

during the year. There should also be a sufficient number of men in No. 2 Company to efficiently supervise the laying-out and to work all the mine-fields provided for the defence. To carry out this proposal, the following establishment of non-commissioned officers and men would be required:—

No. 1 Company.

	Non-commissioned Officers.	Distance Range-finders (Specialists).	Telephonists.	Gunners.	Total.
Wellington	16	18	17	108	159
Auckland	12	12	9	93	126
Lyttelton	10	12	7	48	77
Dunedin	6	10	5	38	59
Total	44	52	38	287	421

No. 2 Company.

Non-commissioned officers	20
Gunners, with pay of first class (of which twenty-eight are engine-drivers, electricians, and artificers)	32
Gunners, with pay of second class (chiefly composed of specialists)	16
Gunners, with pay of third class (training for specialists, and performing submining work)	28
Total	96

For the actual work of laying out the mine-fields the services of the Volunteer Navals would have to be called in, the above establishment being the specialist establishment for working and supervising laying-out of fields.

The Naval Volunteers can only be looked upon as a reserve for the Permanent Force. In war-time the garrisons of the various works would have to be at their posts day and night, vigilant and ready to act at a moment's notice. The strain on the men would be intense, and at the outset an attack might be made so suddenly as to preclude the auxiliaries having received sufficient training to fight the works successfully. You could not count on all your Volunteers turning out immediately on the outbreak of war; and on this account alone you should have a sufficient number of trained men available for duty at once in case of emergency.

VOLUNTEERS.

The Permanent Force, in case of war, would be available at once for service in the passive defence of the four ports; but the Volunteers will have to be relied upon for a large part of this defence, and for the whole of the active defence of the colony. It is not to be expected that an attacking enemy would try to run his ships past the forts and mines whilst they were intact, but rather would try to land a force to capture the forts before running his ships in.

The forts, mine-fields, &c., are provided to keep enemy's ships away from certain ports, to insure safe havens for our own warships to coal and recruit in, and to allow merchant-ships to load and to collect into convoys without interference. It is essential that you should have such fortified ports, and it is also essential that you should have a sufficient number of troops available at each port to secure the safety of the forts, and prevent their being taken by a land attack. In the confidential portion of my report I have entered into the state of the defences of the several ports.

According to the returns up till the end of July, the Volunteer Force consists now of eighty-six corps, comprising 5,121 officers, non-commissioned officers, and men, made up as follows: Three Cavalry Corps, 172 men; nine Mounted Rifles Corps, 518 men; fifteen Naval Artillery Corps, 1,004 men; one Garrison Artillery Corps, 63 men; nine Field Artillery Corps, 512 men; two Engineer Corps, 138 men; forty-six Rifle Corps, 2,667 men; one honorary corps, 47 men. Of these, two corps of Mounted Rifles and two corps of Rifles are disbanding, one corps of Navals and two Field Batteries are being turned into Rifles.

As regards the mounted troops:—

Of the three corps of cavalry, one is in the Wanganui district, one in Canterbury, and one at Dunedin. This country is for the most part not suitable for cavalry, and these corps will be most useful as Mounted Infantry. Orders have already been issued to arm them with the Martini-Henry rifle.

There are eight corps of Mounted Infantry scattered over the two islands. With the long extent of coast-line to defend, Mounted Infantry would be a most useful arm, and I consider that efforts should be made to increase this arm. In the Auckland District the formation of one mounted corps has just been sanctioned. Proposals will, I hope, very shortly be put forward for the formation of two or three more corps in this district. With the length of coast-line it would be necessary to watch in the defence of Auckland, it is essential that there should be a strong force of Mounted Infantry available for the defence. In war-time none could be spared from other districts.

On my recommendation, orders have been issued to withdraw the carbines and issue Martini-Henry rifles to all the mounted corps. Their use in war will be that of a body of infantry soldiers capable of being transferred rapidly from one position to another, to act as infantry, and not as cavalry.