

1934

Sinclair-Burgess, 1934

1934.
NEW ZEALAND.

DEFENCE FORCES OF NEW ZEALAND.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE GENERAL OFFICER COMMANDING NEW ZEALAND
MILITARY FORCES.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

REPORT.

The Hon. the Minister of Defence.

Wellington, 21st June, 1934.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit the following report on the New Zealand Military Forces for the period 1st June, 1933, to 31st May, 1934.

I. N.Z. PERMANENT FORCES.

(a) COMMANDS AND STAFF.

Major E. T. Rowlings, N.Z. Staff Corps, relinquished the appointment of S.O.R.D., No. 9 Regimental District, Nelson, and was appointed S.O.R.D. 5, and Area Officer, Area 5A, Wellington, dated 1st July, 1933.

Major C. T. Gillespie, M.C., R.N.Z.A., in addition to his duties of S.O.R.D., No. 3 Regimental District and Brigade Major, 1st N.Z.M.R. Brigade, was appointed Assistant Instructor in Artillery, Northern Command, on 23rd July, 1933.

Major G. B. Parkinson, R.N.Z.A., relinquished the appointment of Staff Officer, Artillery, General Headquarters, and O.C., R.N.Z.A., Central Command, and was appointed Officer Commanding R.N.Z.A., Northern Command, Staff Officer for Coast Defences, Medium and Light Artillery and Chief Artillery Instructor, Northern Command, Auckland, dated 23rd July, 1933.

Major R. S. Park, R.N.Z.A., was appointed Staff Officer, Artillery, General Headquarters, and Officer Commanding R.N.Z.A., Central Command, Staff Officer for Coast Defences, and Medium Artillery and Chief Artillery Instructor, Central Command, Wellington, dated 23rd July, 1933.

Captain W. G. Gentry, N.Z.S.C., received the appointment of G.S.O. (Intelligence), General Headquarters, dated 3rd October, 1933.

Major W. I. K. Jennings, D.S.O., N.Z.S.C., relinquished the appointment of General Staff Officer, Central Command, Wellington, and was appointed S.O.R.D. 10 and Brigade Major, 3rd N.Z. Mounted Rifles Brigade, Christchurch, dated 24th November, 1933.

Major R. A. Row, D.S.O., N.Z.S.C., relinquished the appointment of S.O.R.D. 10 and Brigade Major, 3rd N.Z.M.R. Brigade, and was appointed G.S.O. Central Command, Wellington, dated 24th November, 1933.

Mr. S. B. Wallace, B.E., was appointed Assistant Inspecting Ordnance Officer and Assistant Ordnance Mechanical Engineer, and granted the rank of Lieutenant in the N.Z.A.O.C. dated 12th December, 1933.

Leut-Colonel J. N. Rishworth, M.B.E., N.Z. Dental Corps, relinquished the appointment of Director of Dental Services and was transferred to the Reserve, dated 2nd January, 1934.

Major B. S. Finn, D.S.O., N.Z. Dental Corps, was appointed Director of Dental Services and granted the temporary rank of Lieut-Colonel on 3rd January, 1934.

Mr. D. L. Lewis, of the civil personnel employed in the Ordnance Department, was appointed to a commission in the N.Z.A.O.C., with the rank of Lieutenant, on 1st February, 1934, for duty as Ordnance Officer, Northern Command, Waikato Camp.

Mr. D. Nicol, employed in a civil capacity at the Main Ordnance Depot, Trentham, was appointed Lieutenant, N.Z.A.O.C., for duty as Ordnance Officer, Southern Command, Burnham, dated 9th May, 1934.

3rd

Lieut.-Colonel J. Lyons, M.R.C.V.S., Eng., N.Z. Veterinary Corps, relinquished the appointment of Director of Veterinary Services and Remounts, and was posted to the Retired List, dated 31st March, 1934.

Captain W. C. Barry, M.R.C.V.S., was appointed Director of Veterinary Services and Remounts and granted the temporary rank of Lieut.-Colonel, dated 1st June, 1934.

The majority of my officers, through the existing abnormal conditions, hold more than one appointment, and many junior officers are holding appointments and carrying out responsible duties which should be apportioned to senior officers. While this is not in the best interests of the Service, it is necessitated by the shortage of staff and normal promotions being in abeyance.

