

Flying training of Cadets was carried out on Avro 504K and Bristol Fighter aeroplanes. The trainees displayed great keenness in all branches of their work, and their conduct on and off parade was exemplary.

The standard of flying was exceptionally high, and the average flying-time per cadet for the course was forty-four hours, making a total of approximately seventy hours of flying training per Cadet.

There was no injury to personnel, and only one mishap causing damage to a machine.

Two refresher courses, each of ten days, were held from the 8th to the 28th March for officers of the N.Z. Air Force.

Flying training was carried out on Moths, Avros, Bristol Fighters, D.H. 4's, D.H. 9's, and Grebes, and the average flying-time per pilot was eight hours. During these courses a certain amount of trouble was experienced with Mono and Falcon engines, and the small staff had difficulty in maintaining sufficient aircraft in an airworthy condition. One machine, a Bristol Fighter, was badly damaged, due to an error of judgment on the part of the trainee, who, however, was unhurt.

Owing to the heavy calls made on the maintenance staff, officer trainees were called upon to undertake certain ground duties, which curtailed somewhat the time normally allotted to lectures and theoretical instruction.

For the first time the mechanics enlisted into the Territorial Air Force were called into camp, and proved of great assistance. During the year they have attended compulsory and voluntary parades at Wigram Aerodrome and displayed much keenness in their work. Their camps were held whilst the Cadet Pilots were under training, and the trainees were employed in the various technical sections with permanent personnel, and valuable experience was thus gained.

(c) AIRCRAFT AND EQUIPMENT.

The total number of aircraft on charge at Wigram Aerodrome is twenty machines. Avro type 504K, fitted with monosoupape engines, have continued to be used as a matter of expediency, but only with trainees experienced in that type of machine and engine. During the year four Gipsy Moths fitted with the Handley-Page auto-slot safety-device have been purchased for replacement of the Avros as an *ab initio* training-machine at Wigram Aerodrome.

The two Gloster Grebe single-seater fighters mentioned in my previous report have come to hand and have been allotted to Wigram Aerodrome.

Advice has been received from the High Commissioner that the D.H. 60 (Moto) Seaplane, which, together with two Fairey IIIr aircraft, was shown in last year's report as being on order, has now been shipped, and is due to arrive early in July. The Fairey IIIr's are expected to be shipped in June, and it has now been decided to fit them both with float undercarriages and employ them as seaplanes for the N.Z.A.F. Base, Hobsonville.

The necessity for a Suspense Account for the purposes of purchase of aircraft is again emphasized by the long delay between the time of ordering and delivery of these machines. Provision was made for them on last year's estimates, and an amount sufficient for payment of their cost must again be placed on estimates for the current year.

(d) N.Z. AIR FORCE BASE, AUCKLAND.

Very considerable progress has been made in the development of this important base. The area selected for the landing-ground for land-planes has been cleared of trees and hedges, and has been levelled and sown in grass, a work of considerable magnitude. A land-plane hangar in reinforced concrete with electrically operated doors, workshops, and appointments has been erected. A residence for the Officer Commanding and five cottages for married airmen have been completed, while a sixth is in course of erection. A transport shed (for motor-vehicles), switch-hut (for power lines), small boat-house, control tower, and meteorological hut and base office have been erected.

A sufficient water-supply was found by boring, and a water-tower with pump-house and pumping plant has been completed.

The seaplane apron, involving considerable excavation, filling, and a stone sea-wall, is complete except for surfacing. The reinforced-concrete slipway—40 ft. in width and 290 ft. long—from the apron seawards, is under construction, while the jetty, approximately 300 ft. in length, for handling stores and launches, is nearing completion.

Extensive accommodation, consisting of marine store, two large hangars, aircraft-repair shop, engine-repair shop, plumber's and blacksmith's shops, and dope-shop, is required on the apron, and this will be provided in one large reinforced-concrete building. Work on the foundations of this building has commenced.

An access road to land-plane hangar, office, and seaplane area has been completed.

Two old houses on the landing-ground have been sold for removal, another removed to a new site for use as a Public Works office, and three others thoroughly renovated for retention.

Extensive surface drainage, sewer drains, water reticulation, and underground power and telephone lines are proceeding as the base develops.

(e) VISIT OF AIR-MARSHAL SIR JOHN M. SALMOND, K.C.B., C.M.G., C.V.O., D.S.O., A.D.C., ROYAL AIR FORCE.

By arrangement with the Air Council, Air-Marshal Sir John M. Salmond, accompanied by two staff officers, visited New Zealand on the 24th September with the object of investigating and making recommendations for the development of the Air Forces in the Dominion.