

SECTION V.—AERODROMES AND RELATED GROUND FACILITIES

The considerable expansion of civil aviation activities, both in respect of commercial services and of club flying, has served to emphasize the need for the further development of many airfields and for the provision of additional ground aids. The most immediate and pressing needs have been met, but the Government's plans have been seriously restricted by the limited man-power and materials available.

Early in the year the Government set up the Aerodromes Committee, whose primary function is to prepare a fully co-ordinated plan for the development of airfields in New Zealand. The investigations of the Committee involve a large amount of research work, and, wherever possible, it is intended to conform to the standards recommended by the International Civil Aviation Organization. The members of the Committee include Sir Leonard Isitt (Chairman), the Commissioner of Works, the Chief of the Air Staff, the Deputy Chief of the Air Staff, the Air Secretary, and the Director of Civil Aviation. Representatives of the Ministry of Works, Treasury, and Air Department are co-opted as necessary to supply specialist assistance.

One of the major problems faced by the Aerodromes Committee during the year was the consideration of the airport requirements of Wellington City. After an exhaustive examination of many proposals and reports, the Government adopted the Committee's recommendation that, with certain minor amendments, the scheme prepared by the City Engineer be accepted.

Pending the reconstruction of Rongotai Aerodrome, it was necessary in the interests of safety to transfer commercial services to Paraparaumu. Certain building and runway-sealing works necessitated at Paraparaumu by the transfer were rapidly executed by the Ministry of Works.

GENERAL DEVELOPMENT WORK

With the exception of new airfield-construction work at Hokitika, at present progressing favourably despite serious drainage problems, the work carried out during the year has been largely maintenance. Improved operation facilities have, however, been provided at several airfields, while at Napier and Waitaki strip extensions are in hand.

On account of the limitations of many airfields, detailed consideration is being given to the formation of strips approaching 5,000 ft. long and 500 ft. wide on the more important aerodromes. In addition, new sites are being investigated in the vicinity of Auckland, Rotorua, and Timaru.

NIGHT FLYING FACILITIES

Preliminary work is in hand for the installation of aerodrome lighting at the Paraparaumu, Woodbourne, and Harewood Aerodromes, whilst at Whenuapai and Ohakea steps are being taken to improve existing night flying facilities.

HOUSING CONSTRUCTION

With the increasing demand for aerodrome flying control and communications personnel at many localities throughout New Zealand and the South Pacific has grown the need for a co-ordinated scheme for the provision of flats or houses. This requirement must be treated as a departmental responsibility, due to the fact that in many cases comparatively isolated localities are involved, while, in addition, the regular rotation of personnel between the South Pacific and New Zealand stations is a most desirable objective.

AIRPORTS FOR OVERSEAS SERVICES

The R.N.Z.A.F. Station at Whenuapai continues to be utilized as the interim overseas airport, and is the only designated regular Customs airport and airport of entry into New Zealand for land-based aircraft operating on international services. In