(b) MILITARY EDUCATION.

The following officers were successful in passing the Entrance Examination of the Staff College, Camberley, in February-March, 1933 :—

Captain C. S. J. Duff, R.N.Z.A.

Captain D. T. Maxwell, N.Z.S.C.

Captain W. G. Gentry, N.Z.S.C.

Captain C. S. J. Duff, R.N.Z.A., proceeded to England on the 13th July, 1933, to undergo a gunnery staff course and an artillery survey course.

It has not yet been found practicable for New Zealand to again resume representation at the Imperial Defence College, but the advantages of this College have not been lost sight of, and it is hoped that the time is not far distant when a nomination may be made. New Zealand was last represented in 1930.

In order to keep up the steady inflow of young officers, to meet requirements occasioned by retirements, resignations, and deaths, four cadets were sent to the Royal Military College of Australia on the 16th February, 1934.

As pointed out previously, the Service is seriously understaffed in officers, and it is hoped it will be possible to send a further six cadets to the Royal Military College of Australia during the ensuing year.

These cadets will not graduate for service as officers in the New Zealand Military Forces until four years after their entry at the College. Although on qualifying they will meet the current wastage, the question of the immediate shortage still remains.

(c) CASUALTIES.

Two "other ranks" of the Permanent Forces resigned during the year and thirteen were discharged for other reasons.

(d) VACANCIES IN THE PERMANENT FORCES (OTHER RANKS).

Recruits have been appointed to fill vacancies which have occurred since my last report and are now undergoing instruction at the Training Depot, Trentham.

Recruits have also been appointed and are in training at the Training Depot, Trentham, to partly meet the increased establishment of the Royal New Zealand Artillery and Royal New Zealand Air Force. It is proposed to be fully recruited by 1st February, 1935.

(e) LIAISON WITH AUSTRALIA.

At the invitation of the Commonwealth Government an exchange of officers was effected during the camp-training period of the past training year, with a view to obtaining closer liaison between the Military Forces of the Commonwealth and of the Dominion.

Under this arrangement Captain (Brevet Major) W. Bridgeford, M.C., Australian Staff Corps, General Staff, Director of Military Training Branch, Army Headquarters, was detailed for duty in New Zealand from 5th March, to 4th May, 1934, and Major N. W. McD. Weir, N.Z. Staff Corps, General Staff Officer, Military Training and Staff Duties, General Headquarters, for duty in Australia from 12th February to 5th May, 1934.

Apart from the interchange of ideas on methods of training, &c., which such an arrangement affords, I regard the personal contact so established between the two forces as of primary importance.

The Chief of the General Staff, Australian Military Forces, has expressed the desire that the scheme now initiated should continue, a proposal in which I fully concur.

2. COAST DEFENCES.

In accordance with the policy approved by Cabinet for strengthening the coast defences of the Dominion, preliminary steps have been taken to procure the new armament and equipment. At the same time a proportion of anti-craft armament and equipment has been ordered.

3. AIR SERVICES.

(a) ROYAL NEW ZEALAND AIR FORCE.

His Majesty the King has been graciously pleased to grant permission for the title of the New Zealand Permanent Air Force to be altered to the "Royal New Zealand Air Force," and this change was duly gazetted in February, 1934.

The strength of the Royal N.Z. Air Force remained unaltered (nine officers, forty-five other ranks) until April 1934, when the first batch (fifteen) of new enlistments, required for the maintenance of new equipment, were posted to the R.N.Z.A.F. Base, Hobsonville, Auckland.

The remarks made in my previous annual report apply with equal force to the year under review. The expenditure for the year ending 31st March, 1934, exclusive of part payment for new equipment (£10,012) amounted to £38,548, which was not sufficient to maintain the existing equipment in a serviceable condition, as a result of which certain essential repair work has had to be temporarily postponed.

