

To promote local investigations and to improve the standard of forecasting and observing throughout the Service, members of the staff are encouraged to prepare notes of local interest and significance. These are cyclostyled and issued within the Meteorological Branch as N.Z.M.O. Circular Notes. No. 41 of this series was issued during the year.

Good progress was made in sorting and classifying the Library.

STAFF

To meet full requirements within New Zealand and the islands, the total establishment of observers and professional officers approved by the Public Service Commission numbers 132 and 46 respectively. Towards the end of 1945, positions were advertised in both classes.

The response in respect of observers was satisfactory. A special training school was established at Woodbourne, and two consecutive three-monthly courses were given, the first starting in March and the second in June, 1946. From the two courses a total of 58 observers passed their qualifying examinations and were posted to various vacancies in New Zealand and the islands. Unfortunately, however, 15 men resigned during the year, and in December positions for both observers and professional officers were again advertised. As a result, twelve new appointees are now undergoing their initial observers' training course. Including the 12 trainees, there were in the Service at the close of the period under review 123 observers, or 9 short of the full establishment.

By contrast, the position as regards professional officers is very serious. While operating as a branch of the R.N.Z.A.F. there were in the Service, at the end of 1945, in addition to the 33 officers who were also members of the civil meteorological organization, 39 graduates who had been specially selected and trained as forecasters. It was realized that many of these wartime temporary forecasters would return to their original occupations on demobilization, but it was hoped that enough of them would transfer to the civil branch to complete the peacetime establishment. Of the 39 temporary forecasters, only 6 chose to stay in the civil Meteorological Service. In addition, 2 R.N.Z.A.F. observers and one graduate without previous meteorological training joined the Service, making a total accession of 9 professional officers. But during the same period we lost the services of no less than 10 officers belonging to the civil staff. These included the Officer in Charge of Research, the Officer in Charge of the Climatological Section, 2 highly experienced forecasters, 3 junior officers, and 3 female professional officers. Of the 10, 2 who are on leave without pay appear unlikely to return, and the remainder have either resigned or transferred to other Departments. Thus the additions have failed to balance the losses and no progress has been made towards decreasing the deficiency in the overall establishment. At the end of the year there was a total of 32 professional officers to meet an establishment of 46, and further losses were pending.

Difficulty in obtaining additional staff is common to many Departments, but the loss to more attractive positions outside the Service of so many trained personnel, and particularly of such highly qualified and experienced men as the Officers in Charge of the Research and Climatological Sections, is very serious and far-reaching in its effects. Unless this tendency is arrested, it must inevitably lead to a further and rapid deterioration of the Service.

The shortage of staff has placed a very heavy burden on the remaining members of the Service, and their cordial and loyal co-operation is acknowledged with pleasure.

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M. A. F. BARNETT,

Director, Meteorological Office.

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