

ROYAL NEW ZEALAND NAVY
REPORT OF THE CHIEF OF THE NAVAL STAFF
FOR THE PERIOD 1ST APRIL 1944 TO 31st MARCH 1945

*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of
His Excellency the Governor-General.*

REPORT

Navy Office, Wellington, 25th June, 1945

The Honourable the Minister of Defence.

SIR, –

I have the honour to address to you the following report on the Royal New Zealand Navy and proceedings on the New Zealand Naval Station during the year 1st April, 1944, to 31st March, 1945. The report has been curtailed in accordance with the procedure adopted since the outbreak of hostilities.

2. As a unit of the Eastern Fleet, H.M.N.Z.S. "Gambia," in April, 1944, took part in an operation against Sabang, giving close anti-aircraft support to a carrier force which bombed the port and town. Three weeks later "Gambia" formed part of a carrier force which carried out a successful operation against Surabaya, Java. On 25th July, 1944, "Gambia" took part in a second operation against Sabang, the port and enemy installation in the town being bombarded for thirty-five minutes, with satisfactory results. H.M.N.Z.S. "Achilles," after completion of a large-scale refit at a dockyard in the United Kingdom, returned to New Zealand at the beginning of this year. Both cruisers have now taken up operational duties as units of the British Pacific Fleet.

3. The 25th Anti-Submarine Minesweeping Flotilla has been augmented by two modern corvettes, H.M.N.Z.S. "Arabis" and H.M.N.Z.S. "Arbutus," both of which have been presented to New Zealand by the British Government.

4. During the year visits to naval establishments have been paid by His Excellency the Governor-General and Lady Newall, Admiral of the Fleet, Lord Keyes and Lady Keyes, and the Commander-in-Chief British Pacific Fleet, Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser.

5. Recruiting of personnel for continuous service has been maintained, and, in addition, a ready response has been received from volunteers for service for the period of hostilities in the Royal New Zealand Navy.

6. The shore establishments in New Zealand have continued to perform essential and valuable work in the maintenance and repair of ships. In addition to naval ships, the defensive equipment of merchant ships has been repaired and new and additional equipment fitted as necessary.

ATWELL LAKE, Commodore,
Chief of the Naval Staff.