The increased demands for naval and military co-operation mentioned last year have been fully sustained, and in some cases it has not been possible to arrange for air co-operation. As regards naval co-operation, a very valuable set of exercises was carried out by the Fairey IIIc aircraft from Hobsonville in conjunction with the Seagull flying-boats of the Royal Australian Air Force during the visit of H.M. Australian Naval Squadron between 23rd and 31st August. During February and April, 1934, the normal co-operation duties were carried out with the New Zealand Division of the Royal Navy. These exercises included observation of fall of shot and torpedoes, attack exercises, and fleet reconnaissance. Army co-operation duties with Territorial formations during the annual training season between January and May have been carried out from both Air Force Stations. These have included artillery reconnaissance with light, field, and medium batteries and close reconnaissance, &c., with infantry and mounted units.

The reorganization and re-equipment of the Royal N.Z. Air Force, approved by the Government, entails the establishment of four flights of Service aircraft of a type suitable for co-operation in Coast Defence, and for extended seaward reconnaissance. Two flights of Vickers Vildebeeste bomber aircraft (landplanes) have been ordered and will be delivered before the end of the year. The new equipment involves additional hangars, workshops, and quarters as well as increases in the flying and maintenance personnel. Plans and specifications of the buildings are practically complete and the work is to be commenced immediately.

(b) NEW ZEALAND AIR FORCE.

The strength of the New Zealand Air Force, which comprises the New Zealand Air Force Wing of four squadrons, totals seventy-five officers, approximating the maximum number of flying personnel which can be adequately trained. As explained in my previous reports, the efficiency of this unit is closely related to the strength of the Royal N.Z. Air Force. As the latter develops so will the facilities for the flying and technical training of the former be increased. In due course it is intended to provide for the enlistment of "other ranks" for both technical training and maintenance duties.

The policy of granting commissions to Aero Club pilots which was temporarily suspended last year will be continued and a limited number of vacancies will be filled by competitive examination. It is worthy of mention that at present 40 per cent. of the officers of the New Zealand Air Force have received their initial flying training in the local aero clubs. At the same time it must be borne in mind that there is an increasing number of officers in the Dominion who have completed a five years' engagement with the Royal Air Force, and provision must be made for refresher training either by absorption in the New Zealand Air Force or by other means.

The annual squadron camps each of ten days' duration were held at Wigram Aerodrome, Christchurch, during the months of January, February, and March, 1934. These camps were attended by fifty-nine officers, who carried out an aggregate of 760 hours' flying on the training-machines and Bristol fighters. The air work comprised front and rear gun firing, bombing with the 8½ lb. practice bomb, formation flying, air pilotage, wireless, and radio telephony.

In addition, during the past year week-end courses were carried out by each squadron which were attended by forty-nine officers, who carried out a further 256 hours' flying training. The value of these short courses has been reflected in a marked improvement in the standard of training during the annual camps.

Provision has been made under the scheme approved by the Government for the re-equipment of the New Zealand Air Force with aircraft of the advanced trainer type suitable for the complete range of instruction in all Service duties.

(c) AIRCRAFT AND EQUIPMENT.

The Service aircraft at the two Air Force Stations are as follows:—

R.N.Z.A.F Base, Hobsonville:—

Service type: Two Fairey IIIc seaplanes.

Training and communication types: One Cutty Sark flying-boat, one D.H. Moth seaplane, two D.H. Moth landplanes.

Wigram Aerodrome, Christchurch:—

Service type: Five Bristol Fighters.

Training and communication types: Two Gloster Grebe S.S. Fighters, three Hawker Tomtits, 3 D.H. Moths, 1 D.H. Puss Moth.

It is hoped to maintain Bristol Fighters in a serviceable condition for at least two further training seasons, pending their gradual replacement by Advanced Trainer Aircraft, and with this end in view advantage was taken of the disposal of Falcon III engine spares by the Royal Air Force to secure certain spares at a greatly reduced figure. During the greater part of the year only one Fairey IIIc has been in commission. The other machine is being reconditioned as time permits and spares arrive.

(d) ROYAL N.Z. AIR FORCE AERODROMES.

The two Air Force Aerodromes at Auckland and Christchurch have been maintained in good condition.

An additional area of 27 acres 3 roods adjoining the aerodrome at Hobsonville, Auckland, was acquired in February, 1934. This is required to accommodate the essential quarters for additional staff without limiting the present landing-ground. The store accommodation at this Base has now been doubled by the addition of a second storey to the existing building, and a photographic and medical building is nearing completion. As yet the machine tools for the workshops at Hobsonville have not been obtained, although provided for in the estimates.

