

Chapter 5

INCUMBENCY PATTERNS

Introduction

This chapter presents base-line data about the length of time spent in office by vice-chancellors of Australian universities who held appointments in the years 1963 to 1983. The analysis pursued responds to the first two of the three research questions underpinning this thesis, *viz.*, definition of the office and identification of its occupants. Incumbency is the term used for period of appointment rather than tenure because of ambiguity associated with the latter concept in the area of employment conditions. The 1963 to 1983 period is used to correlate with data in the social characteristics profile presented in Chapter 4. The present study encompasses the commencement of office of any vice-chancellor incumbent in 1963 (the earliest being 1947 as analysed in Table 5.1) and, for those incumbent in 1983, takes 1986 as the cut-off point.

Focus and Data Sources

The focus continues on the office of the vice-chancellor as chief executive officer even though individual incumbents transmit the data. It is recognized that leadership as a phenomenon may be exhibited at several levels in an organisation not only at senior levels such as that of chief executive officer. This is particularly true of university organisations. One attractive research approach would have been to establish if there is an optimum length of incumbency for a chief executive officer either in a single institution or cumulatively in the same role in other similar institutions. Findings could be reviewed, for example, in the light of literature on organisation development and studies on management systems development (St. John, 1980) which indicate that an organisation has differing leadership needs at different stages of its development. However, this chapter has a narrower focus. It analyses the incumbency patterns of the 49 vice-chancellors who have held office in Australia's 19 universities from 1963 to 1983. A number of conclusions is reached and several trends likely to apply to the incumbency of future vice-chancellors are identified. The data suggest that a system of higher education is emerging in Australia and some of its characteristics are outlined.

A principal source of data was *Who's Who in Australia* and *Who's Who*. Other sources from which data were obtained or verified are: records of interview with most retired vice-chancellors during 1980-81 and with all vice-chancellors incumbent in 1986; correspondence with university registrars; and telephone conversations with university personnel.

Survey Population and Data Presentation

The population surveyed consists of 49 vice-chancellors each of whom was a full-time salaried officer. Two other persons held office effectively as vice-chancellor for almost a year in two separate universities. They are not included because their appointments were in exceptional circumstances between conventional incumbencies.

The analysis of incumbency patterns for the 49 vice-chancellors is presented in the eight tables. The primary frame for comparative analysis is the classification of Australian universities outlined in Table 2.2. This classification identified four groups of universities: 19th Century Institutions; Early 20th Century Institutions; Post War Institutions; and New Institutions. In most tables a criterion is analysed by type of university or by name of university. In some tables, and when a characteristic is exemplified by a specific incumbency, a vice-chancellor is named, this information being in the public domain. Percentage figures and calendar years for other than individual incumbencies have been rounded to the first decimal point. Percentages have been used, even though the numbers are often small, not to distort data but for greater economy in discussion and analysis.

Analysis of Incumbency Patterns

The study begins by examining the incumbency of vice-chancellors who held office in 1963. Data for the ten universities established at that date are presented in alphabetical order in Table 5.1. A variation of one year for apparently similar periods results from the dates within a year at which, and from which, preceding and succeeding vice-chancellors held office. The overall incumbency of the ten 1963 vice-chancellors spans 30 years from 1947 to 1976; and the range of individual incumbencies is from 8 to 20 years. Seventy percent of 1963 incumbents were in office when the Australian Universities Commission was inaugurated in 1959, this being the principal foundation of a system of higher education in Australia; and all continued in office beyond 1964 when the Martin Report, beginning the advanced education sector, was completed and submitted. Inviting further consideration is the proposition that this continuity of service and span of experience suggest a stability not simply measured by years of incumbency. It is notable that the average incumbency of 1963 vice-chancellors is 13.6 years.

A presentation of comparable data, the incumbency of vice-chancellors who held office in 1983, appears in Table 5.2. As mentioned above, the cut-off date for these incumbents was 1986. The overall incumbency of the nineteen 1983 vice-chancellors spans 17 years from 1970 to 1986; and the range of individual incumbencies is from 4 to 16 years. When the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission, a major structural element in the emergence of a system of Australian higher education, was instituted in 1977, nine of the 1983 vice-

Table 5.1 Incumbency of 1963 Vice-Chancellors

University	Incumbency	
	Dates	Years
Adelaide	1958-67	9
ANU	1960-67	8
Melbourne	1951-68	17
Monash	1960-76	16
New England	1954-66	13
New South Wales	1953-69	16
Queensland	1960-69	9
Sydney	1947-67	20
Tasmania	1957-67	11
Western Australia	1953-70	17
All (N=10)	Range: 1947 to 1976	Average: 13.6

chancellors, being 47 percent of the total, were in office. Perhaps more remarkable in comparison with 1963 vice-chancellors is the decline in length of the average incumbency which for 1983 vice-chancellors is 8.0 years. This is higher than the average term for U.S. university presidents of seven years as reported by Kerr in his 1984 study. The lower average incumbency of 1983 compared with 1963 vice-chancellors represents a decline of 41.1 per cent.

What could be of more significance in a total systems perspective is the rate of turnover for 1983 vice-chancellors rather than the length of their incumbency *per se*. At the beginning of 1986 there was a total of 13 vice-chancellors who held office in 1983. Of these four retired or resigned in 1986 (Flinders, Macquarie, Monash, Newcastle) and one died in office during the year (Adelaide). Another two (ANU and Melbourne) had announced their retirement to take effect in 1987. Thus of the 19 vice-chancellors incumbent in 1983 only six, or 32 percent of the total were expected to be in office at the end of 1987. This means that at the end of 1987, 13 vice-chancellors or 68 percent of the total would have held appointments for less than four years. This unprecedented high rate of turnover among vice-chancellors between 1983 and 1987 carries implications, for example, in relation to the leadership role of vice-chancellors individually, and corporately as the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (AVCC) in relation to the public standing and capacity for political influence of higher education in society, and also in relation to the dealings between universities and government departments and co-

Table 5.2 Incumbency of 1983 Vice-Chancellors

University	Incumbency	
	Dates	Years
Adelaide	1977-86	9
ANU *	1982 - (87)	4
Deakin	1976-86	9
Flinders	1980-86	7
Griffith	1972-84	13
James Cook	1970-85	16
La Trobe	1977-	9
Macquarie	1976-86	11
Melbourne *	1982 - (87)	5
Monash	1977-86	9
Murdoch	1979-84	6
New England	1978-85	7
New South Wales	1981-	5
Newcastle	1975-86	12
Queensland	1979-	7
Sydney	1981-	6
Tasmania	1982-	4
Western Australia	1976-85	9
Wollongong	1981-	5
All (N=19)	Range: 1970 to 1986	Average: 8.0

- Notes: 1. Cut-off date is 1986
2. * = Retirement announced effective 1987.

ordinating bodies such as CTEC. These implications are the subject of other research beyond the scope of the present thesis.

Table 5.3 presents data about the average incumbency of all 49 vice-chancellors from 1963 to 1983 classified by type of university. The overall pattern suggested is that the several groups of longer established universities attract vice-chancellors who serve longer average periods in office. The average incumbency for the 13 vice-chancellors of 19th Century Institutions is 10.1 years, for the six vice-chancellors of 20th Century Institutions it is 9.0 years, and for the 14 who held office in Post War Institutions it is 8.1 years. The average incumbency in each of these three types of institutions, indeed in all four groups of universities, is considerably less than the average period of 13.6 years spent in office by 1963 vice-chancellors but more than the average appointment of 8.0 years served by 1983 vice-

**Table 5.3 Average Incumbency by Type of University:
All Vice-Chancellors 1963 to 1983**

Group	University	Incumbency Pattern	
		Years/Vice-Chancellors	Average Years
19th Century Institutions	Sydney	39/3	13.0
	Melbourne	36/3	12.0
	Adelaide	28/3	9.3
	Tasmania	29/4	7.3
	All (N=4)	132/13	10.1
Early 20th Century Institutions	Queensland	23/3	7.7
	Western Australia	31/1	10.3
	All (N=2)	54/6	9.0
Post War Institutions	New South Wales	33/3	11.0
	New England	30/4	7.5
	Monash	25/2	12.5
	ANU	26/5	5.2
	All (N=4)	114/14	8.1
New Institutions	La Trobe	21/2	10.5
	Macquarie	22/2	11.0
	Flinders	20/3	6.7
	Newcastle	21/2	10.5
	James Cook	16/1	16.0
	Griffith	13/1	13.0
	Murdoch	10/2	5.0
	Deakin	9/1	9.0
	Wollongong	11/2	5.5
All (N=9)	144/16	9.0	
TOTAL (N=19)		443/49	9.0

chancellors. The average incumbency of 9.0 years for the 16 vice-chancellors of New Institutions would seem to qualify the analysis that the average length of incumbency bears a direct relationship to the age of each group of universities. However, the interrelation can be justified generally because of the following evidence: firstly, within the New Institutions group are two institutions (James Cook and Griffith) whose foundation vice-chancellors served exceptionally long terms which are most unlikely to be repeated; secondly, a trend towards appointing persons who have previously been vice-chancellor or deputy vice-chancellor (see Table 5.8) would make longer than average incumbencies less likely given the more advanced

age at which a second appointment as chief executive would begin; thirdly, some vice-chancellors, and particularly of less well established institutions facing resource constraints, may not regard the vice-chancellorship as their final professional appointment. The fact remains that vice-chancellors of universities in the New Institutions group had, on average, a nine year incumbency which was 10 percent longer than the average of vice-chancellors of Post War Institutions.

**Table 5.4 Longest and Shortest Incumbencies:
All Vice-Chancellors 1963 to 1983**

5.4.1 Longest Incumbencies

Rank	University	Vice-Chancellor	Incumbency	
			Dates	Years
1	Sydney	Roberts	1947-67	20
2	Western Australia	Prescott	1953-70	17
3	Monash	Matheson	1960-76	16
3	James Cook	Back	1970-85	16

5.4.2 Shortest Incumbencies

Rank	University	Vice-Chancellor	Incumbency	
			Dates	Years
1	ANU	Williams	1973-75	2
2	New England	Cowen	1967-69	3
3	Murdoch	Griew	1973-77	4
3	Tasmania	Caro	1978-82	4

Data relating to the longest and the shortest incumbencies are presented in Table 5.4 as a personal variable of all vice-chancellors in the survey period and in Table 5.5 as an institutional variable for all 19 universities. The longest incumbency of 20 years was served by Sir Stephen Roberts whose appointment as Vice-Chancellor of Sydney University began in 1947, almost 40 years before the cut-off date in 1986. To locate that date more acutely in terms of its distance both from the scientific and technological framework of contemporary society and also from the present system of Australian higher education, Roberts' incumbency began a little more than 12 months after the atomic bomb that ended World War II was dropped on Hiroshima.

It should be noted that Matheson at Monash University (1960-76) and Back at James Cook University (1970-85) were foundation vice-chancellors whose 16 year incumbencies are unlikely to be equalled in length. Back's appointment in 1963 as Warden of the Queensland University College of Townsville, immediately prior to his becoming Vice-Chancellor of the James Cook University in 1970 gives him a continuous incumbency as chief executive officer of 23 years. Williams (ANU 1973-75) and Griew (Murdoch 1973-77) were overseas appointees whose short incumbencies were similar in two respects: their initial period of appointment was not completed; and each took up a senior position outside Australia. The short incumbency of Cowen at the University of New England (1967-69) and of Caro at the University of Tasmania (1978-82) concluded when each resigned to take up directly an appointment as vice-chancellor at another Australian university. This phenomenon, as an aspect of a maturing system of higher education is analysed in Table 5.8.

