

REPORT OF THE CONTROLLER OF CIVIL AVIATION FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1939.

The Hon. the MINISTER OF DEFENCE.—

In this second annual report of the Civil Aviation Branch since the establishment of the Air Department some attempt has been made, by comparative figures and otherwise, to indicate the progress of aviation in the Dominion, to the acceleration of which many influences have contributed. Chief amongst these have been the production of civil aircraft of higher performance and greater economy of operation, the development of devices leading to safer and more regular services, and the consequent growth of public confidence in aircraft as a means of transport. The bold policy adopted by most of the airline operators in providing a more frequent time-table and larger and more comfortable aircraft than was perhaps warranted at the time, together with the advance provision of adequate aerodrome and other ground facilities, have also been important factors, however, which have contributed to make the public of this Dominion amongst the most air-travelled in the world.

Many of the early post-war attempts to establish commercial aircraft services met with failure for a variety of reasons, but since the inauguration of a service from Hokitika to Okuru by Air Travel (N.Z.), Ltd., in 1934 the expansion and improvement of airline operations has been continued. The length of airline operated by regular services has increased from 265 miles in 1934 to 2,016 miles in 1939. During the same period the miles flown per annum have increased from 31,500 miles to 1,574,395 miles, the number of passengers carried from 595 to 53,039, freight from 2,637 lb. to 166,278 lb., and mails from 1,841 lb. to 316,380 lb.

It is anticipated that the Empire air-mail service from England to New Zealand will be completed towards the end of 1939, when the Sydney-Auckland service is to be inaugurated by Tasman Empire Airways. How the network of internal services now in operation will secure the maximum benefit to the Dominion from the Empire scheme is illustrated from the fact that a Dunedin citizen will be enabled to reach London within approximately twelve days of first embarking on his journey.

THE AERO CLUBS.

The aero-club movement has maintained its progress, which, indeed, has been continuous since the commencement of active flying operations in 1928 by the first aero club to receive Government recognition. Clubs have accomplished much in the sphere of training and in promoting public interest in aviation. Government assistance has facilitated the provision of satisfactory equipment and organization for flying training, so that in 1937 it was possible to arrange for clubs to carry out the bulk of the *ab initio* training of pilots selected for entry into the Air Force and the Civil Reserve.

In 1929-30, 72 pilots were trained to "A" licence standard by the four clubs then in existence, while for the present year "A" licences issued to aero-club trainees numbered 205, bringing the total of "A" licences secured by aero-club trainees since the inception of the aero-club movement to 1,406.

The hours flown by club aircraft on training have risen from 9,043 hours in the year 1933-34 to 19,656 hours in 1938-39. The total flying of all aero-club machines under this heading up to the 31st March, 1939, stands at 104,474 hours.

SECTION I.—ADMINISTRATION.

CIVIL AVIATION VOTE.

The civil aviation vote for 1938-39 amounted to £50,871. The main items of expenditure, shown for comparative purposes with the corresponding figures for the previous year, were as follows:—

Item.	1938-39.		1937-38.	
	Voted.	Expended.	Voted.	Expended.
	£	£	£	£
1. Salaries	3,491	3,509	1,884	1,863
2. Aeradio services	10,000	4,470	5,000	952
3. Landing-grounds, incidental expenses	5,000	5,149	5,000	4,674
4. Equipment and tools	900	807	500	499
5. Examinations	50	14	..	..
6. International Commission for Air Navigation	250	170	200	234
7. Investigation of accidents	250	194	250	250
8. Loans to clubs for purchase of aircraft	15,000	15,985	10,500	13,100
9. Meteorological services	10,000	9,908	11,500	8,128
10. Purchase of aircraft for loan to clubs	1,200	1,261	6,200	4,645
11. Hawke's Bay flood relief	1,940	1,738	..	..
12. Exchange of personnel	1,500	1,200	..	..
13. Travelling-allowances	1,250	1,591	1,200	1,145
14. Miscellaneous	40	35	..	..
Totals	50,871	46,031	42,234	35,490