At Wigram Aerodrome, Christchurch, the extensive levelling, grading, and grassing operations which have been carried out by the Public Works Department in conjunction with the Unemployment Board for the past two years are now practically completed. For the purposes of fire-prevention a 64,000 gallon concrete tank has now been constructed, and the reticulation of the buildings with 4-in. water-pipes is in hand.

(e) CIVIL AVIATION.

(i) General.

Although no developments worthy of mention have taken place in commercial aviation during the past year, an awakening interest is being displayed in the possibilities of air transport in the Dominion which may lead to some tangible progress in the near future. Air taxi work is chiefly confined to aero clubs, which have been forced to seek this means of support and which are in a favoured position for this class of work:—

Civil aviation statistics as at the 31st May were as follows:—

Pilots' "A" licenses (private)	244
Pilots' "B" licenses (commercial)	44
Aerodromes (licensed)	26
Aircraft	68
Ground engineers	40

The Air Navigation Regulations, 1933, which have now been in force for one year, have greatly facilitated the control of civil aviation. At the same time no provision has yet been made for any additional staff to administer these regulations, and in particular no aeronautical inspection branch has been formed.

(ii) Aero Club Movement.

In December, 1933, the Government recognized the West Coast Federated (South Island) Aero Club as an "approved" club for purposes of subsidies to pilots and loan of aircraft. This federation had a special claim to consideration on account of the isolation of the district.

During the year one hundred pilots were trained *ab initio* by the aero clubs, and the sum of £1,755 was paid to the clubs on account of subsidies on pilots.

The basis of assistance to aero clubs is under consideration, the proposed modification including a grant to clubs on account of pilots who renew their licenses and also that loaned aircraft shall become the property of the club after having completed a certain number of flying hours.

(iii) Aerodrome Development Scheme.

In September, 1933, a scheme for establishing a chain of landing-grounds throughout the Dominion was approved by the Government. Its objects are to increase the mobility and defensive power of the New Zealand Air Force and to provide for the development and safety of civil aviation.

The scheme utilizes unemployed labour to create a permanent national asset, and will ultimately result in a very considerable saving of capital expenditure on the part of the Government and local bodies when the grounds would otherwise have to be constructed.

Briefly, the scheme involves the location and inspection of suitable sites along the main air-routes by a specially qualified engineer of the Public Works Department, working in close collaboration with the Director of Air Services. Once the areas are selected engineering surveys are carried out, and the grounds levelled by unemployed labour working under skilled supervision. The scheme calls for the close co-operation of the Public Works Department, the Unemployment Board, and the Director of Air Services, and involves the expenditure of additional moneys over and above the cost of the labour, supplied by the Unemployment Board, in order to provide for the cost of surveys, technical supervision, tools, and special items incidental to the scheme. This additional cost is being met by a special grant which has been placed, for the time being, on the Civil Aviation estimates. As yet a definite allocation has not been made. In view of the national importance of the scheme and the fact that this vote determines the amount of unemployed labour which can be so utilized, special consideration should be given to this item which falls into a category distinct from current Defence expenditure.

A number of sites have already been inspected and preliminary surveys made. Several major works are ready to be proceeded with.

4. TERRITORIAL FORCE.

(a) COMMANDS.

There have been the normal number of changes in the command of brigades and units during the year.

I wish to place on record my appreciation of the unselfish service rendered by all officers who have relinquished their commands during the year, and have, by their efficiency and loyal efforts, done so much to help recruiting and the progressive training of their commands.

(b) ESTABLISHMENTS.

It has been decided to increase the establishment of the Mounted Rifles regiment by a troop per squadron, and Infantry battalions of country districts by one platoon in each rifle company.

In order to bring the Infantry into line with the recent alteration to British establishments, it has been decided to add to the support company of each Infantry battalion one mortar platoon. The total increase is sixty-three officers and 1,824 other ranks.

(c) STRENGTH.

The strength of the Territorial Force as on the 31st May, is shown in Appendix I. The increase of other ranks during the year is 556.

(d) OFFICERS.