**Table 5.5 Longest and Shortest Average Incumbency:
All Universities 1963 to 1983**

5.5.1 Longest Average Incumbency

Rank	University	Average Years
1	James Cook	16.0
2	Griffith	13.0
2	Sydney	13.0
3	Monash	12.5

5.5.2 Shortest Average Incumbency

Rank	University	Average Years
1	Murdoch	5.0.
2	ANU	5.2
3	Wollongong	5.5

With minor exceptions the data in Table 5.5, dealing with average institutional incumbency, correlate with those in Table 5.4 which relate to personal incumbencies. The influence of a long-serving and foundation vice-chancellor at each of James Cook University and Griffith University is reflected in the average (and single) incumbency of 16 years and 13 years respectively. By contrast, Murdoch and Wollongong Universities, both also of the New Institution group, are ranked among those with the shortest average incumbency being respectively 5 and 5.5 years. The ANU, an established and quite distinguished university by

national and international standards, has developed a distinctive incumbency pattern which, at an average of 5.2 years, is much shorter than the overall average. Given that the average incumbency of all 49 vice-chancellors in the survey is 9.0 years, the average incumbency of James Cook University is 77.8 percent above average, that of Griffith and Sydney Universities 44.4 percent, and the average of Monash University 38.9 percent longer than average. By comparison, Murdoch University, the ANU and Wollongong University have average incumbencies which are respectively 44.4 percent, 42.2 percent and 38.9 percent shorter than the average for all 19 universities. Three exploratory propositions about incumbency as an institutional phenomenon can be advanced at this point in the analysis:

1. That the three groups of longer established universities attract vice-chancellors whose average incumbencies by group are longer than the average for all universities. Aspects of this proposition, as an overall pattern, were also analysed at Table 5.2.
2. That, if the ANU is excepted as *sui generis* among Australian universities not only in its legislative base, its purpose and its funding, the shortest average incumbencies occur among the New Institution Group of universities.
3. That a relationship exists among organisational culture, institutional age, and the average length of incumbency of vice-chancellors. (Organisational culture, following Schein (1985, 6), is the deep level "*basic assumptions and beliefs* that are shared by members of an organisation, that operate unconsciously, and that define...an organisation's view of itself and its environment.")

Moderating these propositions would be the evidence that two universities of the New Institutions group are ranked in Table 5.5.1 among the longest incumbencies. This, the writer believes, can be explained as an exception associated jointly with the distinctive ethos — social and academic — of James Cook and Griffith Universities, as well as by the fact that the single incumbent of each included in this study was foundation vice-chancellor. The present focus is on institutional and not personal incumbency; and the inclusion in Table 5.4.2 of Cowen and Caro among the shortest personal incumbencies will be analysed further in Table 5.8 as an element in the emergence of a national system of higher education.

One conclusion to be drawn from the above propositions, however qualified the evidence might be, is that while vice-chancellors are persons of developed individuality who define, to a large extent, their own incumbency, universities as organisations attract and sustain their

respective vice-chancellors in a way that influences the length of incumbency among other factors.

**Table 5.6 Incumbency of Foundation Vice-Chancellors:
Post War and New Institutions**

Group/University (Foundation Year)	Foundation Vice-Chancellor	Incumbency Pattern	
		Dates	Years
Post-War Institutions:			
New South Wales (1949)	Baxter	1953-69	16
New England (1954)	Madgwick	1954-66	12
Monash (1958)	Matheson	1960-76	16
ANU (1946/1960)	Huxley	1960-67	8
All (N=4)		Range: 1953-1976	Average: 13.0
New Institutions:			
La Trobe (1964)	Myers	1965-76	11
Macquarie (1964)	Mitchell	1965-75	10
Flinders (1965)	Karmel	1966-71	5
Newcastle (1965)	Auchmuty	1965-74	9
James Cook (1970)	Back	1970-85	16
Griffith (1971)	Willett	1972-84	13
Murdoch (1973)	Griew	1973-77	4
Deakin (1974)	Jevons	1976-85	9
Wollongong (1975)	Birt	1975-81	6
All (N=9)		Range: 1965 to 1985	Average: 9.2
TOTAL (N=19)		Range: 1953 to 1985	Average: 10.4

In this study which reviews possible links between changing incumbency patterns and characteristics of an emerging system of higher education, it is pertinent to examine the incumbencies of recent foundation vice-chancellors. The incumbency of foundation vice-chancellors of all universities in the Post War and New Institutions groups is included in the survey population and details of these data appear in Table 5.6.

The average length of incumbency of 13 years for foundation vice-chancellors of Post War Institutions, with a range of 8 to 16 years, is generally equivalent with that of 13.6 years for all 1963 vice-chancellors with which group they are most appropriately identified. It is 44.4 percent longer than the average of 9.0 years for all incumbencies 1963 to 1983. Foundation vice-chancellors of New Institutions served a much shorter average of 9.2 years in office, with a range of 4 to 16 years, and this is almost the same as the average for all incumbents in the study. Of the three shortest incumbencies among the thirteen foundation vice-chancellors, one left the university and Australia without completing his full term and the two others (Karmel, 5 years and Birt, 6 years) became vice-chancellor in another university.

Two conclusions can be advanced in respect of the incumbency of foundation vice-chancellors:

1. That the average incumbency of foundation vice-chancellors of most recently established universities (New Institutions group) has declined significantly in comparison with the average incumbency of foundation vice-chancellors of universities established before 1960 (Post War Institutions group).
2. That the average incumbency of foundation vice-chancellors is almost the same as that of all their contemporary vice-chancellors.

Most of the significant data discussed so far are brought together in summary form in Table 5.7. The changing pattern in the average length of incumbency is consistent with the analysis completed by several categories: the average period spent in office by Australian vice-chancellors had declined markedly from 13.6 years in 1963 to 8.0 years in 1983. Longest incumbencies, apart from that at Sydney University which also began earliest within the survey period, were related to foundation vice-chancellors at Monash and James Cook Universities. In all possible categories the ANU was distinguished by representation in the shortest incumbency including the overall shortest of two years of all the 49 analysed. Among foundation vice-chancellors of the New Institutions group Murdoch University experienced the shortest incumbency of four years.

Further comment is invited about the shortest incumbencies among 1983 vice-chancellors, *viz.*, four years for the chief executive officer at ANU and the University of Tasmania. Each of these vice-chancellors continued in office beyond the cut-off date for this study of 1986 (as shown in Table 3) even though the Vice-Chancellor of ANU retired before the end of 1987. Furthermore, both incumbents had previously been vice-chancellor of another Australian university (see Table 5.8).

Table 5.7 Summary of Incumbency Patterns 1963 to 1983

Category of Vice-Chancellor	Average	Years of Incumbency		
		Range		
		Longest (University)	Shortest	Dates (Years)
All 1963 (N=10)	13.6	20 (Sydney)	8 (ANU)	1947 to 1976 (30)
Foundation: Post War Institutions (N=4)	13.0	16 (Monash, UNSW)	8 (ANU)	1953 to 1976 (24)
Foundation: New Institutions (N=9)	9.2	16 (James Cook)	4 (Murdoch)	1965 to 1985 (21)
All 1983 (N=19)	8.0	16 (James Cook)	4 (ANU, Tasmania)	1970 to 1986 (17)
All 1963 to 1983 (N=49)	9.0	20 (Sydney)	2 (ANU)	1947 to 1986 (40)

Note: Cut-off date for 1983 incumbents is 1986.

What could be deserving of further research is highlighted by the data showing the range of years over which the several categories of vice-chancellors have corporately held office. Reference is made here to the earlier discussion, when considering the high rate of turnover of 1983 vice-chancellors, about the public standing of higher education and the leadership role to be exercised by vice-chancellors institutionally and nationally. The decline in the continuous span of incumbency for all 1963 vice-chancellors of 30 years to the 17 years of continuous experience shared by the 1983 incumbents as a group is noteworthy. This is more so because there is only four years' difference between the longest incumbency in each of the two groups. While it is acknowledged that this avenue of research might place a different emphasis on the length of incumbency *per se*, the implications in terms of continuity, for example, in the collective wisdom of the AVCC or in the influence of the university sector vis-a-vis agencies such as CTEC, do invite further study.

In a finer meshed analysis one could sieve through a range of factors affecting higher education generally, and most likely the office of Australian vice-chancellor by implication. These factors would need to include: demographic trends, student participation rates, government policy shifts and associated changes to funding patterns, and the climate of international recession consequent upon the formation of OPEC as an energy cartel. Elsewhere the writer (Sloper, 1984, 131) has termed the 1980s period, the "Post OPEC era of higher

Table 5.8 Australian Vice-Chancellors: Initial and Subsequent Incumbencies

Vice-Chancellor	Initial Incumbency			Subsequent Incumbency		
	Group (University)	Dates	Years	Group (University)	Dates	Years
Cowen	Post War Institutions (New England)	1967-69	3	Early 20th Century Institutions (Queensland)	1970-77	7
Birt	New Institutions (Wollongong)	1975-81	6	Post War Institutions (New South Wales)	1981-	5
Caro *	19th Century Institutions (Tasmania)	1978-82	4	19th Century Institutions (Melbourne)	1982-(87)	5
Karmel *	New Institutions (Flinders)	1966-71	6	Post War Institutions (ANU)	1982 -(87)	4
Lazenby	Post Wat Institutions (New England)	1970-77	7	19th Century Institutions (Tasmania)	1982-	4

- Notes: 1. Cut-off date is 1986
 2. * = Retirement announced effective 1987

education", in contrast to the decade or so of the "post-Sputnik era" which represented an apotheosis of sorts in terms of public esteem given higher education, its expansionary funding base, and a belief in more than one country that there was a field of science and technology races which national universities could assist in winning. Since the mid 1970s, a Commonwealth government policy of resource contraction for both teaching and research coupled with a rationalisation strategy involving closure and amalgamation of institutions have made the lot of many CAEs and universities like runners in an endless marathon. Fit and able institutions may have been, but, with apparent arbitrariness performance standards are changed by race controllers, decreasing the chances of many ever reaching an increasingly illusory finishing line. The *1986 Efficiency and Effectiveness Report* found that in the decade to 1985 student numbers in Australian higher education had increased by one third or nearly 100,000 while total government outlays were virtually unchanged in real terms; and that there was little scope for additional financial reduction (Hudson, 1986). Despite the economic recession experienced by Australia in recent years — and in part, this study suggests, because of it — a system of university and higher education has been emerging and maturing.

One contention of this paper is that the emerging system of higher education has involved, *inter alia*, a ranking of university institutions and a changing perspective on the office and role of vice-chancellor as chief executive. This ranking assumed more definitive characteristics in 1970 when the then Professor Zelman Cowen became Vice-Chancellor of the University of Queensland (1970-77) immediately after three years in the same office at the University of New England (1967-69). This translation from one incumbency as vice-chancellor directly to another was without precedent in records of full-time vice-chancellors of Australian universities. It is a unique element in the development of a more dynamic system of higher education, though not necessarily a causal factor. Within the survey group of 49 vice-chancellors from 1963 to 1983, there are five who have held office in more than one university and these data are presented in Table 5.8.

