. W. ..	Native.	Sutherland, V. E. ..	Public Trust.
McLean, D. B. ..	Customs.	Swale, A. Mel. ..	Lands and Survey.
McMillan, R. ..	Health.	Taylor, K. R. ..	Health.
MacShane, A. N. ..	Public Works.	Terry, I. W. ..	Agriculture.
Mahood, T. S. ..	Social Security.	Thomas, F. ..	Marketing.
Marshall, J. R. B. ..	State Advances.	Todd, E. G. C. ..	Marine.
Miller, G. K. ..	Public Works.	Toomey, A. K. ..	Public Works.
Morgan, C. R. ..	Government Life Insurance	Vessey, R. W. ..	Lands and Survey.
Mulcock, R. A. ..	Social Security.	Waddell, J. M. ..	Labour.
Mulholland, L. C. ..	Public Works.	Walker, C. A. ..	Public Works.
Mulvery, T. J. ..	Labour.	Wallace, C. B. ..	Public Works.
Norris, F. W. ..	State Advances.	Waple, E. ..	Air.
Osman, A. W. ..	Justice.	Weaver, F. A. ..	Customs.
Parker, A. J. W. ..	State Forest.	Weir, E. ..	Education.
Paterson, D. A. ..	Lands and Survey.	Wells, S. D. ..	Land and Income Tax.
Perry, J. P. ..	Prisons.	West, S. J. S. ..	Public Works.
Ross, A. B. W. ..	External Affairs.	Weston, G. E. ..	Public Works.
Russell, C. G. ..	Public Works.	Willis, A. G. ..	Industries and Commerce, Tourist and Publicity.
Ryan, P. H. ..	Audit.	Wood, J. B. ..	Social Security.
Schaw, F. A. ..	Labour.	Wright, R. R. ..	Mental Hospitals.
Smith, I. D. ..	Public Works.	Wrightson, C. C. A. ..	Public Works.
Smith, T. H. ..	Social Security.		
Stephenson, G. H. ..	Broadcasting.		

Conclusion.—The past year has again been a most difficult one from the point of view of the administration of the Public Service. Many new problems have cropped up, and the trained staff available to meet them has been small in numbers. However, staff generally are to be commended on the way they have met all demands. I wish to thank all Permanent Heads for their loyal co-operation during the past year, and also my own staff, who have been of the greatest assistance.

All of which is respectfully submitted for Your Excellency's gracious consideration.

J. H. BOYES,
Commissioner.

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