

X. POLICE

Details of police establishment as at the 31st March, 1947, are as follows :—

—			Chief Officer.	Senior Sergeant.	Sergeants.	Constables.	Total.
Rarotonga	..	..	1	1	1	8	11
Aitutaki	..	..	..	..	1	6	7
Mangaia	..	..	..	..	1	5	6
Atiu	..	..	..	..	1	5	6
Mauke	..	..	..	..	1	3	4
Mitiaro	..	..	..	..	1	2	3
Manihiki	..	..	..	..	..	3	3
Rakahanga	..	..	..	1	..	2	3
Penrhyn	..	..	..	..	..	3	3
Pukapuka	..	..	..	..	..	3	3
Ten islands	..	..	1	2	6	40	49

The conduct of the Force has been good, and there are no special problems. Statistics appear under the preceding heading IX, and are contained in the separate reports on outer islands in the following pages.

XI. SHIPPING AND COMMUNICATIONS

The N.Z.G.M.V. "Maui Pomare" continues to be the mainstay of the shipping service between New Zealand and the Cook Islands. In 1946, owing to the damage done to crops by the storm in January, the vessel was able to cope with all citrus fruit available for shipment. The Government also arranged for special calls at Rarotonga by trans-Pacific ships to uplift cargoes of tomatoes, copra, and arrowroot beyond the capacity of the "Maui Pomare." The "Maui Pomare" was withdrawn in January, 1947, for her annual survey and overhaul, and was to return to the service in April.

The "Maui Pomare" proved invaluable during the war years when there was no other vessel available for the Cook Islands service, but a faster and more modern ship, with greater carrying-capacity and ability to maintain a more frequent service, is now required. The provision of adequate shipping facilities is undoubtedly the most serious problem confronting the Group at the present time, but this is complicated by the seasonal nature of the trade. During the orange season large quantities of fruit are available for shipment, but for the remainder of the year payable cargoes of other fruit and of produce are not offering.

AIR SERVICE

A fortnightly air service between New Zealand and Rarotonga is maintained regularly and has effected a great improvement in communications, particularly during the first quarter of the year, when the "Maui Pomare" is laid up for refit. The service has also proved of great value in cases of emergency and of medical necessity.

The air service between Aitutaki and Rarotonga has become very popular with the Cook Islanders and is always well patronized. Indeed, special flights have been required to cope with the number of passengers desiring to travel between the two islands. The service is also being increasingly used by passengers to and from New Zealand.

Passengers proceed by Sunderland flying-boat from Auckland to Fiji, and thence by Dakota planes via Tonga, Western Samoa, Tutuila, and Aitutaki to Rarotonga, the air journey from New Zealand taking three days. The same route is followed on the return journey, but the trip takes five days, as there is a break of two days in Fiji awaiting the connection with the flying-boat.