Details of initial and subsequent incumbencies are arranged in chronological order, and by group of university, with the three vice-chancellors (Cowen, Birt and Caro) who went directly to their second appointments being placed first. Each of the other two held senior government positions (Karmel as Chairman of CTEC, and Lazenby as Director of the Grasslands Research Institute) between their incumbencies as vice-chancellor. Lazenby appears as a *leit-motif* among the five vice-chancellors who have held two such appointments. Not only has he had two incumbencies, but he has also followed two other incumbents (Cowen and Caro) who themselves were vice-chancellors twice. As noted at Table 5.4.2 these latter two incumbencies were two out of the three shortest in the survey group.

The pattern clearly established by the analysis in Table 5.8 is a movement from an initial incumbency in a more recent to a longer established institution of greater enrolment, budget and generally acknowledged status. A vice-chancellor of a New Institution university subsequently held office in a Post-War Institution; the incumbent of a Post-War Institution went to the vice-chancellorship of a 20th Century or a 19th Century Institution. A pecking order amongst universities has emerged and this is identified, in part, by the movement of successful vice-chancellors between institutions in the emerging system. The movement by Caro from one 19th Century Institution (Tasmania) to another (Melbourne) conforms with this general proposition. It is more easily understood by the fact that Professor Caro was Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Melbourne University prior to his appointment at the University of Tasmania. If one wished to examine the effects of leadership in terms of the total length of incumbency as vice-chancellor, the cumulative period spent in initial and subsequent incumbencies by each of the four 1983 vice-chancellors would need to be included.

The remaining characteristic in this study of incumbency patterns concerns the full-time appointment a vice-chancellor undertook, if any, consequent to the conclusion of his final term of office; and how the pattern might have changed between incumbents in 1963 and those in 1983. From interviews conducted with five of the 1963 incumbents it could be assumed that most, if not all, vice-chancellors were then on *sine die* employment terms. These conditions would have allowed incumbency at least until usual retirement age and beyond by mutual consent. Of the 1983 vice-chancellors, only two were appointed other than on fixed term contracts with an option of renewal, and one of these includes a specified retirement age. In Australian universities, the customary age for retirement has been 65 years. Employees in the period under review had to retire at that age and generally could exercise an option to retire after attaining 60 years of age. Currently there is discussion about provision for a more flexible range of retirement options including fractional appointments for academic staff in concluding years of service. Such could hardly apply to the office of vice-chancellor. While vice-chancellors have often undertaken a variety of part-time and occasional appointments after retirement, the present analysis relates to full-time positions.

Of the ten 1963 vice-chancellors, only two, that is 20 percent of the total, took subsequent professional appointments, one beginning a three year period as Chairman of the Australian Universities Commission at 65 years of age, the other beginning a six year term as Chairman of the Australian Broadcasting Commission at 62 years. (The writer is uncertain if the latter was a full-time appointment.) The remaining eight 1963 incumbents retired from the vice-chancellorship, five having exceeded 65 years of age and the oldest dying in office at 69 years.

The pattern for the nineteen 1983 vice-chancellors is appreciably more diverse. As discussed at Table 5.2, only eight of the 1983 incumbents remained in office at the end of this 1986 survey period; and another had died during 1986. Of the ten vice-chancellors who had left office since 1983, two had retired at 65 years and three others after reaching 60 years (one at 60, and two at 62). The remaining five of the 1983 incumbents leaving office, that is 50 percent, had taken up other full-time appointments. The age range of this group was from 51 to 60 years with their average age being 57.2 years compared with 63.5 years for the same 1963 group. Thus, not only do 1983 vice-chancellors serve incumbencies which are on average some 40 percent less than those of 1963, but they also retire or resign earlier in life. The significant conclusion is that an increased proportion of incumbents no longer necessarily view the office of vice-chancellor as their final full-time professional appointment. This conclusion can be related to the leadership potential of the office and the demands made upon successive appointees in a given organisational context. It can be related as well, and possibly in a circular fashion, to the capability of the office to bear influence on behalf of the university and of higher education generally.

Summary

This chapter has considered not only the leadership role of Australian vice-chancellors, and in particular their incumbency patterns, but through that analysis also an implicit revelation about the activities of universities as organisations and their development as a system. What follows now are three sets of propositions derived from the preceding analysis of incumbency patterns. The first set relates to the emerging system as it affects the office of vice-chancellor, the second is based upon the explicit analysis of data, while the third set of propositions is inferential in respect of future incumbency patterns.

1. An Emerging System

***Proposition 1.1* A complex structure of higher education has been emerging in Australia and this will continue to affect the university as an organisation and the leadership role of vice-chancellor.**

Consequent upon the establishment of the Australian Universities Commission in 1959, the formal creation of the advanced education sector in the mid 1960s and the TAFE sector in the mid 1970s, and the inauguration of the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission in 1977, a more structured system of post-secondary education emerged during the early 1980s. Relevant elements of this structure included: a significant change from the role of the AUC as a buffer between government and universities to the more co-ordinative and interventionist operating mode of CTEC; attempts to define (as much by negative funding as by explicit policy

statement) the teaching and research domains of the university and CAE sectors; the proclamation of new institutions (e.g. Curtin University of Technology (formerly WAIT) in Perth and the Northern Territory University) which lacked the approval of CTEC and the federal government; the appearance on the near horizon of private institutions such as the Bond University and the Cape Byron International Academy. These were elements of a maturing system of Australian higher education, more complex in the 1980s than could have been imagined even at the height of the post-Sputnik era. Some elements impinge little on the present study. All will, in the future, serve to define specific attributes of the university compared with other higher education institutions and also the leadership role of a vice-chancellor. A maturing structure often carries implications of increasing stratification but to interpret such a phenomenon as denoting a lack of dynamism in Australian universities would be inaccurate.

***Proposition 1.2* Stratification and differentiation among Australian universities has become apparent and this includes a ranking of institutions.**

Within the Australian higher education system, which during the period 1975 to 1986 had been developing under resource constraints and increasing centralist control, stratification and differentiation among institutions became apparent. Upward academic drift by larger institutes of technology in the advanced education sector was noted. A comparison based on several key criteria (e.g. funding levels, enrolment, range of degree programs) could lead to the conclusion that a small number of CAEs and universities shared more characteristics in common with institutions across their respective sectoral boundaries than they did within their own sector. Such a pattern of differentiation, which spans university and advanced education sectors, focussed back by implication on a greater stratification within the university sector than the standardised legislative base and funding mechanisms would suggest.

A ranking of universities had emerged which reflects conventional wisdom about institutional status and prestige in Australia and internationally. The writer believes that the contemporary ranking in which status was generally equated with age and size may not hold in future years at least in terms of the ability to attract the notionally best vice-chancellor from a pool of applicants to the apparently more prestigious university. Among the reasons supporting this interpretation are:

1. Some of the larger 19th Century Institutions were shackled with high and accumulating maintenance deficits, relatively static academic staff numbers and increasingly senior staffing profiles and associated salary and superannuation problems. Notwithstanding higher status,

some of these rather intractable management problems could make leadership of such institutions less rewarding than previously.

2. Some regional and newer metropolitan universities of the Post War and New Institutions Groups were successfully establishing a specialist mission and identity which seem to be attractive in terms of enrolment and other support. While resource problems common to the system affect these institutions, leadership of them presents opportunities for growth and development.
3. A fresh entrepreneurial spirit is being encouraged across all universities and is finding new expression in such ventures as teaching companies, export education and the operation of research and development foundations.

Universities are remarkably conservative social institutions and it may be that none of these factors will alter the present ranking and comparative status of Australian universities.

Proposition 1.3 Rapid growth in Australian higher education accompanied by adequate funding is an aberration rather than the norm and expectations fostered during the 1960s are likely to be unfulfilled.

The rapid expansion of existing and new universities and CAEs in the growth climate of the fifteen years or so of the Post Sputnik era will be seen historically to be without parallel. The majority of Australian academics took up appointment during that period which also witnessed the planning and inauguration of all nine universities of the New Institutions Group. What many people in higher education regarded as the norm in terms of institutional operations was in fact an aberration. The times of abundance are gone and universities are adjusting to a standard of relative scarcity in the form of government financial provision. The effect on the office and role of vice-chancellor, both of reduced resources and of unfulfilled expectations amongst staff, is undeniable.

2. Principal Incumbency Patterns: 1963-1983

The analysis of data relating to the incumbency of 49 vice-chancellors in office in nineteen Australian universities between 1963 and 1983 provides a number of propositions of which the following are significant.

Proposition 2.1. The average length of incumbency has declined substantially from 13.6 years in respect of 1963 vice-chancellors to 8.0 years for 1983 vice-chancellors.

Proposition 2.2 The overall pattern suggested is that the several groups of longer established universities attract vice-chancellors who serve longer incumbencies, the average being 10.1 years for 19th Century Institutions, 9.0 years for 20th Century Institutions and 8.1 years for Post War Institutions.

Proposition 2.3 Because the exceptionally long terms of office served by some foundation vice-chancellors are unlikely to be repeated and because there is a trend to appoint persons with previous experience as vice-chancellor or deputy vice-chancellor, shorter incumbencies will probably be served by future vice-chancellors.

Proposition 2.4 If the ANU is excepted, the shortest average incumbencies have been served in universities of the New Institutions group.

Proposition 2.5 The average length of incumbency of foundation vice-chancellors of New Institutions has declined significantly in comparison with the average incumbency of foundation vice-chancellors of Post War Institutions from 13.0 years to 9.2 years.

Proposition 2.6 For vice-chancellors who have held office in more than one university, the movement is from an initial incumbency in a more recent to a longer established institution of greater enrolment, budget and generally acknowledged status.

Proposition 2.7 An increasing proportion of vice-chancellors no longer regard their incumbency as their final full-time professional appointment, 50 percent of 1983 incumbents having left office to undertake other appointments.

Proposition 2.8 The high rate of turnover among vice-chancellors between 1983 and 1987 (with 68 percent being in office for less than four years at the end of 1987) carries implications for the leadership role of vice-chancellors and also for the public standing of higher education and for the influence of universities in society.

3. Future Incumbency Patterns

The focus of this chapter has been to analyse available data about previous and current patterns of incumbency. While that evidence may not be predictive of future incumbency patterns for Australian vice-chancellors, other developments in higher education encourage the writer to offer the following inferential propositions.

Proposition 3.1 The average incumbency for future Australian vice-chancellors is likely to be shorter than previously with a period of six to seven years in one institution becoming the overall pattern.

Proposition 3.2 On current data it is unlikely that either women or persons without appropriate exposure to university mores and governance procedures will be appointed vice-chancellor in significant numbers.

Some justification for these propositions can be found in the trend towards shorter incumbencies, in the practice of making appointments from among people who have had experience either as vice-chancellor or as a deputy or pro vice-chancellor, and, specifically in respect of Proposition 3.2, in the lack of available personnel and because of the strength of institutional culture with its inherent expectations about leadership. The gathering and analysis of further evidence is beyond the scope of the present study.

