

1948
NEW ZEALAND

AIR DEPARTMENT

(REPORT ON THE) FOR THE YEAR 1947-48

Presented in pursuance of Section 7 of the Air Department Act, 1937

REPORT BY THE HONOURABLE F. JONES, MINISTER IN CHARGE OF THE AIR DEPARTMENT, FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1948

MR SPEAKER,--

I have the honour to present to Parliament the report of the Air Department for the year ended 31st March, 1948, embracing the activities of the Royal New Zealand Air Force and the Civil Aviation and Meteorological Branches.

REPORT BY THE CHIEF OF THE AIR STAFF FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1943

The Hon. the MINISTER OF DEFENCE, Wellington.

I HAVE the honour to submit the following report on the Royal New Zealand Air Force for the year ended 31st March, 1948.

This report may be regarded as complementary to the previous annual report since both are concerned with the activities of the Air Force during the "interim" period. This period has been characterized by the abnormal and unstable conditions arising from the war. During the "interim" period the R.N.Z.A.F. has been faced concurrently with three major commitments, all of which have been conflicting in their demands on the limited resources available—firstly, the orderly contraction of the wide range of war activities which still involves the diversion of considerable man-power; secondly, the reorganization and training of the R.N.Z.A.F. under peacetime conditions; and, finally, the fulfilment of various operational commitments which have proved a strain on the relatively small trained elements in the Force. The capacity of the Air Force to-day in relation to these commitments is ever less than it was twelve months ago.

Commitments and priorities have changed, and increasing emphasis must now be placed on the reconstitution of the Air Force in accordance with the plans approved by the Government last October. The prime objective of the Air Force in peace is to train personnel to a high standard and to build up an efficient Force which can meet the stress of expansion in emergency with speed, economy, and efficiency. The maintenance and operation of a modern Air Force demands high technical skill and experience, which take some years to attain. Personnel enlisted into the Air Force, particularly for technical duties, must be of sufficient calibre to undertake the instruction offered and reach the standards required. The recruiting campaign has not yet attracted sufficient personnel of this standard. Further publicity on the opportunities in the Air Force is therefore needed, and it may additionally be necessary to establish an apprentices school to attract better entries on leaving school.