

1945
NEW ZEALAND

MARINE DEPARTMENT

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1944-45

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

YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

Marine Department, Wellington, 16th August, 1945.

I do myself the honour to transmit for Your Excellency's information the report of the Marine Department for the financial year ended the 31st March last.

I have, &c.,

JAS. O'BRIEN,

Minister of Marine.

His Excellency the Governor-General of the Dominion of New Zealand.

REPORT

THE SECRETARY, MARINE DEPARTMENT, to the Hon. the MINISTER OF MARINE.

SIR,—

Marine Department, Wellington, 15th August, 1945.

I have the honour to submit the annual report on the activities of the Marine Department for the year ended 31st March, 1945.

Another war year, difficult in many phases, has been the lot of the Marine Department for the period under review. The arrival on our shores of vessels from all nations, some hitherto almost unknown, and the assistance provided to the Allied Nations by way of food, ship construction, and ship repairs have been factors creating a position which required and gained the fullest co-operation of shipping companies, Harbour Boards, engineering executives, and the staff of the Department.

The improved war situation has made possible the relaxation of some restrictions. Certain modifications have been possible in regard to wartime safety measures for shipping, survey of ships, and in the matter of certain navigational aids. Some of the major ports (excluding the four main ports) have benefited by the allocation of overseas vessels for loading purposes, thus materially improving the finances of the Boards, concerned and obviating the necessity for application to Government for further financial assistance. Other Harbour Boards affected by wartime restriction of shipping have had their cases reviewed by Government during the year and have been assisted financially to overcome the deficit caused by war conditions.

The problem of Greymouth and Westport Harbours—in other words, the ensuring of sufficient coal supplies throughout New Zealand—has received full consideration throughout the year from the points of view of both immediate and long-term improvements to these harbours to ensure that depths of water at these bar harbours will in future not jeopardize the supply of coal so essential to North Island industry and to domestic users.

The shipbuilding efforts of the Department are separately dealt with in this report. In addition to ship construction, the successful functioning of the Ship Repairs Costing Service is a feature of the year's work. This service was instituted early in 1944 to ensure (1) a speedy turn-round of vessels, (2) that work only of an urgent nature was carried out, (3) that all work performed was properly supervised and costed, and (4) that labour and materials were made available when required. Ship construction, fortunately, provided a labour pool for transfer to ship repairs in emergency. Success has attended the Department's efforts to standardize costs and procedure. Repairs totalling £576,594 have been costed and authorized for payment during the year ended 31st March, 1945. Apart