Conclusion

Based on the evidence in other chapters and the present analysis, this chapter ends with two general conclusions: firstly, that a relationship exists among organisational culture, institutional age, and the average length of incumbency served by Australian vice-chancellors; and, of more importance, while vice-chancellors are persons of developed individuality who define, to a large extent, their own incumbency, universities as organisations attract and sustain their respective vice-chancellors in a way that influences the length of incumbency among other matters.

Chapter 6

WORK PATTERNS

Introduction

This chapter deals with unique data collected in response to the last of the three research questions that are central to this thesis, *viz*: what do vice-chancellors do? The data were collected in 1986 through a diary audit in which all 19 incumbent vice-chancellors participated. This survey is the first and to date the only one undertaken in Australia; and, based on published and other sources, it is believed to be also unique in respect of vice-chancellors in any other university system in the Commonwealth of Nations. The review and analysis of the data provide information about the disposition of time, the location of principal activities and the people with whom an Australian vice-chancellor spends most of his professional life.

Even as universities may appear to be relatively homogeneous social entities, particularly to those outside the boundaries or influence of their organisational activities, so also vice-chancellors might seem to be, to both those inside and outside of universities, an occupational class that is relatively similar. What is generally known about vice-chancellors and what they actually do is either anecdotal, or archetypal (as presented, for instance, in the genre of the campus novel), or based on newspaper reportage usually in connection with some event or crisis at a university that is deemed newsworthy. As Birnbaum (1989, 125) observes in respect of college and university presidents in the USA, "it is easy to talk about organisational leadership but difficult to study it." In respect of the chief executive officer of any organisation, to study what the CEO does, where activities take place, with whom the CEO interacts and for what purpose and duration would reveal much about the office of CEO and its incumbent as well as about the organisation. Human service organisations, with which universities may be compared, ostensibly value human interactions especially those that occur formally in relation to acknowledged goal or other output activities. However difficult and challenging the study may be, it is contended that a sustained analysis of the work patterns of vice-chancellors should furnish vital information about their office and its role in the university.

The review of what leaders or other office-holders do is often associated with behavioural approaches to management and organisation theory. Studies that derive from these perspectives not unusually collect data from such sources as diaries, observational studies, activity sampling or critical incident reporting. Notable exponents of research and theory development in this domain include Mintzberg (1973), Sayles (1979), and the adaptation of the Blake and Mouton (1964) managerial grid to higher education in the work of Blake, Mouton

and Williams (1981). A concern of this behavioural research approach has been to evaluate whether an executive or leader was oriented to task or to people or to both. To use a diary survey as the sole base for obtaining data about an occupational category would be limiting and instances of these limitations will be specified in the following section. Two vice-chancellors (VC1 and VC10) mentioned their concern about the methodological approach when agreeing to participate; and the writer provided assurances that the diary survey would be but one among a number of data sources. Initially the writer had considered adopting an observational approach with the intent of "shadowing" vice-chancellors throughout their day, subject to leaving the vice-chancellor's presence when matters of a confidential or sensitive nature arose. Advice from several sources including vice-chancellors indicated that to use an observational research mode might result in more time being spent apart from a vice-chancellor than in his presence as a shadow.

The influential, indeed definitional study of work patterns of higher education chief executives is that of Cohen and March (1974); and this employed the mode of diary analysis. For their survey, 42 institutions of a published total of 1235 colleges and universities in USA were selected. Diaries were kept and returned for 41 presidents for two randomly selected days, a Tuesday and a Friday in April 1970. By comparison the present research included the total of all 19 Australian universities and took account of 14 continuous days. Further discussion of the survey population appears in a following section and reference will be made selectively to the Cohen and March study in the ensuing analysis and discussion.

Development and Use of the Survey Instrument

Participation. Early in 1986 discussions were held between the writer and several retired vice-chancellors and also with the Secretariat of the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (AVCC) concerning the optimum way in which to approach incumbent vice-chancellors in order to enlist their participation in the survey of work patterns through a diary audit. A letter dated 10 April 1986 which is at Appendix 2 was sent to each vice-chancellor. This letter specified as background to the proposed diary analysis the following points:

- the writer's previous research in the office and role of vice-chancellor
- the Cohen and March (1974) survey of the work patterns of American university presidents
- indication of a two week period from 26 May to 8 June 1986
- recognition that some vice-chancellors may be on holidays in Australia or elsewhere or may be on official travel overseas

- assurance of anonymity and confidentiality the focus being on the office, not on particular institutions or persons
- advice about subsequent contact with secretaries regarding procedural aspects of the diary audit.

Reports were received from several sources including the Secretariat of the AVCC and personnel in vice-chancellors' offices that, upon receipt of the letter, informal discussions occurred amongst vice-chancellors and also between numbers of them and the Secretary of the AVCC. Within three weeks of the request, confirmation was received that each vice-chancellor would participate, the longest delay in response being from one vice-chancellor who had been overseas.

In agreeing to participate several vice-chancellors made observations, in addition to the reservations about methodology previously noted, which included:

- a two week survey might miss the seasonal flow of annual work cycles (VC10)
- very interested to see the results of the survey (VC4)
- dates proposed are not typical ones as will be overseas during at least half of that period (VC15)
- my diary can give only a glimpse of the office and role of vice-chancellors (VC19)
- the same two weeks are being analysed for all vice-chancellors (VC10)
- a great part of the work is done away from the University in the official residence or elsewhere (VC19).

The dates for the fourteen day period were chosen arbitrarily, apart from the decision not to conduct the survey when meetings of either the full committee of the AVCC or of its executive committee were scheduled. To implement the diary audit during such meetings would result in a gross distortion in terms of time spent by vice-chancellors uniformly in travel away from their universities. By contrast, it is acknowledged that travel for vice-chancellors, both extensively within Australia and overseas, is an accepted component of official duties; and it would be surprising not to find one or two vice-chancellors away during any two week period. The choice of one week at the end of a month and the other at the beginning of a month was deliberate in order to capture any cyclic activities at these times.

To assuage concern about the possibly limited nature of the diary audit period in 1986, vice-chancellors who had expressed such concerns were invited to provide copies of their diaries in previous years, either complete or for the same two week period in May and June.

The writer was sent several complete diaries of retired vice-chancellors and received from three incumbents participating in the 1986 survey, diaries for the comparable periods for the previous five years. These previous diaries, as was the case with the 1986 survey, contain an abundance of data a complete analysis of which is beyond the focus of the present research. After all vice-chancellors had formally agreed to participate in the diary audit, a letter of appreciation (dated 8 May 1986) was sent to them and this is included in Appendix 2.

Instrument. While vice-chancellors were considering their participation, the Diary Analysis Sheet, the instrument for the collection of data, was being developed and tested. This instrument was drawn up to collect essential data from 7.00 am to 12 midnight on the basis of half hourly divisions. Thus for the 17 hours of each day which were to be surveyed, there was a total of 34 separate time divisions. The substantive part of the survey sheet was divided into three columns with the following headings:

1. **WHERE WAS HE?** (e.g. home, office, ... meeting room, council room, car, research station, Canberra motel,)
2. **WITH WHOM?** (Identify by title rather than name, e.g., student, Registrar, Deputy V-C, Dean of ..., Managing Director of ..., CTEC official, ...)
3. **ACTIVITY or GENERAL TOPIC OF DISCUSSION** (e.g., Finance Cttee, meeting, travelling to ..., discussion of overseas students admission policy, opening art show, personal, ...)

The draft Diary Analysis Sheet was sent to several very experienced secretaries none of whom would subsequently be involved in the survey. This group included a retired person who had been secretary to more than one vice-chancellor, a secretary to a pro vice-chancellor, and someone who had on a number of occasions acted as secretary to several vice-chancellors. They were advised by letter of the background to the research, asked to comment on the clarity and intelligibility of the letter and the advice on how to complete the instrument, and requested to advise how practical would use of the Diary Analysis Sheet be in terms of format or any other consideration. Secretaries in this pilot group were permitted to contact each other but were asked not to discuss the instrument with the secretary or personal staff of any incumbent vice-chancellor. Subsequently the writer discussed, by telephone, the pilot group's response and received advice in two areas: firstly that the survey hours of 7 am to 12 midnight may not be sufficient to cover the working day, on occasion, of a vice-chancellor; and secondly, provision should be allowed to enter *Highly Confidential* in the ACTIVITY column. To have extended the survey hours may have, through the appearance of more formidable record-keeping, acted as a disincentive for some participants to keep detailed diaries during the core survey period. The writer therefore decided that the survey would remain for 17 and not 24

hours each day and that each secretary could enter *Confidential*, *Personal*, or leave a blank if the subject of discussion were highly confidential.

Distribution and Use. Fourteen copies of the Diary Analysis Sheet were mailed to each vice-chancellor's secretary with an advisory statement and a covering letter dated 10 May 1988. These documents appear at Appendix 3. The Diary Analysis Sheets were printed on blue paper for ease of identification (white, yellow or green being the conventional copy colours in many public organisations in Australia) and each of the fourteen sheets were headed with the vice-chancellor's name and successive dates from Monday 26 May 1986. The following was among advice given to secretaries regarding completion:

- as much detail as possible to be entered in each of the three columns
- provision exists for entries in the evenings and at weekends when engaged on work or other activities related to official role
- PERSONAL may be entered at any time either during the day or after formal office hours to safeguard any intrusion upon privacy
- an additional page was attached to each daily Diary Analysis Sheet for notation of any comments or of any features of the day that might be unusual
- no particular identification by name of persons or institution was sought.

Secretaries were given the writer's telephone number and encouraged to contact him at any time should clarification be required. They were also advised that they would be telephoned in the week preceding commencement of the audit; and this was done by the writer on Thursday 22 May 1986. Diary Analysis Sheets were completed for fourteen days for each of the vice-chancellors and returned to the writer.

Analysis and Presentation of Data

From the abundance of data gathered through the diary audit, the following analysis of selected items responds to the questions of central concern in this chapter: what it is that Australian vice-chancellors do in their professional lives, where do these activities take place, with whom do they interact and overall, how is their time distributed. The criterion, at whose initiative an activity or an interaction was generated was initially thought to be worthwhile studying. However, the form in which the data was recorded precluded the possibility of any rigorous or consistent analysis among different institutions. The elusive nature of this criterion was seen as being related to the range and diversity of subjects considered in meetings

involving vice-chancellors, particularly those which were not formal governance bodies or committees with set agenda. Support for this perspective was found in additional comments made by one secretary:

I found it difficult to pin down topics when the Vice-Chancellor had discussions with his senior officers. This was because they usually covered more than one topic.

Another secretary made an observation about the multiplicity of topics and tasks which would make clear identification of initiators difficult and also about telephone calls:

As on previous days, there was urgent interruptions – many telephone calls, local and interstate, matters to be approved for sealing, decisions needed on financial matters, and approval for appointments for which the Vice-Chancellor is responsible.

Given the usual provision of several telephone lines to a vice-chancellor's office, including a direct line, no attempt was made in the research design to evaluate telephone activity. It was also thought improbable that vice-chancellors could devote time to recording activities of such high frequency.

