

Reserves, Domains, and National Parks Act, 1928. Other parks, such as the famous Sounds or Fiordland and the magnificent Mount Cook reserves, are not controlled by Boards, but are under direct Government control. The Public Reserves, Domains, and National Parks Act, 1928, was a consolidation and revision of the Public Reserves and Domains Act, 1908, and its amendments, together with a new Part (Part III) dealing specially with national parks. Prior to 1928 there were no statutory provisions (with the exception of the special Acts relating to Tongariro, Egmont, and Peel Forest) dealing specifically with national parks, and those parks in respect of which a special Act had not been passed were subject to the general law relating to public reserves contained in Part I of the Public Reserves and Domains Act, 1908. However, Part III of the 1928 Act for the first time gave general authority for the creation and protection of national parks and the appointment of controlling Boards. The provisions of Part III were applied in the cases of the Arthur Pass and Abel Tasman Parks, and unless and until superseded by new legislation, will be used in any future cases.

MEMBERSHIP OF BOARDS

Where there are special Acts, the membership of the Boards is to a great extent determined by the statutes. Thus, under the Tongariro Act there are nine statutory members, including the Minister of Lands, the Director-General of Lands, and a member appointed from time to time by the Royal Society. Under the Egmont Act the statutory members are the Commissioner of Crown Lands for the Land District of Taranaki, and two persons appointed from time to time by each of the North, South, East and West Egmont local committees. The committees referred to are nominated by the local bodies of Taranaki, and assist the Park Board in the control and supervision of the park. Under the Peel Forest Act the statutory members include the Commissioner of Crown Lands for the Land District of Canterbury. Boards appointed under Part III of the general Act of 1928 consist of such persons as the Governor-General in Council thinks fit to appoint. Endeavours are made to see that the Boards are as representative as possible, and special attention is paid to the representation of the mountain and alpine clubs. One difficulty encountered has been in the tendency towards large memberships. At present the Tongariro Board may consist of eighteen members (the actual membership is fifteen), while the Egmont, Abel Tasman, and Arthur Pass Boards have eleven, thirteen, and ten members respectively. There is no particular merit in having such large memberships, and there is a growing conviction that smaller Boards would be more efficient. This point will be fully considered in the event of any new legislation dealing with national parks being introduced, and here it may be mentioned that a Bill to replace Part III of the Public Reserves, Domains, and National Parks Act, 1928, and the special Acts dealing with Tongariro and Egmont has been prepared and is now being circulated amongst Departments, scientific bodies, and other organizations interested in national park affairs. The existing statutes are in need of some overhaul in the light of present-day knowledge and requirements, and it is desirable in the interests of sound administration that there should be one general law governing the administration of national parks.

POWERS OF BOARDS

Very extensive powers of control and management are vested in National Park Boards under the special Acts and the general law. Generally speaking, the Boards are charged with the duty of maintaining, preserving, and improving the areas placed under their care, and so to administer them that they are available, subject naturally to any necessary restrictions, to the fullest possible extent for the recreation and enjoyment of the general public. Commercialism has no place in the setting-aside of the national parks, and but little in their administration, although the park Boards are empowered by statute to themselves establish or provide, or assist in the establishment or provision