

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1948

The Hon. the MINISTER OF DEFENCE.

I HAVE the honour to submit the following report on the work of the Meteorological Service for the year ended 31st March, 1948.

GENERAL

Shortage of staff, particularly of professional officers, remains the most serious problem of the Meteorological Branch. Routine services have been maintained on the same reduced scale as during the previous year, and it has been impossible to make provision to meet increased demands which will arise shortly as a result of the steady expansion taking place in air services both in New Zealand and on overseas routes. Nor has it been possible to devote adequate time to essential research and studies designed to improve the general standard of forecasting both for the general public and for aviation.

International Conferences.—The Director represented New Zealand, during the year under review, at two important meetings of the International Meteorological Organization. At the invitation of the Canadian Government, meetings were held in Toronto over the period 4th August to 13th September, 1947, of the ten Technical Commissions of the Organization. With two exceptions only, none of the Commissions had met since pre-war years, and in view of the great developments in meteorology which took place during the war the Toronto meetings were of unusual importance. They were attended by representatives from forty-seven different countries and, in all, over two hundred delegates were present. More than four hundred resolutions were adopted for final consideration by the succeeding Conference of Directors. They were designed to ensure the requisite measure of co-ordination on an international basis, and covered all phases of meteorological activity. Apart from the value of the technical discussions, great benefit was derived from the personal contacts made with leading meteorologists from all parts of the world.

Immediately after the Toronto meetings, a short session was held in Montreal of the Meteorological Division of the International Civil Aviation Organization. By this means complete unanimity was achieved between the recommendations of the Commission for Aeronautical Meteorology of the International Meteorological Organization and those of the Meteorological Division of the International Civil Aviation Organization.

The Conference of Directors of the International Meteorological Organization was held in Washington, at the invitation of the United States Government, from 22nd September to 11th October, 1947. The Conference had an exceptionally heavy programme. In addition to consideration of the reports of the ten Technical and six Regional Commissions, a convention for a new World Meteorological Organization was drawn up and signed by authorized delegates. The existing International Meteorological Organization has operated, since its inauguration in 1872, on an official level as an association of the Directors of National Meteorological Services throughout the world. The great developments in the application of meteorology that have taken place in recent years, and are still taking place, made it desirable to raise the status of the Organization to an inter-governmental level, similar to the International Civil Aviation Organization and the International Telecommunications Union. The New Zealand Government has since ratified the new convention, which will come into force as soon as thirty countries have signified their ratification.