Survey Population. The total population of incumbent vice-chancellors in Australia's 19 universities in 1986 took part in this survey of work patterns through the diary audit. At the time of the survey one vice-chancellor had advised his retirement to his council, appointment procedures had been completed, and a successor named who was to assume office seven months later. Another university was in an interregnum period with an acting vice-chancellor in office for about a year whilst appointment procedures were in progress. This acting vice-chancellor was a senior professor of the university who had previously been pro vice-chancellor. All other incumbents were continuing appointments, none having signified publicly any change in their intentions. It is submitted that the contextual circumstances of the two identified incumbents – the prospective retiree and the acting vice-chancellor – were insufficiently different in jurisdiction, function or any other characteristic from those of the other 17 vice-chancellors to justify separate consideration in the following analysis. However, as is the case with all participants, specific comments appear in the following analysis about the role that they fulfilled in office, with a code being used which ensures anonymity but displays frequency of citation or reference.

Two vice-chancellors were away from Australia on official representational assignments for substantial periods during the diary analysis survey. That two of a total of 19, or 10.5 percent of the population, were involved in overseas travel is hardly surprising given Australia's geographical location. Nor is it remarkable that these assignments were focussed on institutional links in the Asian region. In several universities the diary audit period overlapped

an inter-semester break in the academic year. While the effect of this break relates largely to formal teaching programs, within the survey period two vice-chancellors worked nine of ten weekdays and another 9.5 weekdays, each taking an extended weekend holiday. All of the above vice-chancellors submitted detailed Diary Analysis Sheets whether they were overseas on official travel or on personal holidays in Australia. No statistical adjustment was made to the total population being surveyed on account of holidays or overseas travel for it is contended that such factors are representative of the diversity of operational circumstances affecting the office of vice-chancellor at any time in an academic or calendar year.

Treatment of Data. Vice-chancellors and their secretaries were asked to record activities on a half hourly basis within the hours of 7 am and 12 midnight. For the purposes of recording and comparative analysis each day began at 7 am. In most cases one or more half hour entries following 7 am were designated PERSONAL and these were counted as such within the working day. However, in the case of a few vice-chancellors, their working day often began before 7 am and/or extended after 12 midnight. In such instances no record was made as these activities were deemed to be outside the survey period. This was also the situation with those vice-chancellors travelling overseas: if their flights or other travel extended between 12 midnight and 7 am, it was not recorded for analysis. For the purposes of this diary audit of work patterns the official working day for a vice-chancellor was considered to have ended at the time when the last PERSONAL entry was made on the Diary Analysis Sheet for that day.

As indicated previously, many half hour slots involved a vice-chancellor in consideration of multiple topics and issues. Secretaries were requested to identify the principal activity or subject under consideration for each time period and this was the one recorded for analysis. In some instances, activities were not coincident with the half hour design of the instrument; in which case entries were rounded up or down as appropriate. Meals taken in representational or other official settings were treated as work rather than as personal. Because of the small number of universities and their dispersion in relation to Australia's land area, records were made of travel undertaken both by car and by plane.

In all tables, figures for averages were rounded to the nearest decimal point for both percentages and hours. For entries of *High* and *Low Hours* in various categories that were attained by individual vice-chancellors (and recorded in half hour slots on the survey instrument), two decimal points were used in Tables 6.2 to 6.4 to prevent distortion of this information.

Analysis of Working Hours

If there is one characteristic universal to Australian vice-chancellors, it is that they are busy people. The demands of the office of vice-chancellor in terms of commitment and time are consonant with a professional vocation and the exercise of a role at executive level in a complex, modern organisation. Few, if any, observers of Australian universities, even their most severe critics, would dare bring a charge of indolence or inactivity against a vice-chancellor. To set aside, for the present, any questions of productivity and effectiveness, one could find little disagreement with the observations of the *Robbins Report* (cited in Chapter 1) about "the variety and burden of work" required of a modern vice-chancellor or the statement from a former vice-chancellor of two Australian universities quoted in the previous chapter regarding feelings of being "pressed down by the almost intractable problems of just managing" (Cowen, 1968).

The office is, in many overt social aspects, formally circumscribed. Vice-chancellors, despite greater access to jurisdictional authority, have less freedom than a dean or a professor. A phrase from *The Glass Bead Game* by Herman Hesse (1972, 134-5) would be an apt text for an address at any ceremony to welcome or install a new vice-chancellor:

If the high Authority appoints you to an office, know this: every step upward on the ladder of offices is not a step into freedom but into bondage. The higher the office, the tighter the bondage. The greater the power of the office, the stricter the service

Hesse, who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1946, presents a rather gloomy perspective on organisational life and a pyramidal view of leadership. Nevertheless, expectations exist about how the work and time of a vice-chancellor shall be spent and many of these relate to the cyclic nature of university operations, including, for example, those associated with: the calendar year (which in Australian universities is also the fiscal year) in terms of finance, resource allocation and associated planning; the academic year with statutory, ceremonial and other formal responsibilities; monthly cycles often in relation to governance bodies and their management and monitoring of academic and resource matters; weekly cycles in terms of management and patterned administration in a reduced focus; and also with major cycles of planning, review or development that often mesh with strategic funding and other initiatives from government or other external agencies. If this slim profile tends to emphasise executive and academic leadership functions of the office and role, a salutary balance can be found in the vignette of the university president painted by Clark Kerr (1963, 29-30):

(He) is expected to be a friend of the students, a colleague of the faculty, a good fellow with the alumni, a good speaker with the public, an astute bargainer with the foundations and the federal agencies, a friend of industry, labour, and agriculture, a persuasive

diplomat with donors, a champion of education generally, a supporter of the professions (particularly law and medicine), a spokesman to the press, a scholar in his own right, a public servant at the state and national levels, a devotee of opera and football equally, a decent human being, a good husband and father, an active member of a church. Above all he must enjoy travelling in air-planes, eating his meals in public, and attending public ceremonies.

Even though social circumscription, cyclic activities, and internal and external demands do affect the office of vice-chancellor in Australia, room exists for each appointee to interpret and fulfil the office distinctively; and evidence of this has been presented in Chapter 4 and implicitly in Chapter 5.

Expectations of an Australian vice-chancellor may not occur in all dimensions of Kerr's portrait nor equally in each that does occur, but the picture presented is of someone who is subject to heavy demands being made on their time, their energy, their intellectual and their total capacities. The extent to which this perspective accords with reality in 1986 is displayed in Table 6.1 and subsequent tables.

Table 6.1 Weekly Working Hours for Vice-Chancellors

Category of Hours	Average	High	Low
Gross Hours: 5 Day Week	68.7	79.8	56.8
Net Hours: Weekend	8.3	22.0	0
Gross Hours plus Weekend Hours	77.0	101.8	56.8
Personal Hours: 5 Day Week	6.4	12.5	2.0
Net Hours: 5 Day Week	62.4	73.0	48.3
Net Hours plus Weekend Hours	70.7	95.0	48.3

The category *Gross Hours: 5 Day Week* in Table 6.1 describes hours recorded for each vice-chancellor from 7 am until either the time beginning the last PERSONAL entry or until 12 midnight, if work continued to that time, on Monday to Friday in the survey period. The average working hours of 68.7 for a five day week confirms that Australian vice-chancellors devote long hours to official duties. This average approximates that of more than 60 hours per week which was reported by Perkins from a 1967 survey of university presidents in New York (Cohen & March, 1974, 126). It is above the average of 50 to 55 hours estimated for presidents in the diary analysis survey conducted by Cohen and March in 1970 (*ibid*). The Australian data present a range with a high of 79.8 hours and a low of 56.8 hours. The latter hours were worked by one vice-chancellor (VC11) whose university was on inter-semester break and who in fact took one Friday as holiday and therefore worked 56.8 hours over 4.5

days. By comparison the other vice-chancellor (VC13) who also took one Friday as holiday within the survey period actually worked 69.5 hours over 4.5 days.

What the average of 68.7 hours per five days represents is an average of 13.7 hours each day within which a vice-chancellor is engaged in official activities. This is a long and demanding day and within the ten days surveyed, in which 13.7 hours is the average, there were peaks and troughs of more or of less intense working hours. In each day periods of time were spent on personal matters: most commonly in the morning between 7 am and 8 am; sometimes around the middle of the day, although most lunches were either official or quick sandwiches taken alone at the office desk; and often for an hour or so around the evening meal. The average for such *Personal Time: 5 Day Week* is 6.4 hours and displays a high of 12.5 hours and a low of 2.0. The high of 12.5 hours of personal time, which is about double the average and more than 30 percent above the next highest, can be explained by the distinctive work pattern of one vice-chancellor (VC4) who, although his residence was not on campus, took several hours of personal time at home most evenings before returning to his university office to work alone. A deduction from the *Gross Hours: 5 Day Week* of the *Personal Hours: 5 Day Week* results in the *Net Hours: 5 Day Week* which gives an average of 62.4 hours with a high of 73.0 hours and a low of 48.3 hours.

In an assessment of weekly working hours for Australian vice-chancellors the writer believes that the most pertinent statistics are those which take account of the total time period within a seven day week that a vice-chancellor must commit to official activities. These figures are obtained by summing the *Gross Hours: 5 Day Week* and the *Net Hours: Weekend*. As detailed earlier in this chapter, weekend work by vice-chancellors was recorded in the form of net hours usually worked in several locations. The net hours worked by vice-chancellors each weekend was an average of 8.3 with a high displayed in Table 6.1 of 22 hours and a low of zero. This latter was the entry for one of the vice-chancellors (VC11) who availed himself of a long weekend holiday during the diary analysis survey. Thus, the average total hours in each seven day week during which vice-chancellors were formally committed to university responsibilities appears in Table 6.1 as *Gross Hours plus Weekend Hours* and displays an average of 77.0, a high of 101.8 and a low of 56.8 hours. Because the work done by vice-chancellors is not exclusively related to a location either in a personal office or elsewhere in the university as seen in Table 6.2, nor to a five day week, this category of *Gross Hours plus Weekend Hours* and its average of 77.0 presents a fair profile of the time that a vice-chancellor had to give to the office in 1986. By comparison, the total hours actually worked by vice-chancellors in each seven day week is represented by the category *Net Hours plus Weekend Hours* with the totals being an average of 70.7 hours, a high of 95.0 hours and a low of 48.3 hours. Where vice-chancellors spend their professional time is the subject of analysis in the next section.

Locational Analysis

Table 6.2 presents basic information about the distribution of vice-chancellors' time according to location. This information is derived from an analysis of data in the Diary Analysis Sheets and uses for the basis of comparison the category of *Net Hours plus Weekend Hours* which made an average total of 70.7 hours for each seven day week.

Table 6.2 Locational Analysis for Vice-Chancellors

Location	Average		Hours	
	Percent	Hours	High	Low
Home	13.2	9.3	35.25	0
Own Office	35.2	24.9	37.5	1.25
Elsewhere on Campus	18.9	13.4	30.75	4.75
Away from Campus	32.7	23.1	53.75	1.5
Total	100	70.7	-	-

On average, Australian vice-chancellors spent about 54.1 percent of their working week or 38.3 hours on campus, of which 35.2 percent or slightly more than one third of the total net working hours was located in the personal office. Almost the same proportion of time, an average of 32.7 percent, saw the vice-chancellor engaged in official responsibilities away from the university campus. *Home* was the place in which the smallest amount of working time was expended, 13.2 percent being in this location.

