

1944
NEW ZEALAND

MARINE DEPARTMENT

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1943-44

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

Marine Department, Wellington, 30th June, 1944.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

I do myself the honour to transmit for Your Excellency's information the report of the Marine Department for the financial year ended the 31st March last.

I have, &c.,
J. O'BRIEN,
Minister of Marine.

His Excellency the Governor-General of the Dominion of New Zealand.

REPORT

THE SECRETARY, MARINE DEPARTMENT, to the Hon. the MINISTER OF MARINE.

SIR,—

Marine Department, Wellington, 9th June, 1944.

I have the honour to submit the annual report on the activities of the Marine Department for the year ended 31st March, 1944.

The revenue of the minor ports in the Dominion has suffered as a reaction to centralization of shipping, particularly that from overseas, in the four main ports. Recognizing this, Government considered it desirable to render financial assistance to those Harbour Boards whose revenue had been directly affected by war conditions. The Boards themselves have also reacted by dispensing with, or deferring, capital expenditure and by reducing maintenance-costs to a minimum in the meanwhile. Several Harbour Boards received assistance during the past year, and this coming year will no doubt necessitate similar assistance on a greater scale.

The comfort in port of our New Zealand seamen and of British seamen has received the utmost consideration of appropriate authorities, as also has the rehabilitation of New Zealand seamen employed under the British Ministry of Shipping or any other spheres of the Mercantile Marine. The exigencies of war on the sea have also made it necessary for the Department to undertake the repatriation of British seamen who have met with mishap in this quarter of the globe. The co-operation of the shipping companies in arranging this has been most praiseworthy.

Our lighthouses continue to function as necessary units for navigational aids and also for express war purposes, the personnel at the stations having carried out during the war years a most important duty without complaint as to their isolation or the long hours entailed in these extra duties. Where possible the Department has continued with the programme of improving the amenities at light stations, including the provision of better mail-services and improved access. In many cases road access has had to be provided due to the transfer of the Department's lighthouse vessel to other important duties.

NAUTICAL

The adjustment of compasses, particularly during the war years, has continued to be an important function of the Department and the extraordinary demand for Admiralty charts has been met by the provision of photostat copies in cases where the demand for charts from the United Kingdom has at times exceeded the supply.

During the year the Department took over the School for Navigation at Auckland, previously carried on by Captain Keane in a private capacity, this officer having been seconded for other duties. The advantages of a Government school are threefold in that it ensures a continuity of competent