

1949
NEW ZEALAND

AIR DEPARTMENT

(REPORT ON THE) FOR THE YEAR 1948-49

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, 1949

MR. SPEAKER,—

I have the honour to present to Parliament the report of the Air Department for the year ended 31st March, 1949.

REPORT BY THE CHIEF OF THE AIR STAFF FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1949

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, 1949.

The R.N.Z.A.F. has emerged from the abnormal and unstable conditions of the "interim" period depleted in trained man-power and vested with three main commitments—firstly, training members up to the high standards of efficiency demanded of a modern fighting service, secondly, continuing to fulfill operational tasks, and, thirdly, reorganizing practically all phases of Air Force administration to meet modern needs. These three tasks, which are interdependent, have placed a considerable burden on the R.N.Z.A.F. in view of the shortage of trained man-power.

Efforts to attract recruits of suitable calibre have met with only partial success, and a vigorous recruiting campaign must be pursued during the coming year to attract the right type of young New Zealander as soon as he leaves school. Cadet entries are being encouraged, and the Service is providing every facility for their welfare and training.

At the end of March, 1948, all "interim" engagements expired, and the R.N.Z.A.F. reached its lowest point in effective strength. Although recruiting in the twelve months since that date has resulted in the enlistment of 870 personnel, nearly all untrained, releases during the same period amounted to 731 trained personnel, with the result that the technical capacity of the Service was further reduced and the already acute unbalance of trades was aggravated. Trade training and the continued enlistment of ex-R.A.F.