The results of this locational analysis are generally congruent with the survey undertaken by Cohen and March (1974, 125-130) and the comparable studies which they drew upon, with the percentage of time spent in *Own Office* by presidents and vice-chancellors being exactly the same. Minor variations exist: time spent at *Home* by Australian vice-chancellors (13.2 percent) is 2.8 percent less and the time spent *Away from Campus* (32.7 percent) is 3.3 percent less than that of American presidents. The time spent *Elsewhere on Campus* (18.9 percent of total) represents a significant difference, vice-chancellors spending 57.5 percent more time in this location than presidents (12 percent of total). Implications for the office of vice-chancellor and its operational mode that might be interpreted from this difference will be discussed later.

A brief review of the disaggregated data in Table 6.2 will reveal more about the disposition of a vice-chancellor's time in relation to location. The average hours spent at *Home*

by a vice-chancellor were 9.3 with a high of 35.25 and a low of zero. The extreme variation represented by this high occurred as a result of the vice-chancellor (VC2) being confined to bed with influenza where he worked intermittently on university papers. Two zeros were recorded one of which was by a vice-chancellor (VC17) who was overseas for most of the survey period. Whereas Cohen and March (1974, 128) found that "one-sixth of the 8am to 6pm workday is spent at home" by American presidents, the majority of vice-chancellors arrived at the office between 8 and 8.30, many having already done some paperwork at home prior to departure; and it should be noted that conventional office hours in Australia are 9.00 am to 5.00 pm. Contrary to American findings, it was rare for a vice-chancellor to lunch at home. Most lunches were recorded as working lunches – institutional, civic or commercial: with vice-chancellors either being practitioners of the silent sandwich syndrome or being guest of or host for dignitaries on or off campus, university governance bodies, or specialist groups such as scholarly societies, hospital boards or selection committees. Evening meals for vice-chancellors present an even more diverse smorgasbord of location and social interaction and will be dealt with later.

The largest part of a vice-chancellor's professional work is located in his *Own Office*, the average being 24.9 hours. The range is extensive as the high shows 37.5 hours and the low 1.25 hours. The high (VC16) is not exceptional for two other vice-chancellors (VC3 and VC9) spent 37.25 and a total of nine vice-chancellors worked more than the average hours in their private offices. One of the vice-chancellors who was overseas during the diary audit (VC15) accounts for the low; the next two above that low being a considerably higher 9.25 hours worked in *Own Office* by the other vice-chancellor who had been overseas (VC17) and then 14.5 hours worked by the vice-chancellor (VC2) who was at home with influenza.

As noted above, the average time that a vice-chancellor was *Elsewhere on Campus* in each working week – 13.4 hours or 18.9 percent of the total – was significantly higher than that of his American counterpart. The high in this category of 30.75 hours (VC14) is more than twice the average with the next two vice-chancellors working 24.25 hours (VC12) and 20.25 hours (VC13) *Elsewhere on Campus* and a total of eight who worked more than the average. The exceptionality of the high of 30.75 hours is explained by the occurrence in one week of meetings of the university council and its finance committee, of meetings concerned with preparation of the triennial submission to CTEC, and of an annual lecture series plus colloquium the following day all of which involved the vice-chancellor. Such a conjunction of events is not exceptional of itself and could well occur in other universities at a different time of the year, the key variable being the annual lecture series and the availability of distinguished guest speakers. The low entry of 4.75 hours arises from one of the two vice-chancellors (VC15) who had been overseas.

Further details of the time that officially engaged a vice-chancellor *Away from Campus* are presented in Table 6.3. This category does not include time spent by a vice-chancellor at *Home* even where the official residence was located off campus; and only four of the 19 incumbents in 1986 lived in an official residence located on the campus. The percentages and hours used in Table 6.3 are components of the total locational analysis in Table 6.2.

Table 6.3 *Away from Campus* Locational Analysis for Vice-Chancellors

Location	Average		Hours	
	Percent	Hours	High	Low
In City	8.2	5.8	11.75	0
Out of City	10.5	7.4	53.75	0
Car Travel	10.9	7.7	17.75	1.5
Plane Travel	3.1	2.2	20.0	0
Total	32.7	23.1	-	-

The locational category *Away from Campus* accounted for an average 32.7 percent of a vice-chancellors weekly work time and, as noted earlier, there was a difference of 3.3 percent with the comparable categories for presidents of USA institutions. This represents an overall variation of less than 10 percent. What is more notable are major item differences: Australian vice-chancellors spend 8.2 percent of their time in their institution's city on official business whereas American presidents allocate 14 percent of their working week to this location, that is, vice-chancellors spend 41 percent less time *In City*; and vice-chancellors are *Out of City* for 10.5 percent of the average working week compared with 22 percent in this category for presidents, a difference of 52 percent less time. Reasons for these significant variations could be found, in part, in the fundamentally different fiscal relationships between institutions and their patrons in Australian and USA higher education. In the case of Australian universities this was relatively unilineal in 1986 with the federal government being overwhelmingly the principal patron. This analytical vector could be used to examine differences in the external orientation between universities in Australia and in the USA in areas of funding, political support, or linkages with such constituencies as alumni, business and research sponsors. Within the present study the matter can only be noted and not reviewed analytically.

All vice-chancellors except one (the one suffering influenza) spent time *In City*, the average being 5.8 hours with high of 11.75 hours (VC18) and a low of zero. The next two highest *In City* hours were 11.5 hours (VC14) and 9.5 hours (VC3), with a total of 10 vice-chancellors spending above average hours in this location. Activities *In City* for the vice-

chancellor recording the high in this category included civic representational duties, two meetings in the same week of the board of the national universities superannuation scheme, a board meeting for a teaching hospital, and a funeral for a former senior university officer. The second lowest hours in this category were 1.75 hours for the vice-chancellor (VC17) who had been overseas for most of the diary audit.

In the *Out of City* category which displayed an average of 7.4 hours, the high of 53.75 hours (VC15) and the next entry of 47 hours (VC17) were each attributable to vice-chancellors who had been overseas. Eight vice-chancellors or 42 percent of the total recorded zero time spent *Out of City* during the survey period. A possible explanation, more applicable to non-metropolitan or other distant institutions, could be that appointments in either the national capital, Canberra, or in state capitals were usually arranged in conjunction with regular travel commitments such as attendance at AVCC meetings. Some support for this interpretation is found in the fact that of the eight vice-chancellors recording no *Out of City* time, none also recorded any plane travel.

All vice-chancellors recorded *Car Travel*, the average being 7.7 hours in each working week with the high of 17.75 hours including some train travel and being achieved by one of the vice-chancellors (VC17) who was overseas. The next two highest entries were 10.75 hours (VC19) and 10 hours (VC6) recorded respectively by vice-chancellors of universities in a metropolitan and a provincial city. Overall 10 vice-chancellors spent above average time in *Car Travel*. The low of 1.5 hours was from a vice-chancellor (VC12) whose residence was on the university campus. It is reiterated that within time designated PERSONAL both at weekends and after the last PERSONAL entry for each day, a number of diaries recorded additional travel both by car and plane.

During the diary analysis survey eight of the vice-chancellors or 42 percent undertook *Plane Travel*, the average recorded in Table 6.3 being 2.2 hours in each working week. The high of 20 hours (VC15) was completed by one of the vice-chancellors who was travelling extensively in Asia; and this only represents travel during the survey hours of 7 am to 12 midnight. The next highest was not the other vice-chancellor (VC17) who had been overseas and recorded 5.25 hours but a vice-chancellor (VC7) who travelled interstate as a member of an expert review committee and also for a meeting of a scholarly body and recorded *Plane Travel* of 7.25 hours. Five of the eight vice-chancellors travelling by air recorded above average hours and eleven had zero entries. One result of this analysis is an actual level of air travel that is much lower than the popular perception of frequently travelling vice-chancellors.

Interaction Analysis

In the labour intensive industry of higher education where, notwithstanding technology, most vital exchanges aimed at enhancing knowledge, skills and attitudes depend significantly on human interaction, it is not surprising to find that the work of the university CEO is fundamentally social, also deriving much of its *raison d'être* from interaction with people. This contention is sustainable through whichever organisational theory one prisms the university. The bureaucratic, the collegial, the political, the anarchical, the pluralistic or any other model or image is each contingent upon formal, and equally important informal patterns of human interaction. With whom then did vice-chancellors involved in the diary analysis survey spend their time? The research pursued was not designed to identify specific constituencies with whom a vice-chancellor met or interacted. The analysis that follows seeks to identify the frequency of interaction between the vice-chancellor and sets of people: an individual, two to five persons, more than six people and also the amount of time spent alone. Subsequently the results of this review will be considered with the locational analysis and with observations about the topics under consideration during these meetings.

Table 6.4 Interaction Analysis for Vice-Chancellors

Number of Persons Present	Location and Hours				Average		Hours	
	Home	Own Office	Elsewhere On Campus	Total	Percent	Hours	High	Low
Alone	135.7	179.5	0	315.2	34.8	16.6	31.25	0.75
One Other	7.0	195.5	2.0	204.5	22.6	10.8	17.75	0.25
Two to Five	5.3	92.0	23.8	121.1	13.4	6.4	8.75	0.25
More than Six	28.5	7.3	228.0	263.8	29.2	13.9	23.25	0.5
Total	176.5	474.3	253.8	904.6	100	47.6	-	-

The data displayed in Table 6.4 are based on the three first locations in which vice-chancellors spend their time as presented in Table 6.2. Together, these three locations of *Home*, *Own Office* and *Elsewhere on Campus* account for more than two-thirds or 67.3 percent of the category of *Net Hours Plus Weekend Hours* that is, 47.6 hours out of the average total of 70.7 hours for each seven day week. An equally compelling and practical reason for using these three locations derives from the fact that for almost every relevant diary entry the number (and often the position of office-holder) was recorded by the vice-chancellor's secretary. Comparable and accurate data were not generally recorded in respect of persons involved in engagements and meetings that occurred in the category *Away from Campus*. The recording and presentation of data are derived from those in previous tables in this chapter with

only one qualification: in the final column, entries under *Hours - Low*, are not absolute for all vice-chancellors in any single location but are the lowest entries for any one vice-chancellor among the three different locations. Minor differences may be observed between entries in this and previous tables resulting from a rounding of numbers to the first decimal point.

From Table 6.4 it can be seen that vice-chancellors spend less of their working time alone than with other people – an average of 16.6 hours or 34.8 percent of each week. Of these 16.6 hours, 56.9 percent or 9.5 hours are spent alone in *Own Office* with the remaining 7.1 hours or 43.1 percent being spent alone at *Home*. The high of 31.25 hours is accounted for by the vice-chancellor (VC2) who was ill at home with influenza. The next highest single entry of 21 hours in *Own Office* was recorded by the vice-chancellor (VC4) who regularly returned to the university at night and who, by comparison, only worked alone at *Home* for 1.25 hours each week. During the two weeks' survey period, a total of nine vice-chancellors worked more than the average of 16.6 hours each week: two incumbents (VC2, VC14) exceeded those hours at *Home*; another two (VC4, VC16) in *Own Office*; and a further five (VC3, VC6, VC7, VC8, VC12) in the two locations combined. No vice-chancellor is recorded as having done any work alone in the *Elsewhere on Campus* location.