The surplus officers carried on the Regimental Supernumerary List have been absorbed or transferred to the Reserve, and the Supernumerary List no longer exists. A recent increase in the establishment for officers of Mounted Rifles and Infantry units has created certain vacancies which have been filled as far as possible from the Supernumerary List.

(e) TRAINING.

The training prescribed as obligatory for the year was a camp of six days, exclusive of the days of arrival and departure, and a minimum of thirty hours at home stations prior to camp.

The attendance at camps can be considered as satisfactory in view of the prevailing economic conditions. The percentage varied from 93.1 to 50 per cent. of the enlisted strength.

I visited a large number of units in camp and was impressed with the general keenness and enthusiasm of all ranks. This was particularly noticeable in view of the adverse weather conditions which so many units encountered during the past camp training season and which affected both the attendance at camps and the training programmes of units.

In reporting upon training, I consider it of vital importance that the object of the peace-time training of the Territorial Force should be most clearly defined. This object is to provide a framework and machinery for expansion and training in the event of war.

To attain this object it is not only necessary that the soldierly efficiency of units as expressed in the maintenance of discipline and *esprit de corps* should be brought to the highest possible level, but also that a system of training be developed and a cadre of instructors built up with the primary purpose of having an adequate training organization and a sufficient number of instructors to give effect to it when required.

This requires not only a sound system of training the instructors themselves, but also an equally efficient organization for training private soldiers, as it is from the latter that the additional non-commissioned officers required on mobilization will be drawn.

Most Territorial Force officers are more capable of training their subordinates to be leaders than of training them to be instructors. It must be accepted therefore that the detail work of training instructors must be done by the Permanent Forces.

With this object, I have therefore directed that the scope of training of the Territorial Force is to be as follows :—

- (i) Officers and N.C.O.s : To reach a standard of training which will enable them to command and train their present units and sub-units.
- (ii) Men : Fully trained in elementary drill and their duties within their units. To be sufficiently well grounded in the use of their weapons and as "specialists" to ensure their reaching the standard required for war after a short period of intensive training.

Of these, I consider the former to be by far the more important, as the training of the leader and instructor demands long and continuous instruction.

During the past training-year, although many parades additional to those prescribed have been carried out by all units, it has frequently been impossible to depend on the regular attendance of sufficient trained men on a given date to ensure systematic progressive instruction. In these difficult times, distance and the cost of conveyance have been a factor in contributing to prevent all but the very keenest from attending at the drill-hall on a particular date, especially if they are out of pocket over the transaction.

With the introduction of pay for home training, however, it is hoped that regularity of attendance will improve, and so ensure methodical progressive instruction.

I desire once again to appeal to all employers for their co-operation in the direction of granting leave to their employees to attend camp.

The period of camp training—six days—is all too short to permit of more than partial collective training, and if this is not carried out the results achieved during home training are very largely negated.

At the same time, I would like to make grateful acknowledgment of the assistance and encouragement the Military Forces have received from a great many employers, often given at considerable inconvenience to themselves.

5. TERRITORIAL FORCE ASSOCIATIONS.

During the year the Territorial Force Associations have continued to render invaluable service by encouraging recruiting and by providing recreational and club-room facilities for the Territorial Force.

I again desire to thank all those public-spirited citizens who have gratuitously performed such excellent work for the welfare of the Forces.

6. NEW ZEALAND ARMY RIFLE ASSOCIATION.

It is regretted that it is again financially impossible to hold the annual meeting of the New Zealand Army Rifle Association. Its reintroduction would do much to promote efficiency and reward merit in the Territorial Force.

7. RIFLE CLUBS.

The membership of rifle clubs has decreased by 158 during the year, but there are three additional clubs.

The free issue of ammunition to rifle clubs has been continued on the same scale as last year.

The National Rifle Association held its annual meeting at Trentham in March.

8. DEFENCE WORKS, MOBILIZATION DEPOTS, RIFLE RANGES, AND OFFICE PREMISES.

Generally, these have been maintained in fair condition. A further reference to this question will be found under the heading of Finance. Rifle ranges have been maintained in good order.

