

in the R.N.Z.A.F. stretches from the late primary-school standard to Stage I university standard. The educational standard of recruits is causing concern, and considerable effort is necessary after entry to raise it to a suitable level before the airman's technical training is commenced.

Serving personnel are given every opportunity for voluntarily improving their education. Service education will be assured by the system of higher and lower educational tests, now well established, to ensure that airmen reach a sound educational standard before they are promoted. A syllabus of studies for these examinations has been approved by the Education Department, and this approval is the first step towards the recognition of these Service tests as the equivalent of certain public examinations.

University and professional studies are encouraged, and two R.N.Z.A.F. scholarships in aeronautical engineering have been granted.

Emphasis has been placed on the vocational and resettlement aspects of Service education, which are of paramount importance to the large element of short-service personnel.

ACCIDENTS

An examination of all accidents that occurred in the period appears in the report of the Inspector of Accidents at page 44 of this report.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Reports on the work performed by the R.A.F. Missing Research and Inquiry Service were received regularly throughout the year, and 657 next-of-kin were notified of the results of investigations on individual cases. Eight hundred and fifty-seven photographs of the temporary crosses placed over graves of deceased Service personnel were also forwarded to next-of-kin.

HISTORICAL RECORDS

Narratives entitled, "Air Transport," "Man-power," "Publicity," "Repair and Maintenance," "Signals," "Supply," "Defence of the Pacific, 1942," and "Operations in the South Pacific to December, 1943," have been completed, and a booklet prepared by the Historical Records Section, "The Assault on Rabaul," has been published by the War History Branch of the Department of Internal Affairs.

While research is being continued, the first drafts of the histories of New Zealanders in the R.A.F. and operations in the Pacific have been commenced. This work is directed by the Editor-in-Chief, New Zealand War Histories, and the staff is provided by the R.N.Z.A.F.

CONCLUSION

Continued advances have been made, primarily in the sphere of administration and organization. The tangible translation of the previous year's work was mainly evidenced in the aircrew and trade-training activity. The Air Force is entering upon its first year of orderly expansion following three and a half years of inevitable pre-occupation with the multitude of matters forming the aftermath of the war.

I wish to express my thanks to all ranks of the Royal New Zealand Air Force, civilian staff at Air Department, and to Departments with which the Air Force is closely associated for their services and assistance during the past year.

I have the honour, &c.,

A. DE T. NEVILL,

Air Vice-Marshal,

Chief of the Air Staff.