Comparisons with US studies are striking. Based on workday surveys in the office location only, Cohen and March (1974, 129) report that the time an American president spends alone is estimated in one study to be 28 percent and in their own study, 25 percent. In Table 6.4 if the 176.5 hours worked at *Home* are deducted from the total weekly hours worked of 904.6, the hours worked on campus by vice-chancellors are 728.1 or an average of 38.32 hours. The time spent alone in *Own Office* is 179.5 hours or an average for each vice-chancellor of 9.5 hours. Of the total time spent on campus each week, this represents 24.8 percent which also highlights the essentially social nature of the office of vice-chancellor.

That Australian vice-chancellors spend about one-third of their working time alone perhaps supports the jocular observation made by one incumbent (VC 6) in a letter to the writer that vice-chancellors were "mole-like creatures who often did their work alone and in the dark"; and on another occasion in interview the same person suggested that vice-chancellors need to appear, after Kipling, to be like the cat that walked the wild woods alone. To look beyond such images, the reality is that in common with many professional executives, vice-chancellors need time alone for policy analysis and formulation, for writing, for reading the massive volume of printed material directed at and through a CEO's office, and for that most valuable of activities, critical reflection.

It should not be assumed that the time in which a vice-chancellor was alone was a period of stress-free tranquillity. While a range of activities is noted, the most common record

of how time alone in *Own Office* was spent was either "Working on Papers" or "Dealing with Correspondence." Time alone at *Home* attracted more diverse entries, one of the most frequently recorded being "Working on papers for triennial submission to CTEC", this being a seasonal activity for all universities during the survey period. Among additional and divergent, though not unexpected activities, were the following entries:

- Preparing a paper on academic planning. (VC 3)
- Writing obituary of a scientific colleague. (VC 8)
- Writing a speech for Association of Commonwealth Universities Conference to be held in Penang in August. (VC 12).
- Reading D.Sc thesis as external examiner. (VC 16)
- Friday, 6 June began for the Vice-Chancellor at 2.00 am with a phone call requiring immediate action on behalf of (a member of the governing council). Further attention to this matter was necessary after the Vice-Chancellor arrived at the University. (VC19)

The time given by vice-chancellors to interaction with one other person is an average of 10.8 hours in total, being 22.6 percent of the hours expended each week in the three major locations shown in Table 6.4. Almost all of this time with one other person is spent by a vice-chancellor in *Own Office*, the average being 95.6 percent in this location or 10.3 of the total of 10.8 hours. At the core of interaction between an incumbent and one other person are meetings between a vice-chancellor and his personal assistant or secretary. Scheduling work commitments and diary planning are recorded as subjects of such meetings as frequently as is dealing with correspondence. As many incumbents dealt with correspondence and files after hours and at home, frequency of interaction in *Own Office* cannot present a total picture regarding correspondence, also as some use was made of dictaphones. The secretary of one vice-chancellor (VC 12) noted, as an additional comment, that during the survey period the incumbent personally dealt with and signed an average of 20 items of correspondence each day. The extension of this activity would see a vice-chancellor personally dealing with more than 4,500 items of correspondence each year.

The range of persons with whom a vice-chancellor met in a one-on-one situation is understandably diverse, given the heterogeneity of modern universities and the mix of organisational models that could be used to interpret formal interactions. The writer has reviewed interactions between vice-chancellors and one other person and proposes the following tripartite classification with examples from the diary analysis sheets.

1. Consultations with Advisers or Specialists

These could relate to a need to receive expert briefing or advice or to require action in a specific domain of university operations. Interaction of this kind involved recorded meetings with such persons as: secretary, personal assistant, registrar, bursar, staff officer, information or publicity officer, vice-principal, deputy or pro vice-chancellor.

2. Formal Meetings with Office Holders

These could relate either to similar matters as those considered in specialist consultations (as in Item 1 above) undertaken in a wider circle or to meetings required by organisational structures or standard procedures. Meetings of this kind were recorded with such persons as: a professor from the department of mathematics, the dean of law, chairman (*sic*) of the social studies department, chairman (*sic*) of the academic board.

3. Petitioners and Exceptional Meetings

These could relate to a matter of gravity, one which is perhaps novel, or to a special social occasion. Meetings of this kind were recorded with such persons as: a faculty member, lecturer in creative arts, reader in physics, retiring dean of economics, reporter from *The National Times*.

Additional reference will be made to this classification in analysing meetings between vice-chancellors and larger groups of people.

The listing of persons with whom vice-chancellors met individually during the survey period is not exhaustive. One example of a more structured pattern of interaction was recorded by a secretary under additional comments:

As a new Vice-Chancellor (VC 14), Professor (name) has a program to meet and talk to each professor of the university – there are over seventy of them – as quickly as possible. Three a week have been scheduled. The Vice-Chancellor has already spent two hours with each of the 50 Heads of Departments.

Such a schedule of meetings confirms again the intensely interpersonal nature of university activities and for a vice-chancellor, however he conceives his role, the necessity to recognize this organisational characteristic as a commonly held perception.

Associated with the meetings specified above is evidence of a social ranking of people with whom vice-chancellors customarily meet. Ultimately, the culture of Australian universities is such that any member of any university constituency – student, staff or lay member – can gain a meeting with the chief executive officer. Usual circumstances to justify such a meeting are that standard institutional procedures and management processes have proved inadequate or that exceptional conditions exist. Such meetings would be included under

Item 3 above. However, it is customary for the operating system – in teaching, research, public service, internal administration or whatever domain – to take care of the regularities and for the vice-chancellor's office to be a final arena for consideration of irregular or exceptional matters. This matter will be examined in comparison with the findings of Cohen and March (1974) later in the chapter. Before considering meetings between incumbents and groups of people, it can be noted that none of the interaction between vice-chancellors and student associations or staff unions occurred as meetings between two people alone. The same was often true of meetings involving the chancellor and a vice-chancellor during the survey period. These three types of interaction all involved three or more people. The contention is, in respect of student or staff bodies, that this is more a statement about the nature of the organisation they represent, and in respect of all three interactions, a statement about the business to be considered rather than any definition of the vice-chancellor's preferred mode of consultation.

Interaction between a vice-chancellor and groups of two to five person represents, as displayed on Table 6.4, the lowest proportion of an incumbent's time at an average of 13.4 percent of the total or 6.4 hours. The vice-chancellor's *Own Office* is the location for 76 percent of this category of interaction with a significant 19.7 percent of interaction taking place *Elsewhere on Campus*. Using the tripartite classification outlined earlier, most of these meetings would be *Group 2: Formal Meetings with Office Holders* with a smaller proportion being *Group 1: Consultations with Advisers or Specialists*. These groups of two to five persons which meet with the vice-chancellor are often task-force or executive groups rather than full committees and among those recorded during the survey are: members of the administrative committee; the vice-chancellor's advisory group; the deputy vice-chancellor/s; the triennium planning group; the policy advisory group; members of the academic staff union; the student association executive; and members of the alumni association. Specific preparatory meetings were held in many universities before meetings of major governance bodies and these involved the vice-chancellor meeting with, for instance: the chancellor, registrar and/or secretary to council before council meetings; or the chairperson and secretary of the academic board, *inter alia*, before board meetings. Despite the offices held by persons involved, most of these meetings belong to the category under Item 1 above, *Consultations with Advisers or Specialists*. Some meetings with distinguished visitors involved two to five persons; but usually with a visitor's entourage and university public relations personnel, more than five are present.

After the time spent alone by a vice-chancellor interaction with more than six people represents the next largest single commitment of time at an average of 29.2 percent of the working week or 13.9 hours. As indicated in Table 6.4 most of this interaction occurred *Elsewhere on Campus*, that is 86.4 percent of all time expended in this category. In addition it is notable that this location of *Elsewhere on Campus* associated with meetings of six or more

people is the setting in which vice-chancellors spend the greatest amount of time in a working week exceeding the next highest situation of *Own Office* with one other person (21.6 percent) by 3.6 percent. Given that Table 6.4 comprises 67.3 percent of net working hours plus weekend hours worked by a vice-chancellor and that the balance of 23.1 hours worked *Away from Campus* as analysed in Table 6.3 are in dispersed locations and with variable numbers of persons present, *Elsewhere on Campus* in association with six or more persons is decidedly the setting in which the greatest number of working hours are expended, on average, by vice-chancellors. This provides further evidence of the social and interactive dimension of the office.

The groups, meetings and activities which involved vice-chancellors in interaction with more than six persons were, in respect of the *Home* location, social or representational occasions such as dinner parties or receptions. Those taking place *Elsewhere on Campus* usually involved a greater number of formal occasions than in any previous category with the following being among interactions recorded: visits to departments; addressing new members of staff; attending book launch; ASTEC Working Party Visit; visit of Swedish Ambassador; professorial selection committee meeting; attending public lecture; Duke of Edinburgh Conference opening; graduation ceremony; and meetings of governance bodies such as academic board or university council and of their subordinate committees like finance, investment advisory, or buildings and grounds. Involvement at this level of public exposure would require preparation by a vice-chancellor at least through having read agenda or briefing papers and often also by preparing a speech of welcome or response. The former activity was often done in conjunction with small expert groups previously reviewed while the latter preparation was generally an activity undertaken at *Home* and alone.

The studies of American presidents reported by Cohen and March (1974, 129) separate interaction into only two categories: president with one other person; and president with two or more persons. Presidential interaction with two or more persons in on-campus locations engaged, in the case of a New York study, 48 percent of a president's time and from Cohen and March's own research, 40 percent of a president's working time. Comparable data were aggregated from Table 6.4 for Australian vice-chancellors by deducting the hours spent at *Home* with two to five persons (5.3 hours) and with more than six persons (28.5 hours) from the total time in these categories to give a total of 351.1 hours or an average of 18.5 hours. This results in a strikingly similar proportion of 48.2 percent of a vice-chancellor's working time being spent on campus with two or more persons.

For comparison and further to the analysis of activities by location (Table 6.2) and *Away from Campus* (Table 6.3), the following are among interactions recorded in diaries for vice-chancellors when *In City* or *Out of City*: hospital board meeting; meeting of universities

superannuation board; visit to a minister or to a co-ordinating agency; member of an expert committee of enquiry; opening of a conference or of a physical facility; and attending a civic occasion, a diplomatic gathering or government house function. With the data available it is not possible to analyse these interactions in terms of the number of persons present. Almost all of these external activities are linked to the position of vice-chancellor in a specific institution, some such as hospital board membership in an *ex officio* capacity. These interactions are generally not personal to the incumbent with the exception of membership of an expert committee or body; however, it can be argued that the quality that availed membership of such a committee was *a priori* elemental to appointment as vice-chancellor.

Further observations about representational activities are appropriate as these featured significantly in the record of what vice-chancellors actually do. Many of these activities are reviewed as institutional variables being linked to the office of vice-chancellor and some are *ex officio* functions. The range includes: membership of governing boards of scientific bodies and of facilities such as hospitals with university links; attendance at social occasions be these receptions, dinners or funerals; interaction with government officials and politicians – local, state or federal; attendance at and reception of diplomats and personnel from international, scientific and cultural organisations; and participation in university and local community occasions such as dramatic and musical productions and festivals. The composite set of representational activities engaged in by the 19 vice-chancellors, though not by any single vice-chancellor, approaches the picture sketched earlier of Kerr's person for all seasons and all *milieux*. An analysis of interaction by incumbents during the survey period resulted in a clustering of representational activities under the five general headings:

1. Attendance at vice-regal functions.
2. Activities involving a minister, other politician or senior designated public servant.
3. Occasions associated with diplomatic personnel.
4. Direct interaction with a foundation, private company or benefactor.
5. Other formal occasions including hospitality, or dramatic, musical or other cultural events.

