

It will be possible to absorb only a fraction of the officer and aircrew applicants in the Territorial Air Force and Active Reserve, but the number of trained applicants for the ground trades is well below requirements. The General Reserve consists of personnel who have no obligation to undergo annual training but who are willing to serve in the R.N.Z.A.F. in time of national emergency.

Women's Auxiliary Air Force.—The strength of the W.A.A.F. at the 31st March was 16 officers and 223 airwomen.

Exchanges.—The policy of exchanging officers with the Royal Air Force has continued, with marked benefits to the R.N.Z.A.F. In addition to the posts mentioned in last year's report, the appointment of the Director of Medical Services (Air) and O.C. Flying Wing, Wigram, are currently held by R.A.F. officers on exchange. A total of 8 R.N.Z.A.F. officers are on exchange duties in the United Kingdom. The full value of the reciprocal exchange policy will be apparent in the near future when the first R.N.Z.A.F. officers to benefit by experience under the scheme will return to New Zealand. During the year one officer attended the Joint Services Staff College, two officers the R.A.F. Staff College, and one officer the Air Weapons Course.

Honours and Awards. Honours and awards conferred on R.N.Z.A.F. personnel during the year were as follows :

					Conferred 1st April, 1948, to 31st March, 1949.
<i>Honours</i>					
Officer of the Order of the British Empire	..	..	..	..	3
Member of the Order of the British Empire	..	..	..	..	6
British Empire Medal	..	..	..	..	5
<i>Awards</i>					
Air Force Cross	..	..	..	..	4
Commendations	..	..	..	..	4
Legion of Merit (American—Degree of Officer)	..	..	..	..	4

Casualties :

				From 1st April, 1948, to 31st March, 1949.	
				In New Zealand.	Overseas.
Killed (Service accidents)	..	..	..	6	..
Killed (non-Service accidents)	..	..	..	2	..
Died of natural causes	..	..	..	3	..
				11	..

Five deaths resulting from Service accidents were caused in two aircraft accidents, and one was caused through a motor-vehicle accident.

MEDICAL AND DENTAL

The R.N.Z.A.F. Medical Service is still unable to give more than limited attention to the many problems of aviation medicine, owing to the lack of staff. Every effort is being made to obtain suitable officers to give aviation medicine, psychology, and the medical aspects of high-altitude flying, fatigue, and flying safety the attention they demand.