

An officer of the Inspecting Ordnance Officers' Group has recently returned from a five months' attachment to the Branch of the Master General of Ordnance, Australia, where he studied the latest developments in the manufacture and proof of small-arms ammunition. Two N.C.O.s have recently completed a short gunnery staff course in the United Kingdom, and to ease the grave shortage of trained cooks ten soldiers have been sent to courses at the Australian Army School of Cookery.

In order that recently-commissioned Regular officers may obtain experience in regimental duties under active-service conditions, attachments have been arranged with G.H.Q., Far East Land Forces. At present four junior officers are serving with British units in Malaya and Hong Kong.

A Major of the Royal Artillery is at present on attachment to the New Zealand Army for a period of twelve months to advise on anti-aircraft problems and to assist on anti-aircraft instructional duties.

A Major of the Royal Corps of Signals has been loaned to the Royal New Zealand Corps of Signals and, as senior staff officer of that corps, advises and instructs in the latest signals technique.

UNIVERSITY COURSES

The Royal New Zealand Engineers have seconded two young officers to University colleges in New Zealand to enable them to gain engineering degrees.

RIFLE ASSOCIATIONS AND RIFLE CLUBS

Further progress in the re-establishment of rifle associations and clubs has taken place. The total number of recognized active clubs is now 151, with a membership of 6,237. Control is being exercised to an increasing degree through the National Rifle Association.

During the year sales of ammunition at a reduced cost to clubs amounted to 566,350 rounds; and, in addition, free issues to riflemen who fired the annual Weapon Training Course totalled 398,000 rounds.

Approximately 500 riflemen competed at the National Rifle Association's meeting at Trentham in February, towards which a cash grant of £1,000 was made, together with a free issue of 121,000 rounds of ammunition. Additional Army assistance to the association included a supervisory staff of 31 Army personnel, office accommodation and equipment, sleeping-accommodation with messing facilities at a nominal charge, and hire of vehicles.

Competitors numbering 560, including detachments from the Armed Forces and the visiting Australian Fleet, fired the Service matches.

PERSONNEL

The strength of the Regular Force has shown a steady increase in the past year. It is still insufficient, however, to enable the Army to discharge all its tasks properly. The training of personnel called up under the Military Training Act, 1949, will be a heavy commitment requiring large numbers of instructional and administrative staff. Furthermore, the maintenance of equipment requires the employment of many men. While it is possible, by a redistribution of staff, to handle the first intake of recruits serving under the Military Training Act, it is most desirable that the strength of the Regular Force should be built up as quickly as possible. Towards this end recruiting efforts were intensified during the year with good results.