What follows is an item and not a frequency analysis by incumbent that results in percentages. Nine incumbents record one or more interactions involving attendance at vice-regal functions. These are here defined as those hosted or attended by the state governor being a representative of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth of Australia or as it happened during the survey period, functions attended by Their Royal Highnesses, The Duke of Edinburgh or The Duke of Kent both of whom were in Australia. Institutional location seems to be an important

variable for with one exception, the ANU in Canberra, no vice-chancellor of the five non-metropolitan universities was involved with vice-regal functions; and evidence of a status ranking of institutions among those in capital cities, rather than a ranking of incumbents, could be argued: vice-chancellors of all of the 19th century institutions (apart from one who was overseas extensively), of both of the 20th century institutions, and of the ANU (being located in the federal capital) were engaged in this level of interaction representing six of the nine institutions.

Five vice-chancellors were involved in meetings with ministers, three with other politicians all of whom were representatives for the electorate in which the university was located, and 16 with senior public servants or designated officers of statutory bodies. The latter included such officers as the chair and/or members of CTEC, chair of the state tertiary or higher education board, chair of the Commonwealth Public Service Board, a director general of a state department of education and deputy secretary of a state development department. Only three vice-chancellors had none of the three kinds of interaction in this category; and of these, two were from universities which were formally on vacation.

Eleven vice-chancellors undertook representational engagements involving diplomatic personnel. These interactions occur among incumbents in all four sets of universities with a majority, with five items, being found among the nine new institution universities including two not in capital cities. Although a frequency analysis is not being pursued it is notable that one vice-chancellor (accounted for by a single item entry among the eleven above) had meetings or interaction with seven different diplomats during the survey period of ten working days. Another vice-chancellor in the same city engaged in interaction with only two diplomats only one of whom was in common with his fellow vice-chancellor. As it was suggested earlier that representation involving vice-regal officers may be an institutional variable depending on age and status among other factors, it can be speculated that intensity of interaction with diplomats – particularly as their guest – may be a personal variable which a vice-chancellor mediates probably with a hope of generating some contact or benefit between the diplomat's country and a teaching or research program or unit within the incumbent's university. Two vice-chancellors record interaction with private companies and another two had meetings with foundations or possible benefactors concerning support for university programs. One can reasonably assume that with a decline in the rate of government funding and the associated diversification of income sources since 1986 that contacts of this type would have increased significantly.

All vice-chancellors, with one exception, engaged in formal entertaining in the evenings or at weekends usually by means of dinners attended either as host or as a guest. The exception happened to be the incumbent whose retirement date was set and whose successor had been appointed. While it may be interpreted that for him social interaction of this order was

a function of the job and was therefore in decline, both this vice-chancellor and all others undertook luncheon and other hospitality obligations during the survey period. In terms of frequency the overwhelming majority of representational activities fulfilled by vice-chancellors were in the form of dinners, receptions and attendance at plays, concerts and cultural events. This incidence could be related to the hobbies and recreational interests of vice-chancellors as well as to the service they give to organisations concerned with the arts as previously examined in Chapter 4.

Consideration of representational activities including those of a social nature provides opportunity to mention the role of spouse to the male vice-chancellor. Brevity of mention is in general, inversely proportionate to the enormous contribution most vice-chancellors' wives make to the well-being of their husband and of the university. Sir David Derham, former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Melbourne, summed up the expectations of most university councils in the terse statement: "Two for the price of one". Most wives were expected to be not only a gracious hostess but also to be seen as a strong social and committed supporter of the vice-chancellor and the university. The forms of support varied across the range of institutions: programs for the welfare of children in nearby suburbs, arranging an annual book fair, hostess for tennis mornings and for receptions, patron of a number of organisations, and, in company with the vice-chancellor, to be in evidence at a great variety of representational activities. Recognition of the importance of the joint role of the vice-chancellor and spouse was acknowledged in the mid 1980s through, for instance, the provision of domestic staff or assistance in the official residence, transport assistance ranging from an allowance to a separate vehicle, and financial support to permit joint travel on major overseas assignments undertaken by the vice-chancellor. The contribution made by vice-chancellors' wives, the extent to which change has occurred either in expectations or in performance of the spouse's role, merit separate investigation. It is sufficient to note in this chapter that unless appropriate consideration were given a vice-chancellor's wife, the couple would spend even less time together than appears so from the above analysis.

Summary

Inherent in the text and through the review undertaken in this chapter are a number of findings about the work patterns of vice-chancellors in Australian universities in the period under consideration. The principal among these will be drawn out and stated as propositions which concentrate the analysis of what it is that a vice-chancellor does. In the conclusion that follows, further comment is offered about the work of an Australian vice-chancellor in comparison with that reported for an American university president.

Proposition 6.1 Australian vice-chancellors are busy people who devote long hours to the diverse requirements of the position. They commit an average of 68.7 hours to official duties during a five day week and an average of 77 hours for *Gross Hours plus Weekend Hours* during seven days.

Consonant with most professional vocations, being CEO of an Australian university is as demanding in time as other comparable roles in modern complex organisations. Based on available evidence, Australian vice-chancellors work longer hours than presidents of American universities.

Proposition 6.2 From an analysis of time expended in seven different locations, Australian vice-chancellors spend a majority of their working week, being 54 percent or 38.3 hours, on campus.

Of the time spent on campus, 35.2 percent or slightly more than one third of the total net working hours was located in the personal office. About the same proportion of time, an average of 32.7 percent was devoted to official responsibilities away from the campus. These proportions are generally the same as those reported for presidents of US universities. However, Australian vice-chancellors spend slightly less time working at *Home* and *Away from Campus* (about 3 percent less in each case) and considerably more time (57.5 percent) working *Elsewhere on Campus* than do American presidents.

Proposition 6.3 Through an analysis of interaction patterns, the work of an Australian vice-chancellor was found to be essentially social, most time being given to talking directly with people both in relatively structured settings and less formally. The location *Elsewhere on Campus* in association with six or more people is the setting in which vice-chancellors spend the greatest amount of time, being 31.3 percent or 12.0 hours of the working week spent on campus.

The time that a vice-chancellor spends alone, being an average of 16.6 hours or 34.8 percent of the time expended either at home or on campus, is less than that spent working with other people in whatever size group. Of this time, only an average of 9.5 hours are spent alone in *Own Office* on campus which also emphasises the interpersonal nature of much of the work done by vice-chancellors. Interaction between a vice-chancellor and groups of two to five persons represents the lowest proportion of time expended in an incumbent's working week.

These three propositions provide substance and focus to several key statements about the work patterns of vice-chancellors that appear in this chapter, including:

- Despite access to jurisdictional authority, the office of vice-chancellor is, in many overt social aspects, formally circumscribed.
- Expectations exist about how the work and time of a vice-chancellor shall be spent and many of these relate to the cyclic nature of university operations.
- The overall picture of a vice-chancellor that is outlined is of someone who is subject to heavy demands being made on their time, their energy, their intellectual and their total capacities.
- Even though the office of vice-chancellor is subject to social circumscription, to expectations relating to cyclic activities, and to internal and external demands, room exists for each incumbent to interpret and fulfil their role distinctively. In part, this interpretive distinctiveness relates to and derives from the intensely social and interpersonal factors which are inalienable from the office.

Conclusion

This chapter, in assessing the work and activity patterns of Australian vice-chancellors in office in 1986, presents unique data. These data, which were gathered through a 14 day diary audit in which all 19 incumbent vice-chancellors participated, form the first and only information of its kind collected in respect of the total population of Australian or other vice-chancellors in any Commonwealth university system. Selected information from the diary survey was analysed to elucidate how vice-chancellors spent their time, in which principal locations, and in interaction with whom. While the points reiterated in the preceding summary could stand as a conclusion to these investigations, it seems appropriate to make further but brief reference to research dealing with the work patterns of university presidents in the United States of America.

In examining the organisation of a president's time, Cohen and March (1974, 125-152) state that a university president has less than complete control over how time is spent, where and with whom. They (Cohen and March, 1974, 129) suggest

that a president devotes a considerable portion of the time of his day to three traditional royal activities:

1. the reception of petitions,
2. the giving of formal assent, and
3. the certification of position.

Although the order and division of labour differs, there is a general correlation between the three Cohen and March activities and the tripartite classification of interactions which vice-chancellors engaged upon, *viz*:

1. Consultations with Advisers or Specialists.
2. Formal Meetings with Office Holders.
3. Petitioners and Exceptional Meetings.

The "three traditional royal activities" attributed to American presidents seem to be rather static in comparison with the more dynamic activities of Australian vice-chancellors which were recorded across an extensive vertical range. Furthermore, despite the elaboration from Cohen and March's research of the anarchical model of university organisation, the "three traditional royal activities" may align themselves as much if not more with other models including the bureaucratic and the political. Further discussion of the office of vice-chancellor in relation to models of university organisation is pursued in the next chapter.

If the tripartite classification were to be overlaid on the template of the "three traditional royal activities", the writer submits that the latter would fit better the situation of an Australian vice-chancellor's work pattern by the addition of three more activities. These are given below as Items 4 to 6 preceded by the Cohen and March activities as Items 1 to 3:

1. The reception of petitions.
2. The giving of formal assent.
3. The certification of position.
4. Interpretation of jurisdiction or statute including extrapolation based on precedent.
5. Providing dispensation or absolution related to divergence.
6. Encouraging and nurturing creativity.

From the limited analysis of data that were collected through the diary audit, it seems that Australian vice-chancellors are required to be active beyond the three activities seen as dominant by Cohen and March. Certainly they perform a range of duties that may be described, in whole or part, as formal, jurisdictional and royal. In that most of these relate to work patterns flowing from institutional regularities, they tend to require little discretionary judgement and are more static than other matters with which vice-chancellors deal. These would be generally covered by the "three traditional royal activities" enumerated above. By contrast, Items 4, 5 and 6 would be likely to include crises and institutional irregularities. They represent divergence from established procedures or activity patterns which invite the exercise of judgement that is congruent with existing or projected institutional goals. Within the distinctive organisational culture of Australian universities, it is often the vice-chancellor who must sanction such matters. In terms of the tripartite classification used in this chapter, such crises, irregularities or instances of divergence could surface at meetings in any of the three

categories, although more probably in either *Group 1. Consultations with Advisers or Specialists* or in *Group 3. Petitioners and Exceptional Meetings*.

This comparative and partial critique may not be so much related to differences that exist between what American university presidents and Australian vice-chancellors actually do as to the adequacy of the templates or models used (by Cohen and March in this instance) to analyse major work activities. Fundamentally each university CEO is concerned with catalysing needs and resources within a policy development framework and in exercising statutory and discretionary approval towards the achievement of organisational goals. Some of these themes and issues are brought together with earlier findings in the following and final chapter.