

CHAPTER 3.—STAFF OF THE CIVIL AVIATION DIRECTORATE

Director General of Civil Aviation

56. What has been said with regard to the status and the duties and responsibilities of the Director of Civil Aviation indicates the high level of technical experience and competence, as well as administrative ability and judgment, which is required in this post. It is essential, in our view, that Government should be free in making appointments to this post to select the best possible candidate without regard to questions of seniority. It is desirable that in the course of time a cadre of civil aviation technicians and administrators should be built up, in order to provide prospective careers for new entrants and to make the best use of special experience and technique, some of which can only be obtained in the administration of civil aviation. It is not reasonable to expect that such a cadre of civil aviation administrators and technicians can be established virtually within a period of a year or two from the creation of the Civil Aviation Branch. We do not consider that the application of seniority rules as an important consideration in the selection for the post of Director General of Civil Aviation can ever ensure an appropriate appointment. Still less can it do so in the formative stage. We recommend that the post of Director General of Civil Aviation should be excluded from the provisions of the Public Service Act. We do not thereby imply any reflection on the ability of the Public Service Commission, which would be presumptuous and is not the point at issue. We believe that the Public Service Commission can give valuable assistance in making a selection for this post, but the application of all the Public Service Regulations, including particularly the procedure for appeals, in an appointment of this kind is inimical to the best interests of civil aviation and of the country.

57. We have considered the standard of remuneration at present established for the post of Director of Civil Aviation, in relation to the scale of remuneration for comparable posts in other Dominions and in relation to the standards of remuneration prevailing in New Zealand. While scales of remuneration for the lower grades of staff and employment in New Zealand are high, we find ourselves in some difficulty in view of the prevailing small range in scales of remuneration between the lowest and the highest paid workers, notwithstanding the long and expensive education, specialised training, accumulation of experience and special ability which are required in the higher ranks of administration, professions, and management. In spite of the statements which have been made that the salaries offered to technicians in the civil aviation administration (and incidentally in the operating organisations) are inadequate to attract suitably qualified men, it is difficult to advise the establishment of a scale of remuneration for the Director General of Civil Aviation, and in consequence other principal officers of the administration, greatly in