9. FINANCE.

Consequent upon the Government's decision to strengthen the defences of the Dominion, it became necessary to make provision for the purchase of certain additional land, and for the erection of further buildings to house equipment and staff. The expenditure thus involved, together with a delayed payment made to the Colonial Ammunition Co. for small-arms ammunition, resulted in the vote for the year having to be fixed at £283,703, an increase of £53,393 on the sum voted the previous year.

Due to continuation of the policy of strict economy and to progress with the building programme referred to falling short of what it was expected to be by the end of the financial year, the expenditure of the Department was confined to the sum of £264,723, being £18,980 less than the amount appropriated.

Reference was made in my report of the 31st July, 1932, to the effect the curtailment of essential expenditure was having on military equipment, buildings, and other assets of the Department. For nearly four years now, a policy of the strictest economy has been pursued in the administration of the Department, and the maintenance and upkeep of Depot buildings and valuable military material in the country have had to be reduced to a minimum.

Some increase in the normal annual expenditure of the Department, to enable a commencement to be made with essential repair work must be faced shortly if the comparatively heavier cost of rebuilding and replacing in many instances is to be avoided in the near future.

The usual table showing the annual expenditure on the Land and Air Defences of the Dominion over the last six years will be found in Appendix II of this report.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

W. L. H. SINCLAIR-BURGESS, Major-General.
Commanding N.Z. Military Forces.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.—TABLES SHOWING STRENGTH OF THE N.Z. MILITARY FORCES.

(a) N.Z. PERMANENT FORCES AS AT 31ST MAY, 1934.

Unit.	Officers.	Officer Cadets.	Other Ranks.	Total.
N.Z. Staff Corps	55	..	..	55
N.Z. Permanent Staff .. .. .	..	..	125	125
Royal N.Z. Artillery	14	..	99	113
Royal N.Z. Air Force	9	..	82	91
N.Z. Permanent Army Service Corps .. .. .	..	..	7	7
N.Z. Army Medical Corps .. .. .	..	..	1	1
N.Z. Army Ordnance Corps	5	..	21	26
General Duty Section .. .. .	..	..	4	4
Officer Cadets .. .. .	..	4	..	4
Totals	83	4	339	426

(b) N.Z. TERRITORIAL FORCE AS AT 31ST MAY, 1934.

Arm or Service.	Officers.	Warrant Officers and Non-commissioned Officers.	Men.	Total.
Mounted Rifles	156	365	1,836	2,357
Artillery	97	356	1,144	1,597
Engineers	16	45	132	193
Signals	18	39	102	159
Infantry	296	568	2,625	3,489
Army Service Corps	18	59	160	237
Medical Corps	107	81	241	429
Veterinary Corps	20	..	..	20
Totals	728	1,513	6,240	8,481

NOTE.—In addition to the above there are 896 handsmen and 54 prospective recruits for the Territorial Force in regimental Cadet detachments.

(c) CADETS AS AT 31ST MAY, 1934.

Command.	Officers.	Other Ranks.	Total
Northern	112	4,545	4,657
Central	108	4,848	4,956
Southern	138	6,880	7,018
Totals	358	16,273	16,631

(d) DEFENCE RIFLE CLUBS AS AT 31ST MAY, 1934.

Command.	Number of Clubs.	Membership
Northern	21	767
Central	59	1,945
Southern	70	2,209
Totals	150	4,921

APPENDIX II.—NET EXPENDITURE DURING LAST SIX YEARS.

Year.					Military Forces.	Aviation.	Total.
<i>Defence Vote.</i>							
					£	£	£
1928-29	..	..	..	..	425,813	38,782	464,595
1929-30	..	..	..	..	401,645	53,183	454,828
1930-31	..	..	..	..	229,050	48,749	277,799
1931-32	..	..	..	..	156,311	26,663	182,974
1932-33	..	..	..	..	180,112	27,715	207,827
1933-34	..	..	..	..	215,950	48,773	264,723
<i>Public Works Fund.—Vote, Contingent Defence.</i>							
1928-29	..	..	..	..	23,029	44,623	67,652
1929-30	..	..	..	..	7,896	38,870	46,766
1930-31	363	13,449	13,812
1931-32	Nil	Nil	Nil
1932-33	Nil	Nil	Nil
1933-34	Nil	Nil	Nil

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